

**AN EVALUATION OF RESISTANCE TO ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE AND
ITS EFFECTS ON EMPLOYEE PRODUCTIVITY: THE CASE OF TELECOM
NAMIBIA**

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ABSTRACT

Change has become important and unavoidable in today's business environment. The dynamic business environment of today requires organisations to be continuously changing their systems and structures for survival and in order to remain competitive. However, many change initiatives face big challenges and have a low success rate. The study was conducted to evaluate the resistance to organisational change and its effect on employee productivity at Telecom Namibia. The purpose of the study was to find out the nature of the resistance to change and the factors which cause resistance to change, as well as to know the strategies implemented to counter and manage the resistance to change. The study also sought to find out how employee productivity was affected when there was resistance to change. Qualitative methodology, in the form of a case study, was used to collect data. Twenty two interviews were conducted at Telecom Namibia head office with both managerial and non-managerial employees.

Findings showed that employees understood the importance of change. However, resistance emanated mainly because of lack of communication, lack of participation and involvement of employees, concerns about lack of skills and capabilities and fear of moving from their current position to a new position and new systems. Findings also revealed that employee productivity was not affected during the resistance to change. Communication, leadership and management support and commitment, employee participation and involvement are central to the success of overcoming resistance and managing change.

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DECLARATIONS

I Tendai Masunda hereby declare that this study is a true reflection of my own research and that this work and part thereof has not been submitted for a degree in any other institution of higher education.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Orientation of the proposed study

This research study will be based on an evaluation of resistance to change in state owned enterprises and particularly looking at Telecom Namibia. Recent decades have seen fundamental changes in the business world. Change has become a fundamental factor because of fierce business competition, new technologies, new techniques to business development and mostly globalization. Organisations are fast realizing the need to position themselves as regional and global players in a world that national and geographic boundaries are crumbling through globalization. It has become important for managers to be proactive and react quickly to changes taking place in the world. Cummings and Worley (2009) indicate that the pace of global, economic and technological development makes change an inevitable feature of organizational life. This has put a lot of pressure on organisations. To remain competitive, companies have no choice but to change systems either restructuring, re-organising and reengineering systems to improve competitiveness and the end result being a positive change in productivity leading to increase in the bottom line being profits. For this to happen successfully, in the ever changing environment, organisations need to improve their performance by improving their quality and productivity. Organisations need to be flexible to cope with the change. The current environment requires organizations to

adapt or else fail (Robbins, Judge, Odendaal & Roodt, 2009). However, change is not always smooth and welcomed by everyone. Resistance comes with the pressures of change. Most well planned restructuring efforts seem to die a natural death when faced with stern resistance. In Namibia restructuring attempts of state owned enterprises seem to be met by strong resistance as evidenced at Namibia Broadcasting Corporation (NBC), Namibia Airports Company (NAC) and Namibia Wildlife Resorts (NWR). These organisations embarked on a restructuring exercise but employees resisted the change. Public sector organizations are usually seen as being slow, inefficient and less effective compared to private sector organizations which are innovative and are keen on satisfying their customer's needs. However, things have changed. The business world has become violent and public owned companies have realised that for them to survive they cannot wait for the one size fits all kind of running things they need to restructure reposition and reorganize systems to fight competition. Bradley (2010), states that avoiding change is not a viable option. The Challenge is to develop an effective and timely method of determining the optimum set of proactive changes and to manage them so that stakeholder resistance is overcome and defined performance goals are achieved. There is need for organisations to continue making internal changes because the external environment continues to change every day. Without the change, organisations will not survive. The study evaluates the main sources for resistance to change, the management response and its effect on productivity.

1.2. Statement of Problem

Change has become important and unavoidable in the business world. Organisations are realising the need to remain competitive; organisations have no choice but to change systems to ensure survival. However, some of these change initiatives have been met with strong resistance by employees of the organisations. Telecom Namibia embarked on a restructuring exercise in 2011. The structural change entailed cutting down twelve general managers positions to only five now referred to as chiefs. Positions were advertised internally and employees applied. Media reports during 2011 suggest that the problem arose when Telecom employees felt the restructuring exercise was unfair and there was fear that lower level employees would lose their jobs. The in-house personnel who applied for the new positions were not considered for the new positions. Top management also offered voluntary retrenchment packages to employees above 50 years. This brought about unhappiness and hostility at Telecom Namibia. The workers representatives believed qualified employees were not awarded the chance to be interviewed for the positions that were advertised. Media reports suggest the workers representatives refused to accept the new structure and argued that it was never discussed and signed on. Top Management forged ahead with the change process but employees still resisted this change as they saw it as impractical and expensive. Another major change process which occurred was Telecom Namibia acquiring Powercom (Pty) limited T/A Leo mobile service provider. This also caused changes with the structure of the organisation. Cawsey and Deszca (2007) highlight that most change initiatives fail on encountering resistance, the reason for many failures in many change initiatives can

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be found in resistance to change, Resistance to change introduces costs and delays to the change process that are difficult to anticipate but must be taken into consideration. Burnes (2009) found that organisational transformation is a complex process requiring simultaneous work along many different tracks and an ability to coordinate this work and maneuver through resistance to change is a key ingredient for the success of the change initiative. Change in any organization is implemented so as to make a good impact and benefit the organization, but why then does change come with resistance. The research will try to answer this question. Resistance is an important issue in change management as it can be an obstacle to a successful change process. This study will look into this issue and try to assist change managers to manage change better in future without disrupting positive employee productivity patterns (Robbins & Judge, 2011).

1.3. Objectives of Study

The aim of the study is to evaluate the sources and nature of resistance to change at Telecom Namibia against the model by Graetz et al (2006), proposed in the literature review, and through qualitative research, support the propositions put forward. The following is a summary of the objectives of the research project:

- To identify and analyse the sources and nature of resistance to change
- To evaluate the relationship between the change implementation approach and the sources of resistance to change by measuring them against source of resistance to change outlined by Graetz et al (2006)

- To evaluate the approaches adopted to counter and manage resistance to change and its effectiveness on employee productivity.

1.4. Significance of Study

Graetz et al (2006, p.2) argues, “Change is a normal part of business life”. Even the best performing companies still have to manage change. Change capability has become a core managerial competence because without change management skills, individuals cannot operate effectively with the rapidly changing environment (Cawsey et al, 2012). In fact an organization’s ability to manage change will have a significant effect on its performance. In Namibia organizations have been re-engineered, downsized, outsourced, and restructured and “score carded” overwhelmingly to remain competitive. The findings of this Thesis will help Telecom

Management has an in-depth understanding of the underlying issue behind resistance from employees and helps them understand that resistance is a normal reaction which can be managed effectively. The thesis findings will also assist in showing if there was any effect on employee productivity during this period of change implementation and recommendations will be offered to improve on communication and implementation of the change processes to avoid problems. This thesis will serve as a valuable tool to assist change managers in future change management initiatives in Namibia.

1.5. Limitation of Study

The following limitations should be highlighted:

- The study will only cover the period January 2014 to February 2014 due to time constraints
- The research will only cover the Windhoek geographical area due to financial constraints.

1.6. Definition of Terms

The following concepts will be explained to help the reader understand their meanings:

- **Organisational Change** is a planned alteration of organizational components which include the vision and mission, strategy, goals, structure, process of system, technology and people in the organization so as to improve the effectiveness of the organization (Cawsey et al, 2012).
- **Change management** are strategies and plans initiated directed and controlled to monitor and stabilise the change program.
- **Resistance to change** are mainly barriers arising from organizational politics, inappropriate use of power, challenges to cultural norms and institutionalized practices, lack of understanding, inappropriate timing, inadequate resources, incorrect information or employee suspicion of honorable management intentions (Graetz et al, 2006).

- **Employee productivity** refers to the amount of goods and services an employee produces in a given amount of time.

1.7. Outline of Chapters

The Thesis consists of five chapters:

Chapter one provides a background of study to formulate the problem statement, objectives of the study, significance of study and also a definition of terms which will be used in the study.

Chapter two presents the literature on the issue under investigation. A review of literature and theories under Change management as well as similar studies that have been carried out will be presented.

Chapter three discusses the research methodology which was used to carry out the study. This includes the research design, population and samples used in the study, the research instrument and procedure.

Chapter four presents the findings of the study and the data analysis is presented.

Chapter five provides conclusions and recommendations. Conclusions are made from the analysis and interpretation of the findings.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

As stated in the first chapter, the main aim of this research is to make an evaluation of resistance to organisational change and its effect on employee productivity. This chapter will outline in detail organisational change and also view the different aspects of organizational change such as the change management approaches when implementing change, contributions to resistance to change, sources of resistance to change, academic views and previous research on resistance to change and strategies to overcome it. This chapter will also look at employee productivity, its importance and its relationship with organisational change process. This section will also look at organisational development and the relationship between leadership and resistance to change.

2.2. Organisational Change

Graetz et al (2006) points out that the topic of change can mean different things to different people in different situations. This according to Graetz *et al* (2006) creates a complexity in generalizing the definition of change. Change in simple terms is making things different from the way they are. You are basically moving from some current

state of things to a new state which you desire to be at. Porras and Silver define Organisational change as cited in Van Tonder (2004) as an initiative which alters critical processes, which in turn influences individual behaviours that subsequently impact on organisational outcomes. Change can be planned or unplanned. According to Hartel and Fujimoto (2006, p. 351) “ organisational change is any alteration whether planned or unplanned that causes a shift in the status quo and that affects the structure and resources of an organization”. However, in the business world we are living in today change has become more of a planned thing so as to improve organisations’ effectiveness. There are a lot of forces driving change internally and externally and these influence organisations to change their systems and ways of doing things. Some of these forces include technological changes, change in demographic patterns, social responsibilities, the change in economy and globalization. Organisational change is therefore a planned change of the organisational systems, structures, people, and technology in order to improve the operations effectiveness of the organization (Cawsey et al, 2012).

An organisational structure defines how job tasks are formally divided, grouped and coordinated (Robbins & Judge, 2011,p.522). The form of organisational change that took place at Telecom Namibia was Structural change. Top Management redesigned the structure of the organisation and major changes involved the hierarchy of authority. Twelve General Manager positions were cut down to five and where renamed to Chief. This would the chain of command as there are less General Managers. Other structural changes which took place include the merger and acquisition of Leo mobile services. The main reason for the changes was to become more competitive and efficient. Some

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organisations do introduce change not necessarily to improve on efficiency and effectiveness but also when there are problems within the organization which can be business related or misunderstanding because of culture differences. Solving organisational problems may require introducing change which may affect everyone in the organization. Change is therefore not easy to implement. For organizational change to be successful it would require the change agents and facilitators to have the necessary skills and expertise to carry out the change process. It is imperative that there be greater levels of employee involvement especially where change is focused mainly on restructuring the organisations to avoid resistance. According to Van Tonder (2004) organisational change has been an enduring pursuit for managers and academics because the challenge lies in the implementation and employee response to the change initiatives. The organization as a whole must work together to avoid failure.

Managers play an important role in achieving successful change programmes. They need to be pro-active, be part of the change team and be action oriented so as to achieve positive results. Cawsey et al (2012) highlight common difficulties that management face in dealing with organizational change. They state that managers assume they have power and influence to enact changes and underestimate the power and influence of other stakeholders. Managers lack capacity to manage complex changes that involve people. Managers also find managing human processes unsettling because of potential emotionality and difficulties they present with respect to prediction and quantification. Managers are also unable to accurately estimate the resources and commitment needed to facilitate the integration of the human dimension with other aspects of change like

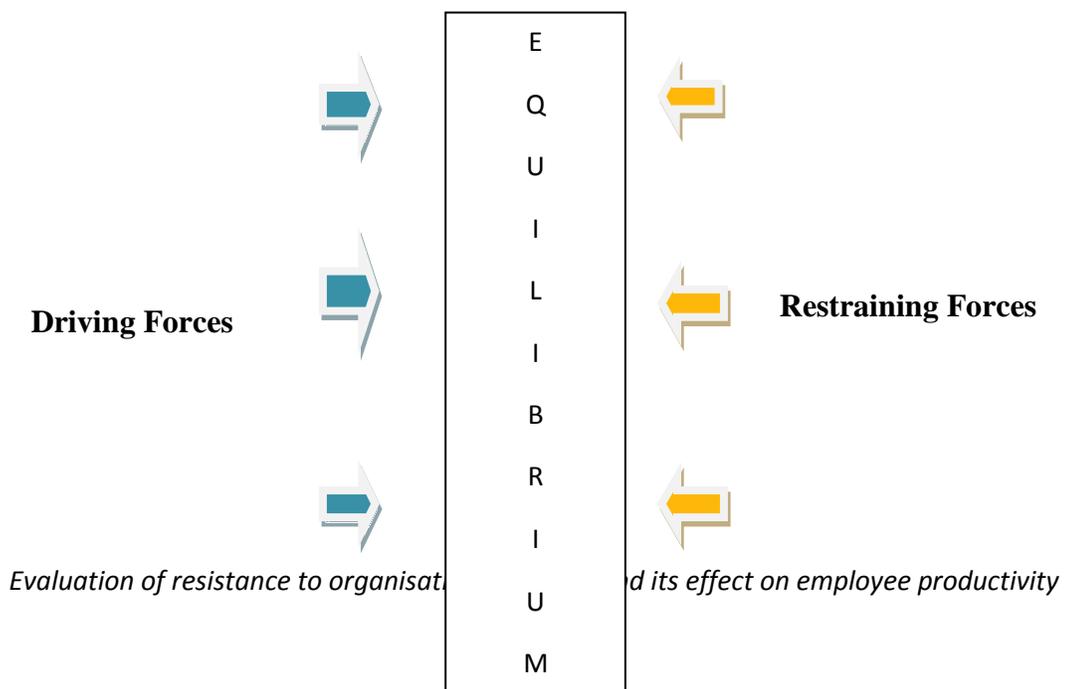
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systems, structures and technologies. Managers' critical judgment also is impaired because of over confidence. Change initiators, implementers and facilitators face these difficulties when attempting to implement planned changes (Cawsey et al, 2012).Management need to introduce strategies to ensure success. There are change models which can be adopted to ensure successful implementation and management of the change processes.

2.3. Approaches to managing change

2.3.1. Lewin's Force-field model of change

Kurt Lewin (1951) as cited in Martin (2005) developed a change model known as the force field analysis model which states that any situation exists as the result of a balance between the forces acting upon it. These forces occur in different directions some driving for change while others are restraining that change by pressing in the opposite direction.*Figure 1: Lewin's force field model* Source : (Martin,2005, p.824)



Before any change, force field will be in equilibrium between the forces driving change and those restraining change. For change to take place, the state of equilibrium must first change. Either the magnitude of the driving force needs to increase and or the magnitude of the restraining forces reduced. When the driving forces are stronger than the restraining forces the status quo of the equilibrium changes. Driving forces are positive forces to change and there are always factors which attract people to accept change while restraining forces are negative forces which result in people resisting change. For Change to be successful managers must strengthen the driving forces and weaken the restraining forces. This model can help managers identify the forces which make individuals resist change or accept change and from there change agents can make better informed decisions to achieve a successful change process. It is a useful tool in change management.

2.3.2. Lewin's three step model

Kurt Lewin identified three stages of change associated with the force field analysis. Lewin's three step model of Unfreezing, Movement and Refreezing. Kurt Lewin cited in Robbins and Judge (2011) argued that successful change in organizations should follow three steps: unfreezing the status quo, movement to a desired end state, and refreezing the new change to make it permanent.

Stage 1 Unfreezing : It requires the current situation or state to be unfrozen in preparation for change to be introduced. This is a difficult stage as resistance surfaces at this stage. If resistance is extremely high management may have to resort to both reducing resistance and increasing attractiveness of the alternative if the unfreezing is to be successful. At this stage organizations try to change the failing systems whilst at the same time maintaining order within the organization. Communication is vital at this stage for employees and everyone involved to air out their views and concerns and the management can address these issues to avoid the barriers to achieving a successful change program.

Stage 2 Movement: The current situation has been unfrozen. The new operational level has been identified and it is now time to make the necessary changes. New systems, policies and structures are put in place and everyone in the organization is encouraged to take part in the change initiative. Change can be in either the driving force or the restraining forces. Research has shown that to be effective, change has to happen quickly and organizations will do well if they get through the movement stage quickly (Robbins & Judge, 2011). At this stage there has to be intensive communication and involvement so that people are moving along at the same pace and encouraging everyone and showing them that this new change will bring greater things in the long run.

Stage 3 Refreezing: Once the changes have been implemented they are refrozen in a new state of balance. If this is not done the balance will not be fixed and it will go back to its previous state. Refreezing implies that changes made become the new norms for

that particular situation (Martin, 2005). When the change agents monitor the change in systems and structures and they are satisfied they then refreeze the new change. For this to work change has got to be reinforced.

Figure 2: Lewin's three step change model *Source : (Robbins & Judge, 2011, p.630)*



Robbins & Judge (2011) further state that to move from equilibrium to overcome the pressures of both individual resistance and group conformity unfreezing must happen in one of three ways. Firstly the driving forces which direct behavior away from the status quo can be increased. Secondly the restraining forces which hinder movement away from equilibrium can be decreased. A third alternative is to combine the two approaches. Change managers can make use of this model as it assists in planning and managing each stage of the change process.

2.3.3. Kotter's Eight-step plan for implementing change

Kotter and Schlesinger (1979) of Harvard business school suggested 6 ways of overcoming resistance to change, namely Education and communication, Participation and involvement, facilitation and support, Negotiation and agreement, manipulation and co-option and explicit and implicit coercion (Thompson & Martin,2010). Robbins and Judge (2011) argue that John Kotter built on Lewin's model to create a more detailed *Evaluation of resistance to organisational change and its effect on employee productivity*

approach for implementing change. Kotter began by listing common mistakes managers make when trying to initiate change. Managers allow too much complacency, fail to create a sufficiently guiding coalition for managing the change process, they underestimate the power of vision, under communicate the vision, permit obstacles to block the new vision, fail to create short-term wins, declare victory too soon and neglect to anchor changes firmly in the corporate culture. Kotter maintains that because of these mistakes new strategies are not implemented well, quality programs do not deliver hoped-for results, downsizing does not get costs under control and reengineering takes too long and costs too much (Burnes, 2009). Kotter (as cited in Robbins and Judge, 2011) then established eight sequential steps to overcome these problems. These represent a managerial approach to successful change management.

Step 1 Create Urgency

For change to happen there must be a sense of urgency around the need for change. This motivates the whole organization to work together. There is need for openness about what is taking place within your market and your strategy so that all your intended goals are known by everyone. The advantage of being open is that you are able to hear your stakeholder's views and clear where there are misunderstandings and gain the support of everyone.

Step 2 Form a powerful coalition

The change agents must be in a position to convince every stakeholder that change is important. There is need to manage and lead change. There is need for experienced

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individuals with the necessary expertise to form a team to work together and lead this change while continuing to build on the urgency. There is need to choose good leaders within the organization, have a good mix of people with different skills from different levels within the organization. It is important to form a coalition with enough power to lead the change.

Step 3 Create a vision for change

Change agents must have a strong vision that people can easily understand and remember. This helps everyone understand why there is need for the change and what exactly you are trying to achieve. Create a new vision to direct the change and strategies for achieving the vision. For this to be a success you create a strategy which will help execute the vision well and your coalition team must have a clear understanding of this vision as they will be leading the change process.

Step 4 Communicate the vision

Communicate the vision throughout the organization for success. Make sure you talk about it all the time to everyone in the organization every chance you get. It does not need to be in a meeting that you call. Make it your language every single day. By so doing people will have mastered it in their minds and will definitely remember and respond to it well. To achieve this managers can make sure that they apply the new vision to all aspects of operations, be available for any questions or concerns about the changes and most of all be good leaders.

Step 5 Remove obstacles

It is important for the change leaders to empower others to act on the vision by removing barriers to change and encouraging risk taking and creative problem solving. At this stage change agents investigate if there is any resistance, if there are any problems with the processes and structures that have been put in place for the new change. It is important to take action and act on the barriers by removing them. If these are identified the leaders can find ways of overcoming and removing these problems and help the change process move forward.

Step 6 Create short term wins.

Plan for, create and reward short- term wins that move the organisation toward the new vision. It is important to create long term targets as well as short term targets which can be achieved within a short space of time and celebrate this achievement. This will further motivate the staff. Everyone who plays a part in the organization must be rewarded this will further motivate the staff members and the leaders of the change program to further motivate them to work hard and achieve the long term goal.

Step 7 Build on Change

There is need to consolidate improvements, reassess changes and make necessary adjustments in the new programs. Each success provides an opportunity to build on what went right and identify what went wrong and areas that you can improve on. Management can bring in new change agents and leaders to strengthen the coalition.

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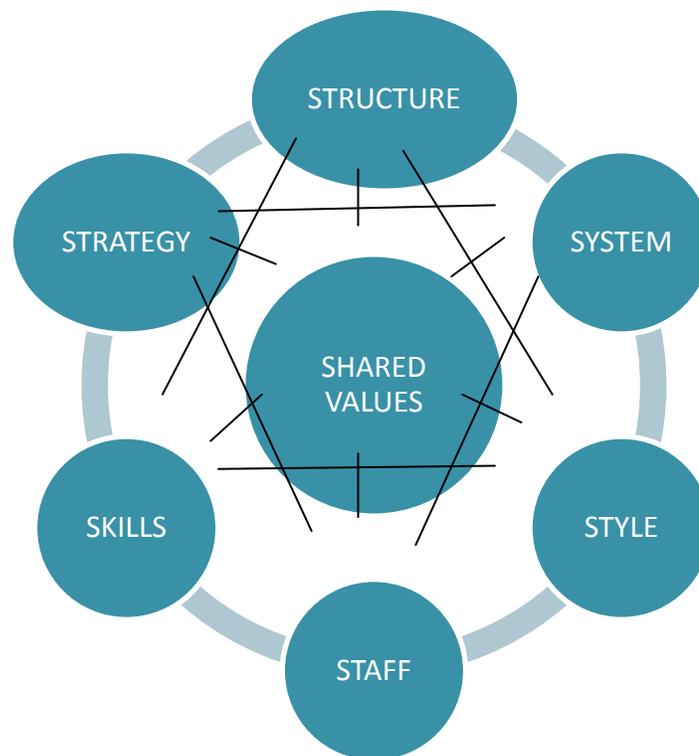
Step 8 Anchor the changes in corporate culture

Reinforce the changes by demonstrating the relationship between new behaviours and organizational success. To make changes stick it should become part of the core of your organization. The values of the vision must show in the day to day work. The managers must make continuous efforts to ensure that the change is seen in every aspect of your organization so as to strengthen the new change in the organization's culture. Everyone in the organization must continue to support the change (Robbins & Judge, 2009).

Kotter's change model will assist managers in planning, executing and sustaining the change process in their organizations successfully.

2.3.4. Mckinsey's 7-S Model

Figure 3: 7-S Model



Sources: Reprinted from Business horizons, Vol.23 Waterman, R. Jr, "structure is not organisation", pp.14-26, copyright 1980, Elsevier

Strategy : This is a plan undertaken in response to or in anticipation of changes in the external environment. It leads to allocation of the organisation's finite resources to reach specific goals.

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Structure: It relates to the nature of the formal hierarchy, reporting relationships and designs that go into the formal structure.

Systems: Formal and informal processes and procedures used to flow information and facilitate decision making and action.

Style: How managers behave in pursuit of organizational goal, their leadership style and culture.

Staff: How human resources are developed and categorized overtime

Shared values: Longer-term vision and shared values that shape what organisational members do and the destiny of the firm.

Skills: The dominant attributes and distinctive competencies that exist in key personnel and the organisation as a whole. (Cawsey et al, 2012).

There must be a fit or alignment of all the 7 aspects for organizational effectiveness. When changes are introduced the alignment can be affected which may hinder effectiveness. It is therefore important for change managers to ensure that changes implemented ensure that alignment of the seven elements is achieved. When changing one element the effects of that change on the other elements needs to be considered to avoid failure because the elements are interconnected. According to Cawsey et al (2012), the 7-S model provides change agents with checklist of critical variables that need to be analysed and is a useful analytical tool. It focuses on their connectedness and the need for alignment between variables. Leaders and managers make use of this tool to

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identify areas where there are misalignments and use the information to solve the problems to increase the chances for success.

2.3.5. Organisational Development

Robbins and Judge (2011) state that organisational development is a collection of change methods that try to improve organizational effectiveness and employee well being. They further state that Organisational Development (OD) values human and organizational growth, collaborative and participative processes and a spirit of enquiry. They propose the following as the underlying values in most OD efforts:

1. Respect for people: individuals are viewed as being responsible, conscientious and caring and should therefore be treated with the respect they deserve.
2. Trust and support: Trust, authenticity, openness and supportive climate are characteristics of an effective and healthy organization.
3. Power equalization: effective organizations deemphasize hierarchical authority and control.
4. Confrontation: problems should be openly confronted, not swept under the rug.
5. Participation: If people are more engaged in decision making, they are affected by the change and become more committed to implementing them (Robbins & Judge, 2011, p.633).

Robbins and Judge (2011, p.634) further propose the following six Organisational development techniques for bringing about change:

1. Sensitivity training: This involved unstructured group interaction where individuals meet, express their views and beliefs, and attitudes towards a certain topic like change. Everyone learnt through observing and participating. This was an early O.D intervention. Nowadays organizations have diversity training, executive coaching and team building exercises to help understand the beliefs and perceptions of individuals in an organization.
2. Survey feedback: This is a tool used to assess attitudes held by members of the organization, identifying discrepancies and solving these differences. Members usually complete a questionnaire about communication effectiveness, job satisfaction and decision making practices. The information collected is used to identify the problems in the organization and helps clarify issues. Everyone is able to get answers to issues that are not clear and become more committed to solving problems.
3. Process consultation: This is more task directed and consultants are hired to gain insight into what is really going on around and within people in the organization. The consultants do not solve problems but guide and coach the managers to improve areas which need improving and solving problems.
4. Team building: Team building uses high-interaction group activities to increase trust, openness and increase team performance.
5. Intergroup development: This seeks to change groups' attitudes, stereotypes, and perceptions about each other. It focuses on differences among occupations, departments or divisions within an organization.

6. Appreciative inquiry: This is conducted by trained change agents. It seeks to identify the unique qualities and special strengths of an organization, which members can build on to improve performance. It focuses on success rather than problems. It consists of four steps discovery, dreaming, design and destiny. You identify what people think are the strengths of the organization. From this members speculate the future of the organization, find a common vision of how the organization will look like in future and agree on unique qualities and finally members write action plans and develop implementation strategies

Robbins and Judge (2011) state that recently organizational behaviour scholars have focused on more proactive approaches- how organizations can embrace change by transforming their cultures. Two such approaches are: stimulating an innovative culture and creating a learning organization. The culture innovation approach looks at how organizations can become more innovative and the learning organization approach focuses on how organization can change through learning. In the Namibian State owned enterprises context most change seem to be generated by top management with the assistance of an external consultant, this proposition is supported by media reports that highlight the prominent role of consultants and management in change initiatives.

2.4. Organisational resistance to change

Resistance towards change encompasses behaviours that are acted out by change recipients in order to slowdown or terminate an intended organizational change (Hughes

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2006). It can be said that resistance hinders effective planning so it is therefore a barrier of organizational change. In any organizational change programme, the greatest challenge comes with the awareness that managing change includes managing the reactions to that change (Andriopoulos & Dawson, 2009). Managers often bring in change without seriously considering the psychological effect it may have on the other members of the organization especially those who have not been part of the decision to make the change. This therefore means that success or failure of the change programme is dependent on good management of the organization's members. Most change management writers recognise that employee resistance is to be expected in any major organizational change programme. Employee resistance should not simply be treated as an obstacle to be overcome but as a valuable source of knowledge and critique of change programme (Strebel, 1998) cited in Andriopoulos & Dawson (2009). Resistance is a very important concept which must be given full attention during organisational change programmes. Resistance can therefore be said to be a reaction or response to change initiatives which is normal and is possible to be managed effectively. Graetz *et al* (2006, p.284) state:

“Although the meaning of resistance to change is intuitively clear how resistance translates into practical change dissension is unclear. Agocs explains that resistance can include a wide range of behaviours, including refusal to engage in joint problem solving, refusal to seek common ground, the silencing of advocates for change, sabotage, the use of sanctions and a general lack of cooperation”.

A recent study showed that even when employees are shown data that suggests that they need to change; they latch onto whatever data they can find that suggests they are fine and do not need to change (Robbins & Judge, 2011). Change initiatives are meant to bring positive results to the organization but some people are so used to their way of doing things that any slight change will bring displeasure and problems. Robbins *et al* *Evaluation of resistance to organisational change and its effect on employee productivity*

(2009) state that organisations by their very nature actively resist change. Individuals feel they are being moved from a known familiar, comfortable place to the unknown. People become frustrated and stressed and that stress and fear of the unknown leads to resistance. People are different, some embrace change whilst others do not want change. Organisations view resistance as a very huge obstacle to achieving positive results. However change managers can also make use of that resistance in a positive way to benefit them. Resistance alerts the managers that there is a problem and therefore opens up room for discussions and debate. Change managers can take advantage of this to explain the change effort and also make change to improve on the change process through listening to the views of the other members. A research paper done by Yue (2008) revealed that the greatest challenge when implementing change in this new century is the reaction and how to manage it. Change creates anxiety, uncertainty and stress. Bovey and Hede (2001) as cited in Yue (2008) highlighted that during 1993 and 1996 500 large Australian organisations revealed that employee resistance was the mostly cited implementation problem encountered by management when introducing change. Failure of many large scale corporate change programmes can be traced directly to employee resistance. In recent society change is considered as inevitability for many organizations, however two thirds of major change programmes prove unsuccessful and according to fortune 500 executives it is not because of lack of skill or resources but because of resistance. It is therefore an enemy of change (Yue, 2008).

Research is still being carried out to understand the underlying cause to resistance to change. Research has been carried out to provide help to managers in dealing with

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resistance to change. Erwin and Garman (2010) (as cited in emeraldinsight.com/journal) published a research paper and the purpose for this paper was to study recently published research to identify findings that provide research based guidance to organisational change agents and managers in addressing individual resistance to organizational change initiatives. It reviewed published papers appearing in resistance to organizational change journals from 1998 to 2009. The paper examined cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions of individual resistance and how it is influenced by: individual predispositions towards openness and resistance to change; individuals' considerations of threats and benefits of change; communication, understanding, participation, trust in management, management styles, and the nature of relationships with the change agents. The research findings provide a starting place useful to change agents in considering resistance in planning for change initiatives. The researchers provided insight into how various personality differences and individual concerns influence resistance, and what change agents and managers might be able to do to appropriately influence resistance. Each of these areas offers a lot of opportunities for deeper examination. However the framework of this research certainly did not touch on all aspects of resistance or issues facing practitioners. Also the reported research used primarily self-report questionnaires to gather data, which are quantitatively analyzed. Such a lack of diversity of research methodologies provides a limited perspective of resistance to organizational change that might have been broadened by qualitative and practice-based methods (e.g. case studies and action research). Hence the need to carry out this research, it may reveal results lacking in other researches which have been

carried out by having a deeper understanding of feelings and attitudes of employees and also to find out the how the change managers were affected.

2.4.1. Sources of Resistance to change

There are many reasons why individuals resist organizational change. People often feel threatened when they hear of change. Robbins & Judge (2009) split the sources of resistance to change into two groups: individual sources and organizational sources. Individual sources include habits where we rely on programmed responses and when confronted with change the tendency to respond in our accustomed ways becomes a source of resistance to change. People with a high need for security are likely to resist change because it threatens their feelings of safety. Changes in job tasks can arouse economic fears if people feel they may fail to perform new tasks when pay is closely tied to productivity. Fear of the unknown, disruption of social arrangements, lowering of status and creation of a climate of uncertainty also causes resistance. Organisational sources of resistance to change include structural inertia, limited focus of change which tends to be nullified by the larger system, group inertia where if individuals want to change their behavior, group norms may act as a constraint. Threat to specialized groups may lead to resistance.

Graetz et al (2006) building on the work of Pardo del val and Feuntes (2003) suggest that resistance can be divided into five categories. Pardo del val & Feuntes (2003) presented a research paper on a literature review and empirical study of resistance to

change. They divided sources of resistance to change into five groups. These have been further explained by Graetz et al (2006).

Graetz *et al* (2006) explains that four views of resistance to change predominate:

1. Resistance to change is a psychological concept- suggesting that individuals by nature challenge any type of change.
2. Resistance to change is a systems concept- reflecting organizational members discomfort with process modification that may disadvantage them
3. Institutionalized resistance- organizational members resist change when they do not believe it is necessary.
4. Organisational culture- organisational members resist change that is contrary to their beliefs and attitudes.

The four perspectives of resistance which have been outlined provide differing theoretical models that conceptualize the causes of resistance. Graetz et al (2006) explains: Building on the work of Rumelt (1995), Pardo de Val and Feuntes (2003) suggest that resistance to change can be divided into five categories.

They describe the five categories as illustrated in table 1:

Table 1: *Sources of resistance*

State of change	Source of resistance	Examples/Manifestations
Formulation	1. Distorted perceptions of change need, barriers to interpretation and vague strategic priorities	Myopia-difficulty projecting the future with clarity Denial/Refusal- to accept contradictory information Perpetuation of ideas Implicit assumptions- which distort reality Communication barriers Organisational silence
	2. Low motivation for change	Direct costs of change Cannibalisation of costs Cross subsidy comforts
	3. Lack of creative response	Resignation change Inadequate strategic vision or commitment of top management.
Implementation	4. Political and cultural deadlocks	Departmental politics Deep rooted values and loyalty Lack of awareness of the social dimension of change
	5. Other	Leadership inaction Embedded routines Problems with collective action Lack of capabilities

Source: Adapted from Graetz et al 2006 *Managing Organisational Change* p.289

The study at Telecom Namibia will make use of the five categories of sources of resistance outlined by Graetz et al (2006).

In the formulation stages of Change three groups of sources of resistance are likely to take place. In the first category there is distorted perception, barriers to interpretation and vague strategic priorities. This may include having difficulty projecting the future, having implicit assumptions which distort reality, refusal to accept information that is not desired and communication barriers. The second category is low motivation for change. This is brought about because of direct costs of change, cannibalisation costs and cross subsidy costs. Change may bring success to the organisation but at the same time losses and because of those losses there is low motivation to change. Employees may also value change results less than managers so there is lack of motivation on the employees' side. The third category for sources of resistance to change is lack of creative response. Some organizations face the problem of inadequate strategic vision, low commitment of top managers to change management and a reactive mindset within the organization. These three categories of resistance to change are likely to be experienced at the formulation state of change. On the implementation stage of change the fourth category of sources of resistance to change is political and cultural deadlocks. Deep rooted values within departments and departmental politics are like to cause resistance to change. The fifth category of sources of resistance to change includes leadership inaction because of fear for changing the status quo, lack of necessary capabilities to implement change successfully and collective action problems in deciding which department moves first (Graetz et al, 2006).

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2.4.2. Different views to resistance to change

Graetz et al (2006, p.280) argues that resistance to change is not always bad; in fact he argues that resistance to change can be a positive to the change program:

“Recent literature has emphasized the potentially positive or at least benign nature of resistance. Resistance to change can serve positive purposes such as forcing change initiators to reconsider hasty plans or marshalling employees support for a new vision. Val and Feuntes highlight that resistance is equivalent to inertia, in that it aims to keep the status quo and is therefore not generally a negative notion since change itself may not be inherently beneficial for the organization.”

Resistance has in fact been re framed by some as both a positive and necessary force that can inform change efforts through providing alternative ideas, harnessing people into the problem solving process and aiding the consideration of alternatives. Waddell & Sohal (1998) as cited in Pardo del val & Fuentes (2003) argued that if resistance is managed well and understood, managers may greatly benefit by looking at the ways of utilizing resistance to change rather than overcoming it. Long back resistance was viewed by some as a form of conflict but through research resistance is now seen as a complex issue caused by many factors.

2.5. Leadership vis a vis Resistance to change

There are multiplicities of definitions that have been postulated by different authors on leadership. A close examination of these definition reveal that central to any leadership process is the concept of exerting “influence”. In this regard Hersey and Blachard (1988) say that leadership occurs when one attempts to influence the behavior of an individual or group. This thesis will discuss three dimensions of leadership in the context of change within an organisation: function, role and attributes and the impact in increasing or reducing resistance to change. The dominant themes in the change literature tend to emphasise that transformational change will not occur without strong leadership and knowhow from the top. Graetz et al (2006) posit that for a change programme to be successful the leader has to perform the following four roles:

- Energising and mobilizing the workforce into a state of readiness for change
- Envisioning the future ideal and defining the direction in a way that appeals to, and inspires all stakeholders on a personal level
- Demonstrating personal commitment and involvement by consistently and relentlessly communicating and modeling the new behaviours.
- Providing enabling systems and structures that will sustain the momentum for change.

This thesis will evaluate the practice of these four key roles by the Managing Director at Telecom and draw conclusions on the impact thereof through analysis. Leaders should have a thorough understanding of how the change relates to the bigger organisational

picture: the nature of change, the impact of change, whether and how the change supports the organisation's strategic objectives and the organisation's ability and capacity to deal with change (Herholdt, 2012).

2.6. Overcoming Resistance to change

Robbins and Judge (2009) suggested 7 tactics that can help change agents deal with resistance to change:

- **Education and Commitment**

Communicating within the organization to everyone about change and the logic of change can reduce employee resistance. It fights effects of misinformation and poor communication and issues are able to be discussed and misunderstanding cleared up thereby destroying resistance.

- **Participation**

Participation and involvement of everyone in the organization can reduce resistance, obtain commitment and increase the quality of change decisions. Manager and change leaders often make a huge mistake of not involving the other staff members who are key to making the change initiative a success and this leads to failure. This can only work if the participants are giving meaningful contributions. Participation also has a disadvantage that through the discussions the group can come up with poor contributions which do not help in achieving success and at the same time wasting time.

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- **Building support and commitment**

If managers or employees fear change and lack motivation to change they resist change. There is need for the change leaders to build support for the employees and help them emotionally commit to change.

- **Develop positive relationships**

It is important for everyone in the organization to maintain good relations. Managers must always try to ensure that they have good relations with lower level employees. If there are good relations, when there is need for change there is a good chance that employees will not resist change because they have good relations and there is trust.

- **Implementing changes fairly**

To avoid resistance managers must make sure that change is implemented fairly. It is important that employees see the reason for the change and perceive its implementation as consistent and fair.

- **Manipulation and cooptation**

These are both inexpensive ways to gain support from employees. Managers can manipulate the situation whereby they can threaten employees with serious issues like closing the department with employees resisting change. Because of this threat are forced to be welcoming to the change efforts.

- **Coercion**

This applies to using direct threats or force on the resisters. Resisters to change can be threatened with transfers to another branch, loss of promotions, negative

performance evaluations and poor letter of recommendation. Organisations can make use of this tactic to force employees to accept change and move on. However this may not work especially if workers are being represented by unions.

Self (2007) presented a research paper on overcoming resistance to change by creating readiness. He highlighted that it is the change leader's responsibility to guide the organisational member to embrace the change rather than resist it. Thus, the process must target creating readiness for the change. Effective management of readiness means the change leader shapes the attitudes of everyone in the organization towards the change initiative and this may lead to members of the organisation adopting to change rather than resistance behaviours. Armenakis et al. (1999) as cited by Self (2007) suggested five key elements in successfully creating and managing readiness.

a) The first of these is the need for change. Organisations identify a gap between a desired state and the current state. The change agent justifies the need to change to help members of the organization see and agree that there is need for change.

b) The second element for creating and managing readiness is establishing if proposed change is the right change to make. The change leader must lead by example and demonstrate that the proposed change is the right solution for eliminating the gap between the desired state and current state. He or she must show the benefits of change to the organisation and it would help if there have evidence of where in the business world such changes have worked.

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c) The third element focuses on bolstering the confidence of organizational members reinforcing that they can successfully make the change. These leaders need to first, emphasize that organizational members have the right knowledge, skills, and abilities to implement the change – or that they will be given the opportunity to develop these. Second, they need to ensure that the organization has the right organizational structure, policies, procedures, technology, and management talent in place to successfully implement the change.

d) The fourth element, key support, involves the actual organizational support for the change. Everyone must be in support of the change initiative for it to be successful. Change leader must have the support of workers representatives and trade unions. This will make the other members of the organisation appreciate and adopt change.

e) The final element is designed to answer the question, “What’s in it for me/us?” The organizational members not only seek to understand the nature of what the outcomes from implementation of the change might be, but they also seek to understand if these outcomes will be positive or negative, and, if so, what the significance of those outcomes are in terms of what each organizational member values. It is important to understand that the value of the outcome can carry as much weight as whether or not the outcome is negative or positive.

Change managers can make use of these five key elements in overcoming resistance and achieving successful results in change implementation programmes.

2.7. Employee Productivity and resistance to change

The most important goal in any profit making organization which will always have a high priority is maximum profits. For this to be achieved an organisation has got to be efficient in its operations. Harrington (2005) states that for organisations to survive in today's competitive environment you need to excel. To excel an organisation needs to focus on all parts of the organisation, optimizing the use and effectiveness of all its resources. Efficiency in an organisation is measured by productivity. Productivity can be defined as an economic measure of efficiency that summarises the value of output relative to the value of inputs used to create them (Cole & Kelly, 2011). Through productivity, a firm is able to see its level of profitability and its ability to survive. An organisation can be said to be productive if it converts inputs in to outputs at the lowest cost. Change brings with it alterations in the company's strategy, structure, processes, systems and people to improve productivity, that is efficiency and effectiveness of the organization. One of the most important inputs to the productivity is the human aspect which is the employees. The research will look at resistance to change at Telecom Namibia and its impact on employee productivity. Employee productivity is basically the amount of goods and services an employee can produce within a given period of time at lower costs. Goodman et al (2007) highlight that groups of individuals all have a unique set of values, expectations, motivation and skills and their interaction often has a synergistic effect on the work team, enabling the team to achieve results that exceed previous norms. They further state that effective management of people can often result in significant increases in output without an appreciable increase in labour cost. As

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businesses are going through economic changes, trying to fight competition, they change systems, and restructure with the intent to grow and improve on productivity levels. During these changes there is fear of the unknown, insecurity and this affects the way people do their jobs. Change is meant to bring good results but it comes with issues. Where there is change there is resistance. How then is employee productivity affected by this resistance? When employees spend time focusing on the effects of changes and less focused on their tasks at hand levels of efficiency are likely to be affected and output is reduced. The study at Telecom Namibia will look at employee productivity and see if there was any change in output at the time when the change initiative was introduced. This will be measured using labour productivity or output per hour of labour. The research will look at the effects the change had on employee productivity and compare and see if worker efficiency at that time period decreased, increased or there was no change at all. If there was high absenteeism and deviant behavior from some employees it may have caused disruptions and huge costs to the company. The research will try to establish this. Employee productivity matters because productivity is the driving force behind an organisation's growth and profitability. Efficiency and profitability of an organisation are linked to productive use of labour and competitiveness and survival of an organisation rely on low unit costs.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the research methodology that was used in this study. The chapter will focus its discussion on the population, sampling and data collection instrument used with an aim to address the research objectives of the study.

3.2. Research Design

Paliwal (2009) stated that a research design can be referred to as a conceptual structure within which a research is conducted. The research made use of qualitative designs in the form of a Case study. A case study is adopted so as to understand one person or situation in greater depth. The qualitative design was used to help the researcher understand the real problems at hand with resistance to change and different feelings and attitudes of the target population. The qualitative approach bases knowledge on meanings from individual experiences. This approach enables the researcher to get a lot of data at Telecom Namibia as it is rich in description, in depth inquiry, and it captures direct quotes about people's feelings and experiences. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2005), the qualitative method can reveal nature of certain situations, settings, processes, *Evaluation of resistance to organisational change and its effect on employee productivity*

systems and people. Therefore the researcher would be able to have a deeper understanding of the issues under study at Telecom Namibia.

3.3. Population

The population for this study consisted of employees of Telecom Namibia, non managerial and managerial employees. “Population is the whole group of people that have the characteristics that you want to study (Robson, 2002, p.260)”. The sampling was limited to the staff members of Telecom Head Office town branch in Windhoek area only. Time and costs resulted in limiting the study to the head office staff members in Windhoek only. Its total population is four hundred and eight (408). The basic idea of sampling is that by selecting some of the elements in a population, conclusions about the entire population can be drawn.

3.4. Sample and Sampling Method

The sample was drawn from a cross section of Telecom Namibia organogram. The Targeted sample size was composed of twenty five staff members. Stratified random sampling was used to select twenty five respondents who all experienced the problems which came with the change initiative process at Telecom Namibia. The researcher identified different strata of managerial and non-managerial staff members. From the

strata, simple random sampling was used to select the twenty five respondents that constituted the sample size.

3.5. Research Instrument

This qualitative research was executed by means of semi-structured one to one interviews. Creswell (2003, p.141) states that “interviews enable participants to discuss their interpretation of the world in which they live and express how they regard situations from their own point of view”. Semi-structured interview questions allow for flexibility of the conversation, encourage the respondents to express themselves and also allow for further probing. Misunderstandings can be cleared up immediately. Semi structured interviews involve a degree of structure and also allow room to pursue topics of particular interest (Bryman & Bell, 2007).

3.6. Procedure

The semi-structured interviews were conducted face to face. An interview guide was drawn up and administered to guide the researcher to get clarification on issues and also to allow probing. The interview was structured in such a way that the researcher would be able to establish the change initiative process and as well understand how the resistance to change came about. The interview was also designed to find out if there was any effect on the productivity levels at Telecom Namibia during this period. The

interview schedule was piloted on one volunteer to ensure reliability and from that the researcher got feedback on how effective the questions are. The individual sought clarity on some of the questions as they were not clear. Amendments were made to the research instrument to make it understandable. The researcher asked for permission to make use of the tape recorder. For those who were not comfortable with being recorded the researcher took written notes. Recordings have a great advantage in that you capture every aspect of the interview, the researcher can check for accuracies in the wording and it makes it easy when the researcher wants to quote respondents. It also helps the researcher concentrate fully on the interview.

3.7. Reliability of the Study

Extra precaution was taken in handling all the data collected, transcribing and analysing it. Welman et al. (2005) argues that reliability is concerned with the findings of the research and relates to the credibility of the findings. It was imperative for the researcher to check if she captured the right data by sharing with the respondent what she has understood from the response of the respondent for verification and clarification purposes to avoid bias.

3.8. Data Analysis

The data analysis approach that was adopted by the researcher for analysing the data collected through the interviews was transcription, coding and thematic analysis. Data analysis involves identifying key themes, trends, ideas and arguments (Gray, 2009). Data was listened to from the tape recorder and verbatim transcription was done. The researcher read and re-read the data to become familiar with the data. The researcher carefully coded words and phrases that may be of use to the study and grouped together the different parts of data relevant to some category (Sapsford & Jupp, 2006). Coding process made it easier for the researcher to get a clear understanding of the interview data. The codes were examined to identify any similarities or differences between the groups. These groups were further examined to see if there were any patterns of meaning, themes and trends which could be identified and grouped according to frequency of occurrence. The themes were reviewed to see if there were any overlapping similar categories which can be reduced in number and grouped together and remove unnecessary groups. The themes were further defined to see how they related to the study and then conclusions were drawn. This will assist in building explanations on the findings and explain theories that may emerge from the data in relation to existing literature. De Vaus (2002) supports this by stating that this process makes data manageable by grouping similar responses. Results will be presented through tables, flow chart diagrams and data interpreted in a narrative form.

3.9. Coding System

Codes were developed from each interview question that was asked by the interviewer to get a clearer view of the data collected. Below is an example of the coding done by the researcher:

Table 2: *Coding System*

Code	OC	P I	R	E P
Level 1	Organisational Change	Participation and involvement	Resistance to change	Employee Productivity
Initial Concepts	Change initiatives in the organisation	Importance of teamwork, support and participation of employees	Problems encountered during change process	Effects of change initiative on employee productivity
Level 2 category development using questions	What benefits would be brought about by the change	Were you involved in the change process from the beginning	Were there any problems encountered during the change	Were there any changes in employee productivity at this time

The first level coding was used to code the participants' responses. The second level allowed the researcher to categorize and summarise the data and put into themes for thematic analysis.

3.10. Ethics

In this study ethical measures were taken into account. The researcher will not publish the outcome of the research without the full consent of the respondents. The researcher observed the issue of confidentiality. The researcher respected the issue of anonymity and informed consent. The participants were given the option of remaining anonymous and their right to privacy. All the participants were treated fairly; there was no aggressiveness, no pushing or favouring other participants. The researcher wrote a letter to seek approval to conduct research at Telecom Namibia and was approved through the Human Resources department and the Corporate Communications and Public Relations department. No participants were coerced to participate in the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

4.1. Introduction

The previous chapter looked at the research methodology that was employed to carry out the study. The purpose of this chapter now is to present the findings and analyse the data collected at Telecom Namibia through interviews. The objectives of the study are to:

- To identify and analyse the sources and nature of resistance to change
- To evaluate the relationship between the change implementation approach and the sources of resistance to change by measuring them against source of resistance to change outlined by Graetz et al (2006)
- To evaluate the approaches adopted to counter and manage resistance to change and its effectiveness on employee productivity

Analysis of data will be done to see if these objectives have been achieved. Presentation and analysis will be done in two parts. Part 1 will be for non-managerial responses and part 2 will discuss responses from the managerial participants. The discussion will follow after the presentation of findings.

4.2. Sample Analysis

Table 3: *Sample Analysis*

Sample Size	Total Respondents	Response rate
25	22	88 %

25 respondents were supposed to be interviewed for this study. However, of the 25 only 22 participated in the interviews. This represents an 88% response rate. 7 out of the required 9 managers (78%) participated in the interviews and 15 out of the required 16 non-managerial employees (94%) participated. A response rate that is below 50% constitutes a minority which signifies that an incorrect generalisation of population may be obtained (Welman et al, 2005). Therefore it was deemed to be adequate to continue with the analysis of the data collected.

4.2.1. Demographic Characteristics

Figure 4: *Gender Distribution*

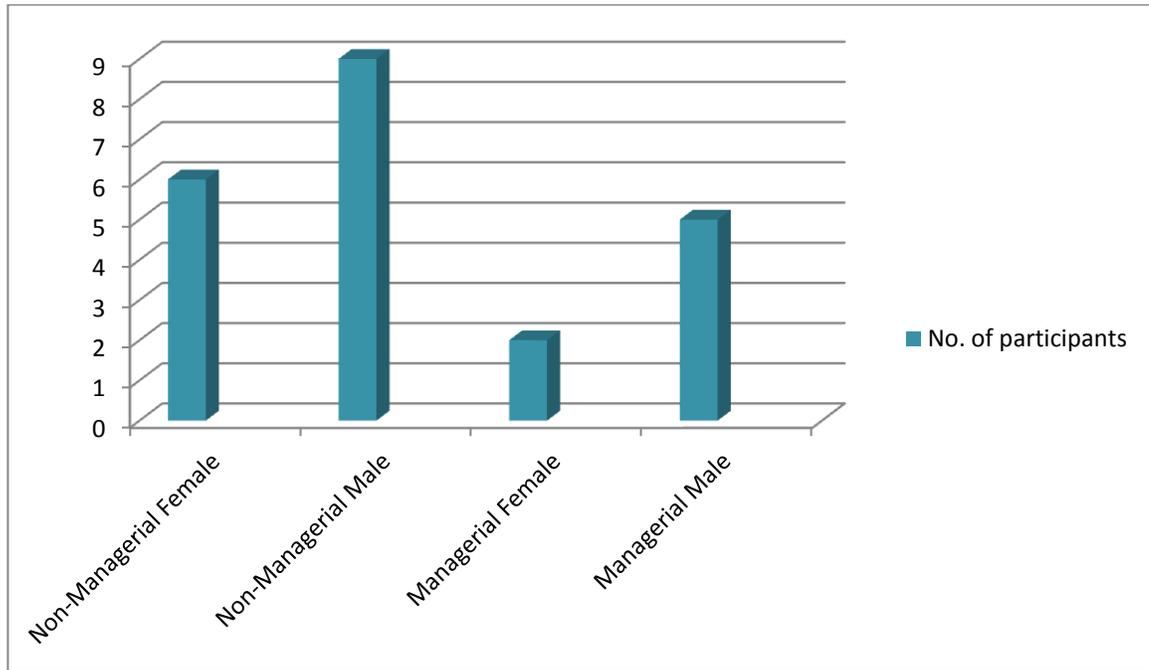


Fig 4 shows the gender distribution of the respondents. There were 6 non-managerial female, 9 non-managerial male, 2 female managerial and 5 male managerial respondents.

Table 4: *Age Distribution*

Age	% Non- Managerial	% Managerial
25-35 Years	40	0
36- 45 Years	26.7	28.6
46- 55 Years	20	42.8
56 and more	13.3	28.6

Table 4 shows the percentage age distribution of the respondents. The results show that 40% of the non-managerial respondents lie between the ages of 25-35 years, 26.7% lie between 36-45 years, 20% lies between 46-55 years and 13.3% lies between 56 and above. There are no managerial respondents between 25 to 35 years. 28.6 % lie between 36-45years. The bulk of the managerial respondents 42.8% lie in 46-55 years age group. 28.6% are 56 and above.

Figure 5: *Highest Educational Qualification distribution*

As shown below 45.4% of the respondents have higher tertiary educational qualifications, that is 31.8% degree qualifications and 13.6 masters qualifications. 22.8% have diplomas and 31.8 have a high school level qualification, that is 13.6% with grade 10 and 18.2% with grade 12.

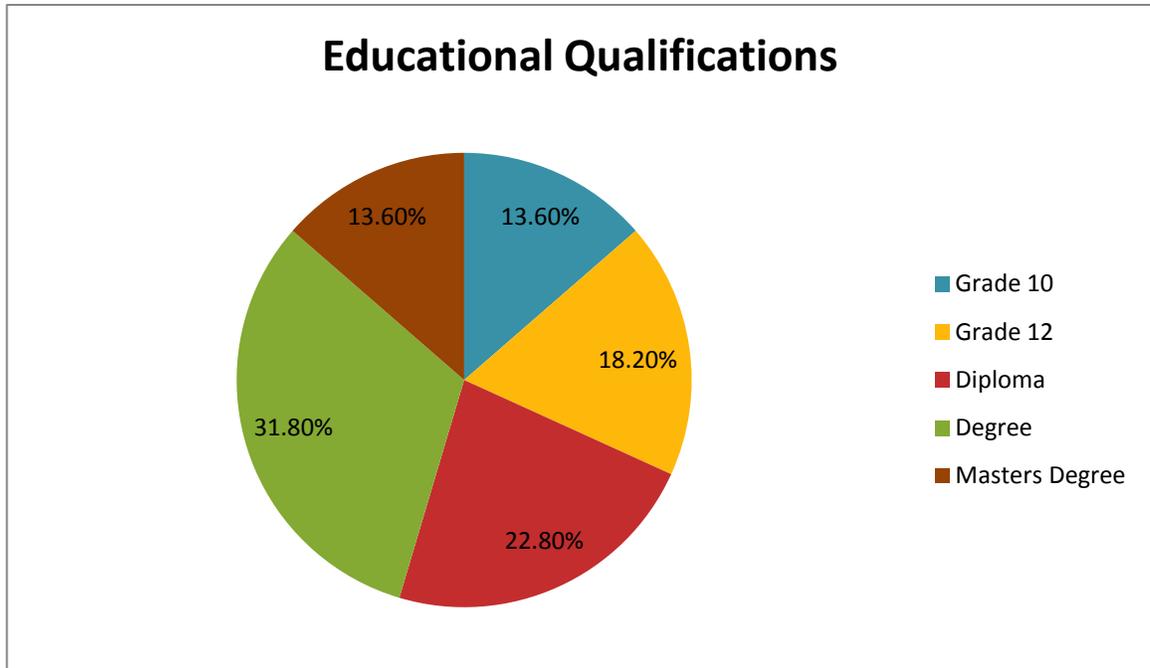


Table 5: *Number of Years Worked at Telecom Namibia*

Duration	Non-managerial %	Managerial %
0 – 5 years	13.3	14.3
6-10 years	26.7	14.3
11-15 years	40	28.6
16+	20	42.8

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Table 5 illustrates the percentage of number of years respondents have worked for Telecom Namibia. It is evident that the bulk of the participants for non-managerial have served Telecom for more than 10 years and the bulk for managerial have served Telecom for more than 15 years.

4.3. ANALYSIS OF DATA

PART 1: NON-MANAGERIAL

The prominent themes that were investigated in the interviews with non-managerial employees are: organisational change, Awareness vision and communication of change initiatives, Participation and involvement, Leadership and management, Resistance to change, Overcoming and countering resistance to change.

These themes will be discussed below.

4.3.1. Organisational change

This theme focuses on the major aspect of the study. Here the researcher sought to find out the perceptions of the participants towards organisational change. All respondents agreed that change initiatives are necessary. They all had a positive perception towards organisational change. They all indicated the fact that the business world is rapidly

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changing and there is need to also change systems and structures for survival. It was evident in their responses that they have no problems with change and look forward to new ways of doing things. A total of 9 participants (60%) did highlight that they had negative experiences with change initiatives whilst 6 participants (40%) mentioned that they have had positive experiences with change initiatives. They were all of the view that if change is done the right way it would bring better benefits and opportunities to the organisation and the individuals.

Below are verbatim comments from some of the respondents:

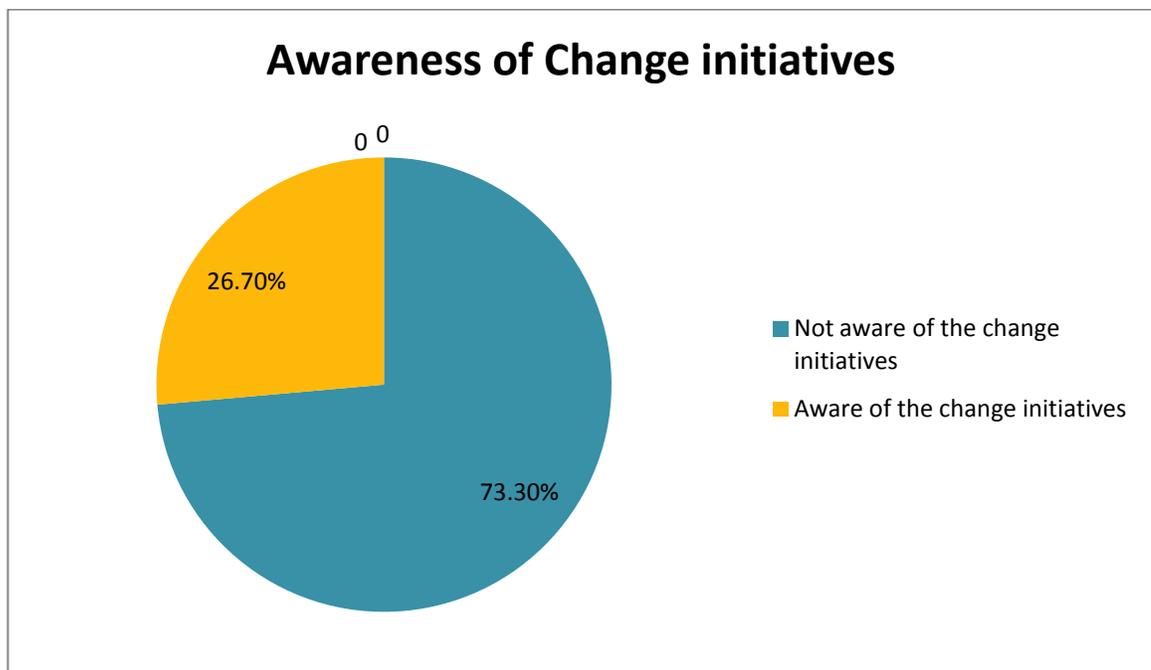
Table 6: *Comments on Organisational Change*

<p>“I have a positive attitude towards change and believe that it is indeed important for the growth of our organisation to bring change. I feel positive and because of change things change for the better.”</p>
<p>“ Organisational change is good and we welcome it. I personally enjoy new challenges and new systems, it makes it more interesting. If done the right way we definitely welcome it.”</p>
<p>“I value change and believe it is important for the organisation. It is also good for me as an employee if the management do involve us. I have experienced change but it has not been good.”</p>
<p>“Change is good if it is communicated through the right channels in the right way”. It is good to change systems although sometimes it can disturb the routine we are used to.”</p>

The interviews revealed that employees are open to change if the right channels are followed in implementing the change. 3 respondents (20%) did indicate that sometimes change disrupts their usual way of doing things. Individuals are reluctant to be moved from their comfort zone and therefore view change as disruption.

4.3.2. Awareness, Communication and vision for change

Figure 6:



4 respondents (26.7%) advised that they were aware of the change initiatives from the beginning, the formulation stage. 11 respondents (73.3%) argued that they had not been made aware of any change initiatives and that they later found out when the process was at an advanced stage close to implementation. The respondents all agreed that the change was not clearly communicated to everyone which made it difficult for the employees to understand the vision and purpose of the change initiatives. 6 participants (40%) indicated that at Telecom Namibia, no clear reasons for change are communicated whenever there are change initiatives. All interview participants were aware of the benefits the change would bring to the organisation and some of the responses given include improved communication and decision making, promoting growth of the organisation, skills growth and better service delivery. While most of the respondents agree that there has been an improvement in communication the structures are however, still not clear. Interviews show that for some, the work load reduced as there were more people in the department doing the same job, for some their positions were made redundant and this made their working environment stressful.

Below are verbatim comments from some of the respondents:

Table 7: *Participants' Comments*

<p>“Changes made our work simpler but many employees lost their positions in different departments and they are lost as to what they are doing in the company which makes it stressful for them.”</p>

“ My work became easier and there was improved communication between me and my manager however if I come to work at 8am by 10 am I will be done and the rest of the day I am sitting because a lot of people are doing the same work. This is worrying because management ends up cutting jobs because half the time we are sitting with no work to do.”

“There was poor communication on the change. We were not told of the benefits of the change and because of that restructuring, many people have no positions. Some people resigned because their positions were taken away from them.”

4.3.3. Participation and Involvement

All participants interviewed highlighted that they were not involved and did not take part in any change process. They all argued that it was wrong of management not to engage them from the beginning, involve them and allow them to participate from the initial stages of the change initiatives. They also seemed to think this was wrong because they are part of the organisation. They need to be informed and given a chance to share their concerns and also be part of the decision making process and not just to get involved when implementing structures and systems. All respondents when asked made it clear that they were not happy with their lack of involvement in important programmes.

4.3.4. Leadership and Management support

The bulk of the respondents 11 (73.3%) indicated that management did try to show commitment and support to the employees during the implementation of the change. They noted that since it was all new to them they had a lot of concerns about their job security since they had not been informed about the change from the start and to help with this problem management and leaders showed support and commitment by taking time to listen to their concerns about the change and what it would mean for them. They also had departmental meetings where everyone in the department would participate and report on the progress of the change implementation. 4 respondents (26.7%) felt that management and leadership of Telecom Namibia had not shown any support. They argued that management had not been transparent and also no clear vision on the goals for change were communicated. They also felt that lack of communication made them feel powerless. One respondent also mentioned that it was clear that some of the managers did not understand the new structures so they did not communicate strongly on the change process and its benefits.

Below are verbatim comments from some of the respondents:

Table 8: *Leadership and management support comments*

<p>“Some people have lost their positions because of change. Management was supposed to ensure that all employees in their departments had the right skills to cope with the changes and would not be affected negatively by the change.”</p>
<p>“Management did not give us time to understand the changes before they were</p>

implemented. The leadership involved the wrong people to make the change understood.”

“Management showed that they do not care about us. If they valued us they would have involved us and trained us so that we can cope with the changes”.

“Management showed support by having an open door policy where we could go and talk to him about our concerns and problems”. Departmental meetings also helped us understand and we were able to take part in the meetings”.

3 participants (20%) noted that their managers were caring and encouraged them to develop themselves and enhance their careers. While 4 respondents (26.7%) said that their managers do not encourage and motivate them to develop themselves. 8 respondents (53.3%) were in-between as they felt that they don't really see the encouragement and motivation. They indicated that they mention it once and then go quiet. Managers are not always motivating and encouraging their subordinates.

4.3.5. Resistance to change

All the participants 100% agreed that there was resistance to the change. 13 respondents (86.7%) admitted that they resisted change and 2 participants (13.3%) indicated that although there was resistance within the organisation from other employees, they welcomed the change because for them change made their work simpler and it improved communication with their managers. They indicated that the fact that there was no communication from the initial stages of formulation motivated the employees to show a

negative attitude towards the change initiatives. They argued that vision and reasons for the change were not clearly spelt out and this caused the employees to resist change.

Below are verbatim comments from some of the respondents:

Table 9: *Comments on Resistance to Change*

<p>“ I think the problem was caused by lack of communication from our managers as to why we need change. That is the mistake they made.”</p>
<p>“ The resistance was caused by unclear reasons and this made employees fear that they would lose their jobs. Change means new ways so we might not be qualified enough to continue on our current positions.”</p>
<p>“ Yes we had to resist the change because we did not understand the purpose of the change. For me personally things were fine as they were so to just change without a clear reason is a problem. Change usually means someone will lose their job.”</p>

The main sources of resistance to change that were noted by the participants in the interview include:

- Lack of clarity of the reasons for change
- Concern for lack of skills and capabilities
- Fear of job loss and loss of power
- Lack of commitment and support from the leaders

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- Not knowing what is ahead

The respondents indicated that they showed their resistance by showing some hostility to their manager because of the lack of communication. However, the interviews revealed that their attitude toward their work was not that much affected.

4.3.6. Managing resistance and Change

The participants interviewed noted that the resistance to change could have been avoided if management had communicated the change initiatives from the start. Below are some of the suggestions from the participants to manage resistance and change in the future:

- Improvement in communication and information dissemination
- Going for workshops on change management
- Training employees to upgrade their skills
- Transparency and clear explanations of reasons for change before changing structures
- Training the leaders and managers so that they understand the changes first. It makes it easier for them when they are disseminating information to their subordinates.

PART 2 MANAGERIAL RESPONSES

4.4. Data Analysis

The prominent themes that were investigated in the interviews with managerial respondents are: organisational change, Participation and involvement, Leadership and management role, Resistance to change, Employee productivity, Overcoming and countering resistance to change.

These themes will be discussed below.

4.4.1. Organisational Change

All 7 participants (100%) noted that change is important considering the business environment which is rapidly changing. They mentioned that there are new technologies everyday so for growth and survival there is need to change their structures and systems. They all indicated that they welcome new ways of doing things. 3 managers (42.9%) highlighted that they had negative experiences with change while 4 managers (57.1%) noted that they have never had problems with change. Interviews revealed that they all agree team spirit is a challenge when implementing change programmes because not everyone feels positive about the change. They all felt that change benefits the organisation if well executed. All respondents indicated that there have been restructuring changes in their departments in the last 3 years. Changes were meant to make work simpler, division of work and improved work processes. 2 respondents

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(28.6%) did indicate that they were in-between about their feelings towards the change because in some areas it made the reporting structures too lengthy and more complex. It also put pressure on the employees on the issue of skills and capabilities. 71.4% indicated that they felt very positive about the change. Comments below:

Below are verbatim comments from some of the respondents:

Table 10: *Organisational Change Comments*

<p>“I feel positive because restructuring has made the workflow smoother and simpler. All related work assignments are summed under one position where they have strategic relevance.”</p>
<p>“Positive because the roles and roles are clearer. Change brings good things to the organisation.”</p>
<p>“Since the changes are sometimes not consulted with some people, it leaves many with mixed feelings as they will not know where they are standing with the company especially those with limited skills and capabilities in the company.”</p>

Although a few participants are in-between about their feelings towards change, they do however agree that change is important. Below are some of the reasons noted by the participants that motivated the need for change:

- Better service delivery since Telecom Namibia is a service provider.
- To fight competition from other telecommunication and mobile service providers.

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- Higher profits
- Adapting to rapid change in technology.

4.4.2. Communication, Participation and Involvement

All participants indicated that communication was done to lower level employees about the change initiatives. They highlighted that some of the methods used to ensure that all stakeholders were informed and always in constant communication about the change process include departmental meetings, circulars through emails, written memorandum and forums where the Managing Director of Telecom Namibia would do road shows across the country talking to employees all over the country. All the participants noted that employees were not involved in the change initiatives from the beginning as they feel that some strategies and discussions must be kept confidential. One respondent highlighted that only workers' representatives were involved at a later stage but it was just communication of the progress of the change initiatives. The interview revealed that the lower level employees were only informed at a later stage when the change process was at an advanced stage. The participants indicated that they ensured that employees were engaged in the change process. Below are some of the ways that were noted in the interview about the different ways used to engage employees during this time:

- Continuously communicating a clear vision.
- Conducting boot camps involving lower level employees

- Creating confidence by leading by example by showing strong commitment to the change process
- Clarifying issues to employees and giving assurances that whatever is happening is being done for good cause and not to be negative about it.

4.4.3. Leadership and Management Role

All the interviewed participants noted that they played a leadership role to ensure smooth running of the change process. The interview revealed that the roles played by leadership and management include

- Showing commitment and involvement through continuous communication of change.
- Defining roles and process designs
- Ensuring that employees are motivated and excited about the change process by being there to listen to their concerns and encouraging them to have a positive attitude
- Ensuring communication of all new developments is effected in order to enhance acceptance and minimize resistance associated with change.

The interviews revealed that all participants agreed that for the change process to be successful leaders must lead by example and play a leading role for employees to buy into the idea of change and avoid problems.

4.4.4. Resistance to Change

All participants interviewed (100%) noted that there was resistance from the lower level employees. 5 participants (71.4%) indicated that resistance occurred at the implementation stage when everyone was now aware of the change process and while 2 participants (28.6%) indicated that resistance was felt from the formulation stage of the change initiatives indicating that some employees already knew about the change initiatives from the start. When asked about the nature of the resistance, the participants noted that the form and nature of resistance felt was mainly hostility and quarrelling and unhappiness. Only 1 participant indicated that there was a reduction in output. The participants were asked about their views towards the causes of resistance and the following responses were noted:

- Fear of moving from their comfort zone and trying new things
- Fear of job loss, responsibility and power
- Lack of clarity for the reason for change
- Concern about lack of competitive skills and capabilities.

The reason mentioned by the majority of the respondents was fear of job loss, responsibility and power.

Below are verbatim comments from some of the respondents:

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Below are verbatim comments from some of the respondents:

Table 11: Comments on Resistance

<p>“Resistance arose because people do not like change. They wanted to keep on doing things the old way.”</p>
<p>“Resistance was caused by the fact that workers representatives did not understand the new structures and its impact on the bargaining unit. They feared their fellow employees would lose their jobs.”</p>
<p>“Employees resisted because of fear that they may not have the required skills and qualifications to do the job and hence lose their jobs.</p>

The participants interviewed noted that the resistance did affect the organisation. Below are the responses given by the participants on the effects of the resistance:

- Missing deadlines because of delays in executing tasks
- Growing negative behaviour towards work
- Increase in customer complaints
- Increase in labour costs due to delays

1 respondent highlighted that up to now people are still showing resistance. They mentioned that there were no significant changes caused by the resistance. They indicated that employees are mature individuals and even with problems they soldier on.

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4.4.5. Employee Productivity

The interviews revealed that Telecom Namibia does measure employee productivity. They noted that they do quarterly performance measurements; they use a balance scorecard performance measuring tool for performance management. In terms of measuring individual output they have methods of doing it.

Below are verbatim comments from some of the respondents:

Table 12: *Participants' Comments*

<p>“Yes we do measure employee productivity. We set timelines for execution of certain tasks and after the set time lapses we see quality of outcomes.”</p>
<p>“Prudent management of resources is one important aspect. However we are in the process to develop more comprehensive methods targeting technical departments.”</p>
<p>We use the balance scorecard and also do quarterly performance reviews. We also do dipstick surveys as a measurement on employee engagement.</p>

Other common responses noted by participants on methods of measuring employee productivity in departments include:

- Measuring number of customer complaints
- Speed of service delivery per set task
- Monthly written reports to see the tasks performed by the subordinate for that month and to see if they managed to meet the monthly set targets.

The participants indicated that there was no change in employee productivity levels during the resistance. 4 participants (57.1%) noted that there were increases in customer complaints. There were too many faults and slow service delivery during this period. 1 respondent (14.3%) noted that there was no significant change in customer complaints so he is neutral as to whether or not there was change. 2 respondents (28.6%) noted that there were no changes in customer complaints. All the respondents however, noted that when the change process was implemented and in operation progress reports showed that there was a change in employee productivity. 6 respondents (85.7%) indicated that the change was for the better while 1 respondent (14.3%) indicated that they do not know if there has been any improvement in employee productivity.

Below are verbatim comments from some of the respondents:

Table 13: *Participants' Comments*

“Efficiency has increased and we are beginning to realize the increase in productivity with the same resources human, financial, time.”
“Yes change for the better. The processes have been redesigned so obviously things have improved although some individuals still show signs of resistance.”
“ I personally feel that employees are just motivated to work hard to get a good rating during performance management reviews for bonus purposes.

3 respondents (42.9%) mentioned that service delivery had improved. They mentioned that they do mystery shopping in Teleshops to see the quality of service delivery and

they are happy with what they are seeing. 1 respondent (14.25%) noted that they do not know if there were any changes in the service delivery while 3 respondents (42.9%) agreed that there were no changes in service delivery. In terms of employees' attitudes towards their work 6 (85.7%) respondents indicated that there is a positive change in attitudes now that changes have been implemented. Employees are better are better focused and have grown customer centered. 1 manager (14.3%) indicated that the change in attitude is negative. Employees still have the belief that it is not working.

4.4.6. Overcoming and Managing Resistance to Change

All respondents agreed that resistance is normal when there is change. They noted that Telecom Namibia leaders and management could have done things differently to avoid the resistance which followed the change initiatives. The leaders and management got the workers representatives on board and communicated to the vision of the change initiative and the benefits it would bring for the organisation. The main aim was that if they get the buy in from the workers representatives they could manage to convince the other employees that the change was for the good of the organisation and it would help stop the resistance. The interview revealed that when the resistance emanated management employed strategies to help manage the situation and these include:

Below are verbatim comments from some of the respondents:

Table 14: *Participants' Comments*

<p>“Workers representatives got on board and we communicated to them the reasons for the change and the benefits it would bring. The Managing Director embarked on road shows to inform the employees about the change.”</p>
<p>“Strategies employed to deal with the resistance was to bring the union especially shop stewards closer to work with management and ensure that they are part and parcel of the process.”</p>
<p>“We had boot camps where we would communicate and train employees on the changes and the opportunities and benefits it would bring.”</p>
<p>“Wider and more intensive involvement of workers representatives eradicating misconception and being open for their input.”</p>

All respondents indicated that in future they would do things differently to avoid resistance and manage change. Below are the suggestions by the participants to overcome resistance and manage future change initiatives

- Faster implementation of change initiatives but not all at the same time. We must tackle one initiative at a time implement it successfully then move to the next.
- To engage workers representatives and employees with influence on others at an earlier stage and orientate them on the changes about to happen before it is rolled out organisation wide.

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- Giving people assurance in any change process that it is for a good cause
- Giving clear objectives and vision for the change prior to the changes. However some elements of it and decisions may be confidential to share with lower level employees.
- Constant communication and motivation
- Smaller but more thorough steps of change.
- Intensive employee involvement as it is crucial to the success of change.
- If mistakes are made, there is need to retrace the steps, revisit system, improve on them and move on.

The above are ways of overcome resistance and managing change in future change initiatives mentioned by the respondents.

4.5. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The results obtained from the interviews were presented earlier on in this chapter. Under this topic, interpretation of results will be done in line with the objectives of the study and to see if the objectives of this study have been met.

4.5.1. Organisational Change at Telecom Namibia

The interviews were able to establish the feelings and perceptions of the employees both managerial and non-managerial towards organisational change. According to the findings, it is clear that there is a strong positive perception about organisational change.

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Everyone believes change is important and good for the organisation if done right. Therefore it can be concluded that Telecom Namibia employees welcome change as long as it is done the right way. The interviews revealed that a lot have changes have taken place at Telecom Namibia in the last three years with the major ones being the restructuring of Telecom management and acquisition of LEO mobile service provider. It is evident from the responses of the managerial that they take on more than one change initiative and fail to take their time after implementation of one project to wait until operations are running successfully then take on new change initiatives. This is made clear on the Theme on 4.4.6 where managers give suggestions of what to do differently in future change initiatives. Some of the responses include taking smaller and more thorough steps in change initiatives, faster implementation of change initiatives not all at the same time and when successful move on to the next initiative.

Communication and Participation and involvement were major themes which came out of the interview. The presentation of results shows that there was poor communication in the whole change process. Communication is key to the success of change initiatives. Communication clears any concerns and problems which may arise about the change initiatives and all stakeholders will gain understanding of the vision for the change. If everything is communicated and made clear, it allows for good team spirit and everyone is engaged in the whole process. It allows for everyone in the organisation to work towards one common goal. This is one problem that affected the smooth running of the change process. It is evident that because there was no communication, therefore lower level employees did not take part or were not involved in any decision making. It is

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evident from the results that when problems started emanating that is when the leadership and management came up with a strategy of getting the workers representatives on board. It was merely communicating to them what is happening so that they can communicate with other employees. They were not involved in important decision making. All in all participation and involvement was only at departmental level during the implementation stage when employees were now being informed and managers giving them the opportunity to raise their concerns in departmental meetings. The Managing director also went on road shows to communicate the benefits of the change initiatives. Even though these strategies were implemented the lower level employees still were not clear about the vision and reasons for the change and this is the reason why there was resistance.

In terms of the leadership and management role played by the managers at Telecom Namibia from the results the general feeling is that leaders and management could have done more to make it easier for the employees to deal with the issues of the change initiatives. According to the employees, managers did play a role of listening to their concerns and also involving them in departmental meetings. However, the majority felt that the leadership and management could have given them more time to understand the changes. They felt strongly that the Management showed that they do not care about the employees because they failed to communicate and involve them and they could have also trained them so that they could cope with the changes. The management however believes they played their part in show strong commitment and support during this period. In the literature review the researcher did indicate that leadership is central to *Evaluation of resistance to organisational change and its effect on employee productivity*

successful change programmes. Graetz et al (2006) posit that for a change programme to be successful the leader has to perform the following four roles:

- Energising and mobilizing the workforce into a state of readiness for change
- Envisioning the future ideal and defining the direction in a way that appeals to, and inspires all stakeholders on a personal level
- Demonstrating personal commitment and involvement by consistently and relentlessly communicating and modeling the new behaviours.
- Providing enabling systems and structures that will sustain the momentum for change.

According to the results collected from the management roles played by the management leading the change and comparing them with the above roles suggested by Graetz et al (2006) they were to a certain extent followed. Problem that arose with the leadership is workers at Telecom felt it was the wrong people leading the change process. They failed to create a state of awareness and readiness for the employees. They failed to inspire all stakeholders on a personal level and communication and involvement was non-existent until the implementation stage. This as evidenced was wrong as it added on to the resistance. It is important to note that mistakes may be made in assuming that managers are the leaders. Among the Management of Telecom Namibia there were leaders who were spearheading the change process with the help of the other managers. Good leaders must possess good communication skills, continuously looking

into the systems and employees, driving them to blend efficiently with new systems and motivating all stakeholders for the success of the change process. It is imperative to have competent leaders working hand in hand with Management for the success of the change process.

The interview did also cover questions on employee productivity. The researcher tried to establish if there were any changes in employee productivity during the period of the resistance to change. The interviews did reveal that Telecom Namibia do measure employee productivity. This is done using various methods which include measuring number of customer complaints, speed of service delivery per set task, monthly written reports to see the tasks performed by the subordinate for that month and the results. The interviews did reveal that there were increases in customer complaints and this can be attributed to the resistance to change. The managers gave different views as to whether there were changes in service delivery and attitudes when resistance was intense. The majority however highlighted that when they were past the implementation stage and operations were in full swing employee productivity had increased which was a positive although some individuals are still showing signs of resistance. This is evidenced by the responses in Table 13 with some saying there has been an improvement in efficiency with increases in productivity with the same resource. It is clear that there were no significant change in employee productivity levels when resistance was intense however positive changes have been noted since the implementation and this to leaders and managers is a good sign that the change is yielding good results

4.5.2. Discussion of Objective 1: To identify and analyse the sources and nature of resistance to change

The first objective was based on establishing the causes and the nature of the resistance to change at Telecom Namibia. As seen from point 4.3.5 all participants agreed that there was resistance to organizational change. From the responses given by the participants it is clear that the main causes of the resistance was lack of clarity from the leadership and management about the reasons for change, fear of job loss, responsibility and power and concern for lack of skills and capabilities. Other reasons for resistance were noted but these two were the most dominant. The nature of the resistance felt was hostility, quarrelling and showing unhappiness to the management. The question of sources and nature of the resistance was also posed to the managerial participants and the majority of them indicated that the nature of resistance felt was hostility and unhappiness. It is clear that Hostility and show of unhappiness was the nature and form of resistance portrayed by the Telecom Namibia workers. The leadership and management indicated that the main cause of resistance was fear of losing jobs. This is seen in Table 11 in the findings. Evidence also gathered from the interviews showed that lack of proper communication from the management steered up the problems.

In terms of the effects the resistance on the organisation, leadership noted that the resistance resulted in employees missing deadlines due to delays in executing tasks, negative behaviour towards work, increase in customer complaints and increase in

labour costs due to delays. The researcher can clearly say that the nature of resistance shown by the Telecom Namibia workers was not only hostility and unhappiness. There were also Go-Slows. Due to the slowing down there were delays in executing tasks leading to missed deadlines and increase in labour costs. Customer complaints may have also increased because of poor customer service as employees may have been moody and working at a slow pace during this time.

4.5.3. Discussion of objective 2: Evaluate the relationship between the change implementation approach and sources of resistance to change

The interviews sought to evaluate the relationship between the change implementation approach and sources of resistance to change at Telecom Namibia by measuring them against sources of resistance to change outline by Graetz et al (2006). The interview revealed that the sources of resistance to change emanated mainly because of lack communication and involvement of the employees from the onset, unclear vision and reasons for the change and because of lack of clarity it raised concerns for lack of skills and capabilities as well as fear for job loss and power. It can be said from the data collected that leadership and management at Telecom Namibia could have done this differently to minimize the intensity of the resistance.

In the literature review the researcher made reference to the sources of resistance to change which were outlined by Graetz et al (2006). There are different causes of resistance and according to Graetz et al they can appear at different stages of the change. Graetz et al posit that resistance to change occurs at different levels and the sources of resistance were divided into 5 categories. At the formulation stage they suggested that 3 sources of resistance are likely to occur that is, distorted perception of change, vague strategic priorities and barriers to interpretation. Second source of resistance is low motivation and the third being lack of creative response. These three sources of resistance to change occur at these initial stages because with different perceptions and feelings, communication barriers, and organisation silence it is likely to cause complications to the change initiatives and at this stage is when leaders and managers of the organisation are given a chance to evaluate their change initiatives and the suggested strategies and also look at other change alternatives. At the implementation stage Graetz et al (2006) suggested that 2 sources of resistance to change are likely to occur and these are political and cultural deadlocks and examples of these include deep rooted values and loyalty, lack of awareness of social dimension of change departmental politics which is mainly resistance from department that feel will suffer with the change implementation. The last source is Others which includes other sources which are grouped together. These include leadership inaction where leaders and management restrict themselves from acting because of fear of changing and uncertainty and lack of necessary capabilities to implement the change. These two sources of resistance are likely to occur at the implementation stage because they are seen as obstacles which are

faced by change leaders and management that may hinder successful implementation of the change programme since the change strategies and initiatives would have been already formulated.

Looking at the findings at Telecom Namibia we are able to see similarities with what Graetz et al (2006) suggested. Resistance at Telecom was mainly experienced at the implementation stage since there had been no communication, awareness and involvement from the onset of the change initiatives. Telecom employees felt that the managers did not show strong commitment and support and it may not be wrong to suggest that maybe some of the managers were uncertain about the change process. There was no communication which made it difficult for employee to understand the vision and reasons for the change. No training was conducted prior to the change initiatives therefore there was concern about the lack of skills and capabilities in line with the changes. There employees felt insecure about their jobs. From the results it is also possible that there were some departmental politics. Resistance would be felt more from the departments that would suffer with the change implementation. Acquisition of LEO Mobile services meant that the structure widens and becomes too long since LEO also had its personnel and were to maintain their position under Telecom Namibia. Departmental politics are likely to occur at the because as new people come in you try to accommodate them but for some employees it may seem like an invasion also feel that they have come to take over their jobs.

At the implementation stage we can conclude that departmental politics, lack of awareness of social dimensions of change, leadership inaction and lack of skills capabilities and communication barriers must be seriously considered when Leaders and managers are strategising on change processes as they may have a serious impact on the success of change programmes. Training would also help to minimise the resistance at the implementation stage. It can help resolve communication and clarify issues which are misunderstood. Skills and capabilities gap can be reduced and employees will be better focused and ready.

4.5.4. Discussion of objective 3: To evaluate the approaches adopted to counter and manage resistance to change and its effectiveness on employee productivity.

The third objective sought to establish the methods employed by Telecom Namibia to counter and manage the resistance to change and its effectiveness on employee productivity. The data gathered from the interviews reveals that Telecom Namibia leaders and management employed methods to overcome the resistance the employees. These include bringing the workers representatives on board to communicate to them the change processes. The strategy was for the workers representative to inform the other employees about changes and be able to convince them that it was for the good of the organisation. The Managing Director embarked on road shows country wide to inform the employees about the changes and the vision of the change initiatives and its benefits

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to the organisation. There was also continuous communication through departmental meeting and every employee was involved. This was effective as the workers soldiered on with the change process. Leaders and management carried on with the implementation of the change process even though there were still some issues of resistance. The interviews reveal that majority of workers' attitudes have since changed for the positive and employee productivity has increased. There is increased efficiency and the organisation is realising results with the same resources. This shows that the strategies worked. In the literature review the researcher did indicate ways to overcome resistance to change and manage it. Some of these were implemented at Telecom Namibia. Managers also had suggestions on how to manage future change initiatives and these go in line with the problems that were experienced at Telecom Namibia. Resistance to change shows leaders and management certain aspects that will not have been properly considered in the change process and this gives them an opportunity to retrace steps fix the problems and rise up again. Communication is vital. The way in which leadership and management handle communication and show their continued commitment and support will have a huge bearing on the success of the change programmes.

4.6. Conclusion

A discussion of the findings was done in this chapter. The themes which were identified in the data collected were presented for both managerial and non-managerial participants. The results showed that Telecom Namibia employees have a positive

perception towards organisational change if it is done in the right manner. The leadership and management of Telecom Namibia embarked on restructuring, even though there was resistance they still forged ahead with the change process. There was no communication from management and lower level employees were not involved in the decision making from the formulation stage. Communication was later done at the implementation stage when resistance began to surface. It was established that the main sources of resistance to change were unclear vision and reasons for the change, fear of job loss and power and concern of lack of skills and capabilities. It was also established that during this period of resistance the levels of employee productivity were not affected. However, there were increases in customer complaints and employees negative attitude towards their work. Leadership and management employed strategies to overcome and manage resistance to change. Other issues that emerged were employees' thoughts and feelings about management care and support. It is clear that there might be deep rooted issues which may also have contributed to the resistance to change. The next chapter will highlight the conclusion of the study and recommendations for future change programmes.

CHAPTER FIVE

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1. INTRODUCTION

The study served as a guide to evaluate resistance to organisational change and its effect on employee productivity at Telecom Namibia. The researcher presented background information about organisational resistance to change and the problem statement. There were 3 objectives in undertaking this research and these were to identify the nature and sources of resistance to change, to evaluate the relationship between the change implementation approach and the sources of resistance to change and to evaluate the approaches adopted to counter and manage resistance to change and its effectiveness on employee productivity. This was indicated in chapter 1. A literature review on organisational change and resistance to change was presented in chapter 2. The research methodology that was employed in this study was presented in chapter 3. The study used a qualitative research design in the form of a case study. The research instrument used was the interviews and the sampling method used was stratified random sampling. In chapter 4 results of the data collected were presented and discussions and interpretations were presented in line with the three objectives of the research. In this chapter conclusions will be drawn from the research and recommendations will be presented.

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5.2. CONCLUSIONS

The study was carried out to evaluate resistance to organisational change and its effect on employee productivity. The conclusions of findings are presented below:

- The findings show that communication is vital for the success of change programmes in order to minimize resistance to change. If change initiatives are not communicated in the manner in which they are supposed to stakeholders will lack understanding of the vision for change and this causes a lot of concerns. The non-managerial participants noted that there was poor communication from leadership and management. The participants indicated that this is the norm every time there are changes or any strategic decisions made they are never communicated in the right manner. Communication and educating employees about the change initiatives are important and they will help minimize resistance to change and motivate and encourage the employees to get involved in the changes.

- The study also revealed that resistance to change can be minimized if there is awareness, participation and involvement of every stakeholder in the organisation about the change from the initial stages. Resistance to change is very intense and powerful in strategic changes. Resistance at Telecom Namibia emanated because of lack of communication by management, lack of participation and involvement of lower level employees. This raised concerns

about their job security and skills capabilities. The findings also show that there is a relationship between the change implementation approach and resistance to change. Resistance is normal in organisational change processes. However it can be minimized.

- Findings show that at Telecom Namibia the resistance felt did not cause any change to employee productivity levels. This raises questions since the interviews revealed that employees had negative attitudes towards their work and managers. Customer complaints also increased during this period. It is safe to conclude that there may have been a negative change in employee productivity levels but may not have been significant to mention. Successful change processes means the organisation is better able to yield good results. However, if there is resistance then productivity may be affected. Where there is resistance employees are insecure, unhappy, negative attitudes and it affects their concentration. This has the potential to reduce output and increase costs due to delays. It is important to avoid or minimize resistance to change. In conclusion there is a relationship between resistance to change and employee productivity.
- The findings also revealed that for change to be successful, leaders and management have an important role to play in ensuring that all staff members are fully involved and engaged in the change process. It emerged that at Telecom Namibia the leaders and managers played supporting roles by continuously

communicating at the implementation stage, ensuring that employees are motivated and excited about the change by listening to their concerns and encouraging them to have positive attitudes towards the change. However, some of lower level employees indicated that they felt the support and commitment was not enough for them to be more interested in the change programme.

- The findings show that employees felt that leaders and management do not care about them. They failed to show support and commitment which raised doubts as to whether some of the managers did not understand the change process. Leadership and management in any organisation planning to bring change must be proactive. They must show that they have knowledge of the change processes to make it easy for the lower level employees to be motivated and encouraged to get interested in the change process. They must show that they understand the vision behind the change and show commitment. Leaders must show continuous support to the employees during implementation process from start to end to avoid problems.
- The findings also show that strategies were employed to overcome and manage the resistance to change at Telecom Namibia. They took a step back retraced their steps and tried to correct the problems. From the results it shows that it

worked. Although there is still some resistance workers soldiered on and the changes were implemented. There have been some positive changes in organisational efficiency.

5.3. RECOMMENDATIONS

Resistance is normal. However, in some instances the power of the resistance may be very strong resulting in failure of change programmes. To avoid this, management must come up with strategies:

- There should be commitment to change from the side of the leaders and management. It is important for everyone to be committed and work together as a team. Leaders must be fully committed and show support from the start to the end for successful implementation.
- Training is an important aspect. Before change initiatives are put into action training must be conducted for all leaders and managers to gain the necessary skills and knowledge to successfully manage change programmes.
- Communication is vital in every organisation. It is imperative for organisations to have a two way communication especially when there are change programmes in the pipeline. Everyone must be informed throughout the change process so that there is clarity and understanding.
- Everyone who will be affected by the changes should be involved in the plans and decision making of changes. Telecom Namibia can start by involving

workers representatives since it is a unionised organisation then all the other employees through departmental meetings from the initial stages.

- Managers can use motivating strategies on employees for successful implementation. Employees' attitudes towards the change can be changed for the positive by offering rewards and praise to those employees who play a role and assist in ensuring the success of the change.
- It is important for employees to be given a chance to participate and get involved in decision making which may affect them. Leaders and managers should always know that the human aspect is the most important resource and must therefore be treated with care and respect. They must be given an opportunity to say out their views and also be given power to be innovative. This gives them a sense of belonging and they feel they are important to the organisation.
- Telecom Namibia leaders and management should know that resistance is normal. It is evident that all non-managerial employees understand the importance of change and are willing to change. However resistance is always there. To minimize resistance the right steps must be followed thoroughly when implementing change, communication must be made the key to success and also avoid imposing decisions on employees.
- The leaders and management of Telecom Namibia must apply the theories suggested in the literature review into practice. These include Kotters' eight step plan for implementing change, 7-S Model, important values and techniques of organisational development for bringing about change and the proposed tactics

to help change agents deal with resistance to change suggested by Robbins and Judge (2009).

5.4. Suggestions for further research

- Similar studies must be done with a private sector organisation and then compare and contrast the systems and techniques used in implementation of change programmes between State owned enterprises and private sector organisations.
- The researcher also suggests that the same research be carried out on a larger sample that represents the total population of Telecom Namibia country wide. This research was only limited to the Windhoek branch head office. A research covering a larger sample may yield more information and different findings of the study.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Request for Permission to Conduct Research

Study

18 July 2013

Chief Human Resources Office

Telecom Namibia

P O Box 297

Windhoek

RE: Request for permission to conduct a research study

Dear Sir/madam

I Tendai Masunda hereby request to carry out a research study at your company. I am not employed and currently studying for a Masters Degree specializing in Management Strategy with Namibia Business School. As a partial fulfillment of the requirements to complete this degree I am required to do a thesis in which I have chosen your company as an area of study. My topic is an evaluation of resistance to organizational change and its impact on productivity. I am seeking approval through your office to conduct a research through distribution of questionnaires and a series of interviews.

The main aim of this research is to understand why change is sometimes resisted and its effects on productivity. Recent media reports in Namibia have shown strong resistance to change culture in state owned enterprises with companies facing challenges in implementing change. Change is a normal part of business life. Even the best performing companies still have to manage change. An organization's ability to manage change will have a significant effect on its performance. Organizations have been re-engineered, downsized, outsourced, and restructured to remain competitive. However these changes have been met with resistance. The results and

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recommendations from this research study will serve as a valuable tool to assist change managers in future change management initiatives in your company. This thesis is for academic purposes only and confidentiality will be respected and maintained at all times.

I would very much appreciate it if you consider my request. I hope the above is in order.

Yours Faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Tendai Masunda', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Tendai Masunda

Appendix 2: Request for authorization to interview employees at Telecom Namibia

To : Human Resources and Public Relations and Corporate communications

From : T Masunda

Subject: Request for permission to interview employees for my research project

Date : 17 January 2014

The memorandum serves to inform the management that I am a student with Namibia Business School and currently working on my research project as part of my MBA which is entitled evaluation of resistance to organisational change and its effect on employee productivity. I wish to interview 25 staff members, 9 managerial and 16 non-managerial. Ethical considerations of confidentiality and anonymity will be adhered to.

I hope the above is in order.

T. Masunda

Appendix 3: Interview Guide

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Interview guide for the managerial and non managerial staff members at Telecom Namibia.

Evaluation of resistance to organizational change and its effect on employee productivity: The Case of Telecom Namibia.

SECTION A : Demographic Characteristics

1.1	Gender	
1.2	Department	
1.3	Position	
1.4	Age	
1.5	Highest educational level	
1.6	Number of years working for Telecom Namibia	

SECTION B : INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

PART 1 NON- MANAGERIAL EMPLOYEES

1. Are change initiatives necessary in the organisation? Elaborate
2. Do you have any past experience with change programmes. How did you find it?
3. Have there been any restructuring changes in your department in the last 3 years?
Are you feeling positive or negative about this change.
4. Were you involved in the change initiative from the beginning? If so what role did you play?
5. What benefits would the change bring to the company and you as an individual?

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6. In your own view was the change initiative clearly communicated to every staff member and was everyone involved and working together in the whole exercise?
7. In your own view did the leadership and management in your organisation show commitment and support during this change process? Explain
8. Was there any form of resistance encountered during the change process
9. What factors caused the employees to resist change? Was it everyone that resisted change?
10. Was your attitude towards work affected during this period? Explain
11. In your own opinion what could have been done differently to avoid and overcome the problems that led to the resistance to change?
12. What is the relationship like now between lower level employees and managers? Do your leaders show care and aim to develop and enhance individual careers?

PART 2 MANAGERIAL EMPLOYEES

1. What are your perceptions towards change initiatives
2. Do you have any past experience with change programmes. How did you find it?
3. Were there any restructuring changes in your department in the last 3 years? Are you feeling positive about the change?
4. What motivated the need for change?
5. What leadership role did you play to ensure smooth running of the change process?
6. Do you think the lower level employees were properly engaged and given the opportunity to participate and be involved in the whole change process?
7. How did you ensure that all stakeholders were informed about the change initiatives and always in constant communication about the change process thereby ensuring transparency?

8. Was there any resistance to the change? At which stage of the change process was resistance felt?
9. In your own opinion what was the nature of the resistance and what caused the resistance to change?
10. How did the resistance to change affect the organisation? Where there any changes in employees' attitude towards their work and did it affect their performance?
11. What strategies were employed to address the negative behaviour and overcome the resistance towards the change process? Did it work?

12. How do you measure employee productivity in your department?
13. Were there any changes in employee productivity during this period?
14. In terms of service delivery and customer services was it affected during this period? Was there an increase in customer complaints? If so what were the reasons for the increase in complaints?
15. In your own opinion what could have been done differently to avoid or minimize the problems that led to the resistance to change?
16. Given the chance what would you do differently to ensure the success of future change initiatives at Telecom Namibia.
17. What systems have been put in place in your department to manage resistance to Change for future change programmes.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION