

The Influence of Organization Culture on Employee Readiness for Organizational Change

***Anthony Andrew; **S. Mohankumar;**

**Senior Lecturer, Department of Management, Eastern University, Sri Lanka.
andrewsa1965@yahoo.com.au*

***Assistant Professor, Department of Business Administration, Annamalai University, India.
vmohaa@gmail.com*

Abstract

The survival of living being in the globe is importantly depend on the existence of organizations. Every organization in the world today has to abide by the ever increasing intense competitive global business conditions. Modern organizations in the business world today have to prepare themselves to face high competition, make quick decisions, introduce innovations and develop the will and competency to cope with constant change (D'Aveni, 1998, p. 183). Today, the ability of an organization to change drives its growth (Vakola, 2013, p. 96). Successful, organizations must be responsive to the needs of constantly evolving business environment (Leana & Barry, 2000, p. 754). The environment in which Organizations operate is increasingly critical and dynamic in nature. Due to increasingly critical and dynamic environment, organizations are continuously forced with the need to implement changes in strategy, structure, process, policies, operations, technology, and culture.

The principal constraint in implementing a change process is the resistance from employees. Recent interest in academics to study and understand the attitudes of employees' towards change has been growing (Rafferty et al., 2013 p. 112; Caldwell, 2009, p. 20). One of the most discussed notions in organizational change is change readiness. It refers to employees' attitude towards a change initiative (Rafferty et al., 2013, p. 121). One of the first scholars to discuss change readiness is Armenakis, and the most influential and

referred to work about change readiness is by Armenakis et al. (1993) and Armenakis & Harris (2002).

The aim of this study was to examine the relationship between organizational culture and employee readiness for organizational change. The objectives were to investigate organizational culture and identify the influence of organizational culture on employee readiness for organizational change in Divisional Secretariat, Eravurpatru in Batticaloa District where various change reforms has been introduced recent past. This empirical study proceeded by a systematic review of literature that led to development of a conceptual model. The data was collected from a sample of 100 Employee from Divisional Secretariat, Eravurpatru in Batticaloa district by using a survey questionnaire. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics. Results showed that organizational culture was positively and significantly correlated to employee readiness for organizational change. This study provides empirical evidence for employee readiness predictor variables for organizational change and may contribute to strengthen the literature on change management, particularly for Sri Lanka, and may assist the management, change agents and practitioners of human resources management to shape the organizational environment in assessing, designing, introducing and evaluating new or existing programmes for organizational change.

Keywords: Organizational change, Employee readiness, organizational culture.

Introduction

Every organization in the world today has to abide by the ever increasing intense competitive global business conditions. Modern organizations in the business world today have to prepare themselves to face high competition, make quick decisions, introduce innovations and develop the will and competency to cope with constant change (D'Aveni, 1998, p. 183). Today, the ability of an organization to change drives its growth (Vakola, 2013, p. 96). Successful organizations must be responsive to the needs of constantly evolving business environment (Leana & Barry, 2000, p. 754).

In order to improve the organizational performance and achieve sustainable competitive advantages many new changes and transformational initiatives have been developed (Wanberg and Banas, 2000; By, 2007; Shah, 2011; Fuentes-Henri'quez and Del Sol, 2012). These competitive global conditions pressure organizations to prepare themselves to cope with the growing

nature of competition. In order to survive in the competitive global marketplace, successful organizations prepared to cope with these pressing changes (Lawson and Price, 2003; Fuentes-Henri'quez and Del Sol, 2012). Studies conducted in the field of change management revealed a high rate of failure in change implementation due to number of determinants (Klein and Sorra, 1996; Abdul Rashid et al., 2004; Soltani and Wilkinson, 2010; Abdolshah and Abdolshah, 2011; Choi and Ruona, 2011).

There are many factors that influence an organization implementing change: from changes in legislation to the need of an increase in organizational efficiency (Senior & Swailes, 2010, p. 15; Stuart 1995, p. 16-17). A growing investigation in this area reflects the significance of change for the functioning and survival of an organization in today's competitive business world.

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Caldwell, 2009, p. 20). One of the most discussed notions in organizational change is change readiness. It refers to employees' attitude towards a change initiative (Rafferty et al., 2013, p. 121). One of the first scholars to discuss change readiness is Armenakis, and the most influential and referred to work about change readiness is by Armenakis et al. (1993) and Armenakis & Harris (2002).

Background and Scope

The studies conducted recently in the field of change management have established that Individual Readiness for Change (IRFC) is one of the most significant factors for successful implementation of organizational change (Armenakis et al., 1993; Weeks et al., 1995; Clegg and Walsh, 2004; Jones et al., 2005; Holt et al., 2007).

Individual employees become central to the change process. Ignoring the role of individual in the change process and the low level of individual readiness for organizational change causes difficulties and in some cases failures in implementing many change initiatives such as total quality management (Meirovich et al., 2006), knowledge

management (Rusly et al., 2012) and management information systems (Jones et al., 2005).

The current organizational change literature refers to change readiness as per beliefs, attitudes, intentions and behaviour of employees (Armenakis et al., 1993, p. 682; Holt & Vardaman, 2013, p. 10; Vakola, 2013, p. 97).

It is important to understand the factors or determinants or antecedents that can influence change readiness before creating readiness for organizational change. One of these determinants is organizational culture (Johansson et al., 2013; Janićjević, 2012).

Research indicate that, though there are many contextual factors, among these organizational culture (OC) was recognized to be one of the most important factors that could either foster or decrease employee readiness for organizational change (Armenakis et al., 1993; Weiner, 2009; Jones et al., 2005; Choi and Ruona, 2011).

Organizational culture influences how the things are done around in the organization (Armenakis, 1993).

According to Schein (1986) organization culture penetrates into all the aspects of organizational life. It highlights that reactions of employees to change process are therefore strongly dependent on the culture that exists in an organization (Hatch, 1993, p. 683; Johansson, 2013, p.3).

Hence, it is paramount important to identify which types of culture or cultural parameter more favorably enhance employee readiness for organizational change. Though there are considerable amount of studies done in relation to readiness for organizational change, few research studies have paid attention recently to establish the relationship between Organizational Culture and employee readiness for organizational change. The few recent studies to determine the relationship between Organizational Culture and employee readiness for organizational change have examined the impact of some of Organizational Culture types on employee readiness for organizational change. Jones et al. (2005) have investigated the influence of only two types of Organizational Culture namely, human relations; group and adhocracy culture types on Individual readiness for organizational change.

With this background in mind, the author wishes to understand the role of organizational culture in this overall process of creating readiness for a change project.

However, most of the government sector organizations which were involved in implementing these new programmes have faced significant obstacles which decrease the level of change implementation success (Zaher, 2006; Al-Ather, 2011). There is very fragmented research and mostly conceptual regarding the obstacles that hinder the implementation of change programmes in government sector organization. According to these few and small scale studies, the majority of government sector organization seem to practice these change initiatives, such as total quality management (TQM), without taking their members' readiness for change and the conditions that foster it, such as organizational culture (OC), into consideration. It is anticipated that the outcomes of this research will add to the body of knowledge concerning the relationship between Organizational Culture and employee readiness for organizational change in developing

countries with particular interest on Sri Lanka, as the dynamics of the business environment is changing rapidly.

To the best of the authors' knowledge, this is the first study to perform such an analysis using purely government sector organization. The government sector in Sri Lanka makes a small contribution to the gross domestic product (GDP). Recently, many organizational changes and reforms have been introduced in divisional secretariats in the Batticaloa district in Sri Lanka.

There is a lack of empirical studies investigating the influence of Organizational culture on Employee readiness for organizational change. Though the relationship between the dimensions of organization and the employee readiness for organizational change was investigated the degree of influence of one dimension over the other was not established. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to fill this gap by empirically examining the influence of all the four dimensions of organizational culture, namely motivation, organizational identification, flexibility, and trust, on employee readiness for organizational change.

Problem Justification

Understanding and assessing organizational culture is a key step before the implementation of any change initiative (Johansson et al., 2013, p.2). There are numbers of elements contribute for organizational culture. It is important to identify which cultural elements need to be changed and which need to be preserved in order to create and reinforce change readiness. Heracleous, (2001) advocates that, if the change initiative is built on existing values, beliefs and behaviours, the change effort is much more likely to succeed. Johansson et al. (2013) identified in their study of the feasibility of reform in a psychiatric clinic in a Swedish hospital identified that, organizational culture of flexibility; cohesion, belongingness, and trust enhance change readiness. Detert et al. (2000), investigated in their study of organizational culture that corresponds to the change project of Total Quality System, discuss the dimension of organizational culture in the context of change readiness. A number of studies also conducted by Armenakis et al. (2011) on organizational culture in the context of organizational change.

Literature on organizational change discusses different dimensions of organizational culture that are triggered by change leadership, communication, participation and support strategies. For example, the criteria to match organizational culture with the type of change management strategy have been described by Janićijević (2012). Lopez-Dominguez et al. (2013) has conducted a study on how leadership and organizational climate influence change-related behaviours of employees. Many authors have identified different dimensions of organizational culture are mentioned within the context of change-related behaviours of leaders and change management strategy (Rafferty & Griffin, 2004; Tyssen, 2013; Zhu et al., 2011, p. 811).

However, there has not been researched enough to establish the influence of organizational culture on readiness for change project. In the study of matching different types of organizational culture with different type of management strategy, conducted by Janićijević (2012, p. 48) pointed out that further research is needed on how the organizational culture impacts the efficiency of the change process. Detert et al. (2000, p. 850)

identifies a lack of academic contribution in studying the particular dimensions of an organization's culture that are most related to implementation of change projects and programs.

This study examines employee readiness determinants for organizational change to support and strengthen the existing literature. Most studies on employee readiness for organizational change have focused individual, psychological, workplace, environmental, cultural and social factors. An important aspect of this is that organization culture became a dominant factor in influencing employee readiness for organizational change (Coleman *et al.*, 1999; Madsen *et al.*, 2005). Although many research have been conducted in different work settings the findings of this research study could contribute to strengthen the existing body of knowledge in organizational change.

It is notable that most research work has been done in developed or western cultural work settings. Less research work has been found so far in developing countries like Sri Lanka. This requires more attention by researchers and practitioners to establish employee

readiness predictors in different work settings environments and cultures. Change methods adopted by western cultures could be used as a body of knowledge in the domestic situation (Fatima, 2002). As there are no studies carried out in Sri Lanka, the body of knowledge adopted by western cultures could be used in a country like Sri Lanka. In this study the variables have been chosen to justify the study in an underprivileged and developing economy where employee expects only the satisfaction of their basic needs from their organizations.

Research Question

This study examines Influence of organization culture on Employee readiness for organizational change in Eravurpatru Divisional Secretariat in Batticaloa District.

1. What is the level of organization culture in Eravurpatru Divisional Secretariat in Batticaloa District?
2. What is the relationship between organization culture and Employee readiness for Organizational Change?
3. What is the relationship between motivation and Employee

readiness for Organizational Change?

4. What is the relationship between organizational identification and Employee readiness for Organizational Change?
5. What is the relationship between flexibility and Employee readiness for Organizational Change?
6. What is the relationship between trust and Employee readiness for Organizational Change?

Objective of the Study

Given the importance of employee readiness for organizational change, it is important to investigate further readiness. The primary aim of this study is to develop a conceptual framework that explains how employees in Eravurpatru Divisional Secretariat in Batticaloa District develop their positive attitudes and behaviors regarding organizational change.

This study has two main research objectives.

1. Analyze the level of organization culture in Eravurpatru Divisional Secretariat in Batticaloa District

2. Examine the relationship between organization culture and Employee readiness for Organizational change
3. Examine the relationship between motivation and Employee readiness for Organizational change
4. Examine the relationship between organizational identification and Employee readiness for Organizational change
5. Examine the relationship between flexibility and Employee readiness for Organizational change
6. Examine the relationship between trust and Employee readiness for Organizational change

Literature Review

Change is concerned with the development of organization. It is used to solve the problems and challenges of the organization. In organization, most problems and challenges are generated by competition, advanced technology, mergers, expansion, product quality maintenance, or enhancing employee efficiency on the one hand and rapid growth, new business ventures, exciting

opportunities, innovations, and new leadership and management approaches (Madsen *et al.*, 2005, p-213) on the other.

Successful adjustment to change can result in higher levels of enthusiasm providing opportunities for learning and growth, while poor adjustment to change is characterized by feelings of uncertainty, frustration, alienation, and anxiety, particularly in relation to issues of job security, status, work tasks, co-worker relations, and reporting relationships (Ashford, 1988; Holt *et al.*, 2007). Before developing positive state of mind towards organizational change, employee needs to be able to visualize the current situation of the organization and environment by comparing past and anticipated future perspectives. Thus, researchers and practitioners need to know the maximum level of employee readiness predictors so that management can endeavor to understand the maximum level of individuals' beliefs, intentions and perceptions during implementation of change programmes.

Change Readiness: Research suggests that, readiness for change is a demonstrable need for change, a sense of

one's ability to successfully accomplish change (self-efficacy) and an opportunity to participate in the change process contribute to readiness for organizational change (Armenakis, Harris, & Mossholder, 1993). Researchers believe that employee willingness and receptivity is essential for an organization to implement change successfully (Hanpachern, *et al.*, 1998; Eby *et al.*, 2000; Madsen *et al.*, 2005; Rafferty and Simon, 2006). Thus, it is necessary to know how to deal with employee before, during and after launching the organizational change programmes.

Literature suggests that employee readiness may be determined through workplace factors or employee perception factors. Both factors may be effective for implementation of organizational change as to develop employee readiness. Lot of literature has been focused on the employees' readiness for organizational change i.e. influence strategies, change agent role individual attitudes and preference, work groups and job attitudes and contextual variables, Eby, *et al.*, 2000 identified, active job, risk and benefit, job change self-efficacy. Cumming *et al.*, 2005,

defined organizational culture, social relationships in the workplace. Madsen, *et al.*, 2005, management and leader relationship, Job knowledge and skills, Job demands trust in peers, trust in senior leaders, logistic and system support, self-efficacy.

The literature generally distinguishes between two employees responses in a change situation: readiness for, and resistance to. Change starts with a new beginning, which may increases the satisfactions as desired and can also increase the disturbances if it failed because change initiatives either success or fail uniformly across the organization. According to Madsen, (2005) employee readiness for change refers to employees' mental and physical preparedness for immediate action that aim to improve, alter, vary, or modify something. Armenakis *et al.* (1993) defined readiness term as organization members' beliefs, attitudes, and intentions.

Organizational Culture: most of the research findings on Organizational culture advocate that, it is one of the important concepts to consider while preparing for organizational change

(Heracleous, 2001, p. 428). Because it is essential that everybody in the organization should understand the objectives of the organization and their contribution towards that. The existence of the Organizational culture clearly shows that everybody in the organization understands how it functions, how it is managed and how it changes (Janićijević, 2012, p. 26). According to Drzensky et al. (2012) that readiness for change incorporated into organizational culture is one of the foremost important conditions for successful implementation of change. Deter et al. (2000, p. 850) claim that, if the organizational culture is not supportive for change, it itself can lead to the failure of a change project. The literature on organizational change identifies elements of organizational culture that are important for change readiness.

A large number of research studies focusing on organizational sciences have received an association toward considering organizational culture (OC) as a guiding aspect of the functions of an organization and a critical path of effectiveness (e.g. Schein, 1983, 1985, 1986).

The organizations having the power to build innovation into the organizational culture and the processes of management in organizations will portray a bright future (Tushman and O'Reilly, 1997). Tushman and O'Reilly, advocate that organizational culture is in the center of innovation. Organizational culture creates a conducive environment in the organization through team work and socializing process. Tushman and O'Reilly, along with others, believe that creativity and innovation are impacted by culture in a number of ways consisting socializing process and the value proposition communicated through structures, politics and day-to-day artifacts, and practices and procedures.,

According to Schein, 1985 organizational culture refers to shared assumptions, values, and norms. Barney, (1986) stated that organizational culture is a source of sustained competitive advantage and some research has shown that it is a key factor to organizational effectiveness (Deal and Kennedy, 1982). Denison and his colleagues identified and validated four dimensions of organizational culture that are conducive to organizational effectiveness: such as, adaptability, consistency, involvement, and mission

(Denison and Mishra, 1995; Denison and Neale, 1996; Fey and Denison, 2003).

Colquitt et al., (2009) mentioned that, an organization's culture is reflected in the actions and behavior of staff. It is the shared social knowledge within an organization regarding the rules, norms, and values that form the attitude and behaviors of its employees. Accordingly, this definition draws attention to three critical points. First, organizational culture is learned and realized through the interactions of employees. Second, it illustrates the rules, norms, and values within an organization. Third, it creates and fortifies definite employee attitudes through a system of controls over employees (Colquitt et al., 2009).

Organizational effectiveness is mainly attained by its employees. It is realized by Organizations to select and recruit employees who are likely to share their values and in return individuals have similar values with the organization. It implies that organizations would be .innovative if the individual employees can nourish innovation. This harmony can be created by fostering suitable organizational culture (Ancona and Chong, 1996).

Definitions of organization culture

Eldridge and Crombie (1974) The culture of an organization refers to the unique configuration of norms, values, beliefs and ways of behaving that characterize the manner in which groups and individuals combine to get things done.

Schein (1985) A pattern of basic assumptions – invented, discovered or developed by a given group as it learns to cope with the problems of external adaptation and internal integration –that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think and feel in relation to these problems.

Furnham and Gunter (1993) Culture is the commonly held beliefs, attitudes and values that exist in an organization. Put more simply, culture is “the way we do things around here.”

Colquitt et al. (2009) It is the shared social knowledge within an organization regarding the rules, norms, and values that form the attitude and behaviors of its employees.

Conceptualization and Methodology

Conceptualization

Organizational culture is one of the key factors that influence readiness for a change project (Heracleous, 2001, p. 428; Deter et al. (2000, p. 850). Change readiness incorporated into organizational culture is a guarantee of the success of a change project (Drzensky et al. 2012, p. 105). Relationship between organizational culture and change project is reciprocal. Organizational culture plays a key role in determining the ability of organization to embrace change (Detert et al., 2000; Johansson et al.,2013).

Change management efforts influence organizational culture by introducing new values, beliefs, behaviours and organizational culture provides foundation for change implementation. Change management efforts based on the strengths of organizational culture target the dimension that should be improved. Thus, if all the identified dimensions of organizational culture are strongly represented in the organization, the

organization is ready to embrace change. However, if these dimensions are poorly represented, change management efforts are applied to reinforce them in order to create change readiness. The following framework represents the concept of creating change readiness using organizational culture.

This research examines employee readiness determinant to build up employee positive beliefs, intentions, behaviours, attitudes, and expectations during organizational change. In literature review the researcher proposes that employee can develop positive attitudes and behaviours on the basis of their organization culture and career along with social relationships in the workplace factors. The conceptual approach for this research study is based on a broad theoretical framework and the study examines the influence of organizational culture on employee readiness for organizational change in Eravurpatru Divisional Secretariat in Batticaloa District.

Conceptual model



Employee Readiness for Organizational Change

A large amount of literature is available on the employee readiness domain relating to individual and workplace factors (Madsen *et al.*, 2005; Rafferty and Simon, 2006; Holt *et al.*, 2007; Elias, 2009). However, the impact of both factors can be envisaged by employee attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions. Indeed, individual factors are associated with personal and social aspects of individuals such as an active problem solving approach, beliefs, autonomy, depression, emotional exhaustion, demography, self-efficacy, locus of control (Weber and Weber, 2001; Cunningham *et al.*, 2002; Madsen *et al.*, 2005).

The organizations having the power to build innovation into the organizational culture and the processes of management in organizations will portray a bright future (Tushman and O'Reilly, 1997). In order to survive and grow in the modern competitive business environment organizations have to adopt new practices and change the way they operate (Holt & Vardaman, 2013, p. 9). However, it is noted that, only 30-40% of change projects are reported to reach

their objectives, (Vakola, 2013, p. 97). Number of organizations reports the lack of support by employees as a critical factor for organisational change project (Piderit, 2000, p.784). According to the literature review on organizational change conducted by Bouckennooghe (2010), 90% of research on change attitudes is talking about change readiness or change resistance (Rafferty *et al.*, 2013, p. 112).

The literature on organizational change discusses various notions that are related to change readiness: support for change, openness toward change, commitment to change, acceptance and adaptation to change and resistance and cynicism about change (Rafferty *et al.*, 2013, p. 121). However, most of the notions discussed are focused on readiness for change and resistance to change, which represent the same phenomena from opposite perspectives. It explains that, in order to avoid resistance to change, readiness should be created (Armenakis *et al.*, 1993, p. 682). In more clear terms that, Organizational capability to change should be created before the change is introduced as it is impossible to start doing things in a different way in one day (Holt & Vardaman, 2013, p. 233).

That is why it is necessary to establish a state of readiness in order to secure organizational capability to implement change (Vakola, 2013, p. 101).

Organization Culture

Change readiness refers to the beliefs, attitudes, and intentions of employees (Armenakis, 1993). However, as individuals are influenced by their social surrounding their individual thoughts and behaviours cannot be considered separate from social processes (Hatch, 1993, p. 683). In other words, employees' reactions to change depend on the norms and rules that exist in organization. Johansson (2013, p. 3) notes that organizational culture is a glue eliminating gaps between individual, group and organizational readiness for change, as organizational culture is embodied in each employee and shared collectively. This section introduces the notion of organizational culture. Further, the dimensions of organizational culture that relate to creating readiness for change project are identified. The section finishes with defining the role of organizational culture in creating change readiness and presenting the theoretical model.

Change-Related Dimensions of Organizational Culture

One of the most important steps for creating change readiness is the assessment of organizational culture (Johansson et al., 2013, p.2). The characteristics that comprise organizational culture can have an impact on the organizational change project even before it starts (Hammer & Champy, 1993, p. 207 cited in Detert et al., 2000, p. 850, Heracleous, 2001, p. 426, Zu et al., 2010, p. 89). Number of researchers have studied the influence of organizational culture on change readiness and implementation. Detert et al. (2000) and Zu et al. (2010) study the influence of organizational culture on total quality management practices. Armenakis et al. (2011) integrate research on cultural typologies and organizational transformation and assess organizational change with the help of Schein's cultural elements framework. The studies conducted by Johansson (2012) about the association between organizational culture and resistance to change. Agnew & VanBalcom (2009) studies a research on cultural readiness for internationalization in a university. Janićijević (2012) identifies the

relationship between organizational culture and change management efforts.

Based on the study on the influence of organizational culture on total quality management practices conducted by Detert et al. (2000, p. 851) argue that organizational culture is the main reason of the failure to adopt total quality management initiative. The total quality management initiative means making changes in the way the organization does business that leads to changing values and beliefs which are the pillars of organizational culture. The authors develop a framework of organizational culture dimensions based on previous research conducted in the field of organizational culture. They studied the beliefs and values that relate to total quality management (TQM) in order to define culture appropriate for the adoption of TQM.

This research is based on the previous research findings that connects change and organizational culture serves as a basis to identify dimensions of organizational culture that relate to change readiness. Organizational change literature was reviewed in search for the values, beliefs, behaviours and other

cultural elements mentioned within the context of creating change readiness.

Motivation: The study conducted by Detert et al., (2000) advocate that motivation is widely discussed in organizational culture and change management literature. They pointed out that in order to understand how to motivate employees to participate in a change project it is important to understand whether employees are motivated intrinsically or by external forces, what is more appropriate: reward or punishment (Detert et al., 2000, p. 855). Intrinsic motivation is referred to the desire of employees to comply with organizational norms and values, the degree to which employees agree with organization (Hofstetter & Harpaz, 2011, p. 8). Armenakis et al. (2011) discusses extrinsic rewards as motivating employees to adopt changes. Armenakis et al. (2011) also suggests that once the new values are internalized, the performance itself will be a motivator (, p. 324). While discussing compatibility of organizational culture with quality management improvement projects Zu et al. (2010, p. 92) state that motivation is one as of the important factors influencing the success of the project. Zu

et al., (2010) also states that setting ambitious goals and providing belief that performance towards these goals are the tools that can be used to motivate employees to get them involved into the change project.

Organizational Identification:

Heracleous (2001, p. 440) states that the change that is based in the existing cultural values is more likely to succeed. Dzerzhinsky et al. (2012, p. 98) referring to the notion of organizational identification, discusses the match between values of employees and values of organization. That further refers that organizational identification positively affects change readiness if values of employees coincide with values imposed by a change project. But if values of employees are identified with current values of an organization and change project implies a change of organizational values, organizational identification negatively affects change readiness (Dzerzhinsky et al., 2012, p. 98). Caldwell et al. (2004, p. 879) also discusses how a change project might affect the fit between values of employees and work environment. Their study acknowledges the complexity of a change project and the influence that the

content of the change project and personal characteristics of employees affected by change have on the fit between personal values of employees and work environment (Caldwell et al., 2004, p. 877). Agnew and VanBalcom (2013, p. 453) also discuss alignment of values within the organization and how this value congruence aligns with the mission of organization.

Flexibility: Flexibility is the capacity of the organization to its changing environment and it is associated with innovation, adaptability, initiative, trust, morale, perceived equity of rewards, and leader credibility (Johansson et al., 2013, p. 3; Zammuto & O'Connor, 1992, p. 718). Several authors have found the association of flexibility with different determinants. Agnew and Van Balcom (2009, p. 453) associate the flexibility of an organization to its orientation with external environment. Zammuto & O'Connor (1992, p. 710) associate flexibility with decentralized decision-making, which helps to respond quickly to changing requirements and conditions. Janićijević (2012) argues that flexibility as an organizational value directly leads to openness to change. According to Zammuto & O'Connor, (1992) flexibility

parameter is often discussed in terms of organizational structure as it reflects value-based choices of an organization. Organizations with flexible structures and flexibility-oriented values initially are more ready for change. Formal structures make organizations too rigid (Naveh et al., 2006, p.279). Bureaucracy in organizational procedures was mentioned to impede flexibility and openness to change, (Neveh et al., 2006, p. 276).

Trust: Trust is related to the willingness to cooperate and to achieve goals (Vakola, 2013, p. 103). It is one of the dimensions of organizational culture that has the strongest impact on change reactions. Mutual trust between employer and employees build strong relationship in the organization. Organizational relationships that are based on trust lead to openness to change and the easiness in adopting change (Kim et al., 2011, p. 1689). Mutual trust enables employees to contribute positively to the organization and encourages to establish effective communication and to exchange ideas (Zhu et al., 2011, p. 811; Armenakis, 2011; p. 324). Trust in leadership also influence change readiness (Rafferty &

Simons, 2006, p. 343) Thus, credibility of change leader increases trust in change project (Armenakis, 2011, p. 307; Self et al., 2007; p. 215). Trust in senior organizational leadership was found out to influence readiness for change positively (Rafferty & Simons, 2006, p.344). How leaders are able to inspire and to build trust are considered more efficient in creating change readiness (Oreg, 2007, p. 81).

In the text above the influence of each dimension on change readiness was discussed. The following table shows identified interconnection between change readiness and dimensions of organizational culture. Also the following table reflects organizational structure, and bureaucracy as sub-notions discussed under the notion of flexibility in the literature.

While discussing dimensions of organizational culture that trigger change readiness organizational change literature mostly do not distinguish between cultural values that already exist in the organization and values that are created or strengthened during the change project. The exceptions are the studies of Detert et al. (2000), Johansson

(2012), Zu et al. (2010) that clearly state their research focuses on the organizational culture influence as per se on change readiness, without stating what cultural dimensions are created within the project. Culture effects change readiness, at the same time change project itself effects organizational culture by introducing new values and behaviours.

The process is bidirectional. Prior to change implementation dimensions of organizational culture which correspond to change readiness should be evaluated, so that change management efforts target only the areas where change readiness is needed to be improved (Armenakis, 2011, p. 310; Heracleous, 2001, p. 440).

Population and sampling

Sampling is important for an empirical study that uses a positivistic approach (Hussey and Hussey, 1997). It is a fraction of subjects drawn from a population. Sekaran (2006) reveals that sampling offers detailed information that deal with small number of units.

This study was conducted in Eravurpatru Divisional Secretariat in Batticaloa District. Recently, the government has announced changes and reforms for

Government sector organizations in Sri Lanka. There are 172 different categories of employee are working in the secretariat. They were grouped under three categories top level Administrative executive officers, middle level administrative officers, and lower level employees. Officers and employees from these categories were selected for this Study. The information was gathered based on the survey questionnaire from the participants. Face to face interviews also were conducted to ensure the accuracy of the information given by the participants. The targeted participants of the main survey were middle level employees in Eravurpatru Divisional Secretariat in Batticaloa District.

Data collection methods and instruments

This study was carried out based on primary data. Structured questionnaire was used to collect data. The Questioner comprised of statements on the four dimensions of organization culture, the independent variable, and Employee readiness for organizational change as dependent variable. The Questionnaire was based on the Likert scale of 1-5 which ranges from “Strongly Disagree” to “Strongly Agree” .The numerical values were given for the purpose of

quantification of qualitative variable as follows:

1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Agree
5. Strongly agree

Data presentation, analysis and evaluation

Data has been presented using tables. Inferential and descriptive analysis were used for data analysis. Hence under the descriptive analysis, mean and standard deviation were derived from the analysis of samples. In inferential analysis, correlation has been applied. Statistical package of SPSS 16.0 has been used for this purpose. The criteria shown in table were adopted to evaluate mean values.

Table 1 Evaluation criteria for mean values

Range	Degree
$1 \leq X \leq 2.5$	Low level
$2.5 < X \leq 3.5$	Moderate level
$3.5 < X \leq 5.0$	High level

Source- Formed for this research

Analysis and Findings

Descriptive statistics

This section presents mean standard deviation and correlation for the variables of organization culture and Employee Readiness for Organizational Change. It further gives the same details to the individual statements of each variable. Mean values have been distributed based on Likert scale between the values 1-5 which represent “Strongly Disagree” to “Strongly Agree”. Meanwhile mean values were evaluated based on already established evaluative criteria which range from “Low level” to “High level”.

Table 2 Mean and standard deviation for the independent variable.

Variable	Mean	SD
Independent Variables		
Culture	3.98	0.545
Motivation	4.26	0.584
Organizational Identification	3.95	0.530
Flexibility	3.59	0.539
Trust	4.12	0.559
Dependent Variable		
Employee Readiness	4.61	0.663

As presented in *Table 2*, Organization Culture had a mean value of 3.98 which fall under the evaluative category of high level. The Standard deviation is 0.545 which indicate that most of the employees in the organizations is experiencing a higher level organizational culture and their readiness toward organizational readiness is higher.

The dimension “Motivation” had a mean value of 4.26 and standard deviation 0.584 (*Table 2*). It implies that most of the employees in the organization are highly motivated.

The mean value and standard deviation for the dimension “Organizational Identification” had 3.95 and 0.530 (*Table 2*). It implies that most of the employees in the organization are highly identified with the organization.

The dimension “trust” had a mean value of 4.12 and standard deviation 0.559 (*Table 2*). It implies that most of the employees in the organization are highly concerned for mutual trust towards organizational activities.

The mean value and standard deviation for the dimension “Organizational Identification” had 3.95 and 0.530

(*Table 2*). it implies that most of the employees in the organization are highly identified with the organization.

As highlighted in (*Table 2*), Employee readiness for organizational change had a mean values of 4.61 which fall under the high level of evaluative criteria. The Standard deviation is 0.663 which indicate that most of the employees in the organizations is experiencing a higher level of their readiness toward organizational change.

Correlation analysis

Correlation values were found to determine relationship between variables of organization culture and Employee Readiness for Organizational Change. By observing the data, a significant positive relationship exists between the independent variable and dependent variable that is organizational culture and employee readiness for organizational change the *table 3* showed a correlation matrix, which described such relationship between variables.

Table 3 Correlation between the variables of organization culture and Employee Readiness for Organizational Change (EROCC).

Independent Variable & Dimensions	Employee Readiness
Culture	0.710**
Motivation	0.891**
Organizational Identification	0.653**
Flexibility	0.610**
Trust	0.754**
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)	

The table 3 showed that the overall employee readiness has significant positive relationship with overall organizational culture with the correlation of 0.710. each dimension of the organizational culture also marked a significance relationship with the employee readiness. Motivation has a correlation value of 0.891, organization identification has a correlation value of 0.653, flexibility has a correlation value of 0.619, and the dimension trust has a correlation value of 0.754. the correlation analysis described how the relationship between dependent variables exists at 5% significant level.

This reveals that organization culture positively correlated with employee readiness for organizational change. The statistical data of organization culture showed employee readiness for organizational change. This results showed that organizational culture has higher significant relationship with employee readiness for organizational change. Thus, the scale can be applied to ascertain employee attitudes and behaviours regarding readiness for change. Madsen *et al.* (2005), reported that employee attitudes and behaviours can be examined by his or her job. The results of this study also show that organization culture scale is significantly and positively correlated with other scale of employee readiness for organizational change. It is interesting to note that the dimensions motivation and trust have highly significant than flexibility dimension of organization culture. It reveals that motivation and trust have higher influence than flexibility to create employee readiness for organizational change.

5. Discussion of Findings

The study mainly focused on identifying the influence of organization culture in creating employee readiness for

organizational change and which of the dimensions influences high in creating employee readiness towards organizational change.

5.1 Organizational Culture Dimensions

The review of literature advocates that a strong organizational culture can lead to creating employee readiness for organizational change. However, there is no sound literature to distinguish the degree of influence between dimensions organizational culture for determining employee readiness for organizational change. Only a few authors like, Detert et al. (2000), Johansson (2012) and Zu et al. (2010) focused their research on the influence of organizational culture on change readiness for the change project. This study involves broader literature on organizational change to identify dimensions of organizational culture that associate with employee readiness for organizational change. The empirical data collected has distinguishes between the influence of organizational culture and employee readiness for organizational change. The data analysis shows how certain dimensions of organizational culture can be used by the management to create and reinforce

employee readiness for organizational change.

The aim of this research is to identify the role of organizational culture in creating readiness for a change project. The empirical data collected has led the researchers to distinguish between the influence of different dimensions of organizational culture in creating employee readiness for organizational change.

Motivation. Motivation was acknowledged by both literature and empirical findings as an important factor impacting change readiness.

Organizational Identification. The literature as well as Empirical data also states that organizational identification has a positive influence on change readiness

Flexibility.

Both empirical and theoretical findings mention the positive effect of flexible structures and negative effect of bureaucratic procedures on change readiness. Bureaucratic procedures were mentioned to delay the processes of change implementation and to impede

flexibility in responding to the intensity of changes. As mentioned by the interviewees, flexible structures, like multifunctional teams or units, created particularly for the project lead to change readiness.

Trust. Both literature and empirical data confirm that trust, as a dimension of organizational culture, influences change readiness. Trust builds communication and willingness to cooperate and contribute to the change initiative (Vakola, 2013, p. 103; Kimet al., 2011, p. 1689; Zhu et al., 2011, p. 811; Armenakis, 2011, p. 324). It is important to note that mutual trust in change leadership is created during the process of change project implementation. This fosters cooperation of employees during organizational change implementation.

Conclusion

The study was carried out with the purpose to define the role of organizational culture in creating employee readiness for organizational change.

Organizational Change project is a risky and challenging endeavour. Management

practitioners and researchers have reported a failure rate of 70% for launched organizational change initiatives (Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2004). However, the business world is evolving at an increasing pace and implementing change initiatives are the only way forward to keep up with the uncertainty and constantly evolving dynamics of corporate world (Senior & Swailes, 2010, p. 13). This study was carried out in the context of the increasing academic interest to change management and creating employee readiness for change. This fact is proven by the dominance of the referenced literature. The literature highlights an important

Research on the determinants of employee readiness for organizational change was stimulated by new interest demonstrated due to recent change reforms in the government sector organizations in Sri Lanka. Increased attention on competition, advanced technology, mergers, expansion, product quality maintenance, enhancing employee efficiency rapid growth, new business ventures, exciting opportunities, innovations, and new leadership and management approaches led to know

employee attitudes and behaviors' of organization change.

This study is concerned with examining employee attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours to readiness for organizational change. Overall, organization culture has a statistically significant and positive relationship with readiness for organizational change. This suggest that, other things being equal, the more developed organization culture is perceived, the more open and ready for the organizational change. Providing an environment that encourages emotional attachment, a feeling of pride and good pay/wages/rewards can help organizations to effectively influence employee attitudes and behaviours. The above results indicate that organization culture constructs applied in this study had positive and significant relationships with the readiness for change construct. That means, in public sector organizations in Sri Lanka, when there is a developed organization culture, employees develop openness and values towards organizational objectives or readiness for organizational change. This conceptualization suggests that motivated employees are satisfied and have a strong belief in and acceptance of the organizations goals and values, show

a willingness to exert considerable efforts on behalf of the organization and have a strong desire to maintain membership of the organization (Mathews and Shepherd, 2002, p-369).

This study has contributed to the literature by integrating different dimensions of culture with employee readiness. Dramatic changes faced by organizations in the developing economic crisis, and mushrooming in the recent past, have strained and altered organizational cultures and put an emotional burden on staff. The lessons from the research study should be of benefit to managers struggling to maintain, adjust or blend organizational cultures and deal with the emotional outcomes for staff.

The findings of this study suggest that employees of public sector organizations in Batticaloa district can develop their attitudes and behaviours as a result of institutional and individual predictors, the more developed organization culture is perceived, the more readiness for organizational change will be noted in the public sector organizations in Sri Lanka.

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