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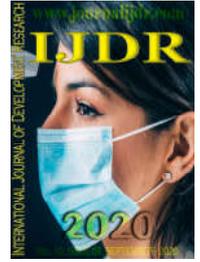
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RESEARCH ARTICLE

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EFFECTIVENESS OF PARTICIPATION IN REDUCING EMPLOYEES' RESISTANCE TO CHANGE IN THE ANGLICAN CHURCH OF KENYA, DIOCESE OF NYAHURURU, NYANDARUA COUNTY, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

Employees' resistance to change in an organization is one of the main causes for failure of change initiative. The purpose of this study was to research the influence of participation on employees' resistance to change in Anglican Church of Kenya (ACK) with a specific focus on the Diocese of Nyahururu. The target population comprised 353 registered workers of ACK Nyahururu Diocese from which 78 respondents were selected using the stratified random sampling technique. Data was collected using questionnaires and analyzed using descriptive as well as inferential statistics facilitated by the Statistical Packages for Social Science. Finding revealed that there is notable participation of employees in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of change initiative (mean=3.75). Greater participation was also positively associated with reduction in employees resistance to change ($r=.631$, $p<.05$; $\beta=.346$, $p<.05$). This showed a clear indication that the employees believe that participation is a factor that shapes the employee resistance and can minimize it. The study recommends that to streamline the implementation of change initiatives at the church, leaders should increase the participation of employees in the planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of these initiatives.

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INTRODUCTION

Change is inevitable and resistance to change can involve losing something valuable. Employees resist change implementation known as universal truth. This can be resignation or sabotage (Calder, 2013). Employees' resistance to change is one of main causes for failure of change initiatives (Nduta, 2017). Approximately 70% of all change programs undertaken in organizations across the world fail (Pieterse et al., 2012). According to Albert (2018), the failure of many initiatives was due to opposition to change. Resistance to change is an occurrence that influences the running of an organization and it increases the costs (Yılmaz & Kılıçoğlu, 2013). Resistance to change involves efforts that aim to maintain the current status quo and comfort. Change is not inbuilt beneficial for organizations. Organizations today are rapidly encountering change in the external environment but are not able to implement new strategies because there is resistance to change within organization. Resistance to change is positioned as a mediator of relationships between employees' subjective experience of change and employers' well-being (Angonese & Lavarda, 2014).

For change to succeed, employees should be prepared from earlier on for change of mindset. According to Nielsen and Randall (2012), among the the root-causes for opposition to change is failure to ensure effective participation of employees in the change process. Participation is defined as the active involvement of employees in decision making in process of an organization (Lee et al, 2013). Participation is a process that engages people in decision making in case of a planned change within an organization (Allen et al., 2014). Participation is the main technique to fight against failure to adopt change (Nadel et al., 2016). Participation is a constructive strategy that helps in minimizing the resistance to change by involving the employees in the entire process (Yoerger et al., 2015). Managers are encouraged to offer employees an opportunity to design an initiative so they can own. Participation of employees initiating, in planning, designing, implementing and evaluation and monitoring the changes provides them with freedom to contribute ideally as a way to assist in the planned change. Employees are open to change if they are involved in the strategy of designing change (Chirenje et al., 2013). This can be achieved by considering and recognizing employees' opinions and advices. Embracing change can be achieved if

employees have a belief that their view has been heard and taken into consideration. Previous research has revealed that employees that are involved in and allowed to contribute towards the design of change programs have lower resistance to change as compared to those who are not included (Pasmore et al., 2010). Participation gives employees a chance to express themselves. Lack of participation is a major cause of resistance to organization change. Employees embrace change when their contribution in decision making have been heard and given consideration. The key objective during change in an organization is to ensure that relevant change is embraced and improves employees' outcomes (Ebongkeng, 2018). If the people impacted by change are not on board, sustainable change cannot be achieved. Employees' levels of participation are negatively related with the level of employees' resistance to change initiatives (Fields & Elele, 2010). Participation of employees creates ownership because there is trust between the employees and management. These minimizes resistance to change (Lam et al., 2002). Change success depends on winning the commitment of the key staff (Van, 2017). Without support it is very difficult to mobilize the energy necessary to start the change process and keep it moving to successful conclusion.

In Kenya, resistance to change has been common hindering development. Many organizations have had frustrations from employees who react emotionally due to resistance to change (Sanyal & Hisam, 2018). Churches have not been spared by this problem. In the Anglican Church of Kenya there have been some clergies who have resigned while others have silently resisted to work. There are others who have moved on in search of greener pastures. This has prompted the under achievements of the churches' goals marked by financial constraints for a couple of years with some clergies going for months without salaries (Synod 2018). In the church information is mostly disseminated through order of seniority and due to these some senior priests fear to contribute fully. Sometimes, other priests are not aware of what is happening and hence there is fear of unknown. This enhances priests' resistance to change. To address this situation, church has embraced stewardship seminars aimed at enhancing employees' participation. However, no systematic study has been done to assess the effectiveness of increased participation in reducing resistance to change initiative. This study sought to address this gap in knowledge.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research adopted a descriptive survey design. The population of the study comprised of 7 evangelists, 8 office staffs, 12 Deacons, 57 Clergy and 269 lay readers translating to a total of 353 registered workers of ACK diocese of Nyahururu. An appropriate sample size for this population was determined using the Nassiuma (2000) formula:

$$n = \frac{Nc^2}{c^2 + (N-1)e^2}$$

- n – Sample population size
- N – Study population size
- c – Coefficient of variation (21 ≤ c ≤ 30%)
- e – Error rate (margin) 2 ≤ e ≤ 5%
- In this study case c was taken 30% e to be 3%
- N=353

c=0.3
e=0.03

$$\frac{353 \times 0.09}{0.09 + (353 - 1)0.0009} = 78.0973$$

n=78 respondents

The 78 respondents were selected using the stratified random sampling technique where each category of staff was treated as a strata and respondents selected from each using the simple random sampling method. The number of respondents selected in each stratum was proportional to the total number of staffs in the stratum.

Data Collection and Analysis

The study adopted a structured questionnaire to collect data from the sampled respondents. The question comprised of a section collecting demographic information, another section focusing on the employee participation, and the last section assessing the issue of employees' resistance to change. The questionnaire was structured with section assessing the main variable of the study comprising of Likert-type items. A pilot study was conducted to assess the validity and reliability of the questionnaire. The researcher issued questionnaires through vicar in-charge of the parish. The respondents were allowed to fill the questionnaires for the time mutually agreed on by the researcher and the respondents. The questionnaires were collected from respondents through the same channel they were issued. The collected data was analyzed with the aid of statistical package for social sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics in form of frequencies and percentages and inferential statistics in the form of Person Product Moment correlation and linear regression were used in the analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Out of 78 questionnaires administered, 73 were completed and returned. This constituted a 93% response rate. In terms of age, 15% of respondents were 26-35 years, 46% of respondents were 36-45 years while 35% of respondents were 46-55 years. 2% of respondents were above 55 and below 26 years. This, therefore, indicates that majority of respondents were 36-45 years. The majority (60%) of the respondents were male whilst (40%) respondents were female. Lay readers formed the majority of the respondents at 76% followed by vicars (11%), deacons (3%) and archdeacons (3%). The number of respondents with college education summed up to 44% of the total population. 32% had university education. About 16% of respondents had worked for 4 years and below. 55% had worked for 5-10 years while 16% had worked for 11-15 years. About 13% of the respondents had worked for above 15 years.

Participation

To assess participation of employees at ACK Nyahururu Diocese in change programmes, respondents were presented with a set of five statements and asked to indicate their level of agreement with each on five-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Their views are summarized in Table 1. On the factor Employees are involved in decision making 17% of the sample population strongly agreed, 62% agreed, 12% were neutral, 9% disagreed and 0 summing up to 0% strongly disagreed.

Table 1. Respondents Views on Participation of Employees in Change Initiatives

Participation	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean	SD
	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)		
Employees are involved in decision making	17	62	12	9	0%	3.57	0.974
Employees are involved in planning change initiative in the church	44%	48%	5%	3%	0%	3.87	1.362
Information is shared during change process	10%	55%	10%	15%	10%	3.46	0.897
Employees are involved in the change implementation	52%	39%	9%	0%	0%	4.00	1.373
Employees are involved in monitoring and evaluating change	17	62	12	9	0%	3.57	0.974
COMPOSITE MEAN				3.70			

Table 1. Respondents Views of Employees Resistance to Change

Employee resistance	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean	SD
	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)		
The cost of change is acceptable and worth it	30	54	12	4	0	3.61	0.904
The employees are able to meet their set target	52	32	12	4	0	3.49	1.353
Proper succession management has resulted in job satisfaction of employees	36	52	12	0	0	3.61	0.904
Employee performance is enhanced by proper succession management techniques	21	44	12	17	6	3.57	0.974
Employees are committed to the improvement of the organization	31	52	9	6	3	3.49	1.353
COMPOSITE MEAN				3.55			

It was found out that decision making process as a tool has an influence on minimizing employee resistance. (M=3.57, SD=0.974). On the factor of Employees are involved in planning change initiative in ACK: 44% of the sample population strongly agreed, 48% agreed, 5% were neutral, 3% disagreed and 0% strongly disagreed. It was found out that employees are involved in the change planning process in the church. (M=3.87, SD= 1.362). On the factor of Information is shared during change process, 10% of the sample population strongly agreed, 55% agreed, 10% were neutral, 15% disagreed and 10% strongly disagreed. It was found out that Information is shared during change process (M=3.46, SD= 0.897). On the factor of Employees are involved in the change implementation 52% of the sample population strongly agreed, 39% agreed, 9% were neutral, 0% disagreed and 0% strongly disagreed. It was found out that Employees are involved in the change implementation. (M=4.00, SD= 1.373). On the factor Employees are involved in monitoring and evaluating change 17% of the sample population strongly agreed, 62% agreed, 12% were neutral, 9% disagreed and 0 summing up to 0% strongly disagreed. It was found out Employees are involved in monitoring and evaluating change (M=3.57, SD=0.974). The overall mean of the study was 3.70. This showed a clear indication that the employees believe that participation is a factor that minimizes the employee resistance. They clearly indicated that participation determines their tasks and work responsibilities in an organizational change process. These findings were in line with a study done by Lam, Chen, & Schaubroeck, (2002). The study concluded that inadequate planning has been a contributing factor to negative consequences in an organization. Effective change management process and planning can reduce disengagement and enhance achievement of organizations' goals successfully on time and budget. Participation of employees creates ownership because there is trust between the employees and management. These minimize resistance to change Lent & Brown (2006). The researchers concluded that People explore the likely effects of certain behaviors; the same applies to the workplace context. Outcome expectations are based upon an individual's own personal experiences from past behavior as well as second-hand information one has received regarding similar situations. In this case, an intermediate level manager might expect to be given a promotion to executive level

management based upon their own past experiences of promotions based on great performance and the organization's promotion policies.

Employees' Resistance: Employee resistance was the dependent variable of the study. To assess this variable, respondents were presented with a set of five statements and asked to indicate their level of agreement with each of five point scale. Their views are summarized in Table 2. On the factor of the cost of change id acceptable and worth it 30% strongly agreed, 54% agreed, 12% were neutral, 4% disagreed and 0% strongly disagreed. It was found out that the cost of change id acceptable and worth it (M=3.61, SD= 0.904). On the factor the employees being able to meet their set target 32% strongly agreed, 52% agreed, 12% were neutral, 4% disagreed and 0% strongly disagreed. It was found out that the employees are able to meet their set target Centre (M=3.49, SD= 1.353). On the factor of Proper succession management having resulted in job satisfaction of employees Centre 36% strongly agreed, 52% agreed, 12% were neutral, 0% disagreed and 0% strongly disagreed. It was found out proper succession management has resulted in job satisfaction of employees. (M=3.61, SD= 0.904). On the factor Employee performance being enhanced by proper succession management techniques 21% of the sample population strongly agreed, 44% agreed, 12% were neutral, 17% disagreed and 6% strongly disagreed. It was found out that Employee performance is enhanced by proper succession management techniques. (M=3.57, SD=0.974). On the factor of Employees being committed to the improvement of the organization, 31% strongly agreed, 52% agreed, 9% were neutral, 6% disagreed and 3% strongly disagreed. It was found out that Employees are committed to the improvement of the organization (M=3.49, SD= 1.353). The overall mean is 3.55. This shows that the respondents agree that change planning techniques is a key influence on employee resistance. Planning for change of the organization is important and should be taken into consideration when setting up organizational strategies. A study by Enid Busolo in 2017 found out that organizations with different forms of planning techniques tend to be more successful and perform better than organizations without diversification which in turn reduces employee resistance. This is in line with our study findings.

Table 3. Correlations Coefficient

		Participation	Employee Resistance
Employee Resistance	Pearson Correlation	.631**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	

** Correlation is significant at 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Variable	r	r ²	Constant	F	P	
Dependent	Employee resistance	.741	.627	1.346	24.449*	.002
Independent	Participation		Beta	Standardized Beta	t	
			.346*	.413*	3.517	.001

Correlation Analysis: The study applied Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient which is a measure of the strength of linear association between two variables. It was used to measure the degree of association between variables under consideration. Results are summarized in Table 3. The correlation analysis to determine the effect of participation on employee resistance shows a significant correlation existed ($r = 0.631$, $p < 0.05$). Pearson's correlations coefficient was higher than 0.5 suggests a strong relationship existed between the two variables.

Regression Analysis: Regression analysis was used to determine the significance of the relationship between the dependent variable and the independent variable. Results are indicated in the model summary in Table 4. In Table 4, R is the correlation coefficient which indicates the relationship between the study variables is strong. The coefficient of determination that is the percentage variation determination in the dependent variable that supported by the variation in independent variable is indicated by the R square which is 0.627. This implies that 62.7 % of the variance in employee resistance in Anglican Churches can be explained by the level of participation of employees in change programmes. This indicates that 37.3% of the changes can be explained by other factors. The F-statistics indicate that the regression model had a significance level of 0.002% which is an indication that the data was ideal for making a conclusion on the population parameters as the value of significance was less than 0.05. F (24.449) statistic is the regression mean divided by the residue mean. The significant value shown by 0.002 is smaller than estimated value of 0.05 which implies that the data was significant for making the conclusion that is the predictor variable explains the variation in the dependent variable that is employee resistance.

Conclusion

The study has established that there is high level of participation of employees in change programmes following the introduction of stewardship seminars. Employees are involved in planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of change initiatives. Increased participation was significantly associated with a reduction in resistance to change. This implies that an upward slope in participation would clearly indicate a positive change in performance of employees in the public sector. The findings led to the conclusion that participation is effective in reducing employee resistance by encouraging team work, ideation and motivated changes. The study findings indicated that most of the respondents felt that participation was effective and had assisted them in their growth. It is therefore recommended that the ACK should emphasize on participation.

The management team should keep interacting as frequently as possible because interactive sessions contribute towards successful succession management process. In order to assist the ACK to achieve structural advantage, those who have gone through any of the interactive process, they should be challenged to think beyond the immediate situation to ensure consistency and growth of employees. The study recommends that a similar study be replicated in other organizations to determine to what extent change planning techniques had on employee resistance. The regression analysis also indicates that 37.3% of the variation in resistance to change can be explained by other factors. This study recommends looking into the additional factors influencing resistance to change.

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