Leading Change Management Practice Towards Employees Performance Among Selected Eateries In Lagos State, Nigeria

Ajani, Akeem Olanrewaju (PhD)[1], Odesanya, Adesina Emmanuel & Aremu, Ismail Lekan[3]
Department of Business Administration & Management
Lagos State University of Science and Technology
Ikorodu, Lagos State, Nigeria
E-mail - ajaniakeemlanre72@gmail.comm
Phone - +2348023443587, +2347063401207

ABSTRACT

Change is admittedly natural and often buttressed as the only constant phenomenon that always occurs. In the recent years, and especially during the Covid-19 Pandemic, organizational transformation has become a necessity in order to keep up with the evolving workplace as the risk and failure of large scale transformations has been a major concern to middle and top executives. Hence the study examined leading change management practices on employee's performance among selected eateries in Lagos State, Nigeria. The research method adopted was survey using qualitative approach. Both probability and non-probability sampling techniques-Dephi multi stage approach was use. First steps involved selection of eateries in Lagos divisions purposely selected. And second involves eateries selection using simple random sampling (by balloting) in which five (5) eateries were selected using geographical spread as well as years of operational existence. Twenty-five (25) Participants were picked while fifteen (15) showed up based on convenience sampling method. The data (from interview conducted) was processed using Generic qualitative frequency method (Nvivo 12). The study revealed that appropriate assessment of the themes and sub themes components of change management practices can lead to maximum job performance in fast foods industry in Lagos, The study concludes that a significant relationship exist between employees' perception of change success and the various personal job outcomes variable. Subsequently, submitted that change agents should always consider the aspect of good employee motivation to exceed expected results and a change practice that is result oriented thus increasing their levels of job performance. The study recommends that the components of change management practice should be harness to increase the desire and get the stakeholders emotionally and mentally engaged with the change. And that, any change management practices to improve performance should be employee focused.

Keywords: Change, change management practices, employee's performance, selected eateries.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the recent years, and especially during the Covid-19 Pandemic, organizational transformation has become a necessity in order to keep up with the evolving workplace as the risk and failure of large scale transformations has been a major concern to middle and top executives.

Change management practices concern varieties of organizational events that when executed properly and in consistency with internal and external organizational interventions enhance the enactment of employees' performance. In a global knowledge economy, organizations rely heavily on their employees to survive and win competitive advantage through creating and meeting customer's product or service needs with the involvement of people. (Gebregziabher, 2015)

1.1 Background to the Study
Change is admittedly natural and often buttressed as the only constant phenomenon in this world that always occurs. Change management is a complex and non-linear endeavour in a world of dynamic change that affect individual, organization, national, regional and global level.(Okenda,Thuo &Kithinji,2017). Modern organisations across the globe therefore experience frequent, diverse and intense change through processes of re-design, restructuring, mergers, acquisitions and total quality programs. According to Abdulraheem (2020) change is as an ever present attributes of organisational life whose pace and magnitude have increased noticeably in recent years.

Moreover, the current conditions of eatery management are igniting new requirements for the system and achieving efficiency. Undoubtedly, human capital development constitutes a vital factor in improving effectiveness. On the other hand, the high dynamics of today's economic space require businesses to develop key competencies such as ability to respond effectively and quickly to change. It is an area that is most frequently complained about by employees during organizational change and daily operations. This has led to the low level of employee's performance in terms of self-confidence, low morale and Poor attitude to work.

Despite the skills and experiences acquired, the employees identity and reality are impaired when changes are forced from without participation, this often result in change resistance as it is perceived as threatening their needs for job security, social interactions and self-esteem (Christoffels, 2019). Nevertheless, this led to further questions on whether there are possible common factors that influence the relative success or failure of organizational change efforts (Lines, Sullivan, Smithwick & Mischung, 2015). . Therefore, it is imperative to investigate the effects of leading change management practices on employees' participation in decision level towards an enhance performance capabilities among selected eateries in Lagos State, Nigeria

2. RELATED LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Conceptual Review
2.1.1 Organisational Change
Organisational change is been defined differently by different authors, while some defined it as a process where an organisation experiences a transformation or a change in culture, others see it as a process where organisation is restructuring itself to meet with current demands (Abdulraheem, 2015). Alas and Vadi (2006) believes that from time to time organisation needs to modify itself in order to ensure stability and predictability either restructuring itself to reduce variation of possibilities and or focus on necessary action that will lead to change.

However, lack of organisational stability when modeling change may lead to confusion and uncertainty which often lead to a state of paralyses (Lewis, 2011). Again, Alas and Vadi (2006) agreed that change involves elements of organisational system which must be the basic key in changing the organisation structure to align to the perceived change.

2.1.2 Change Management Practices
Change management can be defined as an approach to deal with change, often expressed in two different areas - the organization and the individual, with individuals and the overall organization adapting to change at their own pace and style (Rouse, 2014). Managing change encompasses undertaking the drivers of the change and developing strategies to control both external and internal input on organization as well as human factor; particularly attitudes and behaviour of people involved (Njuguna & Muatte, 2016) .According to Hartmann and Lussier, (2020) change management is a process of initiating adjustment, renovation, modification and revolution of organizational activities towards its growth and survival.

Ilesanmi, (2015) posits three types of change: Structure, Technology and People. Changing structure includes any change in structural variables such as reporting relationship, employee empowerment, job redesign and departmentalization. Changing technology encompasses modifications in the way work is performed and equipment that are used i.e. converting inputs into outputs by methods of automation, fabrication or computerization. Changing people refers to change in attitudes, expectations, perceptions and behaviours of individuals or groups.

2.1.3 Types of Change
Planned change could be either transactional or transformational (Bekmukhambetova, 2021). Transactional change consists of modifications and/or improvements in the existing system of an organization, and therefore, it should happen regularly to keep improving processes and operations. This type of change is usually a "continuous improvement" process (called kaizen in Japanese); it does not have as much fundamental influence on the organization (Christoffels, 2019). However, the transformational skills may not be available in the concern organizations. A transformational change does not occur very often because it means a more radical and fundamental change of an organization such as the transfigurations of the mission, structure, major strategies, culture, etc.

The transactional change has two categories: incremental and transitional. The incremental change is the one that has small incremental and gradual improvements, while the transitional change is the change that moves the organization from one state to another like developing a new process; it is called transitional as there will be a transition period to move from the old state to the new state. Therefore, the planned change can be incremental, transitional, or transformational depending on the scope and magnitude of the change. Noteworthy is that incremental changes could cumulate and create a substantial change (Lauer, 2021).

2.1.4 Employees Performance
Abiria& Bayo, (2019) define job performance as the willingness and openness of the workers to do beyond their usual job requirements in terms of scope by contributing towards achieving exceed goals, tasks or expectations. In the view of Khan and Jabbar, (2013) employee performance depicts employee productivity and efficiency necessitated as an outcome of employee growth. Employees performance will culminate into reduction when an organization embark on downsizing, innovations and mergers, in addition to changes in the location, time, quality and quantity of the responsibility and tasks (Tavakolia,2010).

2. 2 Theoretical Review
2.2.1 Lewin's Change Theory
The theory was postulated by Kurt Lewin in 1951, who described the three stages of change as Unfreezing, Changing and Refreezing. The theoretical framework of Lewin was applied to this study by focusing on transitioning through a management change and investigating the experiences of the eatery staff in Lagos. According to Lewin (1951), the first phase of unfreezing is characterised by a change of preparedness, prior learning, behaviours and assumptions that are not applicable anymore (Aravopoulou & Malone, 2016). The second stage is the transition for employees from their current level to the new state. Dissatisfaction, apathy and negative emotions, caused during the previous stage, motivate employees to change. Finally, the third stage is that of refreezing, in which change is permanent. Employees adjust to their new conditions as new beliefs, attitudes and behaviours are established. For this to materialize, old behaviours, attitudes and beliefs ought to be discarded.

Armstrong (2006) posits that unfreezing involves altering the present stable equilibrium that support existing behaviours and attitudes, taking account of the inherent threats that change presents people and the need to motivate those affected in attainment of equilibrium state by accepting the change. Unfreezing is necessary to overcome the strains of individual resistance such as fear of the unknown or breaking old habits and group conformity as well in reducing the barriers to change. The process enables getting accustomed to a new organization and its procedures towards achieving desirable objectives.

2.2.2 Adkar Model (2003)
The ADKAR model developed by Hiatti (2006), is an acronym that stands for awareness, desire, knowledge, ability and reinforcement. As each of these words represents a step in the change process; the process of change management is sequential. Such that successful change happen when phases of change for business and employees happen simultaneously. Rudimentarily, ADKAR change management model is an individual-target change framework. However, with a team or group, ADAKAR could be utilized: as training tool to support people through the change process, to steer change management undertakings such as communication, training, sponsorship and coaching, to diagnose a floundering change by administering an ADKAR appraisal.

2.2.3 Kotter's 8 -Step Change Model (1996).
Even as some author argued that Kotter's (1996) change model lacks rigorous fundaments, yet it has been an instantaneous success at the time it was advocated and still remains a key reference in the field of change management (Appelbaum et al., 2012). Kotter's book titled Leading Change has been used to support different conceptual framework development to assist organisational change management (Brisson-Banks, 2010; Farkas, 2013; Parker et al., 2013).

More so, Farkas (2013) found that Kotter's change model provides a pragmatic structure for culture change through behavioural change and change leadership regardless of positional authority in the organisation. The important phenomenon of the model helps to increase people's prescription in organisational success in a stage to stage approach of managing and sustaining organisational change (Smith, 2011). Sidorko (2008) breakdown Kotter's eight steps model into three categories, namely, preparation (steps 1-4), action (steps 5-7) and grounding (step 8):

2.3 Empirical Review

Ali, and Anwar (2021) examined the perspective of change management in the hospitality industry, specifically in private hotels. A total of 90 administrative staff members from private hotels were given the questionnaire at random. The participants were 76 people from various private hotels in Iraq's Kurdistan province. The study use multiple regression analysis to assess their established research hypotheses, while the Sobel test was used to determine the function of the mediator, The results showed that all research hypotheses are supported. Furthermore, it was discovered that change event play a constructive and significant role in bridging the gap between change management and strategic performance.

Andrew (2017) conducted a study entitled 'influence of employee attitude on employee readiness for organizational change focusing on the government schools in Sri Lanka. The study adopted a research survey design making use of primary source. Questionnaire as a major instrument administered on one hundred (100) teachers as respondents form the sample size population. SPSS version22.0 was used to find relationship between the variables. The results revealed that the employee's attitude was significantly and positively correlated with employee readiness for organizational change, as well providing empirical evidence. Thus, recommended proper feedback and facilities, as well as conducive working environment to be provided for organizational change.

Ndahiro, Shukla and Oduor (2016) study analyzed the effect of change management on the performance of government institutions in Rwanda, A case study of Rwanda revenue authority. The study adopted survey research design and the target population of one hundred and thirty four (134) staff while sample size of one hundred (100) staff based on Solvin's method. Data was collected using (purposive) questionnaires and interviews and analyzed using SPSS and Microsoft Excel. The results concluded that most employees in the institution have generally embraced the changes made in the organization and same time resulting in overall organizational performance.

Chien (2015) study examined employee's attitudes toward new performance appraisal programme in textile and polyester organization in Republic of China. Data analysis was descriptive statistics- analysis of variance (correlation). The study concluded that employees evaluated, positively showed more job satisfaction than those who did not. Thus, recommended the need for large sample in order to make research more representatives, especially outside the demographics to prevent prejudices.

Gitonga (2014) examine the effects of strategic change on organizational performance: A case study of capital markets authority, Kenya. Descriptive survey research design and structured questionnaire was adopted as instrument for data collection. Stratified sampling was used to select sample size of 30% of the target population and statistical tools use is regression and correlation analysis. The results showed that there is positive correlation between organizational performance and both technological and structural change. Subsequently, recommended that having adopted a change process, then a need to establish a reward system for every strategic change undertaken.

Ilesanmi (2015) conducted a study entitled 'Nexus of change management on organizational performance and survival in Nigerian universities: case study of university of Ilorin'. Random sampling technique was used in selecting two hundred and fifty respondents from various faculties in the University. Data were sourced through primary and secondary sources. Analysis of data was performed with Regression analysis. The result revealed a strong negative relationship between changes introduced through computer based test in the university. The study recommends that before embarking on any change, the university should attempt to maintain useful customs and informal relationship, build trust, encourage participation, provide information in advance, make only necessary changes, guarantee against loss, provide counseling, and allow for negotiation between the university management and the staff and students.

Olajide (2014) examined empirically change management and its effect on organizational performance of Nigerian telecoms industries. A total of three hundred (300) staffs randomly selected from Airtel staff population of one thousand (1000). Data collected for the study were analyzed using one –way analysis of variance. The result revealed that changes in technology have a significant effect on performance and that changes in customer taste has a significant effect on customer's patronage. Results also show that changes in management via leadership have a significant effect on employee's performance. Based on the study, it's recommended that telecoms industries in Nigeria should be pro-active to changes in such a competitive environment so as to experience smooth implementation of such changes.

2.4 Research Gaps

The contribution of the study is to extend research and focus and ascertain new ideas. Most studies(Ali &Anwar,2021, Andrew, 2017; Ilesanmi., 2015,Gitonga, 2014;) in recent past on organisational change management focused on the Organisational Structure while this study examines employee performance using qualitative approaches(in depth interview). Previous studies that examined change management practices have most emphasized on using one method (quantitative) to investigate the link. The inconclusive, contradictory and mixed evidence of the relationship between employee's performance and change management practices in the previous studies reviewed is an indicator that, there remains no consensus about the findings of relationship between the construct.

3. METHODOLOGY

The research method adopted was survey using case study because case study gives an in-depth and a better understanding of the variables under study as well permits flexibility in terms of data collection (Burns, 1997, Otokiti, 2011 & Flyvbjerg, 2011). The selection of participants involved the use of both probability and non-probability sampling techniques-Dephi multi stage approach. First steps involved selection of eateries in Lagos divisions purposely selected. And second involves eateries selection using simple random sampling(by balloting) in which five (5) eateries namely: Mr Biggs, Sweet Sensation (S.S), Tastee Fried Chicken (TFC), Tantalizers and Chicken Republic were selected using geographical spread in all the division of Lagos state as well as years of operational existence not below 16years. Lastly, participants were picked based on convenience sampling method. The data (from interview conducted) was processed using Generic qualitative frequency method (Nvivo, 12).

3.1 Test of Research Prepositions

The research preposition explored the components of leading change management practices among selected fast food firms in Lagos State Nigeria. A total of twenty five participants were invited for the Delphi process but only fifteen eventually showed up. The Delphi process consists of a series of communications between the researcher and the participants, referred to by many as waves, with two waves being seen as the minimum and three waves the most effective (Wakefield & Watson, 2014). The fifteen participants were divided into three waves.

Each response was coded and categorized. The study identified five themes, and twelve sub-themes that enhance job performance in fast food industry in Lagos State

Respondent's Background

Table 1: Participants' Background Information

S/N	Location	Job Description	Participants coding
1.	Ikeja	Sales Manager	Res1
2.	Ikorodu	Sales Manager	Res2
3.	Lagos Island	Customer Service Manager	Res3
4.	Epe	Manager	Res4
5.	Ikeja	Public Relations Officer	Res5
6.	Ikorodu	Manager	Res6
7.	Epe	Sales Manager	Res7
8.	Ikeja	Chief Chef	Res8
9.	Badagry	Asst. Chief Chef	Res9
10.	Lagos Mainland	Manager	Res10
11.	Lagos Island	Location Manager	Res11
12.	Badagry	Logistic Manager	Res12
13.	Lagos Mainland	Public relations Officer	Res13
14.	Lagos Island	Quality Control Officer	Res14
15.	Ikeja	Quality Control	Res15

Source: Author's compilation 2022.
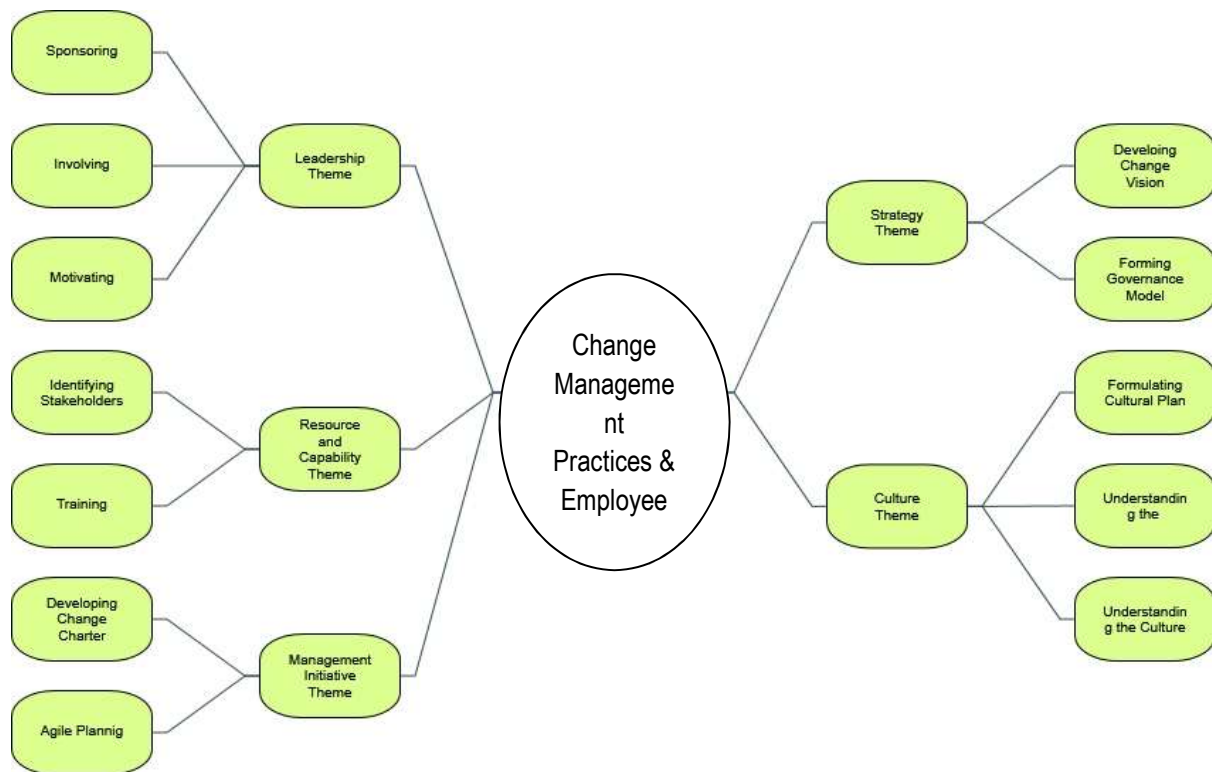
4. RESULTS/ RESEARCH FINDINGS

Fig 1: Thematic Illustration of Change management and employee job performance.

Theme 1: Leadership style

According to, **Res15** "A Leadership is decisive in ensuring that changed policies are aligned with top management, employees, and various stakeholders". **Res9** also noted that "any change is to ensure that everyone is aligned with the reasons for the change and what they will change and how they will be changing". **Res11** in her submission state that the essential factors to change management and ensuring job performance, misalignment between any parties will possibly cause the change to fail.

Respondents on Involving sub theme

While corroborating the submissions made by Res11, and Res9, Res3 added that
> It is largely difficult to achieve transformational change by just pushing people to perform and react. Employees need to be sponsored for training and advancement to catch up with the change mantra. Other respondents affirm that, Leadership should see to the fact that managers are willing and committed to take responsibility and make the change real.

Respondents on motivation sub- theme
Leadership styles also increase the desire and get the stakeholders emotionally and mentally engaged with the change. For instance **Res10 and Res6** acknowledge the fact that change is the most constant thing of nature as they get enthusiastic and engaged in performing any type of work when they get motivated.

Respondents on sponsoring sub theme
In the view of **Res4, 6, 9 and 14** individual performance of a given behaviour is premised by a person intention to display a behaviour, especially when it is a planned change.

Theme 2: Strategy theme
Respondents on change vision sub theme:
According to **Res3**, the change will be defined by identifying; why we are changing; What will be changing; Who will be changing; and How we will be changing.

To buttress the above, **Res13 and Res11** submit that there should be a link between the change and the strategy must be also identified as both the change and firm strategy must be aligned.

Res11.While **Res14** point out that what must identify what will be the change concerning, the processes, systems, mode of delivery, structure, leadership style, employees' behavior, job roles, and culture.

Also, new objectives must be highlighted with clear indicators and targets so that the change leader can keep measuring progress against the original targets (**Res3**).

Respondents on forming governance sub theme
On forming the governance model, Res1, 2, 5,11,12,15 jointly agreed that strategy is to assure that the executive managers are aligned and have a good understanding of their responsibilities and roles, and that there is a continuous support and sponsorship from the organization.
Res13 however, suggest that all the employees and other stakeholders are considered sponsors for the change and it is essential that they all actively and visibly involved in the change processes.

Theme 3: Culture Theme
This theme is about institutionalizing change in the culture of the people and the organisation.

Res1 submit that in the implementation of change the cultural aspects that are motivating or hindering the change must be identified. **Res5** also submit that fast food firms that neglect this important aspect of change are no longer in existence. **Re13** the African culture when it comes to meals never dies. **Res12** the sight of local meal is always sumptuous and tantalizing. **Res14** also is of the feeling of homeliness, by eating the meal in the office or even at home through delivery services.

In another dimension, **Res5** agree that culture plan is to be developed in order to balance and/or change the culture to motivate the change. A change entails resistance if it is a threat to traditional norms and ways of doing things. However, it provides a way to anticipate the potential sources of the resistance in different organizational units.

Theme 4: Resource and Capability

The purpose of the resource and capability theme assures that the change management of human resources is adequately trained to cope with the change requirements (Res13).

Theme 5: Management Initiatives

Agile planning was derived from the suggestions of **Res 2 and 13** which were used to denote the planning process which are continuous and do not stop after generating the change mantra. According to **Res13** the planning should be continuous as some internal and/or external changes might occur while implementing the change. **Res10** suggest that as the change is moving the organization and employees from one state to the other, it has a lot of uncertainties and risks in many perspectives especially when it comes to changing people's behaviors.

According to **Res4**, many factors may contribute in changing the plan such as: adding new stakeholders, introducing managing resistance plan, changing the objectives and/or scope, receiving feedback, the ability of the employees to perform as expected, etc. Planning will help refine the change vision and benefits (Res4).

4. CONCLUSION

From the study, it was revealed that appropriate assessment of the change management practices can lead to maximum job performance. The qualitative analysis revealed that the themes and sub themes which highlighted the components and the practices of change management that leads to job performance in fast food industry in Lagos, should take place on the people, operational, and strategic levels so that its benefits are to be realized on the different perspectives of the organization.

The study concludes that a significant relationship exist between employees' perception of change success and the various personal job outcomes variable. Subsequently, submitted that change agents should always consider the aspect of good employee motivation to exceed expected results and a change practice that is result oriented thus increasing their levels of job performance.

4.1 Recommendation and Policy Implications

The study recommends that the components of change management practice should be harness to increase the desire and get the stakeholders emotionally and mentally engaged with the change.

Employees are at the heart of everything that is achieved in organizations. Once employees are rewarded, they tend to feel secured and do things differently, this enable them to adjust to whatever type of change. Therefore, the eateries should consider reward systems as a way to get over human barriers and manage the process of change successfully.

The policy implication of this study is that any change management practices to improve performance should be employee focused. There is need to reinvent the practices in line with the globalization trend practices such as the use of leadership styles and participation level of employees. This will equip employees with best innovative practices of the 21st century as well as create more opportunities for organisations to come up with new ideas and practical solutions to the organizational challenges. It is important for policy makers to constantly review the change management practices to reflect the modern ways of eatery management in Nigeria.

4.2 Direction for Further Studies

This study concluded a noticeable positive relationship in between the variables. However, it is going to be very beneficial for researchers should they conduct research in this particular field in foreseeable future by including additional variables like employee capabilities, employee inspiration, employee motivation and organization effectiveness along with other working condition in relation to change management practices to create more convincing results that may increase the incredible importance of employee performance.

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