

Research Article

# Understanding the Role of Structural Change Management from Employees' Perspective: A Case Study for Hawassa Industrial Park

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## Abstract

This qualitative research aimed to show that to exploring the understanding of the role of Structural change management from employees' perspectives in Hawassa Industrial Parks under Ethiopian Industrial Parks Corporations. This specific study attempted to emphasize on the role of structural change management for structural change performance enhancement. The study on structural change management from employees' perspectives employed qualitative exploratory method to capture the experience and perception of employee's. For this specific study in the study area data source would be only primary data. Data collection method was semi-structured in-depth interview made with the eight employees and one supervisor from eighteen companies with in the Hawassa Industrial Park. The data were analyzed by using thematic & content analysis. The research on structural change management from employees' perspectives has the finding of training related, experience related, perception related and administrative body related aspects hindering change management. Finally the study recommended that the companies in the industrial parks, National and regional government and industrial park's administrative bodies should apply open door policy to exploit eternal opportunities and the employees in the companies also should be open wise to adapt as well as to exercise change management. Over-all study suggested some limitations for other researchers.

## Keywords

Change Management, Employees, Industrial Park, Perspectives

## 1. Introduction

Above the previous few years, the working situation of corporations and officialdoms has changed rapidly [1]. Change emanates in all forms, customs, and sizes and therefore, it impacts all officialdoms in all [2]. Change described as a imprecise corkscrew appearance because it is changeable [3]. Globalization, technical change, digitalization and changes in labor force, are just little examples of changes that requires action from organizations.

Today organizational change, or also known as organizational reform, is the new normal and ever-present element that forces organizations to adapt their activities in accordance to the changing environment. Changes can be triggered by external factors or it can evolve from internal pressures. Change can be rapid and radical, long-term changes and everything between [4]

The topic of structural change is getting more attention

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than ever [5]. Academic fields such as intellectual capital management, governance, and psychology, have studied structural change from different perspectives. Looking at the number of publications with the keyword of “structural change or organizational change” in Google Scholar exposes the growing concentration into this topic over the years. From 1980 until 1999 there were around 3700 publications on organizational change whereas from 2000 until today there were around 10300 (Google Scholar).

## 2. Statement of Problems

Management viewed obstacles to structural change as being a concern of worker resistance, adaptation the change ineffective [6]. Change management model might provide a decrease in employees’ resistance to change, thereby successfully instituting change management in the structure [7]. The overall business problem in this study was that employees are regularly not a part of the process in any new or upgraded system implementation that directly affects their job as well as structural performances. When managing structural change, management usually decides how a change will take place and what method will be used to integrate the change, without involving the employees [8]. The precise industry problem is that the role of change management from employees perspectives. This study is a qualitative holistic case study and the population of the study is the permanent employees of a Hawassa Industrial Park.

In Ethiopian situation there are various researches conducted in the area of change management [9]. In this research of change management established that time is the most determinant factor to evaluate the role of change management in the organizations because it is difficult to evaluate the role of change management or transformation in short period of time. The employees were not handled a good affiliation on the change practice of their organization due to these facts, the organization could not provide the coherence changing system to the workers [10]. The structural change management aspect is influenced by both external and internal dynamics [11]. The main external environment is government and the main internal environment is employee’s resistance toward change management. The investigator employed qualitative research method for this specific title. But, as it is shown clearly on the review literature part, most of the researchers were employed mixed method approach, secondary data sources, deductive approach and descriptive method data analysis tools. In addition to this, none of them were employed purely qualitative research approach.

Thus, a framework of research gap earlier researchers has the methodological gap that all the researchers were employed mixed method approach and descriptive method of data analysis. Whereas, this research would be done based on qualitative exploratory research approach by employing only the primary data sources based on the perception, opinion,

attitude and belief of the employees [12].

## 3. Research Questions

- 1) How the current employees perceive the role of change management?
- 2) How do you analyze the extent of institutional forces impact toward change management?
- 3) What are employees’ contributions for change management?

## 4. Objectives

### 4.1. Main Objective

The main purpose of this article was to assess the role of structural change management from employees’ perspective: A Case Study of Hawassa Industrial Park.

### 4.2. Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of this article were:

- 1) Headed for explore how the current the employee perceive change management.
- 2) To analyze the extent to which institutional forces impact the viability of change management.
- 3) To inform employees contributions in the role of change management of Hawassa Industrial Park.

## 5. Contributions of the Study

This article would make several impeccable methodological, practical, and academic contributions. From the methodological point of view, while most of the prior studies used quantitative research approaches to study the issues of change management. This study would use qualitative approach to explore the role of change management from employees’ perspectives in the study area. So, it would pave the way for other researchers to use qualitative approach to conduct research in this area. Practically this research would assess and reveal the existing change management practices in the study area and the result might be useful to the concerned body like Ethiopian Investment Commission (EIC), Industrial Park Development Corporation (IPDC) and to the association of foreign investors to look into the policies, regulations and reports of change management practices. Academically change management, its role and employees perception is an under researched area and there is lack of literatures in Ethiopian context. So, when finalized it might be useful reference for future researcher in the area.

## 6. Review of Related Literatures

### 6.1. Conceptual Clarifications of Change Management

The concept of management of change defined as the actual management of a corporation change such that top level leaders, managers and frontline workforces work in recital to successfully implement the needed process, technology or structural changes [13]. While others defined change management as the process of constantly recommencing an organization direction, structure and capabilities to work for the ever changing needs of external and internal consumers [14]. Many others scholars asserted that change are an ever present feature of structural life, both at the operational and strategic level. Due to its importance, change management is becoming overbearing and needs suitable managerial skills and strategy [15]. For firm to continue, succeed and remain competitive in today's highly unpredictable and continuously evolving corporate environment, it must be able to successfully manage the change which is as a matter of fact a necessity. Even though there has not been consensus as to the framework for structural change management, there seem to be an agreement on two important issues One, there is a consent that change, being triggered by internal or external factors, comes in all forms, customs and sizes [16]

### 6.2. Theoretic Context

The theoretic context for this study is the eight step model to transforming a business as suggested by Kotter [17] for businesses. This model is illustrated as surveys by Kotter:

- Phase 1: Forming a influential superintendent coalition;
- Phase 2: Not establishing a great enough sense of urgency;
- Phase 3: Generating a vision;
- Phase 4: Communicating the vision;
- Phase 5: Enabling others to act on the vision;
- Phase 6: Arrangement for and creating short term wins;
- Phase 7: Joining improvements and producing still more change;
- Phase 8: Institutionalizing new approaches.

The data collected from interview contributors would be scrutinized in order to test the configuration of Kotter's eight step models to the insights of public sector employees as to what strategies are required to create change that achieves desired results in public sector organizations. Based on these findings, strategies for public sector organizations to use in creating change that achieves their desired results will be recommended.

## 7. Research Methodology

### 7.1. Research Design

Research strategy is the roadmap for achieving research goal/goals and answering research questions. In other words, it is a master plan specifying the methods and procedures for collecting and analyzing the needed information [18]. The main purpose of this article was to examine the role of change management from employees' perspectives in the case of Hawassa Industrial Park. The article employed exploratory research design with a qualitative research approach. Qualitative research includes a diverse range of approaches. Some of these include phenomenology, grounded theory, Case study, ethnography and interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA) to name just a few for this study, a qualitative research approach particularly interpretative phenomenological study would employ [19]. Exploratory research design emphasis on the discovery of ideas and insights [20]; thus, it enables the researcher to get the role of change management. The purpose of using interpretative phenomenological study is to exploring & understanding the lived experience of a specified phenomenon. It is phenomenological in that it is concerned with the individuals' lived experience and explores personal perceptions and meanings attributed to an object or an experience [21]. The explanatory phenomenological study allows obtaining the contributor's personal perception about change management. Therefore, this enables us to identify change management from employees' perspectives in the study area.

### 7.2. Study Population of the Study

Currently 18 leading foreign companies are operating their business in Hawassa Industrial Park (HIP). So, the target population of this study permanent employee working in HIP.

### 7.3. Sampling Design

Sampling is the process or procedure of choosing a suitable sample for determining parameters or characteristics of the whole population. Sampling procedures are classified into probability and non- probability techniques. In probability sampling, units of the population are selected by fortuitous & every unit has a fixed probabilistic opportunity of being selected. Probability sampling requires a precisely defined population and a sampling frame. Non-probability sampling is based on the personal judgment of the researcher in selecting the sample units [22]. For this study, a Purposeful sampling method has been used for the selection of participants. Purposeful sampling is commonly used in qualitative research. It involves selecting research participants according to the needs of the study; in that researcher choose participants who give a richness of

information that is suitable for detailed research [23]. From eighteen companies, eight permanent employees and one supervisor were selected as participants purposely. Selection criteria were inclusive and enable the researcher to get sufficient data about the role of change from employees' perspective.

#### 7.4. Sources of Data and Methods of Data Collection

For this article personal interview would be employed. This is because; interviewing is the best technique to use "to find out those things we cannot directly observe feelings, thoughts, and intentions" [24]. All the interviews would be conducted both in Amharic language and Sidamu Afoo; they would be expedited by one research assistant and investigator himself. In-depth interview questions would be employed to undertake personal interviews. In the beginning, the investigator would prepare interview questions and undertaken a pilot survey. This was mainly based on the belief that this approach would allow respondents to describe their experiences or feelings and also to check further revision was needed prior to conducting the study. All questions were derived from the literature reviews and conducted at Hawassa Industrial Park. An informed consent notice would be presented to each informant for signing before the start of the interview. The total duration of each interview has been taken 180 minutes. Thus, the total amount of time spent for interview tenacities amounted to approximately three hours. A list of questions would be used at the beginning of the interview to guide the informants' participation. The informants would be invigorated to prompt their thoughts freely on the aspects of their perception. All the interviews have been audio-recorded and then are translated into the written form of data at the early stages of the data collection. Mainly notes have been also taken during the interviews to capture informants' emotions such as nodding, laughter, smiles, frowns and other indicators for each response from the participant.

#### 7.5. Data Analysis

Data collection and analysis must be a simultaneous process in qualitative research. The researcher states that qualitative data analysis involves classifying things, persons, and events and the properties that characterize them [25]. To achieve the aim of this study investigate the role of change management from employees' perspective. The data collected through interviews would be recorded and incorporated. All the data acquired also would be inspected and would be categorized recombining the evidence to address the phenomenon under study. The identity of the informants would be remained confidential in line with the ethical norms and considerations. A coding process would be utilized for this purpose. The entire interviewer would be

coded as R1, R2, and R3, R4, R5, R6, R7, R8, for permanent employees with Industrial Park. The supervisor also would be coded as M1.

#### 7.6. Reliability and Validity

In order to attain reliability in a study, different precautions can be taken, such as making sure that the questions are interpreted in the way in which the researcher/s planned and the same study should have similar results if it is conducted at a different point in time [26]. Validity is the ability to measure what one intended to measure, and construct validity involves the operational measures for the studied subjects [27]

In order to assure the reliability and validity of this study, the researcher would take different measures. To ensure reliability interview questions would be prepared based on literature review and to make the participants comfortable all interview would be translated into Amharic language and Sidamu Afoo. The pilot survey would be undertaken to check the interview question further revision is needed prior to conducting the study and also during the data collection detailed field notes, tape for recording and organizing the collected data would be employed. To ensure validity data collected from different sources would be triangulated. To build the participant's trust approach participants closely and using Amharic and Sidamu Afoo would be employed.

### 8. Data Analysis and Discussion

#### 8.1. Introduction

The data collected through the interview were transcribed and then integrated. All the data acquired were examined and categorized recombined the evidence to address the phenomenon under study. The themes identified within the data include a) experience of permanent employee toward change management b) the perception of employees c) the attitude of employee d) the belief of employee about the issue). To identity of the informants remained confidential in line with ethical considerations. During analyzing the data, coding is essential in qualitative research [28]. The researcher developed themes and subthemes, then explained them in this chapter. A coding is a process of utilizing the data for analysis purposes. The entire interviewers were coded as R1, R2, R3, R4, R5, and R6 R7and R8 for permanent employees respectively. The supervisors of HIP also the informant of the interview were coded as M1.

#### 8.2. Results

The structure of the reporting the result of this exploratory study has been organized in the framework of four issues of apprehension in this study. The main issues are experience, employees' perception, their change management attitude,



the employees' changes belief, the degree of changes.

This study is focused on understanding the role of change management from employees' perspective in Hawassa Industrial Park. In this park there are eighteen companies. From these companies only eight employees and one supervisor were selected and also 8 employees and one supervisor were interview informants. Their ages put as chronological order 26, 28, 22, 23, 31, 45, 37, 33, 35 Educational background of the four of them are finished 10+2, (R1, 42, R3, R4) four are accounting professional graduate in degree (R5, R6, R7, R8). The supervisor educational background is a graduated in degree of engineering his age is 35.

The researcher divides the interview question into two groups those are employees and supervisor so the researcher uses different interview schedules provided for discussion as a discussion guide line.

### 8.3. The Four Main Theme

#### 8.3.1. The Result of Employee In-Experience Related Challenges

Change management is crucial and important for organizational holistic transformation but facing different challenges due to experience of employee about change management. The concept and application of change management is unsmooth due to lack of experience in employees' routine operations. These challenges affect not only the employees but it affects various operations of companies with in the Industrial Park of Hawassa. So the discussion is presented according to the informant responded were coded as R1, R2, R3, R4, R5, R6, R7, R8, for employees and M1 for supervisor respectively.

According to the interviews conducted all informants respondent that they have faced experience challenges while operating in the companies. However, in Hawassa Industrial Park, a very limited number of employees got training and experience sharing opportunity about change management. The other challenge of employee is the working place related to obtain experience about the issue. According to the respondent, responds all of the employees facing the challenges when operating their operation within the companies ".....at performing the operation they facing different experience related challenges (R1), (R2), (R3) (R4), (R5), (R6)..... The challenges of employee are more series technical staffs and employees due to lack of exposures to obtain change management related seminars and training. So all respondents have challenges at preforming the activities on the context of change management. Failure to acknowledge the past could be one of the biggest and most important aspects of change recognition in the need for organization history and changes [29].

According to questioner number two and number four the informant is responded to how the challenges they encounter at preforming the business they mentioned as follows.

According to respondent, they respond as follows the most critical one is lack of exposure to enhance skills relate with change management. R1....routine operations is exploiting the time of experiencing change management even if there is experience sharing ... (R3), R5, R6, R7, and R8. ....responded similar reaction for this questions

According to the data collected from the supervisor of a company he has identified the problem of employees or not his responses was mention as... yes (M1), identified the experience related challenge of employees.

According to questioner number two how the employees supported to get experience (M1) the respondent said the employee get change management, experience through on job training rather than off job training and experience sharing programs.

In general, the supervisor respond to the questioner question M1 and he know the challenges of employee their response is the same.

#### 8.3.2. Perception Challenges of Employees Toward Change Management

According to the informant respond all respond perception is not good about the change management practice of the companies because of different challenges to maintain their perception supports the employees by delivering training and mentoring program to improve their perception.

According to the supervisor of one company he responded that, it is difficult to talk our company is not serving the employee according to their problem of change management. The change management literature also proposes that perceptions about the appropriateness of change are extremely significant during organizational change [30]

#### 8.3.3. The Attitude of Employees Toward the Role of Change Management

All the informants respond reflex their filling to word different administrative body according to their response challenges facing commonly during their operations ..... According to (R1) the administrative body must plan in change management awareness creation ..... I want to see the plan of awareness provoking plan from administrative bodies of our company. Attitudinal problem is my problem if I get awareness about change management another thing is simple as the respondent said .... (R2)..... Yes, I think administrative body should overcome this problem by providing as enough awareness creation opportunity and follow up (R3). The issue of employees has become a series because of the socio-political change of external environment. According to the informant, all the respondents need support from the administrative. a considerable raise in attitudes of employees towards aptness of change once the deliberate change realization [27].

### 8.3.4. Belief of the Employees

The challenges facing commonly during company run those challenges are mention accordingly but according to questioner number two ..... According to (R1) she responded as the experience aspect... The most challenge for my work (R2). ..... I have a different problems but I couldn't get encouragement from concerning body about change management ..... (R3) so all respondent have a problem, all of them need the awareness creation, training and follow up from supervisors and others administrative body.

### 8.4. Summary of the Result

The finding of this study is revealed that in Hawassa Industrial Park most employees that facing challenges toward the understanding change management. These challenges are making hinder their day to day operation in work place. Lack of experience was clearly stated problem of employees and also the problem of awareness is the other problem. To operate the operation in the company is also affected by the poor attitude of employee toward the concept and application change management. The companies also not informed about the role and applications of change management in routine work activities rather than technical information. The other critical challenge facing the employee is the working area of their company is suitable and overloaded. Thus create a negative perception toward the management system the companies.

The other problem of the employees was perceived to lack of incentive as the most important barrier to adapt change management because the employee have salary and other incentives questions rather than change management concept and implementation. As the data indicate the government policy, the administrative body rigidity and lack change of management understanding is the failure for employee the Hawassa Industrial Park. The other is obstacle, as societal perception and resistance to change. Interestingly, employees consistently perceive barriers to change management to be slightly larger than the incentives especially concerning body or organizational culture. On the other hand, most of employees were react if the intervention of administrative body increase our change management problem got a solution in the area of training, incentives, work place suitability, work division, follow up of activities.

The knowledge, skill and experience of employee are also the other factor for growing concept of change management in the companies.

In another hand, the employees come from different backgrounds and families set up, that their problems facing in the change management perception were no more different. The major challenges are lack of awareness and sufficient knowledge of the change management interrelated concepts and activity, working place suitability, lack of confidence and skills. The other issues that the informant reflex was

most of them answering understanding change management are very important to the employees themselves and the organization at large.

### 8.5. Limitation of and Further Research

The first limitation of this study is it is based on nine respondents because of qualitative research takes time, though we cannot oversimplify the outcome. All the respondents conducted through interviews. Purposive sampling technique has been employed, so it has its limitation it does not give equal chance for respondents. Future studies should reflect the research forwarded direction. The research is conducted at Hawassa Industrial Park only; a future researcher might be the focus on at regional and national levels. There is also the problem of common method bias because qualitative research is used in this study. In general, this research is a means for future studies it contributes new knowledge to the existing body of entrepreneurship literature.

## 9. Summary, Conclusion, and Implication

### 9.1. Summary

Based on the finding the conclusion is present as follows permanent employees are employees who are stable for long period with in organization with their perspectives of change management. Most employees are very near to change management concept even though they might resist application of the concept due to different reasons. The employees faced different constraints in the companies change management like lack of experience, lack of awareness, attitudinal gap, and perception related gaps, administrative bodies related constraints and other policy related shortcomings. These and others not researched factors hindering the understating of employee toward the role of change management in Hawassa Industrial Park. Thus, for a sustainable growth and performance the experience, skill, understanding of employees and perception are very important and vital too.

### 9.2. Conclusion and Recommendations

The problems of understanding the role of change management from employees' perspective were lack of experience, training exposure, attitudinal gap and belief of the employee on behalf of change management.

The basic requirement of employees in the area is to facilitate in the area.

- 1) Training and experience sharing exposure for further effectiveness should be adjusted.
- 2) Policy related suitability and administrative body

should be involved in change management practice.

- 3) At the national level management enhancement and change management equipping center for sustainable productivity of government and non-government organization should be expanded.
- 4) The supervisors in the parks also need formal training and development. Formal training exposure for supervisors should be available.
- 5) The employee need legal protection and provision regarding with change management.

### 9.3. Implication

This article is important for the government and businesses to revise the policy associated with change management, intellectual capital management, business related, and legal/administration, fiscal, societal/cultural and other factors that affect the understanding of the role of change management. It also empowers them what types of policy need to be adopted to encourage the participation of employee in change management. Finally, the study benefits other investigators to predict the role change management & its practice in structural performance in the same study area and also provide the deep understanding of the critical issues that upset the perception of employees in general.

### Abbreviations

EIC	Ethiopian Investment Commission
IPA	Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis
IPDC	Industrial Parks Development Corporations
HIP	Hawassa Industrial Parks
IP	Industrial Parks
R	Interviewees
M	Supervisors

### Author Contributions

Paulos Manedo Hafebo is the sole author. The author read and approved the final manuscript.

### Conflicts of Interest

The author declare no conflicts of interest associated with financial benefit, commercial and other affiliations.

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