

Citation: Kajongwe, C & Chinyena, E. (2020). Dynamics of Change Management Practices and Performance of Private Schools in Zimbabwe: Focus on Harare Metropolitan Province. *Journal of African Interdisciplinary Studies*, 4(4), 57 – 65.

Dynamics of Change Management Practices and Performance of Private Schools in Zimbabwe: Focus on Harare Metropolitan Province

By

¹Dr. Collen Kajongwe, PhD, ²Earlmeth, Chinyena
Midlands State University, Zimbabwe

Email: kajongwec@staff.msu.ac.zw/codzakajongwe@gmail.com:

Phone number: +263 77 4198 231

²University of Pretoria, Private Bag X20, Harfield, 0028, Republic of South Africa

Abstract

The study analyzed performance of private schools in relation to change management practices in the context of Zimbabwe. Organizations around the world are putting tremendous energy into the process of change so that they are in a better position to compete in a global economy and this have a significant impact on internal structures and operation of schools, and drive them to change. The study was only centred on private secondary schools in Harare Metropolitan Province in Zimbabwe. Research indicates that the Province constitute a high percentage of registered private secondary schools. The respondents in this study came from relevant Ministries and head teachers of private schools. There are 500 registered private secondary schools in Harare Metropolitan Province. This research used 50 private secondary schools in Harare Metropolitan targeting head teachers. This sample size is calculated from the 10% of the population basing on the rule of the thumb. Probability sampling was used to determine respondents for the quantitative data. The research adopted the positivism philosophy because it was interested in getting meaning assigned by respondents (Interpretivism) while accepting that reality is also quantifiable. The study was mainly quantitative as it was ideal to identify factors and related variables. This study adopted the cross-sectional survey research design and made it possible to measure both the exposure and outcome in a sample of the population at a point in time. The population of this research were all registered secondary private schools in Harare Metropolitan Province. Quantitative data was collected by semi structured questionnaires. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques such as frequency distributions and percentages. Multiple regression analysis was done using SPSS software. Results were presented using tables. The school managers stated that they moderately practiced aspects of planning, committed leadership, workforce alignment, stakeholder involvement and had defined governance structures in their institutions. The study found out that change management practices adopted by the institutions significantly influenced performance of private secondary schools in Zimbabwe. The study recommends the need for comprehensive change management practices to increase performance in the education sector in Zimbabwe. Through this study, results-based change management practices are outlined. Longitudinal studies could be conducted to surf efficacy of change management practices in other institutions of higher learning.

Keywords: Change Management, Private Schools, Harare Metropolitan Province, Zimbabwe.

Citation: Kajongwe, C & Chinyena, E. (2020). Dynamics of Change Management Practices and Performance of Private Schools in Zimbabwe: Focus on Harare Metropolitan Province. *Journal of African Interdisciplinary Studies*, 4(4), 57 – 65.

Dynamics of Change Management Practices and Performance of Private Schools in Zimbabwe

By

Collen Kajongwe & Earlmeth, Chinyena

Introduction and Background of the Study

In the contemporary world, business environments are undergoing continuous change more suddenly and frequently than before. Organizations around the world are putting tremendous energy into the process of change so that they are in a better position to compete in a global economy (Friedman, 2005). Acevedo (2009) asserted that with technological advancement and global awareness in parts of our daily lives, it is imperative for educational change to become a priority. Burtonshaw and Salameh (2011) alluded that change has now become a regular feature of business life as part of the desire for continual increased business performance through involvement of other stakeholders for it to achieve a long term and lasting success. Sayılı and Tüfekçi (2008) argue that in order for a system to sustain and to be effective, it needs to adapt itself to the ever-changing conditions around itself. Rotherham and Willingham (2009) alluded that implementing change is a huge part of meeting new global demands and making needed changes in schools on staff morale and productivity. It is assumed if schools implement change practices, they could improve service delivery, quality, innovation and motivation.

Ritchie and Lewis (2009) posits that planning the change and ensuring its sustainability through successfully managing and implementing it is crucial for schools to improve itself, to respond to demands, and to successfully continue to exist for a longer time. Greener (2008) pointed that in the change process leaders had to focus directly on the organization, that is, its culture, structure, and processes. Subsequently, change is not just adoption and implementation but real change involves nurturing such improvement strategies as collaboration, actively shared leadership, data-driven decisions, high-quality instruction, teacher commitment, and student effort as well as staff morale and productivity (Denscombe, 2010). Burke, (2012) was of the opinion that the leader must be able to recognize where the organization is and be able to see where the organization could be by implementing a plan to move the organization in the direction of the vision.

Change is a difficult and a painful process for organizations. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) was of the opinion that when goals of the change are in unity with the goals of employees, change is better supported by the employees. Factors forcing the education system to change provide school administrators with new roles and responsibilities to fulfil in order to manage this process of change effectively, and requires them to gain necessary knowledge and skills to this end (Gökçe, 2005). An increase in educational reforms to improve school performance has been rampant in all institutions of higher learning globally. In this regard, Rotherham and Willingham (2009) asserted that various activities are implemented to improve and develop current schools, for example school development, school centred management, learning school, and total quality management on one hand, whereas on the other hand alternative school models are being used. Many concepts are used for such reforms to improve processes and products of education such as school restructuring, school reform or school development (Goldenberg, 2003). It is assumed that the position of school administrators' response to such expectations or validation of the change perception may be associated with their being open to change. School administrators are expected not only to exhibit leadership or management ability in relation with openness to change, but also to orchestrate starting, managing and evaluating the change process. Competent managerial qualities

Citation: Kajongwe, C & Chinyena, E. (2020). Dynamics of Change Management Practices and Performance of Private Schools in Zimbabwe: Focus on Harare Metropolitan Province. *Journal of African Interdisciplinary Studies*, 4(4), 57 – 65.

are needed to determine strategic directions for a school to take and to creatively solve business problems, (Scheule & Sneed, 2001).

There are several studies conducted as regards organizational change. Some are theoretical studies on change management, change and leadership in educational institutions, management of organizational change, change in education systems, effective schools in the process of change, organizational culture in the process of change, roles of school administrators and teachers in change and innovation, and resistance to change in the process of change (Ada & Akan 2007; Beycioğlu & Aslan, 2010; Çalık, 2003; Çolakoğlu, 2005; Gizir, 2008; Güçlü & Şehitoğlu, 2006; Şahin, 2007; Tunçer, 2013). Besides, there are various quantitative studies on school administrators' competencies for managing change, role of leadership in change, administrators' readiness attitudes towards change, strategic planning and organizational change (Akkoç & Ergen, 2015; Argon & Özçelik, 2007) and qualitative studies on the use of planned change process for school improvement, managers' views on school change processes, and views of primary school administrators about innovative changes in education (Gökçe et al., 2013; Madden, 2008; Uğurlu, Doğan, Dağdelen, & Çetinkaya, 2013). A review of the literature has not revealed any study examining the views of private school administrators on change in schools and change management practices. Besides, studies found in the literature investigating change in schools are mostly theoretical, and this subject has not been sufficiently dealt with from a quantitative perspective. However, there is dearth of information on the effects of change management and performance of private schools in Zimbabwe which this study seeks to address.

Statement of the problem

Successful management of change is accepted as a necessity in order to survive and succeed in today's highly competitive and continuously evolving environment. Poor success rate indicates a fundamental lack of a valid frame work on how to implement and manage change process. Despite the efforts made to introduce change in the way schools are managed, effective implementation of these changes and their management still remains questionable within. Poor execution of drivers of effective change management is still seen as a key hindrance towards achieving improved organizational performance (UNDP, 2006). Schools are often perceived as resisting change due to the difficulty of precise definitions of their results and the uncertainty of their outcomes. This study is motivated by the fact that earlier studies carried out failed to focus on establishing the efficacy of change management practices in private schools and their effect on performance which this study seeks to address in the context of Zimbabwe.

Objectives

1. To analyse the efficacy of change management practices on performance of private schools in Zimbabwe.

Hypotheses

- H₁:** Organisational culture positively improves innovation in private schools in Zimbabwe
H₂: Organisational policy positively improves service delivery in private schools Zimbabwe
H₃: Educational policy positively improves motivation in private schools in Zimbabwe
H₄: Leadership positively improves productivity in private schools in Zimbabwe

Citation: Kajongwe, C & Chinyena, E. (2020). Dynamics of Change Management Practices and Performance of Private Schools in Zimbabwe: Focus on Harare Metropolitan Province. *Journal of African Interdisciplinary Studies*, 4(4), 57 – 65.

Methods

The study was guided by the positivism research philosophy, which embraces the adoption of pluralistic approaches in research (Cresswell et al., 2003). The cross-sectional survey research design was adopted. Therefore, this study adopted quantitative research methods. The study's population was made up of all registered secondary private schools in Harare Metropolitan Province. There are 500 registered private secondary schools in Harare Metropolitan Province (Finscope, 2018). This research used 50 private secondary schools in Harare Metropolitan targeting head teachers. This sample size is calculated from the 10% of the population basing on the rule of the thumb (Heilbron, 2016). Probability sampling was used to determine respondents for the quantitative data. The research used semi structured questionnaires to collect quantitative data. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques such as frequency distributions and percentages. Results were presented using tables.

Theoretical Framework

This research is anchored in Kotter's (1996) model of change. Kotter's (1996) perspective focuses on structure as a significant tool for the efficient achievements of organizational goals. It emphasizes the role of management in deciding such structures and determining the specific goals that are to be achieved. Under this perspective, organizations are entities without people and the emphasis is on control (Bennis, 2013). Organizations respond to change as a complex educational strategy intended to change beliefs, attitudes, values and structure so as to better adapt to new technologies, markets, and challenges, and the dizzying rate of change itself. Kotter (1996) developed a model which should be used at the strategic level of an organization to change its vision and subsequently transform the organization. Studies using this model here shown that the change process goes through a set of phases with each phase lasting a certain amount of time and mistakes at any phase can impact the success of the change.

The eight stages are each associated with fundamental errors which Kotter believes undermine efforts at transforming organizations. This contains useful advice for managers on trying to overcome inwardly focused cultures and paralyzing bureaucracy. Kotter (1996) suggests that there are critical components that are necessary for leaders to change an organization that is clearly understanding the strategies to be changed and defining critical success factors; communicating the strategic change objectives to the work force and finally reviewing each of the work elements to identify their degrees of alignment into support of the business strategy. The pace of change is categorized by the rate of occurrence. This could be discontinuous (Luecke, 2003), incremental (Burnes, 2004), or continuous (Balogun & Hope, 2004). Grundy (1993) defines discontinuous change as change which is marked by rapid shifts in strategy, structure or culture, or in all three. It is assumed rapid change can be triggered by major internal problems or by considerable external shock.

Literature Review

2. Change management in relation to enhancement of private schools

Educational institutions require change because demands of parents, educators, learners and society continually change in response to changing life demands (Mergal, 2000). Therefore, as Mergal (2000) asserts, if the school is true to its mission, change is inevitable. However, schools' function within many directives from education authorities. Todnem (2005) asserted that authorities prescribe through various legislative directives and policies how matters at school have to be undertaken. Amongst other things, Acevedo (2009) alluded that directives are provided regarding usage of financial and human resources, school governance as well as curriculum matters. This may

Citation: Kajongwe, C & Chinyena, E. (2020). Dynamics of Change Management Practices and Performance of Private Schools in Zimbabwe: Focus on Harare Metropolitan Province. *Journal of African Interdisciplinary Studies*, 4(4), 57 – 65.

give a sense of direction to the school and lead to the non-recognition of the need for renewal and adaptation to advancements that require change. Indeed, this may even lead to tensions and conflict regarding the independence of schools to self-manage and renew.

Managing change effectively will help to reduce the stress of change especially on the side of people involved (Kolbo & Turnage, 2013). Managing change mirrors, the "grieving cycle" which include shock, fear, anger, denial, sorrow and acceptance with regard to change in schools (Burke, 2012). Kolbo and Turnage (2013) asserted that adoption of change practices by schools is spearheaded by the need for management and administrators for strategic planning. A facilitator for the systemic change process must help the community develop a vision of their ideal educational system, stakeholders must create and take ownership of a shared vision of the new educational system, and everyone must develop a passion for their new vision. (Jenlink, Reigeluth, Carr, & Nelson, 1996). To achieve such consensus, the group must have the ability to process what is needed to achieve the vision, working in a safe environment. The group must have a sense of ownership, which is fostered by empowerment; in other words, the group must have the ability to initiate the change the members desire (Jenlink et al., 2016).

Private Schools in today's business world are facing increased responsibilities, particularly preparing students for high stakes with limited resources to meet these goals (Manasse, 2015). It is assumed that as expectations are increased school funding has not been increased. Responsibilities for school teachers have also increased and school leaders have worked hard to try to balance their daily duties (Manasse, 2015). All of these stressors can impact on the change processes implementation in private schools. With all of the responsibilities and expectations of school leaders, leaders need to focus on morale and productivity of the staff members (Todnem, 2005). A positive school climate is beneficial for students and staff. A positive school climate increases academic performance, enhances social and emotional skills and retains teachers (Todnem, 2005).

Private school staff members face low morale as a result teacher's turnover is high thus impacting student performance (Acevedo, 2009). Teacher retention also has an impact on raising student test scores. A teacher typically needs to teach for five years to gain the experience necessary to improve student performance (Acevedo, 2009). It is assumed a school with a positive school climate increases staff morale. When teachers feel like they are contributing members of the school community, that their opinions are valuable, and that they have strong relationships at work, they are more likely to feel satisfied with their job. Teachers that work in caring and supportive school environments are more likely to face the school wide challenges and pressures for students to perform on high-stakes tests (Burke, 2012).

According to the National School Boards Foundation (2002), technology integration is as much about change and support for the change as it is about technology. The NSDC (2002) has indicated that without a high level of support, even the best learning opportunities either online or off will remain unused. NSDC (2001) has described eLearning infrastructure requirements as consisting not only of hardware, software, and high-speed connectivity, but also regular maintenance, planned upgrades, specially prepared faculty, and appropriate participant-instructor ratio. Technology is now essential for effective instruction treat technology as an integral too. Technology is assumed to address core educational priorities and improve student achievement and also make significant investments of time and money in professional development hence contribute to greater performance. In its report, E-Learning for Educators, NSDC (2001) concurred with these guidelines. Both professional organizations have emphasized the importance of the organizational change process that provides the foundation for the implementation of eLearning in schools. Furthermore, educators and researchers have agreed on the importance of faculty training and development to the success of eLearning implementation efforts (Kolbo & Turnage, 2002; NSDC).

Citation: Kajongwe, C & Chinyena, E. (2020). Dynamics of Change Management Practices and Performance of Private Schools in Zimbabwe: Focus on Harare Metropolitan Province. *Journal of African Interdisciplinary Studies*, 4(4), 57 – 65.

Kolbo and Turnage (2013) asserted that for institutions to remain at the forefront of higher education, faculty development initiatives are of prime importance for change management to be of any value.

The success of change is influenced by organisational attributes. Anon (2006) posits in this regard that the organisational culture and history play an important role in the change process and therefore understanding these attributes can assist in determining potential obstacles in implementing change. Various writers highlight the importance of effectively managing change (see Hay 8 Hartel, 2001; De Witt, 2004; Van der Westhuizen & Ther'on, 2002). Among other factors, the importance of effectively managing change is related to ensuring that change is implemented successfully and that resistance is limited to the change itself. In this regard effective management of change implies the following, ensuring that change fits the needs of the organisation, carefully planning, designing and implementing the change, reducing as much disruption in the organisation as possible so as to ensure that there is no loss of the familiar and reliable, there is no loss of authority and change is meaningful.

Regarding the implementation of change and its management, Blair (2000) asserts that the principal's role is that of articulating a vision for the schools so that everyone understands it and sharing influence, authority, responsibility, and accountability with the staff in shaping the vision so that shared ownership of the vision occurs checking or assessing progress, which is about monitoring and evaluation. Blair (2000) argue that these actions represent the principal's continual efforts to touch base with implementers, seek input about their needs and assess implementation progress in a formative mode, involve more formal data collection, analysis, reporting and transferring data and include summative evaluation purposes.

The school principal must create school organisational conditions that support change and its implementation (Manasse, 2015). This in essence implies an understanding and knowledge of the fundamental aspects of change, that is, how individuals respond to change and the general nature of change; and the knowledge of the change process itself. Kolbo and Turnage (2013) was of the assertion that in creating a school environment that is conducive to change, the principal must understand the cultural dynamics of the school and create a strategic practical course of action and balance the current reality with the need for rapid adoption of the desired reality. It is assumed that the leadership style of the principal becomes a critical aspect in the process of change in schools.

Results and Discussion

Respond rate analysis

Table 1: Response rate analysis

Description	Questionnaires administered	Questionnaires administered and not returned	Questionnaires administered & returned	Percentage of response rate
Respondents	50	12 (24%)	38 (76%)	100%

Source: Survey, (2020)

The study results indicate that (24%) respondents failed to administer the questionnaires distributed while (76%) respondents administered to the questionnaire. The success of high rate of respondents was attributed to self-administering of questionnaires by the researcher. This implies that respondents were much willing to articulate to change management issues in private secondary

Citation: Kajongwe, C & Chinyena, E. (2020). Dynamics of Change Management Practices and Performance of Private Schools in Zimbabwe: Focus on Harare Metropolitan Province. *Journal of African Interdisciplinary Studies*, 4(4), 57 – 65.

schools in Zimbabwe with the assumption of improving performance standards of the educational institutions. Figure 1 show change management practices in private secondary schools in Zimbabwe.

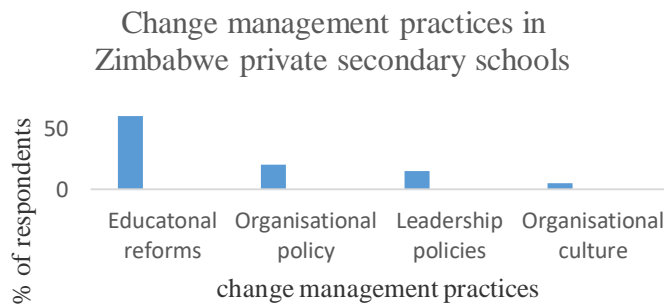


Figure 1: Change management practices in private secondary schools

Source: Survey, (2020)

The study results show that (60%) respondents indicate that they were implementing educational reforms as part of their change management in private secondary schools in Zimbabwe. In the same vein (20%) respondents indicated that they were implementing organisational change management reforms, (15%) respondents adhered to leadership policies and finally (5%) pointed to organisational culture reforms as part of change management practices. Inference is made to literature where Kolbo and Turnage (2013) asserted that adoption of change practices by schools is spearheaded by the need for management and administrators for strategic planning. A facilitator for the systemic change process must help the community develop a vision of their ideal educational system, stakeholders must create and take ownership of a shared vision of the new educational system, and everyone must develop a passion for their new vision.

Citation: Kajongwe, C & Chinyena, E. (2020). Dynamics of Change Management Practices and Performance of Private Schools in Zimbabwe: Focus on Harare Metropolitan Province. *Journal of African Interdisciplinary Studies*, 4(4), 57 – 65.

Table 2: Change Management Engagement

Factors	Responses		Frequen cy	Percent, %	Mean extent, μ	SD , σ
Educational reforms	Very large extent		10	26	3.3667	0.3261
	Large extent		20	53		
	Moderate		8	21		
	Total		38	100		
Organisatio n policy	Very large extent		28	73	3.1658	0.3460
	Large extent		6	16		
	Moderate		4	11		
	Total		38	100		
Leadership reforms	Very large extent		30	79	3.1646	0.3357
	Large extent		3	8		
	Moderate		5	13		
	Total		38	100		
Organisatio nal cultural reforms	Very large extent		6	16	3.2536	0.3267
	Large extent		28	73		
	Moderate		4	11		
	Total		38	100		

Source: Survey (2020)

The study results show the extent to which they involved in the change management practices in their learning institutions (See Table 2). The success of change management lies in the responsibilities of every stakeholder in the organisation (Manase, 2015). In this regard the group must have a sense of ownership, which is fostered by empowerment; in other words, the group must have the ability to initiate the change the members desire (Jenlink et al., 2016). However as illustrated in Table 2 most respondents concurred that change management practices in private secondary schools in Zimbabwe impacted positively to performance. Hence accepting H₁, H₂, H₃ and H₄ as positively significant.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Change is an inherent characteristic of any organization and like it or not, all organizations whether in the public or private sector must change to remain relevant. In conclusion, change is inevitable and change is development. Private secondary school education in Zimbabwe is a service on the move and has reached a point where there is need to exceedingly invest in some research and development as it becomes more competitive and hence a need to be in the know at all times. From this study the most successful change efforts have focused very heavily on the best practices of change management. Public Secondary Schools in Zimbabwe have realized and carefully institutionalized the change to develop organizational capabilities so that the change becomes a robust feature of the organizational context. It is suggested that responsible educational stakeholders in Zimbabwe must continuously monitor the ongoing change process for performance measurement. Frequent employee surveys and administrative walk-around are some means by which principals of schools, that are basically the change agents, may keep track of the

Citation: Kajongwe, C & Chinyena, E. (2020). Dynamics of Change Management Practices and Performance of Private Schools in Zimbabwe: Focus on Harare Metropolitan Province. *Journal of African Interdisciplinary Studies*, 4(4), 57 – 65.

sustainability of change. Successful change management strategies require not only an awareness of human behaviour, but also workplace evolutionary trends. This study has also yielded recommendations for further longitudinal research in institutions of learning country wide.

The study recommends that in the change process projects management is responsible for measurement and analysis of both processes and individuals during the change process. Staff must be made aware of their progress in new and developing settings as well as in familiar ones in order to draft and adjust personal goals and improve performance effectively. Therefore, measurement and evaluation should be designed to reflect the vision while motivating and initiating self-government of individuals in the new or transitional stage of the change process. It is clear that managing change requires a number of aspects as highlighted in the preceding section. It is also clear that managing change in a planned and orderly manner seems to evolve and requires unfolding over a series of phases.

Therefore, leaders have the power to and should provide an environment rich in opportunity and resource, in which employees are encouraged in the area of self-development. Placing staff appropriately is critical to ensuring that they become long-term contributors who can be counted on in periods of growth and transition. Effective change leadership understands that discerning the right fit of individual to position is critical to all present and future change endeavours and that ignorance in this area can be a costly flaw during periods of change. It can be asserted that staff development on a continuous basis is thus critical, especially with regards to implementation of externally imposed change like curriculum change as is currently the case in schools.

The study suggests a comprehensive framework to be developed for accurately measuring the relationship between change management practices and performance based on more objective responses by the school managers while taking into account the environmental factors that uniquely affect the institutions in the Zimbabwe context.

Citation: Kajongwe, C & Chinyena, E. (2020). Dynamics of Change Management Practices and Performance of Private Schools in Zimbabwe: Focus on Harare Metropolitan Province. *Journal of African Interdisciplinary Studies*, 4(4), 57 – 65.

References

- Acevedo, T. (2009). *Handbook of Human Resource Management Practice*. 11th Ed. London: Kogan Page.
- Bell, CH (2004), *Organization Development*, Englewood: Prentice Hall Inc.
- Burke, W. W (2012), 'Understanding the management of change an overview of managers' perspectives and assumptions in the 1990s', *Journal of Organizational Change Management*,
- Burnes, B. (2006). *Managing Change. A Strategic Approach to Organizational Dynamics*, London.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L. and Morrison, K. (2007). *Research Methods in Education*. 6th ed. New York: Routledge
- Creswell, P. (2003). *Research Methodology: Concepts and Cases*. Vikas Publishing
- Davis, M. H. & Harden, RM 2002, *Leadership in education and the strategy of the dolphin*, *Medical Teacher*. 24, No. 6, 2002, pp. 581-4.
- Denscombe, A. (2010) Business Research, Juta and Co Ltd, p.15
- Greener, S., (2008). Business Research Methods, New York: Ventus Publishing
- Hanson, E. M (2006), *Educational Administration and Organizational Behavior*, USA.
- James, C. & Connolly, U. 2000, *Effective Change in Schools*. London and New York, Curran Publishing.
- Kotter, J. P. and Cohen, D., (2002). *The Heart of Change: Real life stories of how people change their organisations*, Boston: Harvard Business School Press
- Lewin, Y., (2010). *Analysis and evaluation of organisational change approaches*. *International Journal of Business and Management*, 4(12), pp. 234-238.
- Manasse, H (2015) *A critical review of the role of leadership and employee involvement in organisational change*. *Journal of Innovation and Knowledge*
- Moran, JW & Brightman, BK 2001, 'Leading organizational change', *Career Development International*, 6(2), pp. 111–118.
- Morrison, K. 1998, *Management Theories for Educational Change*, Paul Chapman Publishing Ltd. London.
- Rotherham R and Willingham L (2009) *Leadership in Organizations*, Englewood Cliffs, N.Y: Prentice Hall.
- Ritchie, T and Lewis, R (2009). *Research Methodology*. New Delhi: APH Publishing Corporation
- Todnem, P (2005). *Understanding and Managing Organizational Change*, C. Mabey and B. Mayon White. London (UK), Paul Chapman Publishing Ltd in association with The Open University.
- Todnem, Rune. (2005) Organisational change management: A critical review, *Journal of Change Management*, 5:4, 369-380, DOI: 10.1080/14697010500359250