ABSTRACT

Creating Objectives-Based Knowledge to Resolve Organisational Change

Dysfunctionality

Lewin's (1947) tripartite approach seems forgotten and hence to be considered of no value when organisational structures are initiated. Proposals for organisational structures, architectures and staff interactions as the panacea to organisational problems appear to have had limited success (Zack, 2000; Massini, Lewin and Pettigrew, 2001; Feher, 2004 and Garezzi and Terzi, 2005). This raises the question what types of organisational knowledge are wealth-producing. It seems advisable to search for alternatives to organisational knowledge. Objectives based knowledge is reported. It consists of efforts to focus on the links between individual objectives and organisational resources.

Semi structured interviews from eighty-five managers and employees from four private sector organisations in the UK provided the paper's data. Managers' behaviour included increasing formal behaviour, reducing employees' freedom, imposing targets and controls – contrary to standard experience. It was noted, however, that some employees took initiatives without their managers' consent. The methodological implications refer to the fact that the employees involved focused on exploring new activities and on initiating experiments to find resources. They did not search for value-free knowledge, but attempted to acquire objectives-based knowledge. Their activities made them into renewable common-pool resources: individuals who had become experts in supporting their companies to change. An attempt is made to understand this type of support in terms of its impact and in terms of the methodological implications. The literature reviewed includes work by Armistead and Meakins (2007), Harper and Harper (2002), Ford, Ford & D'Amelio (2008), Agboola and Oyesola (2011) amongst others.. It is concluded that available organisational knowledge

lacks quality in that it is not polycentric (Ostrom, 1999). 'Normal' life needs to be balanced by or mixed with 'revolutionary' life (Kuhn, 1962).

Introduction

Organisational problems such as unsuccessful change, organisational demise, management-employee conflicts, organisational and individual unproductivity and under-performance have prompted scholars such as Lewin (1947) to propose potential solutions to deal with the issues. However, part of the difficulty arises when organisations cannot deal with the resistance generated as a result. This becomes even more pertinent when the difficulty is on a wider scale societal change. To resolve the problems caused Lewin proposed three steps as part of an approach to deal with some if not all of the problems that could lead to societal or organisational dysfunctionality. It is claimed that using the steps will enhance successful transition and thereby help to resolve (some of) the issues. The proliferation of literature and the debates on the subject to date suggest that the problems caused by organisational change still generate ongoing interest. It also suggests that something is missing despite the propositions. These are captured in the literature in terms of either a technical or non-technical approach. Despite the interests they have generated, the approaches to resolve the dysfunctionalities (e.g. organisational lack of performativity, failure to adopt the right strategies to deal with market failure or competition etc…) have been fraught with continuous difficulties. The latter suggest that a different (more effective) treatment is timely and necessary. In efforts to provide a solution Kotter (1996; 2008) proposes eight stages. Kotter and his colleagues (see Kotter and Cohen; 2012) as well as their followers or those before them remind us of the persistence of resistance and added conflict so as to highlight and renew Lewin's earlier call to do something in their resolution. Such calls have been echoed

over the years (see for examples Coch & French, 1948; Dent & Goldberg, 1999). This constant need to deal with resistance as if it were some 'deviant behaviour' (Agboola and Oyesola, 2011) suggests that something else is needed. Moreover, the way the literature has identified the two categories as 'change agents' and 'change recipients' (or resistors) (Ford et al, 2008) only serves to worsen the resistance that proposed approaches were designed to resolve in the first instance. Something is lost in the process of such a treatment of a fundamental set of problems. The research problem for this paper therefore translates into how organisations can deal with the problem of resistance that is generated between the groups by harnessing the knowledge from their interactions. French and Raven (1962) had earlier cautioned against one party assuming and making use of too much power at the disadvantage of the collective whose knowledge effectively becomes discredited in the process. A rectification of the imbalance in terms of what form(s) of knowledge (i.e. capability/resource to resolve a problem) is/are required to effectively deal with an organisation's resistance problems and resolve the dysfunctionality caused during change is sorely needed.

The rectification of the problem of resistance and deviance being proposed is argued by using the literature as follows. Burnes (2004) advocates behavioural change and Fisher (2012) opines that personal transitions are required for people to adapt and thereby manage change. Romanelli and Tushman (1994) focus on external influences on the way organisations can effectively deal with the problems caused by change. Johnson et al (2006) look closer at the role of culture so did Paton and McCalman (2008). However, Rees and French (2013) focus on cultural dynamics as part of the solution. Agnew (2005) advocates changing the external environment as if the dysfunctionality emanated from there. Buchanan and Badham (1999) and Pettigrew and McNulty (1995) focus on the important role people, power and politics play from within the organisational change setting. Piderit (2000) identifies staff attitudes

and it is anticipated that dealing with positive and negative responses to organisational change could help resolve the associated problems of change. These examples seem to suggest what can be done by the different parties when we want to resolve the issues. What appears worrying is the apparent lack of focus on the type of knowledge gained when attempts are made to resolve the issues. Although Huczynski and Buchanan (2007; 2013) advocate teams and team-building exercises and Kanter (2012) calls for organisations (and their managers) to become more competent, there is need for research that looks into the type of knowledge that could help turn dysfunctional change situations for the better or such that they become more effective. Again, the nature and composition of Kanter's competence needs further expansion in terms of whether this should be regarded as knowledge and of what benefit this could bring to organisations.

Furthermore, the way in which the debates and discussions have highlighted elements such as change implementers and recipients have unintentionally created a binary divide thereby increasing the problems associated with change. The latter is manifested in the forms of resistance (perceived as well as actual), conflicts between individual and collective interests, power struggles between individuals and groups and so on. When this happens valuable resources in the forms of knowledge, expertise and people's contributions are lost. What is also worrying is that the knowledge that participating groups can bring to organisational change as a way to deal with the dysfunctionality of resistance has not yet been explored to beneficial effect. In addition, the bi-polarised nature of the debate continues to further fracture the discussions. What is now needed is a more holistic debate which focuses on recognising that organisational change is a more complex issue than what it has been credited to date, identifying the interactions between various participants (including the change agents/implementers and recipients/resistors) and more crucially highlighting what type(s) of knowledge they can bring to help unravel the complexities and resolve the dysfunctionality.

This is attempted in this paper. As part of an attempt to resolve the issues Golembiewski et al (1976) adopt a 'technical' or, if one wills, formulaic procedure to the implementation and understanding of change. Kotter (2008) and Lewin (1947) view the work of managers as key, again from a change-centric perspective. For Kanter (2012) learning and skills are key in unlocking the solutions to organisational change whereas Buchanan and Badham (1999) see the resolution of power and politics issues as crucial if organisations are to resolve the problems caused by organisational change. What seems evident from these debates is a recognition that something different is needed as attempts are made to make organisations more effective in dealing with existing problems. In this paper, it is proposed that doing so means acquiring a different type of knowledge to help organisations and their managers implement change more successfully. Since Piderit (2000) suggested that a shift is needed, the nature of that shift and the implications this could have on the way we develop the capacity to organise work and implement change have not been looked at. The dearth of research in creating objectives-based knowledge in this area necessitates urgent attention and exploration.

Based on the literature and the debates, the paper's research objectives are as follows:

1. To find out what role employees and managers play when their organisations implement change;
2. To find out how the changes were introduced and what effects these had on people;
3. To see what type of knowledge can be gained and to what effect this can be utilised.

A critique of Management and Organisational Studies literature in the area is undertaken in the next two sections. This is followed by an exploration of the research methodology which identifies the data collection methods, the type of data collected and how findings were

analysed. The implications for theory and methodology point to the introduction of creating objective-based knowledge as a way to deal with the problems caused by organisational change. It is argued that what is proposed serves as an addition to the technical approach. The type of knowledge proposed as objectives-based knowledge highlights and recognises the different ways people choose to contribute as part of their objectives in making their organisations more effective to handle the pressures of change. What they contribute is treated as knowledge that needs to be built within the ways organisations introduce and manage the technical and non-technical ways of dealing with change. Conclusions are drawn and future research identified.

Literature Review: Technical Organisational Change

To find out what role technical approaches may play in organisational change, the author critiques these in relation to their knowledge generation capacity. Although Gubley (1998) and Junnarkar and Brown (1997) recognise the role of technologies in knowledgeable resources, they also underscore their limitations in resolving some of the deviant behavioural changes advocated by Agboola and Oyesola (2011). Technical approaches are regarded here as those that view and treat organisations, its members and processes as if they could be codified through the use of IT and representational forms. These are different from personalisation strategies in which the emphasis is on person-to-person sharing of knowledge. Truch and Bridger (2002) and Adelmann and Jashpara (2003) think combining Hansen et al's (1999) codification and personalisation strategies could be a more effective way of sharing knowledge. Zack (1999) thinks knowledge management strategies reside within an architecture that is organisational, technical and codified. The human element is missing. Within the change management literature approaches that share similar characteristics are categorised as 'technical' and those that have different properties are grouped under non-technical approaches. The critique of the approaches is undertaken to highlight the changes to

working practices, the differences in the practices and to see what could be added to the personalisation (i.e. social) and codification (i.e. technical) elements proposed in the literature. In so doing the author explores what areas of knowledge could be used to better support organisational change based on the limitations of the two dominant approaches (the technical and non-technical). The technical approaches owe a lot of their characteristics to Lewin's (1947) three-step, Force Field model and his followers. Kotter (1996; 2008; 2012) went on to identify additional steps (eight in all) as part of a procedure to deal with the limitations caused by resistance to new working practices being implemented. The paper will now examine three change implementation models to see what they can contribute to the debates.

Lewin's Model

Lewin proposed the 'Force-Field Model' as a way to analyse the extent to which a society (at a macro level) deals with change. The model is sometimes used to analyse the extent to which an organisation (at the micro level) is ready for change. The model is broken down into a 3-stage procedure the aim of which is to see whether this stage-by-stage procedure generates knowledge that could be used to more effectively manage a change setting.

Lewin identified his first step as one where an organisation needs to 'unfreeze' its members' behaviours and attitudes. He identified characteristics such as members having to unlearn or destabilise their old beliefs, attitudes, behaviours and an organisation's culture needs to be rebalanced to new ways of doing things. He recognised that organisations are ordered forms of randomness: without the order the sum of a set of activities is less than their whole. This means that order is chosen and hence that it is difficult to change given a previous order. While changes have to be implemented locally, local changes may not immediately have beneficial effects and may be resisted. This means that for an organisation to bring about

successful change it is insufficient to simply announce what the new order is. One has to provide organisational/societal members with information and employ people with the requisite skills to carry out the required tasks. He noted that this would entail a period of emotional disturbance and disequilibrium as members adapt to the requirements. Organisational members would be experiencing a shock to their system as leaders seek to communicate urgency and effect the new culture.

Lewin claims in his second stage that the organisation starts to transition or move onto the change phase as management try different procedures and implement the practices required. At the same time, management are also advised to take into account what is happening in their external organisational settings, note the approaches needed and evaluate chances of success. Whether they do might be another issue. Doing such groundwork is expected will facilitate organisations and their members to have the appropriate behaviours and ensure success. However, these actions need constant work and effort (or 'unfreezing') for success to follow.

This is what Lewin refers to as the 'refreezing' stage when the change behaviours and attitudes are reinforced and stabilised. These become part of the institutional fabric. When this happens it could be claimed that the organisation has a new way of doing things or a new order. This 'newness' reflects the organisation's culture, new practices, new values and norms. Cummings and Hues (1989) regard such transformation as pivotal to success.

Lewin and his followers emphasised the role the existing organisational and social order plays in organisational change and the effort needed at the higher level. Although numerous organisations have stuck to such a technical procedure the transformation anticipated or the personalisation advocated by Hansen and his colleagues (1999) have not brought about a

more effective way of knowing what is needed for their members. What is needed is to explore what the role of individuals, i.e. their motivations and objectives could contribute in reversing the organisational change failure or the deviant behavioural trend and rebalance the notions of resistance and cooperation (Agboola and Oyesola, 2011).

Kotter

In his study Kotter (1996; 2008) found an increase in the frequency and scale of change. Research in the potential benefits and weaknesses of managing change abound. In his attempt to address the latter Kotter proposed the 8-Step Model which is designed to recognise the interlocking nature of what is to be changed and the ways these can be managed to deliver success. It is interesting to note that Kotter ruled out human emotion as part of his model although Richardson and Denton (1996) differ.

Step/stage 1 of the procedure centres on management building a sense of urgency among the individual employees. Keeping the momentum, fostering collaboration and cooperation characterise this stage. It is assumed that data are available, that they are reliable and management can act on these. However, perennial organisational difficulties continue to wreak havoc on efforts. There are costs (human and material), dwindling material and non-material resources and the need to do more for and with less. In some management's quest to subvert what they term operational dysfunctionalities the anticipated change and the successes promised may come to naught. Although Romanelli and Tushman (1994) claim that external turbulence compels organisations to change, the scale and gravity of these on the internal organisational operations are not accounted for. Nor are people's reactions. Alternative strategies such as research and development, performance management and leveraging these against competitors are recommended. However, the role that organisational members play in these dynamics is left out and in this sense forgotten (Paton and McCalman,

2008; Rees and French, 2013). Although the important role of culture is underlined, the grassroots' influence on outcomes is bizarrely left out by Johnson et al. (2006). Studies seem to over-emphasise either the resistance or cooperation aspect in what scholars have identified and acknowledge as a dynamic set of inter-relational elements is missing. Therefore, a more holistic picture is required.

Realising the potential damages from resistance Kotter (2007) adds a second step. Building a coalition to implement the change is included. Kotter assumes that the group's formation will galvanise talent, create an appealing vision to employees and stakeholders (including customers or service users). Obstacles posed by resistance to change are overcome as management communicate the organisation's new vision using a step procedure. Whilst Kotter proposes skills development Kanter (2012) advocates that organisations (as a resourceful entity) learn to become competent in change. The extent to which individual employees play a role in the new developments is downplayed. Paradoxically, those who fear the changes should be empowered to carry the vision through as part of the next step. Significant omissions in this include the roles of culture, power and members' reactions (especially negative resistance), the very obstacles Kotter was poised to overcome. Perhaps, the lack of tangible and measurable data in this area could have accounted for his omission. Buchanan and Badham (1999) and Pettigrew and McNulty (1995) uphold the centrality of people, power and politics. Others still see the arguments as one-sided and 'change-agent centric' (Ford et al, 2008), much to the loss of other participating elements.

In relation to the paper's topic it is important to highlight and recognise the contribution of *all* individuals. The four cases presented in this paper show the need to talk about people and their objectives. Although the latter were constrained by conditions such as their employment and the anxieties of future dismissal, they contributed to reshaping their organisation's

culture and its fortunes. The contributions of people need to be included in Kotter's and Lewin's stages as a way of recognising what objectives could contribute to creating a new type of knowledge for managing change.

Resistance

What the two approaches seem to suggest is that resistance is a barrier to change, but also something that indicates that change has been possible in the past. It needs to be dealt with. In her seminal work, Piderit (2000) reminds us of the role attitudes play to organisational change. She highlights the complexity of the topic area and underscores the need for a shift. She bemoans the over-emphasis scholars have placed on the role of resistance. Dent and Goldberg (1999) are a case in point. Researchers and practitioners who treat resistance as negative have reinforced the tradition started by Lewin (1947) although we have been reminded of its downsides. Finding alternatives means looking at different ways of reconceptualising resistance and whether this could be beneficial in the context of knowledge generation. For example, Schultz et al (2002), Nemeth et al (2001) and Knowles and Linn (2004b; 2004c) have reminded us about the way resistance can be used as a resource to create awareness and enhance successful change.

Scholars who treat resistance negatively view employees as barriers to change. People are reported as uncooperative (see Watson, 1992; Bovey and Hede, 2001) and their behaviour seen as 'deviant' (Agboola and Oyesola, 2011). However, other studies have revealed that management could be the source of employees' resistance (see Merron, 1993). It is assumed that those with less power will try to oppose those with official power (i.e. management or 'change agent-centric' individuals (see Ford et al, 2008)). Research into why people resist organisational change has also revealed that this could be explained by people's ethical beliefs (see Milgram's (1965) experiments) although the need to look at objectives still

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persists. Contrary to Lewin and his followers' claims, other studies have recently demonstrated that resistance can draw on issues that need to be addressed (Dutton et al, 1997) thereby indicating that something is lost in the process of resisting resistance.

In their studies Brower and Abolafia (1995) and Sprietzer and Quinn (1996) emphasise the role that employees' inaction and management's leadership behaviours play in creating resistance. Employees are perceived as impatient and emotionally frustrating (see Coch and French, 1948 for earlier renditions). Piderit (2000) combined the cognitive, the emotional and the intentional to study people's attitudes and propose 'ambivalent attitudes' thereby combining positive and negative elements as part of her signalled shift in the topic. Earlier studies did not recognise what resistance could offer (see Eagly and Chaiken, 1998; Morrison and Phelps, 1999).

Ford et al (2008) claim to have identified a new conversational value although others continue to see dysfunctionality in resistance (Kanter, 2002; Barrett et al, 1995). This re-echoes complaints and criticisms from Carruth et al (1985) as decision-making processes are disrupted (see Wegener et al, 2004) and conflicts abound (Kotter and Schlesinger, 1979).

Contrary to Piderit's (2000) and Dent and Goldberg's (1999) proposal to relegate resistance into the scrapheap, the paper looks at what contribution to the organisational change and change management knowledge generation discourse it could make. Developing a different concept means looking at three things: the contributions of management and employees to bring about changes to working practices, the nature of the changes in the four selected organisations that were experiencing pressures and the contributions of dysfunctional resistance in knowledge generation (Feher made earlier attempt in 2004). The first two have been overly examined in the literature (see Lewin, 1947; Kotter, 2007; Piderit, 2000, Ford et

al, 2008; Agboola and Oyesola, 2011 amongst others), the latter has not benefited from such attention. What people contribute to organisational change and the methodological implications need to be included in approaches already developed by Lewin and Kotter.

The author reports below on his own study on constraints faced by employees and the ways they reacted to the difficulties managers created. The author proposes to use findings from four case studies to explore what the third element can contribute to organisational change (see the fourth section for the findings' contribution). This adds to the emerging literature on what *all* change participants are capable of contributing within pressurised environments. Whilst earlier attempts by Lopez-Cabrales et al (2006) and Stensaker and Meyer (2011) looked at employees' reactions to massive organisational changes and length of experience, the current paper adds objectives to see whether these can bring about successful organisational change. Building on from the earlier work of Stensaker and Meyer (ibid), the paper identifies both the positive *and* negative reactions of employees and combined these with employees' objectives in a concept referred to as 'objectives-based knowledge'. It shows that 'knowledge repositories' (Simon, 2001) are no longer the preserve of organisational architectures and technical structures but people.

Methodology

The author conducted semi-structured interviews with managers who were tasked with implementing the necessary changes and employees who were expected to comply with the changes, following the literature. Two data collection points were carried out, the first in 2004/2005 and secondly in 2011. In the first set, that is prior to the banking crisis, the author asked participants what changes were introduced, by whom, the nature of the changes, how they were implemented and reacted upon by all participants. The four organisations were selected because they had to respond to market pressures, satisfy customer demands and

government legislative changes to the delivery of services such as care and housing amongst other company priorities. Participants were distinguished as managers and employees to provide clarity in their roles and what they had to offer to effect the changes required. 68 interviews were conducted in the first round, 17 in the second.

The second set of interviews asked what each organisation did subsequent to the initial round of changes, what they did when they sought to maintain working relationships, what their objectives were and what their forms were and what they might have offered to the proposed changes in each of the four organisations. In 2004/2005 17 interviewees were conducted on average per organisation with the following breakdown: Bakkavor-Lauren's Patisserie - 10 employees and 7 managers, Longhurst Housing - 10 employees and 7 managers, Eden Housing - 10 employees and 7 managers and Lagat -10 employees and 7 managers. Anonymity was relinquished. Each participant was given the opportunity to elucidate on their objectives. Some did others chose not to. The responses were treated as ways people noted the changes and articulated the forms in which their reactions and objectives to the dysfunctionalities took.

With the assistance of two other researchers the author wrote down all the themes from both data-sets, checked these with the two assisting researchers, agreed the dominant ones and named each of the categories. The themes were then reported in six stages to see what these could contribute to previous attempts (see Lewin and Kotter). Each stage showed the form in which participants responded to the dysfunctionalities within their organisational structures. In total the stages show the ways employees and management tried to manage the changes thereby showing their respective capabilities and how they made use of resources. The technique via which the themes were derived has been referred to in the literature as recursive abstraction following the hermeneutics tradition (Alvesson and Skoldberg, 2000). Employees

and managers reacted differently sometimes by resisting and at other times by supporting the changes. Both sets of reactions are combined to ascertain the type of knowledge generated in all the six stages of compilation.

Empirical Data

The changes that took place in each of the identified organisations were as follows. In 2004/2005 Longhurst faced intense pressure from government to improve the volume and quality of its housing facilities in various parts of the UK. They were also required to comply with housing legislation and standards. They introduced more one-to-one staff supervisions with teams of employees and respective supervisors were chosen to enforce the standards. By 2011 these supervisors were conducting appraisals, monitoring and evaluating staff performance and checking the volume of the housing stock and its quality.

During the first interview round, Lagat which was in the business of providing guidance and counselling to young adults of college going age was coming under intense national pressures to increasing their provision. This was at a time when the human resources to deliver such services were thinly stretched out leading to staff reports of stress and burnout. Employees were having to work longer hours, were doing occasional Saturdays and covering a vast workload of students. The organisation was at the same time training and developing staff with the additional skill-sets required to cope with the new demands and changes to working patterns. Additional strains in 2011 saw staff being additionally stretched as workforce numbers had gone down owing to a merger between Connexions and other smaller service providers as compulsory redundancies were made to create Lagat. To make matters worse for the new company and its staff there were additional funding cuts from a relatively new government that had to rein in on public finances as a way to control the national deficit post 2008 banking crisis. The company had to begin scouting for new businesses and covering a

wider geographic area than they previously did. Staff were asked to cover these additional wider distances to provide and, where possible expand the required services and to embrace new digital working.

In 2004/2005 Eden Supported Housing was similar to a family run business as management and staff observed cordial working relationships and were on first name terms. Everyone was supportive of each other and of their patients' learning and physical disabilities. They were tasked by government and other care regulators to provide affordable care to people in the Nottinghamshire area of the UK. In order to expand their business, they were also reaching out to those off their premises and to be seen by the regulators to deliver the same level of quality care and attention to all patients. On the author's return in 2011 it was noted from the environment, business developments and subsequent participants' statements that the family feel had disappeared. The organisation had been bought by a business firm whose priority was to streamline operations and maximise profits. Managers were tasked by the parent company to conduct working relationships in a business-like and profit-orientated way. This included having to measure outputs, account for business transactions and increase patients. The new norm stretched managers and employees who had worked with the 'older' company and the Care and Quality Commission, UK added to the constraints faced through additional compliance with procedures and regulations.

When the author initially visited Laurens-Patisserie in 2004/2005 it was family-owned. The company made and sold cakes to local supermarkets and families within the Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire areas of the UK for over two decades. Increasingly, the company had to work hard at integrating different ethnicities, nationalities and people from different regions of the UK who were accounting for an increasing number of its workforce. These included Iraqis, Afghans, Africans and other people from Eastern Europe and South Asia as well as

British. There was also an increasing demand from local supermarkets to increase supplies at competitive rates. By 2011 supermarkets shifted their demands to quality cakes as well as the need to include nutrition labelling on all products. The organisation responded by training additional staff for Health and Safety, increased health inspections and introduced an additional shift of workers. The organisation has also been bought by Bakkavor, an Icelandic-based company, whose emphasis shifted to a maximisation of profits, an increase in managers and employees' responsibilities and contributions and shareholder returns on investments. All were expected to cut down on waste and create greater market value.

Whereas Lewin (1947) introduced three stages, Kotter (1998; 2012) modelled change using eight stages the author identifies six stages (from the data) each of which highlights the developments of employees' objectives-based knowledge as part of their response to the organisational changes. When combined the stages identify the various ways that employees and managers adopted to deal with the dysfunctionality they faced from within and outside their companies. The knowledge that has been generated from each of the stages is argued to be a necessary addition to the technical approach. It describes a variety of employees' subjective experiences and objectives to the technical procedures of implementing change that managers introduced to counter their organisations' dysfunctionalities. The concept is different from the traditional observational and representational form of research in which people's feelings and subjective perceptions are represented as objective entities which are captured and presented using a technical approach (see Hansen et al's (1999) knowledge codification). Objectives-based knowledge makes it possible to arrange the responses in a series of six coherent, inclusive and cohesive stages, the arrangement of which is expected to show various ways of identifying and managing dysfunctionality (including resistance to change).

Stage 1

This stage saw managers in each of the four organisations recognising that, faced with pressures and potential dysfunctionality, they had to change. They started to introduce new customs, new ways of working and demand that employees adhere to the requirements of the order they thought would be needed – without proper justification. Managers realised from early on that they ought to begin to ask employees to be disciplined if their organisations were to develop the ability to meet the challenges and if they were to continue in jobs in the longer term. Managers also started asking their staff to work in teams in order to carry out what employees saw as an increase in their responsibilities as tasks became more diversified compared to prior to the organisational changes. A breakdown of what each job role did, in which of the four participating organisations and at what point in the data collection stage (2004/2005 or 2011) is reported to show contextual, the nature of the changes and how each role tried to effectively deal with the (potential) dysfunctionalities as follows.

In 2011 a senior manager at Lagat said: '*management put up an away day to break barriers between teams; we also arrange weekly then monthly meetings for people to see what others are doing...*' Another Manager in the same company added '*I also develop programmes as government funding and opportunities arise, working in partnership with organisation s to maximise opportunities* (with our collaborators such as Lincoln College, Action for Employment (A4e), Jobcentre Plus etc).' The Business Advisor said '…*we used to work independently whereas everybody has talents we can pool together in a team.*' A Senior Training Officer mentioned '*we...have Lagat Days and we talk about the company training plan... All new staff are encouraged to do the key skills they require.*'

At Eden the HR Manager remarked '*we are working with people with more complex needs, we are growing geographically with an ambitious growth plan while managing the cost plan,*

so doing more with less resources, introducing new projects in certain strategic places; each of those projects is multi tasked, for example the Health Care Manager and Team Managers are managing staff and delivering frontline support...a lot of managers are having to work round the clock, regional managers have to pick up one to one (i.e. supervision) with staff, changes will ensure we are leaner and more efficient…'

An employee at Lagat remarked '*there's a lot of cross working, a lot of cross function work that goes on in departments around disciplinary issues...*'

The Head of Construction at Longhurst said '*there is a policy for every manager to meet staff once every month; it's a download session really, they talk about jobs on site, with end users, how they are working, if it doesn't work we think of alternatives, to get the best solution…*'
The Quality and Information Manager at Longhurst noted '*in the next 3-5 years...there will be more conflating of work...We try to be more effective. Previously...the last 2 companies (Friendship Care and Spire Homes) had 2 IT systems...there will be better returns on investments...*' An employee said '*until recently we have been financially stable but there's increasing recognition we have to compete, to be cost effective and to be able to grow. Government grant aid has been cut, so the only way to grow is to be leaner and meaner so that we can borrow more and build more...*'

The Systems Manager at Bakkavor noted the following changes in working practices: '*The change was driven by becoming leaner, to measure ourselves, train personnel and a need to drive down labour costs to make maximum profits... The previous management team has been scrapped. In a similar vein, the way we quantify all the processes have changed. For example, information and manufacturing processes have changed, technical staff [Technical*

Assistants] have been increased, factory operatives have decreased, but there has been more

management staff, more quality assistants, more health and safety staff…'

Stage 2

Managers started to inject more disciplinary measures into their organisations having realised

that this failed when they attempted to 'discipline' their workforce. Employees did two things

simultaneously: they showed signs of being disciplined by reporting and leaving work on

time and carrying out their responsibilities whilst finding additional ways not to be cowed by

the new measures. They did so by occasionally reporting late for work or sometimes failing

to do so and providing countless reasons for their tardiness. Managers began to despair at the

ways employees were talking to each other and bringing in unofficial methods to get their

work done. HRM and Health and Safety procedures and policies were being side-lined as

employees interpreted the rules managers had put in place to suit their own work and

personal circumstances. They started to find more intelligent ways to work round the

proposed organisational changes.

In 2004/2005 employees at Eden talked about '*making work arrangements less strict*' and

'*erasing job boundaries'*. Staff at Longhurst note that jobs are given '*verbally to a team in*

the ICT Department…This is informal as opposed to laid-down (HRM) policies and

procedures… Staff devised their own ways of conducting daily operations.' In a similar vein,

Lagat (formerly Prospects) staff at their Lincoln office talk about adopting 'working

practices which were at odds with their London counterparts.'

Stage 3

Managers started to identify what they termed '*new strategies*' to engage their employees

more as they realised the resistance generated from their earlier draconian measures was

damaging progress. Employees saw these measures as '*hard*'. Managers identify values such as organisational effectiveness, value for organisational gain, sustainability, organisational survival and so on which they thought employees could easily assimilate into. However, employees felt they have been treated in a disrespectful way. They started to develop their own communication methods as a way not to talk to their managers thereby creating a two-tier communication system much to the disgust of managers. To make matters worse, managers insisted that employees should report their actions (or inactions) to their Line Managers/Supervisors. Failure to do so would be judged by management and those higher up as acts of sabotage and that employees were not wanting to adhere to deadlines and boost the organisation's business fortunes. Employees began to explore additional ways of institutionalising structures that work in their network of colleagues' and their organisation's interests and not necessarily what managers wanted to see. Managers tried to reinstate the very '*hard*' procedures, measures and structures employees thought were the cause of the conflicts in management-employee relations in the first place.

Some employees talked about '*undergoing a lot of pressure and job stress*' simply because they were having to be compelled by managers to 'meet the daily targets' and to bow to shareholder demands of boosting profitability because '*shareholders have the power*' in Laurens.

Stage 4

Employees increasingly engaged other employees as a way to fight against the '*harsh*' management strategies of implementing change. They began to take up additional roles which were not in their previous job descriptions. When managers realised this they started to emphasise that employees needed to stick with their official responsibilities so that these could be adequately and properly monitored and supervised within the organisation change structures. When employees sought to be more entrepreneurial, managers introduced what

they saw as further bottlenecks to keep employees in check as Dispatch, Health and Safety, Cleaning and Production staff. When the latter failed to comply managers became despondent and increased the reporting and monitoring mechanisms for employees. The latter began to feel that they have discovered a new sense of personal dignity albeit as employees in their respective organisations, something they initially dreamt of at the start of the implementation of the changes. Managers introduced quality checks and increased the number of and heightened the role and responsibilities of quality teams and customer services, a move they thought would placate the employees. Managers thought their implementation will boost the cooperation between themselves and employees. The counter-effect was achieved in Eden as employees saw this move with cynicism and management mechanisms for getting more work done from employees.

In the 2011, the Quality Manager at Longhurst remarked '*We have residents' scrutiny panels who look at our customer service. Residents are engaged and quite involved in retendering contracts and that has been good*' (i.e. in improving our services). Another said '*we have always had housing officers who engage with the local community…the expectation to engage with people…*'

At Laurens and Eden employees started to seek for a second point of view different from what was going on in Longhurst who engaged with their local communities for such second viewpoints. One employee remarked '*people would say: 'we used to do this and that together'* as employees) whilst it was becoming practice for '*junior support staff at Eden to confide to trainers*' for a second opinion different from what managers' opinions on ways of implementing the required changes.

Stage 5

Employees initiated the development of sub-cultural groups that they thought would provide the necessary support for other employees affected by managers' strategies and their desire to make the organisational changes work. Employees began to identify tasks which they were collectively good at and started to work more closely with others in other departments to make their effect and employment power on management more pronounced. They increasingly would not report their actions to managers but to each other. They began to stimulate each other to be more productive and effective in dealing with management's '*harsh*' strategies. Managers started to backtrack on some of their actions and emphasised their personal power as a cushion against the employee backlash.

In 2004/2005 an employee at Laurens said '*managers and the proprietor of the business have a lot of power here. The proprietor owns the land.*' Employees observed that managers' responses in resolving the change implementation issues were not sustainable and they started to question management's competence in managing the change process in the longer term. Lagat employees doubted whether their managers' could see the sustainability of providing educational and counselling services to younger adults in the future whilst Eden employees viewed with cynicism managers' sudden drive to increase value for money in every service employees deliver to disabled patients.

In 2011, an employee at Bakkavor said '*I want to have responsibility... I manage my function and I get on with it... I would like to...develop towards a broader role...and then have more strategic role...in another Bakkavor site...*' Others mentioned '*Learning to appreciate the work demands on each other's role through support for each other…*'

An employee at Eden remarked '*it's about developing a positive attitude, enhance team working across departments and develop 'a very 'can do' approach. There's a lot of cross*

working, a lot of cross function work that goes on...Cross departmental working is appropriate...'

Along similar lines, another employee at Eden remarked 'more is expected; managers are less visible, because they have more work to do…as an employee I used to go to people and say '*can I help with something'…*'

Stage 6

By stage 6, employees were increasingly behaving as if they were capable of running their own organisational change. They had developed what they thought were the appropriate knowledge and strategies to respond to the constraints and successfully. They were cognisant of what actions were required, how they would react to the dysfunctionalities caused by management and of their value to their organisations. Employees started to encourage others to be more competent in their roles and to contribute effectively. One employee made the following comment '*we at Laurens are self-supportive*' whilst another said '*I think more communication is required at Laurens because of the high turnover rates' whilst another said 'management at Lagat (formerly Prospects) need to be talking to staff informally.*' This stage witnessed employees' growing confidence in their abilities to contribute and to use the appropriate communication mechanisms to bring this to fruition even when managers were trying to block their efforts. Paradoxically, managers realised that employees were becoming more competent in their roles as implementers of change and as employees and started to resist. One manager said that '*jobs are allocated based on responsibilities at Eden*' whilst others at Longhurst relied increasingly on constantly monitoring the quality of staff's work.

The six-stage process has shown that when managers were implementing wide-scale organisational changes, employees were increasingly showing signs that were akin to positive

reactions to the changes. Their actions suggested they could be innovative even when they come across management barriers and management power that appeared to incite resistance. Such developments are composed of people who come together in a collective effort to defy the dysfunctionalities both from within and externally. This type of development is what has been referred to as people having generated knowledge from their individual and collective objectives of managing their organisational change more effectively than their superiors. This has been referred to as 'objectives-based knowledge'.

Discussions

The concept of 'objectives-based knowledge' helps in highlighting the six steps that recognise people's objectives, something that is not mentioned in Lewin's three stages or Kotter's eight steps of organisational change and change management, in Hansen et al's (1999), Feher's (2004) and Agboola and Oyesola's (2011) work.

In addition to the literature the six stages that emerged from the responses seem to balance the notions of resistance (see Piderit, 2000; Dent and Goldberg, 1999) as well as cooperation by showing a variety of ways organisations/employers and their managers have reacted to the changes. Employees have demonstrated from their statements that they cannot simply be viewed as passive recipients as shown with the traditional technical approach whereby resistance to change is identified and dealt with through standard management and organisational procedures. What we see from the stages is the springing up of new organisational heroes and heroines who are different from those advocated by Lewin, Kotter, Huczynski and Buchanan to name but a few (see Stanton et al, 2010), the 'deviant' employee *mis*-behaviours from Agboola and Oyesola (2011) and the personification sharing of knowledge by Hansen et al (1999). The research into change management in the traditional sense in Management and Organisational studies puts managers in an advantageous position.

It has been shown in the four cases that doing so woefully failed in motivating and inspiring their employees at the grassroots (those referred to in the literature as 'change recipients' (Bouchenooghe, 2010). The latter had to innovate and create working practices that not only helped in making the organisational changes to work more effectively than what their managers strategized but to enhance their organisation s' continuous survival (Argyris and Schon, 1996). It might be advised to have managers become aware of the complexities and knowledge generation processesas well as the potential dysfunctionalities.

What the six stages demonstrate is that individuals' objectives *do* matter when it comes to successful organisational change! It is shown that when managers isolated themselves as part of their fightback to dysfunctional resistance, this tactic seems to have the opposite effect. Employees showed they were additionally strengthened as they built sub-culture groups and strategised on developing alternative forms of knowledge and capabilities. Managers might have attempted to 'save' their organisations but what this did was simply play into the hands of formulaic organisational change and produce the very results these standard procedures were originally designed by its architects like Lewin (1947) to counteract – that is organisational failure and potential demise. The case has therefore been argued, using the data and the literature, for a non-formulaic type of approach to organisational change, one informed by employees' objectives.

The benefit of generating 'objectives-based knowledge' is argued as follows. Traditional Management and Organisational Studies have identified and portrayed resistance as part of the dysfunctionality of change and therefore something negative that managers are tasked with or task themselves with having to deal with/manage it. What 'objectives-based knowledge' shows is that resistance is part of what people contribute (or if one wills, part of their objective) to organisational change and this signals a different treatment from the earlier

attempts (see Lewin, 1947; Armenakis et al., 1993; Kotter, 2007; Agboola and Oyesola, 2011). Employees had to exhibit a range of reactions and objectives as they cope with managers who seek to codify their practices (Hansen et al, 1999). Employees were responding to pressures externally (Romanelli and Tushman, 1994) as they simultaneously were changing their behaviours internally (see Fisher, 2012) thereby negating the passivity of dominant theoretical logic (see Ford et al, 2008) or even the *mis*-behavioural representations of recent times (Feher, 2004; Agboola and Oyesola, 2011). Employees are no longer 'ambivalent' (Piderit, 2000). This achieves the first research objective on whether employees do play a role in the implementation of organisational change.

The results from the six stages have shown that managers, when faced with the responsibility of balancing their personification and codification power in their relations with employees, have tended to fall back to technical/codification (not dissimilar from IT) approaches to manage staff. The way in which employees organised their activities and tailored different reactions to influence the changes demonstrate that people's objectives need to be taken into account. Employees have shown they can upskill themselves and adapt. This has satisfied the second research objective on the nature of the changes and, by extension, their impact on the daily lives of employees as well as mangers. The notion of 'objectives-based knowledge' responds to the third research objective on investigating what possible form of knowledge could be generated other than the predominant technical type in the tradition of Lewin (1947) and Kotter (2012). It also serves to rebalance the debates on resistance and cooperation and capture what has been lost in the debates by presenting a range of people's reactions as shown in the six stages thereby adding to what has been reported in the literature. This type of organisation is different from the upskilling or the organisational competence claimed by Kanter (2012). What the four cases demonstrate is a more bottom-up approach to the implementation and management of organisational change and how to identify and

manage/deal with dysfunctional resistance. The massive Management and Organisational Studies literature is argued to be silent about and have lost the fundamental knowledge generation processes in this area of 'objectives-based knowledge'.

The notion made it possible for employees to contribute innovatively, despite the harsh measures from management. By the second stage employees showed that resistance could be a positive development contrary to earlier claims by Dent and Goldberg (1999), Coch and French (1948) or even later additions by Agboola and Oyesola (2011). 'Objectives-based knowledge' shows employees are prepared to work round impositions and control from their managers (Felstead et al., 2003). They prove able to develop stronger buffer positions, allowing them to increase the value of their resistance in the 'new' organisation. Their power consisted of activities (French and Raven, 1959) whose groupings show that they may be fittingly named, as if in an additional 'meta' knowledge generation notion of 'objectives-based knowledge'. The development of the six stages showed that the dichotomised presentation of the subject in the extant literature needed revisiting as executed.

This type of development introduces a form of theorising that differs from the usual form of observational representation or traditional approaches, commonly used in the work of proponents such as Coch (1948), Lewin (1947) and Hansen et al (1999). It proved viable in that employees rekindled their resistant spirit as they fundamentally restructured their reactions in challenging environments via a sequence of six stages. 'Objectives-based knowledge' made it possible to name what people contributed and the way the employees related with managers and redeveloped their capabilities as 'their objectives-based knowledge'.

To attempt to resolve the deficiencies from Management and Organisational Studies and its literature, two major approaches were reported: technical/formulaic and, if one wills non-technical/non-standardised developments. However, these were not sufficient enough to explain the complexity of the phenomena being investigated nor provide us with some theoretical stability and account for lost capabilities. To deal with these inadequacies, a new type of increasingly complex theorising – 'objectives-based knowledge' is introduced, and is categorised in terms of its fundamental difference from technical approaches to incorporate resistance as part of the emerging non-formulaic approaches (Pitsakis et al., 2012; Mahadevan, 2012; Piderit, 2000; Stensaker and Meyer, 2011). The approaches examined either showed that researchers were interested in one level of analysis (the individual or the organisational structure/architecture), in what the relations impacted upon or the fact that employees had various types of attitudes or that they were too passive or resistant and therefore their 'deviance' needed control. The questions were asked: 'What role might employees play in various emerging contexts of organisational change?' 'How might the developments impact on people (employees *as well as* managers)?' 'Will such developments be easy to explain using technical approaches based on 'agent-centric', employee-*mis*-behavioural logic, passivity and dysfunctional resistance or could something different emerge from the developments on organisational change contexts?' 'Objectives-based knowledge' has made it possible to allow for the identification of a significantly larger amount of what employees and management knew about and did as they responded to the potential dysfunctionality of organisational change. This is despite the negativity propagated by Dent and Goldberg (1999) and the recalibration anticipated by Golembiewski et al (1973).

'Objectives-based knowledge' allows for a complex and comprehensive study of what employees are capable of doing when challenged to change and how these can be theorised as part of developing their know-how. The stage-by-stage presentation of what came out shows

how the resilience as well as the resistance of employees can be viewed more positively and how these can be utilised as knowledge by both managers and employees to (more) effectively/resourcefully deal with negativity within change environments. This development is therefore an addition to what has been earlier proposed by Kanter (2012) and the type of coordination from the grassroots in generating their own capability adds to Stensaker and Meyer's (2011) work or the 'personification'-type of knowledge from Hansen et al (1999).

'Objectives-based knowledge' focuses on actions instantiated by multiple members. It is not just from top management 'change centric' people who are out to 'save' their organisations. Employees have demonstrated that they could also take charge and make change happen successfully. The combination of Stensaker and Meyer's (ibid) positive 'capability' and negative resistance theorised by Dent and Goldberg (1999) and Armenakis et al (1993) but unfounded in the four cases has been referred to as 'objectives-based knowledge'. It differs from the notion of capability as used by Stensaker and Meyer (2011) and others previously and subsequently in that it allows for the identification and theorising of a variety of attitudes in developing both the capability as well as the resourcefulness of people – as a consequence of what employees can do when controlled in what emerged as a negative set of environments. It also addresses the technical standardisation of approaches to organisational change and the ways these are implemented and managed. The theoretical contribution being proposed is used to describe the experiences, the relations and what employees and management did in four companies that can be argued to have been under sufficient difficulty (see Dent and Goldberg, 1999; Armenakis et al., 1993). 'Objectives-based knowledge' made it possible for people's points of view to be made to count (Piderit, 2000; Procter and Randall, 2015) in ways that they chose to resist dysfunctionality more effectively.

Conclusion and Future Research

In conclusion, the paper has looked at two different approaches – the formulaic/technical and the non-formulaic/non-technical approach to organisational change. It is opined that both approaches have informed and been informed by Management and Organisational literature over the past seventy years, especially since Lewin (1947) proposed his Force Field Model. It has also been shown that managers make use of the predominantly technical/codification approach when they implement and manage organisational change although with limited success as reflected in the literature. When the procedures reported in Example One do not work as in the four organisational cases and elsewhere in the literature, employees are blamed for being 'anxious', uncooperative and resistant (see Dent and Goldberg, 1999) and 'deviant' (Agboola and Oyesola (2011). These characteristics are perceived as negative 'barriers' or 'resistors' to change and Kotter (1996; 2008) proposes eight steps as a solution. When employees still fail to cooperate (or behave appropriately in management's view) 'hard' measures are recommended (Graham, 1999) as shown in Example Two. In the Management literature much attention is paid to two principal actors: employees who derail change efforts and the 'change-centric' managers who are perceived as having the requisite competence to deliver successful outcomes – i.e. (see Golembiewski, 1976). When the procedures of Example Two fail, others have proposed additional measures such as dealing with organisational politicking and using managerial power. It is assumed these would quell employees' resistance (Buchanan and Badham, 1999) and rectify the 'deviance'. Research results still show that organisational change fails as resistance continues as an offshoot or even an embedded element of organisational dysfunctionality. This has ushered in Example Three. To resolve the problem Management literature might have benefited from Fisher's (2012) call for behavioural 'transition' although it does not guarantee that the anticipated organisational success will follow. Or even that managers convert resistant and potentially dysfunctional employees into overnight cooperating individuals with 'competence' to deliver

successful change (Kanter, 2012). The deficit in knowledge generation capacities to deal more effectively with organisational change and its potential derailment continues in Management and Organisational Studies.

What the six stages have shown is that Management and Organisational Studies and its literature need to embrace something new, something that not only generates knowledge of how to better deal with resistance but also balances the notions of cooperation and resistance for the past seven decades. This is that employees also have objectives just as organisation s and their managers have objectives. The findings show that managers need to recognise and work with employees' objectives if they want to effect successful change and stem the drain on loss of knowledge. Using their power and influence alone and falling back onto formulaic/technical procedures and codified strategies have been shown not to provide the answers to bring about successful change outcomes. Using the six stages, an unfolding development has shown how employees who found themselves in difficult organisational situations that had been brought about by the need for their organisations to change have channelled their objectives (including their resistance) to generate the appropriate knowledge to implement successful change. Employees re-developed their contributions contrary to parts of formulaic and non-formulaic approaches. These objectives produced 'objectives-based knowledge'. The notion highlights what individuals and collectives can do as they resist imposition and mitigate against the negative impacts on their physical, emotional and mental wellbeing/wellness at work. The literature is vocal on employees' attitudes and reactions to change but silent on objectives. The empirical data demonstrate employees took up active roles, adapted their objectives and made change work. This is a grassroots perspective different from the higher up/managerial perspective.

'Objectives-based knowledge' makes it possible to talk about and theorise instances where and when people are able to identify certain inappropriate objectives and interactions, constraints to their psychological and emotional development and to fight against/resist the predominant extant literature's notions of employee frustration (Coch and French, 1948) or their 'discontent' (Graham, 1995: 220) or their anxiety (Argyris and Schon, 1978) or their 'un-readiness' (Armenakis et al., 1993) or their 'deviant' behaviour (Agboola and Oyesola, 2011). Employees use their objectives to effect positive change. The operationalisation of the concept via the six stages has also helped to answer the second as well as the third research question/objective on the nature and impact of change on employees' lives by showing that even though there was a negative environment employees transitioned the negativity and created something positive and proactive in the form of 'objectives-based knowledge'. From their actions and behaviours employees have demonstrated that other less procedurally driven ways of implementing change are possible. The models proposed by Lewin, Kotter and their followers need further revisions and applications. The first step in doing so has been proposed through the recognition and contribution of 'objectives-based knowledge' that serves to highlight the ways employees adapt their objectives and re-focus/re-order resources to bring about successful change. A further study could look at how 'objectives-based knowledge' might be resisted in other similar SMEs, what potential forms of further knowledge might evolve and ways that such emerging characteristics could be used to inform managers and employees of other possibilities of managing change in even more effective ways…

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