ORGANISATION DEVELOPMENT MODELS OR FRAMEWORKS

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I. INTRODUCTION

Recently, organisations cannot avoid the need of change and change become one of demanding issues faced by managers (Waddell, Cummings & Worley, 2003). In order to be successful, organisations must adapt to the environmental changes such as implementing downsizing, re-engineering, flattening, introducing new technology, or new product development (French, 1969). There are three major trends of environmental changes which stimulate change in organisations−globalization, information technology, and managerial innovation (Waddell et al., 2003).

Colvin and Kilmann (1989, cited in Harvey and Brown, 2001) conducted a research and found that 68% of the organization respondents were going through a very high level of competition and more than 15% of the respondents would closed down in the next few years if they did not make any change programs. Therefore, it is compulsory for the organizations to initiate and manage the change programs (Arena, 2002).
To gain sustainability in environmental changes, managers have to implement and master both incremental and planned change (organisation development); and dramatic and unplanned change (transformational change/organisation transformation) (Tushman & O’Reilly, 1996; Chapman, 2002). However, organisation development (OD) is a more desired state by many organisations because it is an introspective change process and creates continuous improvement, whereas organisation transformation (OT) is a reactive change process and dramatic to the environmental changes (Waddell et al., 2003).

Burke (1994) describes organisation development as a planned change process of organisational culture through by utilization of behavioural science technology and theory. Planned change refers to the activities that take place to initiate and perform successful organisational change (Porras & Robertson, 1987; Lippit, Watson, Westley, 1958). Similarly, Waddell et al. (2003) define organisation development as a planned change process that systemwide applies behavioural science knowledge and reinforcement of organisational strategies for the improvement of organisational effectiveness.

In recent times, organisation development is not so much as organisational behaviour or organisational psychology topics, but grows rapidly in professional practice and research (King & Anderson, 1995). Burke (1994) states that organisation development encompasses a wide range of practices with everlasting variations in them, such as team building, structural change, and job enrichment. Practically, it is generally implemented with the help or collaboration of external or internal behavioural-scientist consultants or change agents (French, 1969; Beer, 1980).

Organisation development is process oriented not outcome oriented which is aimed to improve the total system in the organisations and in larger environment covering strategy, structure, and process changes (Tushman & O’Reilly, 1996).

However, OD is perceived as a weak theory because OD is based on portions of behavioural sciences and several disciplines, and there is no single theory of OD because it is a very young field which was invented in 1960 (Burke, 1994).

Furthermore, during 1970’s, there has been an increasing dissatisfaction with this organisation development programs (Jelinek & Litterer, 1988). Quinn (1993, cited in Jelinek & Litterer, 1988) even argued that OD has been irrelevant because
organisations demand a better way of managing change. He stated that many OD consultants do not understand about business. Worren, Ruddle & Moore (1999) state that OD focuses the attention more to the social and psychological aspects of change whereas organisations need people who understand business world. They argue that OD tends to overemphasize on the changing of individual behaviour pay little attention to other elements such as structure, technology and system.

In addition, Burke (1997) viewed that the OD practice started to lose its values by the so-called management techniques such as reengineering and downsizing, which are designed to encourage flexibility and speed to response the external environment (Buchanan, Claydon, and Doyle, 1999). In contrast to Worren et al.’s view (1999), Buchanan et al. (1999) argue that the OD current change programs tend to offer a ‘quick fix’ and neglect human factor as the value of OD and ignore the underlying problems (Harvey and Brown, 2001). Some OD senior practitioners also believe that this profession has lost its way and values and are no longer sufficiently honoured and less practiced (Burke, 1997). OD practice seems to be imbalanced and fails to view organizations as an integrated system (Worren et al., 1999).

However, OD has been practiced for more than fifty years as a change program, and OD has become an important tool to help organizations to change in the highly changing and complex world (Cummings and Worley, 1997) and it was found in the study of Colvin that that 82% of the respondents benefited from the OD programs (Colvin and Kilmann, 1989, cited in Harvey and Brown, 2001).

Moreover, due to the growth of educational programs and professional societies in OD, this field continues to improve and generate new theorists, researchers, and practitioners to bring the contemporary issues of OD (Waddell et al., 2003).

This literature review will focus on what researchers and scholars say about organisation development models and frameworks that are used in theory and practice. There are many models proposed by scholars in this field. However, this literature review will discuss the primary basic model used in theory and practice - Action research model, Lewin’s three step change model, Schein’s elaboration of Lewin’s model, five phases of planned change model, and the general change model.
III. DISCUSSION

Most practitioners agree that there are three basic models which are used as guiding frameworks of any OD effort (Burke, 1994). Action Research model, Lewin’s three step model which further developed by Schein into more detail steps, and phases of planned change. These three models or frameworks are not mutually exclusive, but they are all came from Kurt Lewin original thinking and these models have been widespread and become the main basis for general model of OD (Burke, 1994).

Action research model originated from two independent sources – John Collier, a person of action who conducted a change in ethic relations, and Kurt Lewin, a person of research (Burke, 1994) who says “no action without research, and research without action (Lewin, 1952).

Action research model describe planned change as a cyclical process which involves collaboration of OD practitioners and organisation members (Coghlan, 2002). It heavily stresses on data gathering and diagnosis needed for planning, implementation, and evaluation of OD (Burke, 1994).

There are eight steps of action research model (Coghlan, 2002). The first step is problem identification – usually initiate by top management who sense that the organisations need help of OD practitioner to solve its problems (Burke, 1994).

The second step is consultation with a behavioural science expert. In this step, the OD practitioner and the organisation or the client share and help each other to establish collaborative atmosphere (Lewin, 1952).

Data gathering and preliminary diagnosis is the third step. This step is aimed to find the causes of organisational problems. The four basic techniques of data gathering are questionnaires, interviews, process observation, and organisational performance data (Elden & Chisholm, 1993).

The fourth step is feedback to key client or group. In this step, the OD practitioner reports the diagnostic data gathered in step three to the client. Joint diagnosis of problem is the next step to decide whether the two parties want to continue to solve the identified problems (Burke, 1994).

The sixth step is joint action planning. OD practitioner and the client plan the action will be taken based on the environment, culture and technology (Elden & Chisholm, 1993).
Action is the next step which implement the actual change in the organisations such as using new procedures and methods, work designs, structure reorganisation, building new behaviours (Lewin, 1952). The last step is data gathering after action in order to evaluate the implication of action which may lead to implement rediagnosis of the new action (Waddell et al., 2003).

The action research has inspired current approaches and has been expanded to new applications that create changes to its basic model (Elden & Chisholm, 1993). There has been a contemporary adaptation to Action Research model (Burke, 1994). Action research is now become more complex and must coordinate with multi change process and stakeholders diversity (Marshak, 1993). Action research has also been applied in the international organisations especially in the developing countries and this action research should adapt and be tailored to fit the different cultures in international settings (Elden & Chisholm, 1993). Furthermore, in general, two adaptations has taken place in action research – the significant increase of members involved in the change process (participatory action research) and the encouragement of positive approach – focus on when the organisations work at their best (Marshak, 1993).

Lewin’s change model is another OD model. This model is one of the fundamental models in OD, introduced by Kurt Lewin (Lewin, 1951). He states that this model is aimed to sustain balance between two forces in the organisations – people who preserve status quo and people who want to push for change (Lewin, 1951). Furthermore, he argues that enhancing forces for change will create more resistance and tension than modifying the status quo in the organisations (Waddell, et al., 2003).

There are three change steps in Lewin’s change model – unfreezing, moving, and refreezing (Burke, 1994). Unfreezing is the first step of change process. In this step, information is introduced to reduce prejudice and shows the inconsistency between desired behaviours of organisation members and the currently exhibited behaviours by motivating members of organisations to engage in change activities (Waddell, et al., 2003).

Moving is the second step which is the action implemented to change the behaviour of the organisations (Burke, 1994). This action which many OD consultants call intervention includes change the values and attitudes through changes in structures and processes in the organisations (Waddell, et al., 2003).
The third step is refreezing which means to stabilise the new level of behaviour or the new state of equilibrium (Cummings and Worley, 1997). It has many patterns such as collaboration not competition, new management approach, and new reward system (Burke, 1994).

These three steps seem to be simple, but they are not simple to implement (Lippit, et al., 1958). These steps are also relatively broad and have made some effort to elaborate them (Burke, 1994). One of the effort is provided by Schein. Schein (1987 cited in burke 1994) argue that those steps overlap even though they are distinct conceptually. He then elaborated Lewin’s model into some steps as discussed in the next paragraphs (1987 cited in burke 1994).

Schein describes unfreezing step as the step of creating motivation and readiness (Marshak, 1993). He elaborated the unfreezing step into three ways – disconfirmation where people feel dissatisfied with the current situation (e.g. high cost, low morale, low quality) and need for a change; induction of anxiety or guilt with the current situation and being motivated to achieve some future goals; and the creation of psychological safety where people believe that the changes will not create any harm o bad impact to them and the organisations (Marshak, 1993).

Schein divided moving or changing step into two steps – identification of a new role model, mentor, boss or consultant to see other people point of view; and scanning the environment for relevant and new information (Burke, 1994).

Schein elaborated refreezing step into personal refreezing - individuals fit the change into their self concepts; and relational refreezing - to assure the client’s new behaviour fit to the others (Burke, 1994).

The third OD model is phases of planned change introduced by Lippitt, Watson, and Westley (1958). There are five phase of this model (Lippitt, et al., 1958). The first phase is development of a need of change (Lewin’s unfreezing), e.g. providing data about organisation’s serious problems (Burke, 1994). The second phase is the establishment of change relationship by encouraging collaborative work between the client and the agent. The third phase is working toward change (Lewin’s moving step), consisting of sub phases: clarification or diagnosis of the client’s problems; examination of action intentions and objectives; and transformation of objectives and intentions into change action.
The fourth phase is generalization and stabilization of change (Lewin’s refreezing) by spreading the change to the entire system. This can be done by the structural support such as the new organisational report and accountability relationships; and normative support such as conforming new norm, to make the change process become institutionalized (Burke, 1994). The last phase is attaining a terminal relationship – to end the relationship between the client and the agent.

The three discussed above – action research, Lewin’s model, Schein elaboration of Lewin’s model, and phases of planned change are part of the general model of change process and based on the Lewin’s original idea (Burke, 1994; Waddell et al., 2003). In practice, the sequent different activities in general model are entering and contracting, diagnosing, planning and implementing change, evaluating and institutionalizing change (Waddell et al., 2003).

III. CONCLUSION

Organisations can not avoid the need of change within the organisations and change become one of demanding issues faced by managers. In order to be successful, organisations must adapt to the environmental changes.

To compete in environmental changes, managers have to implement and master both incremental and planned change (organisation development); and dramatic and unplanned change (transformational change/organisation transformation). However, organisation development (OD) is a more desired state by many organisations because it is an introspective change process and creates continuous improvement, whereas organisation transformation (OT) is a reactive change process and dramatic to the environmental changes.

OD is a planned change process that systemwide applies behavioural science knowledge and reinforcement of organisational strategies for the improvement of organisational effectiveness. Organisation development is process oriented not outcome oriented which is aimed to improve the total system in the organisations and in larger environment covering strategy, structure, and process changes.

OD has been practiced for more than fifty years as a change program, and OD has become an important tool to help organizations to change in the highly changing and complex world. This field continues to improve and generate new theorists, researchers, and practitioners to bring the contemporary issues of OD.
There are three basic models which are used as guiding frameworks of any OD effort—Action Research model, Lewin’s three step model which further developed by Schein into more detail steps, and phases of planned change. These three models or frameworks are not mutually exclusive, but they are all came from Kurt Lewin original thinking and these models have been widespread and become the main basis for general model of OD.

Finally, These model of planned change effort (OD effort) will depend on the magnitude of change – incremental or quantum change; and the degree of organisation – over organised or under organised organisations.
REFERENCES

Book


Journal


