Managing Change in a Democratic Culture: A Case Study Approach

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Abstract

Although managing change in a democratic culture is not a simplistic issue, leadership is expected to manage change for the effectiveness of any organization or institution. However, there is abundance literature in change management but about change management in a democratic culture is a few. The purpose of this article is to encourage the newly appointed school principals to manage change for the improvement of school performance since everyone understands his/her rights. The researcher identified six schools including three primaries with an enrolment of more than three hundred and twelve educators and three secondary schools with an enrolment of more than six hundred and twenty educators under the leadership of newly appointed principals. Three schools were identified from rural area and three from urban area in the same Circuit. The participants comprised of three female principals and three male principals to make a total of six. The participants were interviewed in their respective schools at their convenient times. The purpose of conducting semi-structured interviews was to find out the experiences of the newly appointed principals in change management and to ascertain challenges in their working relationships. The researcher used reflective diary and audio recorder for the collection of data that was transcribed by the researcher. The data was analyzed using data matrix and reported as a case study.

Keywords: Change, Managing, Democracy

1. Introduction and Motivation Underlying to the Problem

Despite political landscape, a change in an organization or institution is normal that could occur due to promotion or demotion of the employees more especial in the leadership capacity. Therefore, such a change needs efficient and competent management for the survival of the institution or organization. Organizational change occurs for different reasons such as for adaptation, transformation, rationalisation, and restructuring. Adaptive changes are small modifications that an organization can undergo to refine itself hence transformational changes are large scope and scale that involve a radical change in direction for an organization or institution. An organization is nothing if not a group of people with common goal working together to achieve that goal. Stobierk (2020) proposed tips and strategies that can be adopted to better manage change in a workplace for better performance. Understanding the process of change is one of the fundamental tips that one should have to manage change. All changes have a starting point and end point; therefore, the change process is everything that happens between those two pints that one should understand. This involves multiple steps that are typically grouped into preparation, implementation, and follow-through stages. For this study, the researcher agrees with Stobierk (2020) that any change has a starting point. The newly appointed principal should know what should be done before suggesting any change such as analysing school performance and study school policies. The knowledge institution is imperative for effective change management. At the end of each change, there should be an evaluation of the effectiveness of the implementation and the new idea that might have been introduced.

In preparation stage, the manger must focus on the preparation both organization and employees. This involves helping the employees to understand the need for the impending transition and outlining the vision and plan for achieving it. Implementation stage, the change manager is focused on executing changes in a way that is compatible with the company's vision for future. The last stage during understanding process is follow-through

where the manage focuses on ensuring the change sticks and becomes embedded in the company's culture and practices. Understanding the forces of change also a crucial tip to the manager to manage change. Here the manger must know the pressures that are driving change and know if the pressure is coming from leadership or external pressures such as development of new technology, shift in your industry or a new competitor. The manager must create a plan that should communicated with the other employees. Although you could have communicated your plan, prepare for road backs as a manager (Stobierk, 2020).

When it came to the implementation of the decision, the company paid the price for its communication mistakes. Managers and workers feel alienated and feel that they had never been considered. Managers do not feel prepared to handle the barrage of questions they uncounted the previous day and no one can be comforted by a binder. Some people can vote with they feet and simply do not go to the new headquarters if change is not properly managed. Others could be more destructive and disengage themselves from any real effort to make the company successful but if they are in the payroll. Managing change is crucial and critical (Duck, 1993). For this study, managing in a democratic culture is not easy, for the people know their rights. Some of the educators might resist to change and give their reasons which do not improve the working system or improve an institution. The school leadership as managers of change must understand Human Rights so that whatever initiative is introduced should not undermine the rights of the individual. In the democratic culture, educators have unions that stand for the educators' rights. However, there are school principals who appear to introduce change in their workplaces without a plan of action. They change things that do not need to be changed and with no communication with staff. In this instance, conflict may arise because educators would be afraid of such change which can be for them, more especially if it might have not been discussed in the staff meetings. The researcher confirms what Stobierk (2020) alluded.

Managing change is not a simplistic issue hence it is challenging in many organisations. This includes preparing and supporting employees, establish the necessary steps for change and monitoring pre-and post-change activities to insure successful implementation. Developing a structured approach to change is critical to help to ensure a benefit transition while mitigating disruption. Effective communication is one of the most important skills for effective change management. All involved must understand the progress through the various stages and see results as the change cascades. Resistance to change can be defined as any obstacle that becomes an implement to implementing change. The source of resistance is often individuals or groups, but it can also be systems or processes that are outdated or that fail to fit current business conditions (American Society for Quality, 2023). For this study, strategies for change management should be design before the implementation of the new idea. Educators could resist as individuals or as a group if they are not part of the process. Therefore, communication is significant in managing change so that educators themselves could drive reform. Educators would listen to you at different levels, some could on marginal level, evaluative level, or active level. Moving from one culture to another is not feasible if there are no strategies in place. The principal must prepare to respond to questions from educators and allow those educators who understand change to respond to some questions so that those educators who do not understand change can take it from their colleagues' perspectives. Change management should not be one man's responsibility to limit conflict, although it is crystal clear that it not easy to introduce change without conflict from unknown.

Since the advent of democracy, some school principals are experiencing numerous challenges in their schools such as resistance to cooperate by some staff members and unwillingness to recognize the leadership of principals who do not affiliate to the same educators' union. Other school principals happened to resign due to pressure from their educators. Therefore, if experienced principals are under pressure, this implies that the newly appointed principals could even experience worse. Managing people in a democratic culture is not a simplistic issue, especially those who might have applied for the promotional post but could not succeed. Such people claim to know much about the school. Hence to manage those educators is not easy as they are too suggestive. The literature about managing change and conflict is discussed below.

2. Literature Review

A significant organisational change can be challenging. It requires many levels of cooperation and may involve different independent entities with an organisation. Changes usually fail for human reasons, the promoters of the change do not attend to the healthy, real, and predictable reactions of normal people to the disturbance of their routines. Effective communication is one of the most important success factors for effective change management (ASQ, 2023). Change is an individual event, so there are human factors to consider. That means the more adoption an organisation gets from employees, the closer it is to achieving the desired outcomes. Resistance to change is the norm in organisation, especially in change-saturated environments. Managing the people side of change drives a higher speed of adoption and an improved proficiency.

Change management's primary objective is to drive and support the realisation of the desired future state and the achievement of the expected outcomes. Change is often a necessity due to external or internal circumstances. The changes we focus on, are those that aim to achieve some purpose. The fundamental need to achieve an outcome provides the motivation and the values, that demands our attention (Hiatt & Creasey, 2023).

Resistance to change can occur when people perceive the change as a threat and that results conflicts between individuals and groups. The sources of conflict in change management are also power struggles. Power struggles can occur when people compete for influence, resources, or recognition in the change power. Power struggles can result in hostility, sabotage, or polarization. To resolve power struggles, one needs to establish clear roles and responsibilities, foster collaboration, and cooperation, acknowledge and reward contributions and mange any conflict constructively. Competing interests result conflict in change management. Competing interests occur when people have different or conflicting goals, values, or preferences in relation to the change. To avoid this, one needs to identify and understand the needs and interest of each party, find common ground and mutual benefits, negotiate, and comprise and build trust and commitment. To deal with different sources of conflict in change management, one needs to use conflict management frameworks to analyse, diagnose, and address the conflict effectively (Linkedin, 2023).

For this study, the principals of should know that the implementation of change can fail, therefore, they must evaluate their strategies. Where there a resistance by some of staff members, the principal must address the resistance individual and avoid generalising because this could be unfair to those who are ready for change. Managing change in a democratic culture would never be like managing it before the advent of democracy. It is, however, magnificent to have knowledge before deciding to implement change in your school. The researcher disagrees with Haitt and Creasey (2023) that change is an individual event. Change should be a team event because all people that can be affected by change should be involved in the implementation of change. Unless educators are involved in any change in their workplace environment, chance of success is too limited hence conflict can be accelerated. Although there is a change of leadership, the newly appointed principal can still take the plan forward that is in place as long as he/she will achieve the objectives and the outcomes of the school. Some of the newly appointed principals failed by changing things that do not need to be changed instead of adopting and adapting.

Change management is a systematic approach to deal with the transition or transformation of an organisation's goals, processes, or technologies. The purpose of change management is to implement strategies for effective change, controlling change and helping people to adapt to change. To be effective, the change management strategy must take into consideration how an adjustment or replacement will impact process, systems, and employees within the organisation. There must be a process of planning and testing change, communicating change, scheduling, and implementing change, documenting change, and evaluating its effectiveness. Challenges of change management include resource management to manage physical, human resource and financial resistance by people affected, communication of changes relating to the employees, new technology can disrupt an employees' entire workflow and multiple points of view (Lawton G & Pratt M.K, 2023).

To implement change successfully, determine why the change needs to happen in the first place, what are you trying to achieve and why is that goal so important? How will the change benefit your organisation, people, and process? Once you have settled on the overarching goal for your initiative, it is helpful to understand what factors often trip up business leaders along their change management journey. Change management models can be adopted to be successful in your change management such as ADKAR model. Resistance as a problem can be limited in the organisation by the outcomes such as awareness, desire, knowledge, ability, and reinforcement. In addition, create a sense of urgency by focusing on presenting the change as an urgent and exciting opportunity and also show case to those impacted by the change that it will help them to be more productive and do their job more effectively, roll out in phases by avoiding overwhelming your team with too much change all at once but gradual change is more accessible to adopt than significant changes all at once, address resistance by addressing any internal hesitancies from the beginning, use a variety of training methods and establish change leaders that will help to motivate the entire team to push forward with the transformation (Wathfix, 2023)

For this study, the research agrees with Wathfix (2023), that principals of school should try to get different models for change management to be successful in their management of change. Therefore, principals must analyse the models and then adopt that which is appropriate to his/her school. Some principals appeared to have failed in change management due to lack of knowledge ability to implement change. It is fundamental to develop an aspiration of change in your educators so that they develop such desire for implantation of change.

A proselytising ideologue leadership can hardly succeed in managing because in the democratic culture, people ask questions, and they are critical and rational. Therefore, principals should never have preconceived ideas, but rather have forward thinking when planning to bring change in their schools as newly appointed in their post.

Generative leaders strive to leave the world better than they found it. They seize a rare opportunity to do better not just for their shareholders, but for their customers, for their teams, for society and for the plant as well. Generative leadership believe that their obligation to society and the planet is at the core of their business not just an afterthought. They reimagine leadership as a team sport. They adapt to changes conditionally. They build resilience in their team by ensuring a balance between sprints and recovery (Caye, Hemerling, Lovich, Humblot, Potier & Werner, 2022). The complex adaptive leadership model argues a leader could oscillate between the role of a leader on one day and a follower on the next day and a key principle is to move through these roles seamlessly and with easy. Leadership practice in extreme context needs to be considered in the leadership theory, where the leader is required to assemble individuals to solve different problems and to flourish by being agents for change with the ability to adapt to the new context (Mayet, 2021).For this study, the principal should try by all means to move a school from effectiveness to improvement, The principal should design strategies for problem-solving and also change to adapt to new innovations. Try to build team in a school so that change can be facilitated by individuals in that school. The researcher concurs with Caye, Hemerlin, Lovich, Humblot, Potier & Werner (20220 & Mayet (20210.

Reflective practice refers to the process of learning through and from experience towards gaining new knowledge, A leader and followers are a common group thar affects the reflective practice of leaders. Leadership is an emerging process, creating co-evolving ways using characteristics, capabilities, thought, feeling and behaviour that reflect leadership's experiences and struggling. There are unable to form meaningful relationships, mutual understanding, and interaction, neither with their material surrounding nor the fellow human beings (Van der Steen, Van Saane& Van Dijk,2021). The process of reflection and analysing priorities and practices in education offers several benefits to professionals and professions. The benefits may involve helping them to reflect and expand their awareness of ways to practice that helps their profession critically develop analyse the role of other stakeholders. Their experiences may even serve as tools for encouraging and supporting critical thinking (Young,1998). For this study, newly appointed principals should demonstrate their experiences in new working environments. Their experiences could bring awareness to members of staff on different ways for tackling a problem. The problem that might be related to learners or educators. Both the leader and the follower should reflective what they know about the institution and leadership so that they can share common practices. If they share common practices, they can even identify each one's role for the benefit of the institution.

The ability to manage change and conflict in the workplace effectively is a critical competence for managers and supervisors. However, there are tips for managers and supervisor that can help them to manage change effectively. These include thinking about one's own reactions to change before helping one's subordinates to adapt change and one must be aware that one's behaviour about change can affect the behaviour and reactions that one's staff can have about the change. One must communicate with staff clearly and honestly about the changes that are taking place at work. One should not assume that the staff knows much about what is going on. When one is communicating about change, explain what is changing, why it is changing, how it is changing and when it is changing. One should also emphasize what is not changing so that staff can know what will stay the same for them. When each process has its own way and pace, one should understand that staff may experience shock, denial, anger, resistance, and fear. Therefore, one must take time to discuss these reactions with one's staff and acknowledge that they are all normal reactions. Encourage staff to work together to learn more about the change and how it will affect them. Celebrate small wins as one will be in the transition of change (Human Resources, 2024).

If change is managed poorly and conflict goes unresolved, the costs in human capital can quickly grow to an alarming proportion. When an organizational change happens, people personalize it and make it about themselves. They start to believe that change is happening to them, for them, or against them. Therefore, leaders need to understand that resistance to change is not based on ill-will toward the company, but on the fear of unpredictability. When experiencing a change at work, most people ask themselves questions, such as am I going to have a job? and what is in it for me? Some changes create more upheaval than others. These behaviours include looking for new positions, exhibiting a decline in productivity, gossiping about sensitive office issues. Derailing behaviours create increased stress levels in the workplace, which can affect morale and even employees' health and well-being. One should expect these changes to create a certain amount of workplace conflict and be prepared to manage it, making it productive rather than disruptive force (Zielinski, 2022).

For this study, newly appointed principals should have competence to manage change and resolve conflict amicably and harmoniously in their respective institution. Competence refers to a complex structure of attribute needed for good performance. Social and emotional intelligences are critical attributes of leaders which are, therefore, imperative for the newly appointed principal to manage change and conflict. Unless one understands one's reaction to change and the behaviour of educators, one can hardly implement change successfully. One must understand emotions to enable to manage and resolve conflict. A leader should have ability to facilitate emotion into decision-making process under difficult situation. One can be successful in resolve conflict if one understand that emotions can grow from low to high emotions. As a leader do not promise much but less so that you provide much. The researcher agrees with Human Resources (2024) and Zielinski (2022) that there are people who think that change is for them and about them. Some of the educators happen to resign or take early retirement thinking that change is about them by personalizing it. Hence some reach to an extent of reapply for appointment after realizing that change was not for and about them.

Change in turn can cause conflict to occur between people in a personal or business relationship. If it is a small change that is not worth the same of arguing or worrying about, one needs some time to calm down or needs time to gather more information about the situation, and then consider avoiding the conflict altogether. One can avoid conflict by leading the room, ending the conversation, or quitting the project. It allows one to place an emphasis on the things that the individuals in conflict have in common to de-emphasize the reason for the conflict. This can happen if one makes accommodation. Change may not necessarily mean all or nothing, so find a way to compromise what needs to be changed and what may not be as important. Compromise requires give and take from all parties involved in the conflict. Handle one issue at a time to deal with a conflict. Change can be overwhelming, but conflict can be disconcerting. Start with the smallest issue first and if is resolved, then move on to the next and more complex issue. Continue the process until one can resolve, accommodate, or compromise on each issue. Although one may not be able to control when a conflict arises, one can control when the conflict is addressed. Choose a time when all parties involved are willing and able to address the issue (CHRON, 2024).

To be successful in change management with conflict, use empathy to place oneself in one's employees' shoes, acknowledging that change can be frustrating and frightening. Alleviate fears and quell misapprehensions by being prepared to answer questions in an open, honest, and direct manner. Working collaboratively with employees to address the gamut of emotions that may arise will ensure that employees feel heard and understood, helping them to understand and ultimately accept the new situation. Leaders should create a solid communication plan and execute it effectively. One must be transparent to employees, explain why the change is happening and how it benefits the organization, helping them to see the larger picture and long-term benefits. Ask suggestions from the employees and work with them to keep the lines of communication open. Many organizations struggle with the conflict and upheaval that normally arises due to change (Zielinski, 2022). For this study, newly appointed principals should be transparent to staff so that they can be supported. If one communicates with educators, frustration and fear could be less because they would know what change all is about. It appears that some principals do not community and get suggestions from members of staff. For this reason, they experience resistance and conflict usually arise in such a situation.

3. Research Design and Methodology

The researcher adopted Exploratory Case Study Approach within a Critical Paradigm. A Critical Paradigm aims towards the empowerment of the participants and focuses on the ways to change the situation. A case study is a systematic and in-depth study of one case in its context. This aims to describe the situation in any area and generally descriptive in nature. The researcher aims to capture the reality of the participants' lived experiences of and thoughts about a particular situation (Christiansen and Bertram, 2014). The researcher employed qualitative technique for data collection. The researcher selected newly appointed principals including three female and three male principals. The names of the principal and school identified for the study remain undisclosed for confidentiality.

The participants make a total of six (6). Some of the newly appointed principals were not welcomed in the new working schools, hence the rationale for selecting those welcomed without dispute. The purpose of selecting those participants was to find out their experiences in new work environment and to identify challenges. Again, the researcher wanted to find out how they were managing change in those working environments. Semi-structured interviews were conducted in their respective working environment at their convenient time. The same open-ended questions were used for the interviews of all participants. That helped in the validity and reliability of the measuring instruments. The purpose of using the same questions was to find out how each principal was managing change in a fastidious school. Their responses were recorded in a reflective diary and audio-recorded and then transcribed by the researcher. The responses to the interview questions were presented as an inductive

research report. The findings reflected that managing change is not a simplistic issue especially in a new working environment. The participants were afraid of the challenges. Their responses to the same question were compared and analysed using data matrix and then interpreted.

4. Theoretical Framework

The study was underpinned and driven by conflict theory. Conflict theory happens where groups compete for resources and power. The competition is the foundation for all our social interactions and relationships. This includes social change and shifts in power dynamics result from sudden change (Wall Street Mojo, 2023).

Managing change refers to managing the conversation between the people leading the change effort and those who are expected to implement the new strategies for managing the organizational context in which change can occur and managing the emotional connections that are essential for any transformation (Duck, 1993). For this study, managing change refers to control people during transformation that resulted from the change of leadership that could be from outside or within the staff members or employees. This includes the resilience and the ability to influence other employees to work towards the achievement of the vision of the institution or organization. The ability to implement strategies and decisions made for the transformation of the institution or organization.

5. Conceptual Framework

For this study, the conceptual framework includes change management and conflict theory. These concepts drive and underpin the study and are explained below:

5.1 Change management

Change management is a process of planning, implementing, and evaluating organizational changes to achieve desired goals and outcomes. Change management often involves dealing with various sources of conflict, such as resistance, misunderstanding, power struggle. And competing interests. Resistance to change can occur when people perceive the change as a threat to their status, security, comfort, or identity. Resistance can be manifested in different ways such as denial, avoidance, passive or aggressive behaviour, or active opposition. Another common source of conflict in change management is misunderstanding of change. Misunderstanding of change can occur when people have different expectations, interpretations, or assumptions about the change (Linkedin, 2023). For this study, change management is a process of introducing new plans or strategies to improve the performance of an institution. This includes the allocation of work and responsibilities to educators. Change management may result poor or excellent performance of institution depending on how it has been implemented. Therefore, change management is one of the attributes of leadership and managers that needs development.

5.2 Conflict theory

Conflict is a natural disagreement resulting from individuals or groups that differed in attitude, beliefs, values, or needs. This can also originate from past competitiveness and differences. Conflict can be affective conflict or cognitive conflict. Affective conflict occurs when two or more interacting entities become aware that their ideas and emotions are incompatible, which is also known as relationship conflict. Cognitive conflict occurs when two or more interacting social entities become aware that their thought processes or perceptions are out of step, which also known as task conflict. There are several types of conflict that can affect both our social and working lives, such as conflict within the individual-this conflict is generally caused by uncertainty about an individual's work role or work load and this can lead to frustration because personal goals are not obtained that may result in emotional behaviour, conflict between individuals-this conflict is caused by differing personalities or when two individuals are competing for the same resources and this can be disruptive and lead to toxic work environment as each person strives to become dominant and fulfils his/her needs and conflict between individuals and groups- this conflict occurs when an individual is pressured to conform to the wishes or standards set by the working group (Kitman and Mclay,2016). For this study, the research agrees with Kitman and Mclay (2016) because conflicts in schools occur within individual, between individuals and between individuals and groups. These result from different personalities, uncertainty about an individual and competing for the same resources. An individual can be pressurised to conform to the standard set in a particular school. However, conflict theory should determine all activities that must be done to with any conflict that may arise in managing change. This theory should guide newly appointed principals on how to address any conflict in their respective schools.

6. Results

6.1 The individuals' responses to interview questions

Their responses were recorded and then transcribed by the researcher. The participants used their experiences to respond to the interview questions. The purpose of the interview questions was to find out if the participants could manage change in their institutions with all challenges and how they were managing change in their respective work environments. The aim of the research was to encourage and build the capacity of the newly appointed school principals to be strategic in managing change in their schools under all circumstances. Their responses were discussed below:

6.2 The participants' approach in the first staff meeting

The first participant pointed out that his/her first staff meeting was to discuss his/her school plan with educators. The participant alluded how things would be done throughout the year. In the discussions, year plan, allocation of work, assessment strategies and extramural activities were included. The second participant indicated that the first meeting was to know and understand the vision and mission of the school before start working. In addition, staff members were introduced to one another as well those in the School Management Team (STM). Staff members were encouraged to work hard as a team and tried to remove fear of change within the staff members. On the first day, the participant wanted to see school policies to understand them to avoid contradiction. The third participant showed that he/she explained the importance of organogram in a school for smooth running. Furthermore, the school target and strategies were discussed in the first staff meeting not excluding the performance record of the school. The fourth participant said that all he/she wanted to see on the first day was the attendance register and assured that every staff member had signed it. Again, the participant allocated duties and responsibilities to all educators as well as the learners to their classes. School financial report was presented to the participant. The fifth responded ascertain that his/her first meeting was to assure readiness of colleagues towards working as a winning team. The first meeting was organised to share the vision and mission of the school, discuss school year plan and the allocation of subjects to educators. The sixth participant showed that the first meeting was about the distribution of work and the formation of school committees so that they could start working.

The reaction to the interview question indicated that the participants brought year plan to the staff members for discussions. The first staff meeting included the allocation of work to individual educators as well as the introduction of the organogram of the school management. According to the participants, attendance register of educators should be discussed in the first staff meeting. The vision and mission must be introduced to all educators for the smooth running of the school.

6.3 Participants' expectations on the first day in a new working environment

The first participant indicated that he/she expected to see that everything was well arranged in the school including the arrangement of classes with desks for learners. He/she further showed that learners should receive books on the first day. The second participant pointed out that warm and affable welcome was expected in a new working environment on the first day. The participant expected that everybody would participate in all the activities that could be introduced. Everyone was expected to contribute to what could be raised in the meeting to create a conducive working environment at the same time. The participant expected to see happy and motivated people who could work together towards the achieve the set goal in a new work environment. The third participant pointed out that he/she expected educators to be on time and well prepared for teaching. Learners were expected to be in uniform, and in time. Learning and teaching were expected on the first day of arrival. The fourth participant ascertained that self-discipline between educators and learners was expected. The participant expected cooperation and respect amongst educators and the principal. The fifth participant anticipated positive responses with enthusiasm to carry out given tasks and responsibilities from staff members. The six-participant confirmed that he/she expected to see happy, motivated, and free people working together towards the achievement of the school goal. Teaching and learning were expected on the first day.

The answer to the interview question showed that participants expected warm and affable welcome to their new work environment. The participants knew that happy, motivated, and cooperative educators could contribute much towards the achievement of the school goal. The participants expected well-arranged classrooms on the first day so that teaching and learning could take place. They were aware that a good start determines the end results.

6.4 Participants' feelings in a new working environment

The first participant showed that he/she was not free in a new working environment because he/she was not accustomed to that environment. He/she wanted someone to orientate him/her first to understand the culture of that school. The second participant indicated that both educators and him/her were not free in that school. They were afraid of one another. He/she was not certain if the educators and learner in that school would well come him/her and cooperate for the development of the school. He/she was not sure if he/she would manage change in the school. The third participant confirmed the anxiety that was so predominant. He/she was afraid of some educators who appeared to be older than the participant. The fourth participant reported that he/she was afraid of the new challenges. He/she was not sure if educators and learners would well come the new leadership. The fifth participant pointed out that new environment was a challenge, more especially addressing many educators and learners. The sixth participant confirmed that he/she was afraid of not accepted in a new working environment like others who were not well come in other schools. He/she was not sure if what he/she would introduce could improve the school performance.

The participants' reactions to the interview questions showed that all participants were afraid of the challenges in the new working environment. They were not certain whether they would be welcome or not by the educators and learners. The participants did not know where to start to find out if educators and learners were ready to be under their leadership.

6.5 Participants' experiences on change management

The first participant showed that change management should start by looking or checking what should be done. What could be the outcome of what you would be planning to do. The purpose of the change should be made clear. The second participant indicated that to manage change, you must encourage other educators and motivate them to work hard. One should delegate responsibilities to other educators so that they should be part of change agent. The participant further confirmed that one who wanted to manage change should exemplify to educator. Encourage other educators to participate in the change that could be initiated in the school. The third participant pointed out that one should learn the culture of the school first. Never make unnecessary changes, change where change was due to avoid chaos and misunderstanding in a school. When you introduce change, one should not be too rigid, allow some alternatives to include all educators in your school. The fourth participant indicated that when you manage change, you had to give those educators who appeared not to cooperate more work to do. Respect and cooperation with educators were imperative in change management. The fifth participant reported that a diagnosis of the areas that needed change should be done first. Change awareness should be discussed with educators so that educators could also identify areas that needed change. One should assign responsibilities to educators so that they contribute towards change management. The principal would have to motivate educators to participate in the execution of duties with great appreciation. The sixth participant indicated that change could be managed by implementing policies. Unless one understood policy, one could hardly manage change in a school. You must encourage educators to read policies with understanding so that they could implement them.

The feedback to the interview question reflected understanding of change management as not a simple issue. The participants were aware that educators should be involved in all initiatives for change to be successful. It was not the responsibility of the school leadership to identify areas of change, if one wanted to avoid resistance, but educators must participate in the identification of areas of change. In addition, departmental and school policies should be understood so that any change could not be contrary to the policy.

6.6 Participants' first preference of change in a new work environment

The first participant pointed out that change was not a simplistic issue, therefore, he/she suggested that one should take time to identify an area of change and identified strategies that could be used to bring change in the school. The participant further suggested that unnecessary change must not be done to avoid confusion. The second participant suggested that the attitude of educators towards hard work should be changed immediately. In this regard, the principal should be an exemplifier in whatever he/she did. School performance should also be changed towards excellency by setting a clear and ambitious school target. The third participant indicated that the first change should be done to reduce learners' absenteeism and school uniform. Furthermore, educators' attitude towards their work should be changed by motivating both educators and learners. Motivation was regarded as one of the best strategies to manage change in the school. The fourth participant indicated that the focus should be on curriculum by checking if educators were teaching subjects they qualified to teach. If some could be teaching subjects they did not qualify, they should be changed. Educators should be delegated to responsibilities that they had capacity and potential for.

The fifth participant showed that focus should be on school vision and mission so that all educators understand them. Educators should be motivated to own vision and mission of the school. If the vision of the school was not clear, change would be done to the school vision and mission. Again, curriculum delivery would be focused on so that there could be a change of delivery. The attitude of educators towards extra-curriculum activities should be changed. The sixth participant confirmed that the attitude of educators should be changed first so that they could enjoy their work. Those who had negative attitude towards their work should be motivated to work hard, sometime incentives for good work could be organised.

The answers to the interview question confirmed that the participants were aware that curriculum changed should be managed thoroughly. The attitude of both educators and learners is significant aspect to be considered first for management. Learners' absenteeism is one of the important areas of change in each school for the improvement of performance. Their responses indicated that all these could be managed through motivation and assigning duties to the educator who might have capacity and potential. Therefore, the identification of competence could help any person to manage change in a school, more especially in the democratic culture where educators were aware of their rights.

6.7 Participants' introduction of new ideas towards replacing strategies in place

The first participant showed that there should be an action plan before one could introduce new ideas to staff members. The action plan should be discussed by all members of staff to confirm if the idea would assist to improve school performance. The policy related to what was in the plan should be reviewed to strengthen and sustain the new idea. The second participant indicated that the idea should be discussed by the School Management Team (SMT) first in relation to the vision and mission of the school. The idea should be well articulated to the management for support so that one could encourage one another to work hard for the accomplishment of a set target. In addition, accountability should be encouraged to avoid failure to meet target. The third participant pointed out that before a new idea is introduced, an analysis of school performance should be done by all educators so that the principal could introduce ideas that could be relevant towards improving school performance. The idea should be introduced as an intervention strategy so that all educators could be responsible for the implementation. The fourth participant said that he/she would demonstrate new ways of doing things and the outcomes thereof. The ideas should be shared in a more polite way to encourage participation of all educators. Educators should be encouraged to discuss the idea before implementation. There should be an evaluation of the outcomes after each school term for continuation or abandonment of the idea. The strategies for the implementation of new ideas should also be discussed by the educators so that they could own everything. The fifth participant ascertain that new idea could be introduced after diagnostic analysis of each educator's performance and discussions. During discussions, he/she would appreciate the educator's good performance and also indicated areas that needed support. After he/she would have had performance analysis of each educator, the participant could the suggested new ideas. The ideas should be discussed in the staff meeting to find strategies for their implementation. The six-participant reported that one should bring an idea to educators in a staff meeting so that they could discuss it. Allow educators to compare your idea with the strategies that were implemented in excellent performing school. Allow educators to make a comparative study of performance before you could finalise your idea. The change should be aligned to the strategies used by excellent performing schools only.

The responses of the participants to the interview question reported that educators were of paramount importance to any change that could be made in a school. Although the principal of a school could have an idea, that idea should be discussed in the meeting so that all educators could be involved in any change in that school. The leadership could have suggestion after analysing each educator's performance so that all educators could understand change because they would all be aware that change was of significance towards school performance.

6.8 Participants' views on the failure of some principals in a new work environment

The first participant explained that some principals failed to manage change because they were afraid of educators. They appeared not to sure of their managerial strategies. The participant further indicated that they do not take responsibilities. They did believe in themselves. The second participant confirmed that some principals did not believe in themselves. Some were appointed without minimum qualifications of leadership with managerial skills. They were deployed through cadre deployment process rather than appointed on their competence. The third participant pointed out that they failed because some educators were so resistant to change. Therefore, they did not comply with the management nor policy. It was not easy to welcome a new principal more especially was not from the same school. There were principals without appropriate qualification, for that reason, they failed to manage change. Principals who did not further their qualification usually failed because they did not have strategies for managing change.

Principals who did not have appropriate qualification, appeared to be afraid of some educators who might have higher qualifications than theirs. The fourth participant indicated that some school principals failed to manage change because they work alone instead of involving other educators in the management. Therefore, educators could hardly support them that ultimately resulted failure. Again, some failed if School Governing Body (SGB) did not support their strategies. The fifth participant showed that some school principals appeared to fail because they introduced changes without making an analysis of strength and weakness of educators. In addition, there were school principal who seemed to treat educators unequally. Some educators appeared to be very close to principals hence such cosy relationship enabled the principal to manage change However, some were illtreated by some of members of management. Lack of vision and planning by some of the school principals appeared to be one of contributing factors towards their default. The sixth participant ascertained that they failed because they could not use different styles of management. Some just suggested things that they could not implement. They plan things without strategies for implementation. Equally, planning alone without strategies could not make difference in many schools.

The views of the participants to the interview question showed that were a variety of contributing factors towards the failure of some of the school principals in a new working environment. Some of those factors included inappropriate qualifications of some of newly appointed principal, unwillingness to further studies by some of the principals, poor participation by some of the educators could be detrimental to change management by some of the school principals and the resistance of some of the educators in the school. Therefore, the ultimate results were the default of the school principals to manage change. Some educators had illusion about themselves.

6.9 Participants' perceptions on the adoption of the culture of a new working environment for managing change.

The first participant pointed out that to manage change one should know and understand the culture of a school, otherwise one could fail to manage change. The second participant indicated that one should critically analyse the culture of a school so that one could adapt to that culture or not. The culture of poor performance should not be adopted nor adapted. The third participant showed that there was no need to adopt a culture of underperformance; one should change that culture for the benefit of the school and community. The fourth participant confirmed that the culture of underperformance should be change immediately although it could be difficult for those who were adapted to it. The fifth participant ascertain that a culture of good results should be adapted and adopted by a newly appointed principal if he/she needed to be warmly welcomed in a new school. If the current system of operation was not up to standard, the operation procedure should be changed for excellent performance. The sixth participant indicated that a good manager should change a culture of bad behaviour of both teachers and learners as soon as he/she started working in a particular school.

The responses to the interview question showed that the participants agreed that a culture of school should be scrutinized before one could change it or not. The culture of excellent performance should never be change but rather be adopted and adapted. If it was underperforming culture, the newly appointed principal should change the culture from a participatory action approach to avoid resistance. One should not have illusion about oneself when managing change in this regard.

7. Discussions

A successful change management process that is realistic, achievable, and measurable change are implemented smoothly by successfully engaging all the people involved in the change. Strategies should be designed to involve, prepare, equip, and support individual to adopt and adapt to change to move from their own current states to desired future state that can help to deliver effective results that achieve your organisation strategic vision (21st Century CM, 2020). No organisation can afford to stand still without challenges to meet and better ways of doing things. However, every change needs to be planned and implemented with care, otherwise it could end up doing more harm than good. Therefore, managing change should be planned to ensure that changes are implemented thoroughly and smoothly and have the desired impact. In addition, there are four core principles of a successful change management. These include understanding change, planning change, implementing change, and communicating change. Understanding change refers to know the reasons for change, what will be the benefit of change in an organisation and what will people need to do to successfully achieve the change. A successful change does not occur by chance but needs plan to be right for any organisation. Strategies need to be developed to implement change in any organisation. Successful change leaders show characteristics such as ability to build coalitions and inspire trust, strong communication skills at every stage, emotional intelligence, and the ability to think strategically and link the change to the big picture (Mind Tools, 2023).

For this study, the participants appeared to be aware that planning is significant in the implementation of change, although they have different views with regard the starting point of managing change. The fact that there are always challenges in change management, they are aware of this. The ability and quality of leadership will determine the whole process. No principal can accept failure hence it is precarious. Emotional and social intelligence are all crucial in change management. This includes the ability to identify emotions, understanding emotion, managing emotions and ability to facilitate emotion to decision-make process. The newly appointed principals must have ability to see and know what other educators might be thinking about when he/she arrived on the first day. Hence conflict can hardly be avoided because managing change and conflict cannot be separated but they can only be distinguished. Educators who might have applied the same post cannot keep quite due to the change that happened in that school whereby someone from another school has to manage them. Conflict happens irrespective of planning or without planning. The ability to manage conflict is a critical skill in this situation.

Managing organisational change is complicated, therefore, leaders must align people to the reason for change, often working against long standing habits and beliefs. Organisations are more likely to succeed when they plan change initiatives proactively and engage employees before, during and after the change. For leaders, to be successful in managing change, the leader should put people first, people fuel change and sustain its momentum. Change initiatives fail when people involved do not understand, believe in or engage in the change. Leaders make change easier when they engage employees in the change. Leaders accomplish this through proactive change management communication that creates a desire to change across the workforce. To make change happen, leaders need the right tools to guide them. Change management models help leaders to connect business strategy to action, that increases the likelihood of success. Communication is an essential part of effectively managing organisational change. A vision of change is only powerful as the communication that supports it. Leadership's impact on change is well understood. Many leaders do not understand the role they play in the change. Employees can better understand the rationale behind a change when organisations prioritise purposeful, consistent communication. There will be both high and low points during change initiatives. Therefore, leaders can proactively manage and leverage them. Do not ignore resistance (Hannum, 2021).

Managing change includes changing the organisational culture and employees' attitudes. The top-down transformation efforts are teared out and participatory approaches are adopted for change. Managing change is tough, but part of the problem is that there is little agreement on what factors most influence transformation initiatives. Many change management gurus have focused on soft issues such as cultures, leadership, and motivation. All these elements are important for success, but managing these aspects alone is not sufficient to implement transformation projects. All these can happen only if there is communication with employees, but it is not easy to change attitudes or relationships, they are deeply ingrained in organisations and people. Companies should formally review transformation projects at least bimonthly because is possible that change initiatives could run into trouble rises exponentially when the time between reviews extends eight weeks. The are middle managers who want block change (Harold, Keenan & Jackson, 2005).

Change management is in four types. These include anticipatory, reactive, incremental, and strategic management change. Anticipatory change occurs where organisation makes changes in response to something expected to happen. Reactive change happens in response to an event that impacts the business. Incremental change is a series of changes., usually at micro level that adds up to wider overall changes and strategic changes are made at and filtered down from a higher level and impact the whole organisation. An example of this is the change in leadership or organisational structure (Coursera, 2023). For this study, change management refers to the changes that occur to the leadership of school due to the promotional posts. This change management is not easy more especially if the leadership to the post can be from another institution. The newly appointed principal has obligation to change the attitude of educators in a particular school. Sometimes the relationship in that school might be too cosy to manage the school. Therefore, the principal has use strategies to change such type of relationship that does not help educators to improve school performance. Change management should bring better change to the school than to deteriorate the operating standard procedure.

In Minnesota, the principal's responsibility is to inspire and support change so that the school can improve from its performance to ensure that best outcomes for all pupils, strengthen the professional practice of staff and all other stakeholders. Changing is always challenging, even where it is necessary, and principals play a crucial role in guiding school through the process. Principals leading change must understand the change dynamics within their school's context and work directly with learners throughout the school to manage the change process Experience has shown that simply implementing a new framework or process in a complex organization does not lead to substantive, sustainable change.

Principals who create impactful, lasting change within their schools understand the vision for their schools and identify foundational barriers to achieving that vision (Department of Education,2019).

Principals are not adequately prepared with the knowledge and skills to effectively lead change. It is not too late to develop training programs that can prepare principals to be more effective in facilitating change. Transformational leadership supports change leadership by promoting a shared relationship that transforms both the principal and the followers and foster mutual support and increased self-awareness to achieve a positive goal. Principals believe that they better trained in change than they really are, and when they are given opportunity to identify change principles, they can identify them. The principalship requires ongoing acquisition of knowledge (Action,2020). For this study, the researcher agrees with the Department of Education (2019) & Action (2020) that school principals should be trained to develop knowledge and skills that would assist them to develop strategies for managing change in their schools, although there might be other principals who could assume that there no problems in their schools. The findings clearly reflect that there is a need for principals to be developed through training programs. Unless they are developed, it appears that some of the challenges would be insurmountable more especially principals who can find themselves in a new working environment.

8. Conclusion

Managing change in a democratic culture is not a simplistic issue because all people including employees such as educators know their rights. They know what should be done or/ and not to them. Therefore, once you are a manager, you must know your subordinates so that when changing things in a school you should involve all educators. Change should be succinctly and diligently communicated to avoid resistance. Any new idea should be discussed with educators before the implementation process. Educators have the right to defend their private self-interest through their labour unions. It is also advisable to think of the strategies that could be used to take an idea into practice. Build and develop the capacity of your educators so that they could contribute to any change in your school. Subject allocation change should also be included in a school because there could be educators who might be teaching subjects which were not part of their specialisation. Establish a culture of excellent performance on arrival in a particular school for the benefit of the school, community, and the entire country at large for better economic development. Promote a culture of teaching and learning and facilitate cooperation between educators and learners. A school is malleable like all other institutions. Any change should be rationally made rather than to be influenced by contingent self-interest. Presumably, a leader must be abreast of different models of managing change to enable to make a comparative analysis of study, so that you can choose an appropriate model for your school. Therefore, the findings imply that school principals need development that could sustain and strengthen a responsibly coherent professional. School principals should be encouraged to be lifelong learners to acquaint themselves with knowledge and skills. They need wholly support from all stakeholders responsible for the education of learners.

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