



CHANGE MANAGEMENT FOR THE POST-PANDEMIC ORGANIZATION: ROLE OF EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE

Ismail S¹ and Dr. Y. Subbarayudu²

¹Research Scholar, Department of Business Management, Yogi Vemana University, YSR Kadapa, Andhra Pradesh, India

²Associate Professor & Research Supervisor, Department of Business Management, Yogi Vemana University, YSR Kadapa, Andhra Pradesh, India

ABSTRACT

Organizational change is important because global and societal change is both pervasive and persistent. We live in a rapidly changing world. These changes have transformed and are continuing to transform the businesses and organizational environments around the world. The winds of change that have swept organizations across the world reached the Indian subcontinent in 1991. Prior to 1991, the idea of Indian organizations becoming world class producers would have evoked cynicism and derision. Earlier very few Indian organizations are moving in this direction, but the pandemic has forced every organization to adopt change systematically, managing the critical factors that determine success in the new globally competitive environment. Managing change is probably the single most important issue today for all those who have undertaken the difficult task of managing organizations. The complexity and dynamic nature of the environment has placed greater demands on organization to be flexible, responsive and efficient. Around the world, organizations big or small face the inevitable prospect of change. The intriguing question is why have some organizations succeeded while others failed? This intriguing question has thrown a good opportunity to study change management practices in IT industry. The IT industry occupies the major share of service sector in this country. Employee experience is a worker's perceptions about his or her journey through all the touchpoints at a particular company, starting with job candidacy through to the exit from the company. 40% of job changers surveyed said they were attracted to their new position because of the opportunity for remote working that it provided. Poor treatment at work is another major reason behind the Great Resignation. The present study is carried out in a period in which changes in the environment, control the change management practices and advances through changes in the organization over a period of time. Employee response towards change management for the post-pandemic organization and role of employee experience is collected through both primary and secondary data.

Key words: Change Management, Post Pandemic, Employee Experience, Great Resignation.

Cite this Article: Ismail S and Y. Subbarayudu, Change Management for the Post-Pandemic Organization: Role of Employee Experience, *International Journal of Marketing and Human Resource Management (IJMHRM)*, 13(1), 2022, pp. 74–84.
<https://iaeme.com/Home/issue/IJMHRM?Volume=13&Issue=1>

1. INTRODUCTION

Change is a word that bewilders some but welcomed by others who see the opportunity in it to make things better. Change is that activity without which individuals or organizations would stagnate and risk their future. Change, innovation, task alignment, progress, continuous improvement – no matter what name is given to it. Organizations are changing. Change is the only constant. Change is all pervasive. Change is happening continuously and at different speeds at different times in different organizations and in individuals. Change comes from all directions. Corporate restructuring, new technologies, improvements in data analytics etc. contribute to the change and result in improved financial success, customer and employee satisfaction and loyalty & commitment. Organizations dream of bettering themselves. To accomplish this, they must change themselves. To survive in the long run, they need to adapt themselves to the external and internal changes continuously. But managing change is not the easiest task at all. The task is difficult because organizations must become flexible, responsive and efficient to adapt to the complex and dynamic nature of the environment. Globally, organizations face the inevitable prospect of change irrespective of their size.

1.1. Factors and reasons behind organizational change

The most influential factor for organisations to bring about change is the external environment. This external environment instigates reaction for the organisations to bring about change. Given below are some of the external environment factors which trigger changes in the organisation:

External factors & Reasons

- Technological Change
- Changes in Marketing Condition
- Social Changes
- Political and Legal Changes
- Government Rules and Regulations
- Competition
- Technological Advancement
- Changes in People Requirement
- Changes in Supply Chain
- Changes in Society's Value System

The other factor triggering change in the organisations is the changes taken up internally, either proactively or reactively taken up in response to the external changes. The following are some of the factors that contribute to the internal changes,

Internal factors & reasons

- Change in Managerial Personnel
- Deficiency in Existing Organization
- Change in Leadership
- Introducing New Technology

- The Domino Effect
- For Meeting Crisis
- New marketing Strategy for Existing and New Products

Change happens in the organisations when they act proactively to the expected risks and difficulty. When an organisation foresees the problems and devises plans to combat and the impact of those problems, it is basically forecasting the external factors that would influence its business and brings about changes internally before the external forces take over.

1.6. Employee Experience

Employee experience is a worker's perceptions about his or her journey through all the touchpoints at a particular company, starting with job candidacy through to the exit from the company. Talent acquisition refers to the process of identifying and acquiring skilled workers to meet your organizational needs. The most successful organizations attract and retain top talent. When the economy is good, the competition for top talent is highly competitive and the need for effective talent acquisition and retention grows. During difficult times, such as the COVID-19 pandemic and recession, attention to employee experience can help companies become more competitive and prevent the worst repercussions. In general, companies that have positive employee experience, as indicated by barometers such as high scores in research studies and inclusion in top places to work lists. Employee perceptions and experiences will affect every other aspect of a company's processes. Happy employees who perceive their experience as good are more engaged and complete tasks more effectively and efficiently.

Employee experience directly affects other specific aspects of the workplace. For example, employees who have positive experiences are more likely to commit to and stay at an organization than employees who have negative experiences. They are also more likely to promote the company as a great place to work, leading to more referrals for open positions and increased fill rates, since most job seekers are easily swayed by employee perceptions of the work experience and company culture. This is one reason why company review sites -- such as Glassdoor have grown in popularity. Bad reviews will turn candidates away from a company, while good reviews will draw them in. Employee experience also affects worker engagement. Higher engagement levels improve company culture and increase productivity, ultimately creating a positive impact on the company's revenue and profits.

1.3. The four key factors to focus on when it comes to employee experience

The ability to grow and learn. Industry studies increasingly find that opportunities for skill development and career growth are major factors in a job candidate's decision to join an organization. Learning and career pathing programs are critical here.

Leaders who listen, coach, and champion career growth. "Employees don't leave jobs; they leave their bosses." No doubt you've heard that one before. It's a cliché that's been around for a reason: Strong leaders are linked to deeper employee engagement, reduced turnover, and better financial performance. Effective leaders act as partners with their team members. **Feeling valued as individuals.** Employees need to feel free to express opinions, even when they differ from the status quo. Beyond that, they need to see their opinions considered in decision-making. Diversity, equity and inclusion (DE&I) programs tie in here, with an emphasis on DE&I as an ongoing initiative geared toward creating a culture of acceptance. (More on this later – see "How organizations build a great employee experience")

An environment that supports autonomy and flexibility. This is all about making it easy for employees to do their jobs. Beyond equipping employees with the right tools and training, employers should honour, when possible, individual preferences in terms of how, when, and

where workers feel most productive. In the wake of the pandemic, many employers are re-evaluating traditional work schedules, in-office requirements, and ideas around productivity.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Change encompasses different dimensions and can be caused by various factors. According to the UNDP (2006), there are several factors that influence change and these factors directly and indirectly impacts the organization's goals and objectives. Categorizing these factors into two, it can be described as internal factors that include technologies, operational changes and processes, internal laws and policies, conversion of government organizations to private enterprises, organizational modernization initiatives, changes in management decisions and others. While external factors include but not limited to stiff competitions between companies in the same industry, increasing pressures of globalization, political, economic, socio-cultural, technological, legal, and environmental forces (Lynn, 2001). Similarly, the research of Kamarck (2004) has also highlighted the positive direct relationship between organizational change and the achievement of the strategic objectives of the organization. According to the data provided by UNDP (2006), several factors influences change to occur as it affects directly and directly to corporation's objectives. The two factors include the internal factors or drivers such as change in operations, technologies, internal policies and laws, urgent call for modernization, management changes in decisions, as well as commercialization or privatization of previously held government organization. While external factors include the increasing demands of globalization, competition between companies in the industry, economic status, technological, political and social conditions that affects the goals and objectives of the organization (Lynn, 2001). Research conducted by Kamarck (2004) reveals the direct relationship between organizational change and the objectives of the organization. His emphasis is dwelt on the importance of careful planning to assure the attainment of corporate goals and objectives as well as the ability to achieve competitive advantage. For instance, implementation of any change efforts requires coordination by all agents and members which should be built upon organization's objectives such as for example, changes in management; plans and program, leadership, relationships and others that impacts both the management and the workforce. Various studies investigate the impact of change to organizations and findings revealed that, changes that are planned for long-term reflects more positive contribution to the organization's success than changes that are initiated for short-term and unanimous findings also suggests that, change that are intended for long-run purposes should be aligned with that strategic plan of the organizations (Cousins, et. al., 2008; Cai, et. al., 2009; Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2004). However, understanding the concept of change should be deeply internalized by the employees and management in any organization and one of those, is to understand the typologies of change. Tryphosamathakaduboikhutso (2013) in the thesis "Change Management: The Impact on Systems Implementation. A Business Application Solution Centre (BASC) Case Study" done in South Africa discusses the impact of change management during the implementation of an IT system and highlights the reasons for failure. The reason for the failure of system implementation projects is often attributed to poor implementation during the project. It is significant to place the importance of people while managing technology and its processes. Communication, training and management participation are common means of addressing fears of change, and to build trust. This information should be utilised by project teams during implementation projects, as it helps to provide the necessary model to ensure the success of the change initiatives. Maryam Bestow and Ayham Jaaron (2014) in their paper on "Change Management in Telecommunication Sector: A Managerial Framework" done in Palestine discussed about the factors forcing telecommunication organizations to change and they are Political instabilities, technology advancements, changing customer tastes, globalization, and cultural changes. Change management planning, top management active

involvement, reinforcement and feedback are the requisites to enhance telecommunication, organization's ability to change by promoting a number of drivers for learning from feedback IBM's Institute for Business Value (IBV) recently polled 3,000 CEOs and identified those who reported high revenue growth compared to their peers over the three years. About 20 percent of the respondents outperformed the rest, while another 20 percent reported below-par revenue growth over three years. When IBV compared the responses of the "outperformers" with the "underperformers", dramatic differences emerged. "IBV found that several factors shape employee experience, including the formation and development of work-based connections and relationships, the design and ongoing use of employees' physical work environments, and the tools and social platforms employees use to accomplish work-related activities," IBV reported. "Our research shows that organizations can enhance employee experiences through increased personalization, transparency, simplification, authenticity and organizational responsiveness." Companies that seek to improve the employee experience, adopting the employee's perspective can provide an important starting point by using data and analytics to identify needs and measure impact on business outcomes. Understanding critical milestones in the employee journey can further refine insights into areas where experience may be lacking and what actions can be most effective.

3. NEED FOR THE STUDY

Theories and models of organizational change evolved in the west, across industries found that employees oppose changes not only related to institutional factors, psychological factors, or union activities but also related to business strategies, goals of innovation or change, and firm size and sector. They also found that the most significant factor affecting employee attitudes toward change is occupational stress. The indicators of occupational stress are work relationships, work-life balances, overload, job security, control, resources and communication, pay benefits, and aspects of job. Also, studies conveyed that there is negative relationship between employee resistance to change and job motivation whiles their self-confidence for learning and self-development was not associated with employee resistance. But this time employee is not ready to leave the change i.e., Employee Experience of Remote Working. In-fact it has become one of the reasons for Great Resignation. So, a study is required to test the role of employee experience in change management of organizations post pandemic among IT employees.

4. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Organizations also differ in their change management practices with respect to the ownership, industry, size, region etc. These factors do play a significant role in the way the organizations respond to the change management initiatives. Change can be at the organizational level and at the individual level. Also, employee experience being a newer topic, information gathering on all these above issues of role of employee experience in change management of organizations post pandemic among IT employees is a paramount task.

5. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the study are:

- To measure the employee response to these employee experience management being implemented.
- To study the impact of organizational change measures on individual change mechanism.
- To study the impact of Employee Experience on Great Resignation

6. METHODOLOGY

Change is must irrespective of size, sector and location of the company. An attempt was made to contact the IT companies in Bangalore, Chennai and Hyderabad through emails as majority of IT companies are in these areas in South India. In response to these 12 companies have positively responded and permitted to do research. As many as 3000 questionnaires were mailed to employees in these 12 companies. Out of them significant number of questionnaires were received from 6 companies and to a maximum of 50 each only as the information on the said topic was not familiar and comprehensible to many. The six companies are thus selected purposively. The select six companies are as follows

Table 6.1. List of Companies

Sl. No.	Company Name
1	Automatic Data Processing
2	Capgemini
3	Cognizant Technology Solutions
4	General Electric
5	Larsen & Toubro Infotech
6	Tata Consultancy Services

Wherever the number of questionnaires filled in all aspects is less than 50, further attempts are made to reach the quota of at least 50 by adopting quota sampling. Out of the received filled in questionnaires, 312 were with full information in all aspects. Hence the sample size is 312 employees. While selecting employees of the 6 companies care has been taken to cover them from different locations. As many as 3000 questionnaires were mailed to employees in the select companies. Out of the received filled in questionnaires, 312 were with full information in all respects. Hence the sample size is 312 employees

7. ANALYSIS & RESULTS

Table-7.1: Employees experiencing major change in their job routine

Co.		Employees experiencing major change in their job routine					Total	Total Score	Level of major change experience
		Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Often	Always			
	ADP	1	1	22	26	0	50	173	3.46
	Capgemini	15	14	14	7	0	50	113	2.26
	Cognizant	3	5	16	23	3	50	168	3.36
	GE	1	10	18	28	0	57	187	3.28
	L & T Infotech	14	23	9	3	1	50	104	2.08
	TCS	1	4	21	29	0	55	188	3.42
Total		35	57	100	116	4	312	933	2.99

Source: Primary data through questionnaire

The averages are given in the following manner. Total score of each company is calculated and it is divided by no of respondents in each company. Employees of ADP have experienced major changes in their job routine followed by TCS, Cognizant and GE. Whereas Capgemini and L & T Infotech opine that they rarely experienced major changes in their job routine. These changes occur mostly based on clients request for improved/better software services. Clients of ADP, TCS, COGNIZANT and GE probably looking for continuous creative software services to create unique image in the business world, whereas clients of Capgemini and L & T Infotech

are not compelled to that extent and hence are adjusting with older services with minimal changes until unless there is great revolution in the market.

Table-7.2: Awareness of Employee Experience Management in the Organization

		Awareness of Employee Experience Management in the Organization						Total Score	
		Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Often	Always	Total		
Co.	ADP	1	27	22	0	0	50	122	2.44
	Capgemini	16	25	7	2	0	50	94	1.88
	Cognizant	14	16	4	16	0	50	121	2.42
	GE	4	27	26	0	0	57	137	2.40
	L & T Infotech	16	20	12	1	1	50	102	2.04
	TCS	2	32	21	0	0	55	128	2.33
Total		53	147	92	19	1	312	704	2.26

Source: Primary data through questionnaire

Weighted averages are calculated, and the scores say that the employees of ADP, Cognizant, GE and TCS are aware of employee experience management in the organization compared to Cap Gemini and L & T InfoTech. IT employees in general are aware of the changes happening in their industry as their career depends on how they acquire skills on the latest developments.

Table-7.3 Type of change undergone

		Type of change undergone				Total
		Rapid	Short Bursts	Incremental	Organization Constantly Undergoing small changes	
Co.	ADP	0	2	47	1	50
	Capgemini	7	11	19	13	50
	Cognizant	2	8	13	27	50
	GE	0	7	48	2	57
	L & T Infotech	9	15	21	5	50
	TCS	1	3	50	1	55
Total		19	46	198	49	312

Source: Primary data through questionnaire

From the above table we infer that employees of ADP, GE & TCS feel that change is incremental, whereas in Cognizant it is continuous. Employees of Capgemini and L & T InfoTech opine that for some the change has been rapid for some short bursts, incremental and constantly undergoing small changes. This probably could be attributed to how the organizations are involving employees at different levels of implementing change. The reason for employees of ADP, Cognizant, GE& TCS opining that change is incremental and Organization Constantly Undergoing small changes is that there is organizational pressure for change, whereas Capgemini and L & T InfoTech has environmental pressure for change.

Table-7.4 Changes Brought According to Percentages

Co.	Change in type of work		Change of work hours/ Conditions		Increased / decreased work responsibilities		Reorganization		Introduction of new technology		New Products/ Markets		Others please specify	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
ADP	23	46	18	36	30	60	23	46	8	16	6	12	0	0
Capgemini	25	50	22	44	33	66	10	20	22	44	17	34	0	0
Cognizant	14	28	17	34	9	18	9	18	25	50	3	6	3	6
GE	30	53	19	33	35	61	22	39	13	23	8	14	1	2
L&T InfoTech	18	36	23	46	28	56	14	28	15	30	9	18	0	0
TCS	29	53	19	35	26	47	29	53	14	25	7	13	0	0
Grand Total	139	45	118	38	161	52	107	34	97	31	50	16	4	1

Source: Primary data through questionnaire

It is observed that among Capgemini, GE, ADP and L & T Infotech the major change brought about is that their work responsibilities have increased while in TCS and Cognizant the major change has been change in type of work.

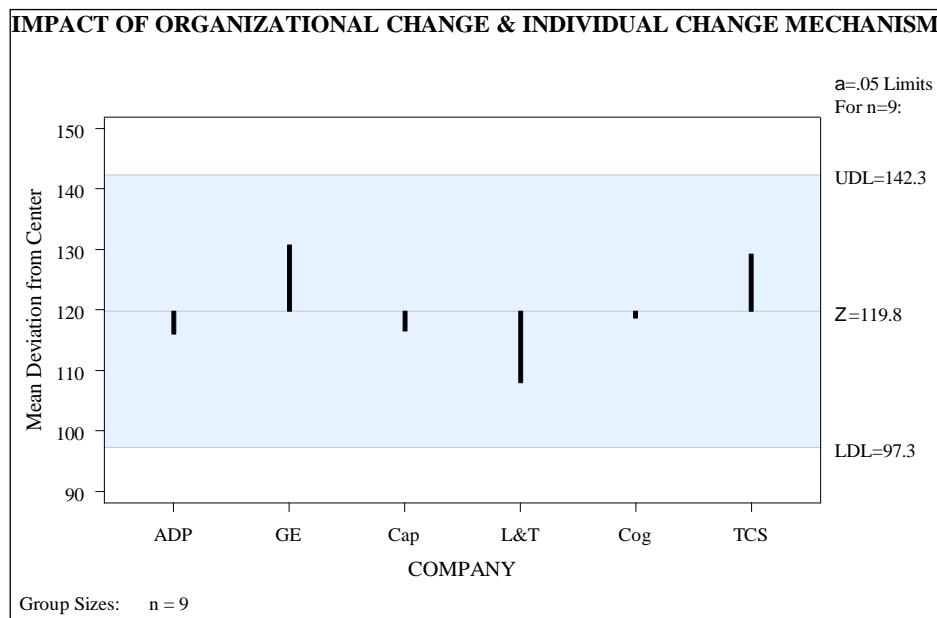


Figure-1 Impact of Organizational Change & Individual Change Mechanism

Source: Primary data through questionnaire

It is observed from the above diagram that TCS & GE are taking change measures which have association with individual change mechanism. By clearly defining the newer job and providing necessary training one can involve employees in to change. While the rest of companies are lagging behind as the management is providing less number of change measures with which employees are not able to change.

Table-7.5: Great Resignation Can Overcome by Employee Experience

		Great Resignation Can Overcome by Employee Experience					Total Score	Level of major change experience
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree		
Co.	ADP	2	5	15	26	2	50	173
	Capgemini	4	8	5	30	3	50	113
	Cognizant	3	6	7	25	9	50	168
	GE	5	6	9	28	2	57	187
	L & T Infotech	14	23	9	3	1	50	104
	TCS	4	1	21	29	0	55	188
Total		32	49	66	141	17	312	933
								2.99

Source: Primary data through questionnaire

The averages are given in the following manner. Total score of each company is calculated and it is divided by no of respondents in each company. Employees of ADP have accepted that Great Resignation can be overcome by Employee Experience followed by TCS, Cognizant, Capgemini and GE. Whereas L & T Infotech has opposed that Great Resignation can be overcome by Employee Experience. The reason behind Great Resignation is employees have tasted the remote working during Covid pandemic. They have great time with family and also remote working doesn't affect their performances.

8. FINDINGS

- Change is key and sensitive element for any organization. Change is essential for long term sustainability of organizations in the market. Changing organizations keep on exhilarating by satisfying their customers through creative products and processes. IT organizations often undergo change because of the demand from clients for newer software services, financial muscle of the organization and employee's interest towards newer things. These make the employees of IT organizations to *experience major changes in their job routine*. Employees of ADP, Cognizant, GE and TCS are experiencing changes frequently compared to Capgemini and L&T infotech.
- Employee's awareness on change is felt very essential for successful implementation of change which occurs through both environmental as well as organizational pressures. Employees of IT organizations felt that management has greater responsibility to make employees aware of changes that has undergone earlier and changes which are to be incorporated now. As *awareness on change* matters a lot for better understanding of roles and responsibilities of IT employees in newly changed environment. Also it has its impact on productivity of employees. Employees of ADP, Cognizant, GE and TCS are aware of changes in the organization compared to Capgemini and L & T Infotech.
- Pressures are the only reasons for undertaking change. Generally, IT organizations experience pressures from both environment and organizations. Type of change undergone is different for different pressures. IT organizations that are undergoing new broom and mandated pressures are demanding for rapid and short burst type of change.
- Companies that are successful in sourcing top talent have engaged in an employer branding process that leads to a favourable impression by candidates before they even interview with your company.
- Employees who have positive experiences are more likely to commit to and stay at an organization than employees who have negative experiences.

- Positive Experience employees more likely to promote the company as a great place to work, leading to more referrals for open positions and increased fill rates
- Millennials and Gen Z employees demand trust and want to feel that their employers are in alignment with their own goals and values
- Great Resignation can overcome with employee experience

9. DISCUSSION

Leaders navigating this uncertain world of work, it's important to remember that the journey to improving employee experience is ongoing. Be gentle with yourself and know that it's OK to start with small steps. Begin by focusing on a single aspect of employee experience, such as the candidate or onboarding experience. Then iterate and grow your program over time, using data to guide your strategy every step of the way. Looking to gain a competitive advantage when it comes to attracting and retaining top talent during the Great Resignation. To retain the best talents managers must create an environment where employees can grow and ensure a great experience.

10. CONCLUSION

Change is inevitable and unavoidable. It exists in different dimensions and can be described as internal factors that include technologies, operational changes and processes, internal laws and policies, conversion of government organizations to private enterprises, organizational modernization initiatives, changes in management decisions and others. While external factors include but not limited to stiff competitions between companies in the same industry, increasing pressures of globalization, political, economic, socio-cultural, technological, legal, and environmental forces. In other words, change occurs in different types. Different views and perspective of change varies between organizations as it can give positive and negative consequences. More importantly, managing resistance to change in an effective manner helped organizations to deal smoothly the implementation of change. Organizational change enables organizations to device ways to implement change management effectively with the aid of different change models. Lastly, change management provides many benefits that organization receives provided such change is aligned with the corporates goals and objectives.

REFERENCES

- [1] Armstrong, M.A. (2009). *A Handbook of Human Resources Management*. (11th ed.). London: Kogan Page.
- [2] Authenticity Consulting LLC (2012). *Field Guide to Consulting and Organizational Development*. Retrieved on November 5, 2016
- [3] Beer, M. and Nohria, N. (2000). Cracking the code of change. *Harvard Business Review*, May/June, pp. 133- 41.
- [4] Blumenthal, B. and Hespelagh, P. (1994). Toward a Definition of Corporate Transformation. *Sloan Management Review*, 35 (3): 101-106.
- [5] Bowe, R (2011). *Change Management Coach*. Washington DC: Oxford Press
- [6] Burnes, B. (2001). *Managing change: A strategic approach to organizational dynamics*. London: Prentice Hall.
- [7] Burnes, B. (2004). *Managing Change: A Strategic Approach to Organisational Dynamics*. 4th edition. Harlow: Prentice Hall

- [8] Cai J, Liu X, Xiao Z, Liu J. (2009). Improving supply chain performance management: a systematic approach to analysing iterative KPI accomplishment. *Decision Support Systems*, 46(2):512-21.
- [9] Cameron, K. (2008). *Leading Change: Using Fixed Points to Navigate*. Provo, UT: Leadership Excellence.
- [10] Cousins P. (2008). *Strategic Supply Management*, FT Prentice-Hall, Harlow Crawford L. Management of interdependent soft projects. In: Hartman F, Jergeas G, Thomas J, editors. *Proceedings IRNOP Determinants of Public Policy: When Do Institutions Matter?* San Diego, CA: University Development. OED Working Paper Series: No. 4, May. Washington, D.C.: World Bank.
- [11] Fernandez, R. and Rainey, H.G. (2006). Managing Successful Organizational Change in the Public Sector. *Public Administration Review*, March/April, pp 168 – 176.
- [12] Ganta, V. C. and Manukonda, J. K. (2014). Leadership During Change and Uncertainty in Organizations. *International Journal of Organizational Behaviour & Management Perspectives*, 3(3), 1183.
- [13] Ghoshal, S. and Bartlett, C.A. (1996). Rebuilding Behavioural Context: A Blueprint for Corporate Renewal. *Sloan Management Review*, 37 (2): 23-36.
- [14] Goodstein, L.D. and Burke, W.W. (1991). Creating Successful Organization Change. *Organizational Dynamics*, 19 (4): 5-17.
- [15] Greiner, L.E. (1972). Evolution and revolution as organizations grow. *Harvard Business Review*, (July/Aug.), pp. 37-46.
- [16] Grundy, T. (1993). *Managing Strategic Change*. London: Kogan Page.
- [17] Hotho, S. (2008). Linking changing professional identity and changing professions. *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 21(6):721-742.
- [18] Gagandeep Kaur, Kaur, Gagandeepkaur, a conceptual study on organizational change in current scenario June 07, 2009
- [19] John P. Kotter, *The New Rules: How to succeed in today's post- corporate world*, April 1995, Hardcover - 238 pages, Free Press; ISBN: 0029175860
- [20] Masilamani, R.J. 'Innovation for building a world class Indian organization', *Excellence in Innovation*, Ahmadabad: Ahmadabad Management Association, 1997.