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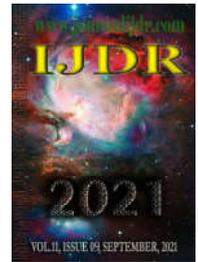
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EFFECTS OF COMMUNICATION ON EMPLOYEE'S RESISTANCE TO CHANGE IN ANGLICAN CHURCH OF KENYA, DIOCESE OF NYAHURURU, NYANDARUA COUNTY, KENYA

Jassan Thuku*¹, Nason Vundi² and James Kuria³

Faculty of Development Studies, St. Paul's University, Private Bag, Limuru, Kenya

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*Corresponding author: Jassan Thuku

ABSTRACT

One of the main causes for failure in change initiatives in an organization is Employees' resistance to change. The purpose of this study was to research the effects of communication on employees' resistance to change in Anglican Church of Kenya. The study was based on Lewin Change Management model. Qualitative and quantitative methods were used. The target population included 186 respondents obtained through Israel's Formula. Stratified sampling was used to select respondents from the target population. The data was collected by use of questionnaires, entered into Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) and later analyzed by use of percentages. Results highlighted that there was communication effectiveness in the Anglican Church that contributed positively towards minimizing employee resistance. The overall mean of the study was 3.6 and correlation coefficient of .756 this indicates that the respondents agree that communication is a game-changer in minimizing resistance to change. The study recommended that the Anglican Churches should emphasize on communication.

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INTRODUCTION

Businesses are continually exploring ways to improve their bottom line. Consequently, implementation of change programs has been inevitable. However, studies shows that there is 70 percent failure rate for all change programs undertaken in organizations across the world (Pieterse, Caniels, & Homan, 2012; Weiner, 2009). The single biggest barrier to change program success is employee resistance (Goodridge et al., 2015; Nduta, 2017). Resistance to change can involve losing something valuable. It involves efforts that aim to maintain the current status quo and comfort (Albert, 2018). Resistance to change is positioned as a mediator of relationships between employees' subjective experience of change and employers' well-being (Albert, 2018). Žižek & Mulej (2017) noted that although change is inevitable, it is not embraced by everyone. Employees may respond with feelings such as uncertainty, frustration and may feel in danger and disoriented. Internal skepticism and resistance during change implementation is a problem that many leaders have in common (Ngambi & Nkemkiafu, 2015). According to Angonese and Lavarda (2014) resistance to change shows qualities that are not considered in the change process. In Kenya, resistance to change has been common hindrance to development. Organizations have had frustrations from employees who react emotionally due to resistance to change (Sanyal & Hisam, 2018). A research done by Kendi and Mugambi (2014) in a security company in Nairobi showed that 71.5 percent of staff members were positive that lack of employee interest affected the management of resistance to change.

Mindset was a major challenge that affects the management of resistance to change. About 86 percent of staff members indicated that employees' mindset was indeed the contributing factor of resistance to change among the staff. Leaders need strategies to overcome resistance to change within their organizations (Ngambi & Nkemkiafu, 2015). One of the strategies advanced in change management theories is effective communication of the change process in order to get buy-in from the employees (Husain, 2013). For change to succeed, employees should be prepared from earlier on for change of mindset. Nielsen and Randall (2012) opine that the causes for opposition to change is failure to discuss the need for change, failing to coming up with powerful guiding partnership to disseminate the need for change, failure to challenge the status quo and failure to inculcate challenging vision and goals. On the other hand, Thomas and Hardy (2011) argue that the cause of employee resistance to change can be summarized as misunderstandings, lack of information, different individual characteristics and emotional effects. Dent and Goldberg (2009) adds that the job insecurity is the cause of resistance to change. Pieterse et al. (2012) stresses that for employees to adopt change, they must be informed about the reason for change, the planned change and time frame required, and how change will impact their job and the risk to be experienced. These studies (Ngambi & Nkemkiafu, 2015; Nielsen & Randall, 2012; Thomas & Hardy, 2011; Dent & Goldber, 2009; Pieterse et al., 2012) highlight the role that communication plays in minimizing resistance to change. However, few systematic studies have been conducted to test the influence of communication on employees' resistance to change in the context of religious institutions in Kenya. The proposed study seeks to address

this gap by focusing on the Anglican Church of Kenya (ACK) Diocese of Nyahururu. Various change programs have been initiated at the ACK Diocese of Nakuru with aim of addressing financial constraints that have bedeviled the institution for several years. This made this institution a suitable setting for examining the influence of communication on employee resistance to change.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Literature Review: The study was guided by Lewin Change management model. Lewin (1947) believed change meets strong resistance because there is no overall agreement on the end goal. The ultimate aim is for employees and leadership to overcome employee resistance to change due to human nature, behavior, habits, norms, and organizational culture. Lewin proposed a three-step change model for implementing change successful. The three steps include unfreezing, changing, and refreezing. The primary focus in the unfreezing stage is to position the workers and the firm for change (Husain, 2013). This stage is where resistance increases at a high rate, with how big the change is and how it will affect the organization. This step focuses on challenging the existing situation within the organization and convincing stakeholders regarding the importance of change. This phase also focuses on addressing stakeholders' questions, concerns, fears, and uncertainty regarding the change process. It is of value to communicate to the staff members on the need for change, the expected results, and the reason for communication.

Communication during several stages is very important because it provides the people who were not involved in the change, to get the information regarding their roles in the process of change and how it is able to affect them. The second step in Lewin's change process is change, which entails transitioning the organization to the new ways of doing things. At this stage, it is important for leaders to communicate any new process and practices as well as convey how it will be of benefit to the organization. Leaders should also give stakeholders time to understand the change and feel connected to the new ways. The final step in Lewin change management model is refreezing. The main goal of this phase is to install structures that institutionalize the new ways of doing things. It is founded on the rationale that stakeholders can easily relapse into the old ways of doing if new practices are not entrenched and embedded. The phase is structured on giving feedback to the employees' questions in regards to the efficiency, the reward, role taking, and control. The dissemination of information in this stage should be continuous, concrete, multidimensional, to enhance employees appropriate understanding of personal effects that the change involves (Kayla, 2012).

Empirical Literature Review: Employee resistance is common existing topic in psychology literature and management books and the focus was out on employees (Ackar, 2013). It is important to cooperate with employees if an organization wants to successfully implement the change (Piderit, 2010). What resistance consist of is hard to define but it is certain that it can stop the implementation of change. Thomas and Hardy (2011) divided people into two groups when they react to change: for and against. The kind of people that react negatively, or the ones who do not accept change can be divided in the group with "resistant to change". People react differently with their emotional feelings with aggression, fear, happiness and excitement; these feelings can be seen as resistance (Piderit, 2012). Both positive and negative sides of the resistance have been argued to affect individual's behavior. Researchers argued multi-dimensional aspects of employee resistance to change, when an individual respond to change, it is their behavior, feelings and thoughts that are involved (Erwin & Garman, 2010). Many researchers have discussed the importance of communication during the change process. To inform the involved person beforehand is one of the most efficient ways to overcome employee resistance (Raluca, 2010). They have the right to know when the change happen and how it will be implemented, what is expected from them, how it will influence their jobs and what kind

of support they can get in order to be motivated and engaged to change (Kottor & Schlesinger, 2009). The early information can effectively decrease employee resistance, confusion, and anxiety before rumors spread out in the whole organization. People have a wish to have their working environment predictable and this is the reason why managers should be well prepared with the outcome from change and give employees reasonable information about why, how and what is implemented in the near future (Cilgeous & Chambers, 2014). Barrett argues that "without credible communication, and a lot of it, the hearts and minds of the troops are never captured" (Barrett, 2002). How effective the communication is can determine the level of employee resistance during change process, also can encourage employee to be engaged to it, accept and support, maximum the extent of outcome from change (Harshman & Harshman, 2016).

Effective communication helps avoid confusion by providing clear, accurate information. Change without effective communication on the kind of change happening, may instill fear and hostility among employees towards the changes (Halkos & Bousinakis, 2012). Administrative and technological changes may trigger resistance since they are a threat to those who hold the offices. Neglecting psychological persecution of employees towards changes effectively lead to failure of changes initiatives in an organization (Žižek & Mulej, 2017). Effective administration of change is founded on clear understanding of employees' behavior or performance in the organization. When change is initiated on in-accurate and lack of information this strategy will yield more resistance to change. Effective communication comes in to give employees a predictable outcome of the desired change. It's important for management to create a prediction of the consequence of the change and guarantee that each employer has a reasonable awareness of why, what and when the change is implemented (Cem & Boyaci, 2015). Communication enables the members of an organization achieve both individual and organizational goals. Communication enables employees to understand organization change and enables them to plan their level of satisfaction of individual goals with their achievement by their continuous effective communication (Tsai, 2011). Communication principles are key elements in overcoming resistance to change (Matos & Esposito, 2014). Embracing communication during the change process creates an understanding among employees on the need for change, the kind of change needed and the impact that will result from the change. If there is ineffective communication, only the people in control of change process will understand and know the development. Communication is a very important tool in the successful achievement of any change implementation. It is a major component for giving explanation, an announcement, and preparation for change. Internal communication enhances change at the same time minimize confusion and opposition to change (Hasanaj, 2017). Efficient communication is paramount in all stages of change process. It is necessary to monitor communication in order to avoid any confusion through clear, accurate and truthful messages. Malek and Yazdanifard (2012) opine that the most common method to minimize resistance to change is to inform the employees about it before hand. It is important to alert the workers on when the change is about to happen, what is expected of them, what will happen, how change will be implemented, how development will influence their occupation and how organization will sustain and motivate them. Early Communication decreases uncertainty and natural rumors before they spread throughout organization.

Redundancy of message and repetition of the message through many channels of communication increases employee's memory and it is more effective (Batech *et al.*, 2013). Face to face dissemination of information has greater influence than any other way of communication, since it deals with sender and receiver. It is two-way communication positive involvement in the process, clarifies uncertainties and allows immediate feedback, it also allows nonverbal communication. Line authority is a proper communication because it has great communication states of source and influence of the message (Sheikh, 2013). Supervision is the key in communication. Employees long to be addressed officially by their immediate

superior. It is the expectation that the staff should be well informed and conveyed the information that is credible. The opinion leader ought to be informed about change initiative since they have great impact on others opinion and attitudes. According to Tabitha (2018), proper communication is key in involving employees. This can minimize people's level of doubt. This abolishes one of the major obstacles to employees' desire to get involved in the change process. The need of communication is to inform the staff that change is considered, involving them in planning and implementing of the change. The employees should be given relative environment to discuss their problems and challenges involved openly, and convinced about the need for change. Communication should be regular and not once. Deliberating the need will enhance employees aware of the need for change, the formal and informal channels of communication ought to be embraced (Stocklmayer *et al.*, 2010). Dissemination of information deals with control flow of information on the necessity for change, anticipated events and how work is proceeding (Cain & Haque, 2008). An improved communication flow will play a major role in providing employees with a healthier understanding of change initiatives and minimize resistance to change in the initiative. The employees need to understand the goals or objective of the plan to change their work habits. Quality communication planning has a vibrant role in the change process. Effective dissemination of information is negatively connected on the level of employees opposition to change initiative (Yılmaz & Kılıçoğlu, 2013). Changes should only be made when the situation demand. If manager make change for the sake of change, the response will be only minimal acceptance irrespective of its benefit. Where there is effective conveying of information there are modes used for communication. They refer to the channel that an organization conveys its key information. There are several channels to select from in order to reach your target audience, depending on what the organization employees read, listen to, watch and engage in (Tabitha, 2018). An organization can use poster, organization's newsletters, books or reading materials, internet, new stories (TV, radios, newsletter and magazines), public gatherings and face to face. If the manager develops a reputation for providing reliable and timely information to employees, the explanation of the need there is a possibility of being believed if the manager will be trusted resistance will be minimized (Johannsdottir, Olafsson, & Davidsdottir, 2015).

Conceptual Frame Work: Figure 1 presents the conceptual framework detailing the key variables of the study and the presumed relationship between them.

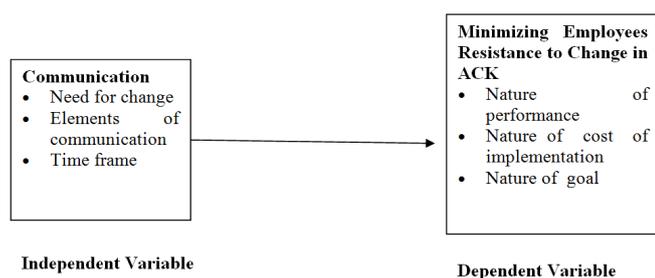


Figure 1. Conceptual framework

As shown in Figure, the parameter used to measure communication were conveyance of information of need for change, elements of communication, and time frame. The dependent variable was minimizing resistance to change in ACK. This was measured by nature of cost of implementation, nature of goal, and nature of performance.

METHODOLOGY

The researcher used descriptive research design to undertake the study. The population of the study was 353 registered workers of ACK Diocese of Nyahururu comprising of 7 evangelists, 8 Office staffs, 12 Deacons, 57 Clergy and 269 lay readers. A sample of 186

registered workers was selected using the stratified random sampling method. The sample size was determined using Israel (1992) formula. Table 1 present a breakdown of the sampling plan.

Table 1. Sampling Plan

Category of Staff	Total Population	Sample Size
Lay readers	269	135
Evangelists	7	5
Office staffs	8	6
Deacons	12	10
Vicar	50	25
Archdeacons	7	5
Total	353	186

Source: Author (2021)

A semi-structured questionnaire was used to collect data. The questionnaire had closed ended items that required the respondents to select one or more responses from given alternatives and open ended items that required the respondents to express their personal views about the questions asked. Pre-testing was conducted at ACK Magumu Archdeaconry to check the questionnaires structure and the sequence, meaning and ambiguity of questions. The draft questionnaires were also given to persons knowledgeable in research to ascertain the items suitability in obtaining information according to research objectives of the study. After determining the validity and reliability of the instrument, the researcher proceeded to the main data collection process. Data was analysed using statistical methods by use of tables, charts, frequencies and percentages. Inferential statistics employed the use of correlation matrix and regression analysis to generate results. It is envisaged that these comparative methods were the best since the data was qualitative in nature. The analysis was done using the computer software known as Statistical Package for Service Solution (SPSS) version 24.0.

RESULTS

Out of 186 questionnaires administered, 186 were completed and returned. This constituted a 100% response rate. About 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. The majority (60%) of the respondents were male whilst (40%) respondents were female. 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.

Change Communication at the ACXK: The independent variable of the study was communication of change at ACK Diocese of Nyahururu. This was assessed using a likert-scale comprising of five items that respondents rated on a five-point scale. Results are summarized in Table 2. On the factor of Employees are informed the need for change 21% of the sample population strongly agreed, 44% agreed, 12 which is 12% were neutral, 17% disagreed and 6% strongly disagreed. It was found out that Employees are informed the need for change (M=3.57, SD= 0.974). However, qualitative findings showed that 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. The Church has embraced stewardship seminars but employees effective participation, communication, and motivation will yield more. On the factor the types of channels used are effective 31% strongly agreed, 52% agreed, 9%were neutral, 6% disagreed and 3% strongly disagreed. It was found out the types of channels used are effective (M=3.49, SD= 1.353). On the factor of Employees are informed the need for change at the appropriate time 32% strongly agreed, 52% agreed, 12%were neutral, 4% disagreed and 0% strongly disagreed. It was found out that Employees are informed the need for change at the appropriate time (M=3.49, SD= 1.353).

Table 2. Employees view of Effectiveness of Change Communication

Communication	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)	Mean	SD
Employees are informed the need for change	21	44	12	17	6	3.57	0.974
The types of channels used are effective	31	52	9	6	3	3.59	1.353
Employees are informed the need for change at the appropriate time	32	52	12	4	0	3.52	1.353
Guidance on new tasks are communicated	21	44	12	17	6	3.57	0.974
Channels of communication are used to disseminate information are key aspects	18	47	10	17	8	3.55	0.93
COMPOSITE MEAN	3.56						

Table 3. Reduction of Employee Resistance to Change on employee 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						

On the factor of Guidance on new tasks are communicated 21% strongly agreed, 44% agreed, 12% were neutral, 17% disagreed and 6% strongly disagreed. It was found out that Guidance on new tasks are communicated (M=3.57, SD= 0.974). On the factor of Channels of communication are used to disseminate information are key aspects 18% strongly agreed, 47% agreed, 10% were neutral, 17% disagreed and 8% strongly disagreed. It was found out Channels of communication are used to disseminate information are key aspects (M=3.55, SD= 0.93). The overall mean of the study was 3.56. This indicates that the respondents agree that communication practice is a game-changer in the church environment. They agreed that practices and inclusion strategy is essential for companies to reduce resistance on a global scale and highly important for the achievement of business objectives. This is in line with findings by Tsai, (2011) who concludes that Effective communication comes in to give employees a predictable outcome of the desired change. It's important for management to create a prediction of the consequence of the change and guarantee that each employer has a reasonable awareness of why, what and when the change is implemented. Additionally, Eshitei et.al (2013) did a study on sugar companies in Kenya, to establish the effects of succession planning programs on staff retention and found out that among the factors that influenced retention of employees, was succession planning programs through provision of information through proper decimation channels thus leading to employee satisfaction. This in turn will reduce employee resistance.

Reduction of Employee Resistance to Change at the ACK Diocese of Nyahururu: The dependent variable was employees' resistance to change at the ACK Diocese of Nyahururu. This was assessed using a Likert scale comprising of five items that respondents were asked to rate on five point scale. Table 3 presents the results. On the factor of the cost of change is 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 is acceptable and worth it (M=3.61, SD= 0.904). On the factor the employees being able to meet their set target 52% strongly agreed, 32% agreed, 12% were neutral, 4% disagreed and 0% strongly disagreed. It was found out that the employees are able to meet their set target (M=3.49, SD= 1.353). On the factor of Proper succession management having resulted in job satisfaction of employees 36% strongly agreed, 52% agreed, 12% were neutral, 0% disagreed and 0% strongly disagreed. It was found that 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.

Influence of Communication on Reduction of Employee Resistance to Change: The aim of the study was to test the relationship between communication of change and employee resistance to change at the ACK Diocese of Nyahururu. The relationship was first examined using the Pearson correlation test. Table 4 presents the results. The correlation analysis yielded a Pearson correlation coefficient (r) of 0.756, indicating that a strong relationship existed between the two variables. Since the coefficient value is positive, it denotes that the relationship between communication and reduction in employee resistance is positive. This means that an improvement in communication would hasten the reduction in employee resistance. The p-value was less than 0.01 suggesting that the relationship between communication and reduction and employee resistance to change is significant at the 0.01 level of significance. The link between the two variables was further assessed using the simple regression method. Results are summarized in Table 5.

Results in Table 5 shows that the coefficient of determination (r^2) is 0.411. This implies that 41.1% of the variance in reduction in employee resistance at the ACK Diocese of Nyahururu can be explained by communication. The F-test showed that the relationship between the two variables is statistically significant; $F(4,176) = 24.449, p = .002$.

Table 4. Correlations Coefficients

		Communication	Reduction in Employee Resistance
Employee Resistance	Pearson Correlation	.756**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	

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

Table 5. Simple Regression Results

Model	r	r ²	Constant	F	P	Beta	Stdzd Beta	t	p
1	.641	.411	1.347	24.449*	.002	.276	.239	2.12	.013
Dependent variable: Reduction in employee resistance to change									
Independent variable: Change communication									

The beta coefficient for communication is .276, which indicates the existence of a positive link between communication and reduction in employees' resistance. Specifically, the beta value implies that if communication is improved by 1 unit, employee resistance would decline by 0.276 units.

CONCLUSION

The analysis showed a strong relationship between communication and employee resistance.. This helps us conclude that communication has a significant influence on employee resistance. Specifically, the study has found that using appropriate channels and providing good quality information needed on the proposed changes for easier acceptance helps to minimize the level of employees' resistance to change. Therefore, leaders in religious institutions should focus on improving the way they communicate change initiatives to employees in order to minimize resistance. In particular, leaders should provide their employees with succinct explanation of why the change is needed as well as the benefit that will accrue from implementing the change. They should also identify effective channels for disseminating change information to employees.

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