Autonomous Schools: Change Management

Student’s name

Institution

Course Code

**Literature review**

**Concept of change management and challenges**

The organizational change is not effective without application of strong leadership. Therefore, managing change requires unwavering and strong commitment from the head of an organization and strong teams which can effectively drive change. It has been pointed that change cannot be managed but instead people should be prepared for leading and responding to change (Lancaster, 2019). According to Lancaster (2019), change is unavoidable and therefore, the development of an organization and its survival depends on the ability to adapt and proactively accept change. Therefore, implementation of successful change management starts with effective leader who can be able to respond and create transformation leadership by establishing a new system to revive the process. Indeed school managements are facing several organizational and leadership challenges, which can only be solved effectively through change management.

It is pointed by Martinci (2010) that the demand of quality education has triggered the development of various concepts to improve schools performance. A study conducted by Othman & Rahman (2013), concluded that proficient and quality performance required change management to address challenges in the schools. Martinci (2010) pointed that change management in schools can be obtained by involving all the stakeholders to spearhead collaboration. The aspect of change is related to the motion to introduce new concepts or ideas to the running of schools. As many education stakeholders would agree, change is inevitable in an organization and aspect of change is usually connected to solving of problems. Therefore, the management of schools or school principals is usually faced with constant problems related to the management of schools which need to be solved. We observe change through monitoring the behavior occurring among key stakeholders. According to Othman & Rahman (2013) the change in an organization affects the process of growth and creates transformation within an organization. We live in the world where we are governed by the organizations and therefore, most people see organizations as the basic foundation of a society and also regard them as stable and firm structure. Therefore, change management of organizations is essential for effective delivery of services. In education sector, the change management create avenue for delivery of quality education and better society.

Kerubo (2014) reported that the important aspect of change in the schools is the creation of dual education system and making some schools autonomous. A study “Change Management in Adult Educational Organizations: A Slovenian Case Study” by Martinci (2010) concluded that successful implementatiomn of change is neccessay for each adult education organization. The change is utilized through assimilation of culture, and other way of life to improve the learning content. According to Mansor, Mohamed, & Suliman (2018), change in the education can also be obtained through liberal application of culture in the education. The change management also required some leadxership skills. Knowledge, behavior and varsatilities which sometime may require the the implementation of change of the organizational cullture.

However, a study conducted by , reported that making school automous is one of the management strategies which can be used speadheard growth and improve education standard in the country. Kerubo (2014) concluded that automous of school create efficient management of schools at the local level. It create inclusive management and therefore, quality education could easily be achieved. The successful of change management can be achieved only when it includes the benefit of the management and creating awareness of defined measurable stakeholders goals and aims. The creation of automous school therefore, could be the best umbrella for establishing a quality management system in schools. As stated by Webster & Webster, (2010), centralized management of schools creates a lot of loopholes. Most importantly, there is disconnection between the central management team and the local management which are the principals of the schools and the board of of school. Without bridging the gaps between the central and local schools the performance can be improved. According to Sande, Wamukoya, & Walela (2015) automous school have local management, monotoring, or inspection and evaluation to ensure that quality education is provided in schools. Therefeore, the change management which can improve the performance of schools is the descentralization of schools management and power to principals of schools and the board of management. A study conducted by Mansor, Mohamed, & Suliman (2018) concluded that making schools automous facilitates efficient management. The board and principals of schools being directly responsible and accountable to the loca,l stakeholders. With decentration of schools efficiently of management if reintroduced and the schools’porformance shall skyrock. Mansor, Mohamed, & Suliman (2018) stated automous of schools also facilitates cultural integration. The local cultural would easily be integrated into the school teachngs. This can make it for learners to embrace culture which is a key aspect in education.

Petterson (2018) concluded that implementation of change management in schools is achieveable when all stakehodlers are involved. The implementation of change should thererfore, begins at the point of establishing the decifit. Thi could be done through intensive research and consultation of all the stakeholders in the education. As point out by , understanding the deficit would ensure that change is accepted by all the stakeholders of schools. The benefits or importance of the change must be identified, the objectibe and goals highlighted as well. Undestanding of change by all stakeholders is a critical component for the success oif change management.

**Research methodology**

The quatitaive research method was utilized to compolete the study. Qualitative research method is regarded as the used survey, question and interveiws to gather data and the analysis is conducted using mathemati, and statistic method. In order to complete the study, a semi-structured face to face interview was conducted at institution of autonmous school in Bhutan. Tbe participants (interviewee ) were top school management team. The principal of school and other top leadership were invited for interview. However, because of the sensitive matter manay people were not willing to give their opinions.

The questions asked the participants were designed and drew up Kotter’s eight (8) steps to successful change. The three intereviewers were used to deliver the concepts and the questions to the interviewees. This was to make sure that the interviewees answered were accurately, intensive and appropriate answering all the reasearch objectives. Moreover, the secondary resources including journals, articles and books were also used to complete the research.

**Analysis and findings**

For the purpose of managing change successfully, organizations have used Kotter’s eight (8) Step Modelling to change to successfully influence changes in the organization. Kotter’s steps of change management is mentioned in the literature review and it shows a clear roadmap how how change can be implemented. Therefore, in this study, Kotter’s strategies is used an operational framework to analyze the information which were gathered from through the use of interviews.

**Step1: create or establish sense of urgency**

Kotter recognized this first steps as important for the implementation of change. This is because it is essential to have power people willing to lead change plan.

Quote 1: There have been a decline in education quality in the country. This came to limelight after the Minister of Education review some essay from some university graduates.

**Analysi**s: This statement means that a problem with education standard was identified by the Ministry of Eucation and therefore, it was an urgent matter to address the problem to uplift the quality of eductaion. Though there have been persistent improvements in students’ academic performances in the national bard examinations, students not being able to write a decent essay was viewed by some as a ‘perceived conclusion’ on the quality of education. This triggered the education to stipulate the vision of change and made it urgent for the the quality of education to improved inn the country. The illustrations means that the Ministry of Education and all ist stakeholders were distuirbed and form a team to help unwavel the problem. The Ministry of education was spurred by this incidence, the Ministry of Education was tasked to do soul-searching and one of the common findings was a lack of autonomy to the school principals and staff for the management and administration of the schools. The centrally managed system of school administration was found to be ineffective in addressing the actual needs on the ground.

**Step 2: Forming a Powerful Coalition**

Quote1: The Ministry of Educatioon was disturbed by the poor show of undergruates and therefore, it was time form a team to investigate the cause of the problem and provide recommendation on what is needed to be done to address the problem.

Analysis: Upon realizing the problem a team of experts were selected including the District administrators and school principal was invited at the Ministry to sign a tripartite Delivery and Performance Agreement (DPA) between the District Governor, School Principal and the Secretary of the Ministry of Education. The DPA clearly outlined the specific roles and responsibilities of each key stakeholder.

**Step 3: Communicating the Vision**

Quote 1: After the formation of the team to look into the problem, the signing of the DPA was followed by an orientation and training of the Principals that set the vision and directions of operations of autonomous school.

Analysis : This statement could mean that immediately after the team formed by the Ministry of Education compoleted and presented teir report, the vision was established which can drive the change in the education system.

**Step 4: Communicating the Vision**

Kotter illustrate communicating vision as one of the essential ways to ensure that everyone is brought on board to understand the intended change. It point that every channel should be used communicate the vision and strategies so that everyone can adopt. It also meant to provide guidence and teaching of new behavior.

Quote 1: Email communication to the board of school and directors of education

Quote 2: Email communication to the principals and other education stakeholders to highlight some of the chnages recommended by the committee formed by the Ministry of Education.

Analysis : It means that the stateholders had to communicate the recommendation made which could change the the management. It was therefore, required for the schools had to submit their Strategic Plan of Action for 5 years with provisions for midterm review and evaluation mechanisms in place by the schools themselves and experts outside the school. Primarily, the review mandate was to be taken by the Education Monitoring Division (EMD) of the MOE. A consultative approach to decision making was designed in the entire concept formulation, planning, implementation and review of the initiative involving all the key stakeholders

**Step 5: Empowering others to act on the vision**

Empowering others according to Kotter means that obstacles are removed and the change is implemented.

Quote 1: The implemented of change occurred by using various report to change the system and the management of schools. The school mangement was changed from centralized to autonomous management system.

Analysis: It was realized that the centralized management used does not add value to the education system. It create a loophole and therefore, it is difficult to ensure that there is accountability. It was therefore, essential to change the management of schools throughout he country.

Step 6: Planning for and creating short term wins

Kotter stated that this involve the planning to show visible performance. It include implementation of the derived strategies to improve the education standard.

**Quote 1: the stategies derived by tbe team would achievd.**

Analysis: One of the major highlights of the change initiative was the involvement of the local decision makers, including the District Governor and the Local Village Headman. In addition, the teaching and the non-teaching staff were involved to seek their views during the submission of the expression of interest and the crafting of the strategic plan. The entire initiative was through a thorough consultative process to share the ownership of the programme.

Step 7: **Consolidating improvements and producing still more change**

It involve the use of approve credibility to change the system. It involved the use of the correct methods to introduce change

Step 8: Institutionalising new approaches

Analysis: I was spearheading the institution of Autonomous Schools in the country and it was of particular pride and an honor for this onerous yet noble task. As a Chief of the SLCD in the MOE, I had to act as a trustworthy and a credible bridge between the stakeholders to ensure smooth implementation of the programme. The lessons of Master of Public Administration and Educational Leadership and Management were very useful for me to initiate the change process. I acted as a middleman to bring the key stakeholders on a common platform of consultative discussions to finalize all major documentation and coordination towards ensuring universal ‘buy-ins’ from the parties involved. Importantly, in lieu of the national decentralization programme, a significant component of decision items was handed over to the field officials.

**Discussion**

The findings is similar to what is captured in the literature reviw regarding issues which trigger change, problems and how to address the change management in school. the result indicates thatg urgency is the main issues which trigger the beginning of change in any organization. Based on findings, it was established that the the poor essay performance by undergraduate students made the Ministry of Education to realized that there is a problem in the ducation system which reauire immediate solution. In this case, the urgency was derived and mechanism are used to form a team of powerful people including the istrict governor to help in solving the problem on the eductaion sector. It is established by the study that the automony of school create a level of management different from the federbal governmment and also brought schools managemnent closer to the peopled and therefore, introduce efficient in the process of management of schools. This is achieved by bringing monitoring of schools closer to the stakeholders and therefore, it is important to make schools independent from the control of government. This could be a positive change managenent which can ensure that schools become accountable and performance of education sector improve as well. It is also important to implement change by involving all the stakeholders for effective result to be achieved.

**Conclusion and Recommendation**

It is obtained that change management is an important aspect in organization success. The study shows that identification of the problem, as an urgecy, setting up coalition of power people and set vision of the chane are some of the most important aspect of change management. In order to realize immediate and effective change the Ministry of Education established clear road map through working together with all the stakeholders to address the problem of poor eduacation in the country. Through the use of Kotter’s eight (8) steps of change management it was established that making schools autonomy would be the best decision which could change how the schools are managed and therefore, help in improving the performance of schools in the country. The autonomy of schools would give principals to have a free will in management of the affairs of the school through the consultation with the board of schools. Kotter’s Change management therefore, provide elaborate method or strategies which can be sued to identify organizational problem in order to establish effective change management which can reform the organization.

It is recommendation to create a clear channel of communication to convey change to all the stakeholders. The schools thriugh the country must have effective method or ways of delivery information. As stated ealier, this would be helpful in ensuring the change information is understood among the key stakeholders in the education sector. It would make it appropriate to solve the problem existin through understanding and through proper channel of communication it would be easier to understand the problem and the stakeholders would focus on the vision and objectives of change.

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