

Antecedents of Employee Readiness for Change: Mediating Effect of Commitment to Change

^{1*} *Devi Soumyaja*, ² *T. J. Kamlanabhan*, ³ *Sanghamitra Bhattacharyya*

¹ *Institute of Management, Christ University, Bangalore, India*

² *Department of Management Studies, Indian Institute of Technology Madras, Chennai, India*

³ *School of Management, BML Munjal University, Gurgaon, Haryana, India*

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ABSTRACT:

The study attempted to look at the influence of individual factors (creative behavior and practical intelligence), process factors (participation in decision making and quality of communication) and context factors (trust in management and history of change) on employee readiness for change to transformational changes. Commitment to change and its three dimensions- affective, continuance and normative were hypothesized to act as a mediator in the present study. The data was collected through a survey using self-reported questionnaire and by judgment sampling. The data was collected from large sized organizations in manufacturing and IT sector, which were undergoing transformational changes and the total sample size for the study was 305. To understand the mediation effect of commitment to change dimensions, mediated regression analysis was carried out. Among the three dimensions of commitment to change, affective commitment to change alone was found to have a partial mediation effect. Thus, focusing on the employees' emotional attachment to the change could be one way for increasing employees' readiness for change. The study also provides insight into the construct commitment to change in the Indian context.

Keywords: *Commitment to change, Employee readiness for change, Mediation effect, History of change, Intelligence, Affective commitment to change*

INTRODUCTION

Nearly every organization undergoes some kind of change or the other. Organizational change continues to occur at a high rate in modern organizations (Burke, 2002; Armenakis and Harris, 2002; Herold and Fedor, 2008). As per Roffey Park's "Annual Cross-Sector Work Place" survey between 2001 and 2005, over 90 percent of the respondents indicated that their organization had undergone some change program, largely involving restructuring, in the previous two years.

In spite of substantial existing literature on change management, most significant change

initiatives fail to meet expectations. A global survey by McKinsey and Company (2008) concluded that only by changing constantly could organizations hope to survive but two-thirds of all change initiatives failed. Research has indicated that 70% of the business process reengineering projects have yielded limited success (Bashein et al., 1994). According to Beer and Nohria (2000), seven out of ten change efforts that are critical to organizational success fail to achieve their intended results. Studies show that in most organizations, two out of three transformation initiatives fail (Sirkin et al.,

*Corresponding Author, Email: devisoumyaja@gmail.com

2005). Only 38 percent of the respondents reported that change has led to their organization achieving high performance (Holbeche, 2006). The change literature regularly quotes the failure rate between 60% and 90% (Burnes, 2009). Bain & Co claims that the general failure rate is 70% (Senturia et al., 2008) but that it raises to 90% for cultural change initiatives (Rogers et al., 2006). Buckingham and Seng (2009) study with more than 1500 executives from 15 countries, who work on change management, revealed that 60% of the projects aimed at achieving business change do not fully meet their objectives. According to the study, the major obstacles to implementing change in an enterprise are centered on people and corporate culture. According to research by the Gartner group (Holbeche, 2006), the number one reason why change initiatives fail, is the inability of the people to adjust their behavior, skills and commitment to their new requirements. The cost and time loss associated with each of these failed change efforts is also very high.

Prior empirical studies have confirmed the assertion that employees' attitudinal and behavioral reactions to change play a major role in its success (Robertson et al., 1993; Kim and Mauborgne, 2003; Shin et al., 2012). However, research dealing with organizational change has been largely dominated by a macro, system-oriented focus. Accordingly, several authors have called for a more person-focused approach to the study of organizational change (Judge et al., 1999; Wanberg and Banas, 2000; Vakola and Nikolaou, 2005). In order to successfully lead an organization through major change, it is important for management to consider both the human and technical side of change (Ackerman, 1986; Bovey and Hede, 2001). The key challenge of change lies in gaining employees' willingness to commit to the change effort. To cope with new technological, competitive, and demographic forces, leaders in every sector must continue to seek new ways to help their organizations adapt to these conditions and fundamentally alter the way they do business (Kotter, 2003). Conner (1992) proposed that commitment to change is the glue that brings people and change goals together, helping them understand the purpose of change and, as a consequence, increasing employee's individual

efforts to change their work behaviors while reducing their turnover intentions.

Having committed employees tends to be positive for organizations, which helps explain why there have been efforts to more fully understand commitment's antecedents as well as its consequences (Meyer et al., 2002; Shin et al., 2012). Research has indicated that commitment to change contributes over and above organizational commitment to the prediction of employees' self-reported behavioral support for change (Herscovitch and Meyer, 2002; Meyer et al., 2007).

The study had two main objectives. One was to take a holistic perspective of the change management by considering the individual, process and context factors. The second research objective was to understand whether commitment to change mediates the relationship between individual, process and context factors and readiness for change.

Literature Review **Readiness for Change**

In his model, Lewin has proposed three stages to bring about change in any system—unfreezing, changing and refreezing (Lewin, 1954). Schein (1989) further explored Lewin's three-stage process model and thereby provided an example of contemporary approach to organizational change. Holt et al. (2007) further reinforced this by identifying that the process of implementing change successfully consists of three stages, namely: 1) readiness to change, 2) adoption, and 3) institutionalization. Thus, understanding employee readiness to change could serve as a guide to organizational leaders as they approach changes and determine the best mode of implementing those changes. Readiness to change is the cognitive state comprising of beliefs, attitudes and intentions toward a change effort (Armenakis et al., 1993). Some authors consider readiness to change as a multidimensional construct measured through cognitive, affective and behavioral dimensions (Abdulrashid et al., 2003; Bouckennooghe and Devos, 2007) whereas several others consider it as an unidimensional construct (Madsen et al., 2005; Holt et al., 2007). Holt et al. (2007) conceptualized antecedents of readiness to change in terms of context, content, process and

individual factors. Organizations change and act through their members and even the most collective activities that take place in organizations are the result of some amalgamation of the activities of individual organizational members. Thus, the first step towards understanding models and theories of organizational change is nothing but understanding change at the individual level. Given the fact that change is an affectively laden process, it may be informative to explore how individual differences may result in people being more or less likely to adapt to the cycle of change.

Antecedents of Readiness for Change

Individual Factor: Intelligence

Intelligence is by and large a neglected topic in the area of organizational behavior. Till the last decade, none of the organizational behavior text books carried any reference to the concept of intelligence. Only by mid 90s had the concept of IQ (Intelligence Quotient) gained momentum, thanks to the concept of emotional intelligence popularized by Goleman (1995). For the present study, individual intelligence is conceptualized in terms of Sternberg's (1985) Triarchy theory of intelligence –analytical, creative and practical intelligence. Sternberg and his colleagues have shown with some success the relative independence of the three proposed aspects of intelligence.

For example, a confirmatory factor analysis of a research-based instrument, the Sternberg Triarchic Abilities Test, revealed three distinct and relatively independent factors corresponding to the analytical, creative, and practical aspects of intelligence. Nevo and Chawrski (1997) explored the relationship between non-academic aspects of intelligence (tacit knowledge and practical intelligence): practical intelligence and tacit knowledge was found to explain a significant proportion of professional success in immigration . Analytical, practical, and creative intelligence were all found to be related in some degree to self-reported everyday adaptive functioning (Grigorenko and Sternberg, 2001). Individual employees' emotional and practical intelligence were found to be significantly related to their level of commitment to the organization (Humphreys et al., 2003). Emotional intelligence of the employee was

found to be positively related to employee attitude towards change as well as to facilitate the change process (Vakola and Nikolaou, 2005; Chrusciel, 2006). As per Herkenhoff (2004), another common area of change within organizations involves seeking higher levels of employee initiative and innovation. Creative people not just adapt easily to change but are also more likely to lead it. Prior research suggests that employees' supportive and creative behaviors assist in the successful implementation of change initiatives (Herscovitch and Meyer, 2002). For the present study, practical intelligence and creative intelligence are considered as independent variables which are taken from Sternberg's (1985) Triarchy theory of intelligence.

Process Factors - Participation in Decision Making and Quality of Communication

The change process refers to the steps followed during implementation. One dimension of change process can be the extent to which employee participation is permitted (Holt et al., 2007). One of the earlier studies that noted the significance of participation of employees in the change process is the landmark study of Coch and French (1948). Through a variety of experiments at the Harwood Manufacturing Plant, they observed that groups that were allowed to participate in the design and development of change had a much lower resistance than those who did not. Employees must believe that their opinions have been heard and given respect and careful consideration (Reichers et al., 1997). If employees are encouraged to participate and their inputs are consistently and genuinely enlisted, it is supposed to increase commitment and performance, reduce resistance to change and enhance the acceptance of even unfavorable decisions (Wanberg and Banas, 2000; Bouckenooghe and Devos, 2007). Employee participation in the change effort also has a positive impact on trust in management and perceptions of supervisory support for improvement (Weber and Weber, 2001).

The constant challenge in all change projects is management's struggle to overcome employees' persistent attitude to avoid change. The answer not only lies in the participative leadership style of management but also in the

communication with organizational members. Indeed, several authors claim that communication of change is the primary mechanism for creating readiness for change among organizational members (Miller et al., 1994; Armenakis and Harris, 2002; Bernerth, 2004). If the quality is poor, people tend to develop more cynicism (Reichers et al., 1997). Bommer et al. (2005) noted that articulating a clear and timely change vision is essential in order to develop a felt need to change. The amount and quality of information that is provided can also influence how organizational members will react to change. In other studies that directly examined the influence of providing information, detailed information about a change has been shown to reduce resistance to change (Miller et al., 1994; Wanberg and Banas, 2000). To conclude, the quality of communication will contribute to the justification of the reasons why change is necessary, reduce the change-related uncertainty and play a crucial role in shaping employees' readiness for change.

Context Factors - Trust in Top Management and History of Change

Context consists of the conditions and environment within which employees function. For example, a learning organization is one in which employees are likely to embrace continuous change (Holt et al., 2007). It has been established that readiness for change will be strongly undermined when the behavior by important role models (i.e. leaders) is inconsistent with their words (Kotter, 1995). Trust in top management is found to be critical in implementing strategic decisions and an essential determinant of employees' openness toward change (Eby et al., 2000; Bouckennooghe and Devos, 2007). Trust in senior management was found to negatively influence employee cynicism towards change (Wanous et al., 2000; Albrecht and Travaglione, 2003). Trust in peers as well as management was observed to be an important factor influencing employee readiness to change (Eby et al., 2000; Rafferty and Simons, 2006).

Organizational change research has tended to ignore time and history as important contextual forces that influence the occurrence of change in organizations (Pettigrew et al., 2001). Readiness for change has been found to be influenced by

the track record of successfully implementing major organizational changes (Schneider et al., 1996). In their research on cynicism about organizational change, Wanous et al. (2000) have found that the history of change is correlated with the motivation to keep on trying to implement changes. Bernerth (2004) observed that a positive experience with previous change projects will stimulate employee's readiness; a negative experience will inhibit their readiness. Bordia et al. (2011) suggested that the experience of poor change management in the organization develops a schema that captures the essence of that experience. Their study results indicated that, previous history of poor change management lead to pessimism about successful implementation of future changes in the organization as well as undermined confidence in the ability of managers to implement change.

Commitment to Change as Mediator

Herscovitch and Meyer's (2002) conceptualized commitment to change as a three dimensional construct – affective, continuance and normative. The three components of commitment to change were found to be generally distinguishable from the three components of organizational commitment. Herscovitch and Meyer (2002) defined commitment to change, as 'a mindset that binds an individual to a course of action deemed necessary for the successful implementation of a change initiative'. Following Meyer and Allen's (1991) original conceptualization of organizational commitment, this mindset can take different forms: (1) a desire to provide support for the change based on a belief in its inherent benefits (affective commitment to change); (2) a recognition that there are costs associated with failure to provide support for the change (continuance commitment to change); and (3) a sense of obligation to provide support for the change (normative commitment to change). Thus, employees can feel bound to support a change initiative because they believe that the change is valuable, because they feel that it will be costly not to, or because they feel an obligation to support it.

Herscovitch and Meyer (2002) predicted that all three forms of commitment would relate positively to compliance with the requirements for organizational change, but that only affective

commitment and normative commitment would relate positively to higher levels of support. They argued that the nature of the commitment becomes important in explaining employees' willingness to go beyond these minimum requirements. Employees who believe in the change and want to contribute to its success (strong affective commitment) or who feel a sense of obligation to support the change (strong normative commitment) should be willing to do more than is required of them, even if it involves some personal sacrifice (e.g. working extra hours to learn new sales procedures). Employees with strong affective and normative commitment are likely to see value in the course of action they are pursuing and are therefore willing to do whatever is required to benefit the target of that action. Continuance commitment to change reflects an external pressure to support a change and a perceived cost or risk associated with not supporting the change. Studies frequently have shown that this form of commitment is negatively related or unrelated to such desirable outcomes such as job performance (Meyer et al., 2002; Parish et al., 2008). Further, a negative correlation was also reported between affective and continuance commitment to change (Herscovitch and Meyer, 2002). Shin et al. (2012) also considered only affective and normative commitment to change in their study and not continuance commitment to change, because it was neither conceptually nor empirically related to discretionary behaviors they assessed as outcomes. Hence for this study also, only affective and normative commitment to change are considered as mediators.

Individual employees' emotional and practical intelligence were found to be significantly related to their level of commitment to the organization (Humphreys et al., 2003). Positive relationship between employees' emotional intelligence and affective commitment to change is also reported (Nikolaou and Tsaousis, 2002). In the study by Shin et al. (2012) employees' normative and affective commitment to change were directly related to their behavioral and creative support for change as assessed by their work unit manager. Emotional intelligence has a positive impact on stay commitment and overseas adjustment among expatriates (Lii and Wong, 2008).

Participation of employees at the time of change was found to be strongly related to employees' commitment post change (Lines, 2004). Several studies reported communication as an important factor influencing commitment to change, especially affective commitment to change (Conway and Monks, 2008). Parish et al. (2008) considered communication as a potential antecedent of commitment to change. Simon (1995) found that trust in leadership positively predicts affective and normative commitment but does not predict continuance commitment. Trust in management may likewise affect people's commitment to the organization; particularly if employees view corporate decisions as the results of a fair process (Lind and Tyler, 1988). Huy (2002) commented that employees are more likely to collectively support organizational change programs when there is a sense of trust and attachment to the organization. Huy further commented that "wavering commitment among agents during implementation could lead to organizational inertia. Trust is a lever to manage employee thoughts about and commitment to an organizational change initiative.

Theoretical Framework and Development of Hypotheses

Many researchers have called for the need to take a holistic perspective in change management research. However, only very few studies have addressed this issue. Holt et al. (2007) classified the antecedents of readiness for change into four categories namely, individual, process, context and content factors. Since only transformational changes are considered for the study, the content factor is controlled. This study tries to study the effect of intelligence on employee readiness for change by applying Triarchy theory of intelligence in the context of organizational change. The process factors considered for the study are participation in decision making and quality of communication. The context factors considered for the study are trust in management and history of change. Affective commitment to change was found to have significant effect on the success of the change implementation (Parish, et al., 2008). Organizational commitment was found to act as a mediator in the change process (Iverson, 1996;

Yousef, 2000). Role of organizational commitment in employees' reactions to organizational change (Lau and Woodman, 1995; Piderit, 2000) has also been studied by some researchers. Coping with change was found to act as a mediator in the relationship between affective and continuance commitment to change and turnover intentions (Cunningham, 2006). Research has indicated that commitment

to change contributes over and above organizational commitment to the prediction of employees' self-reported behavioral support for change (Herscovitch and Meyer, 2002; Meyer et al., 2007). Based on the literature review discussed in detail above, and the conceptual framework (figure 1) below, the following hypothesis was formed:

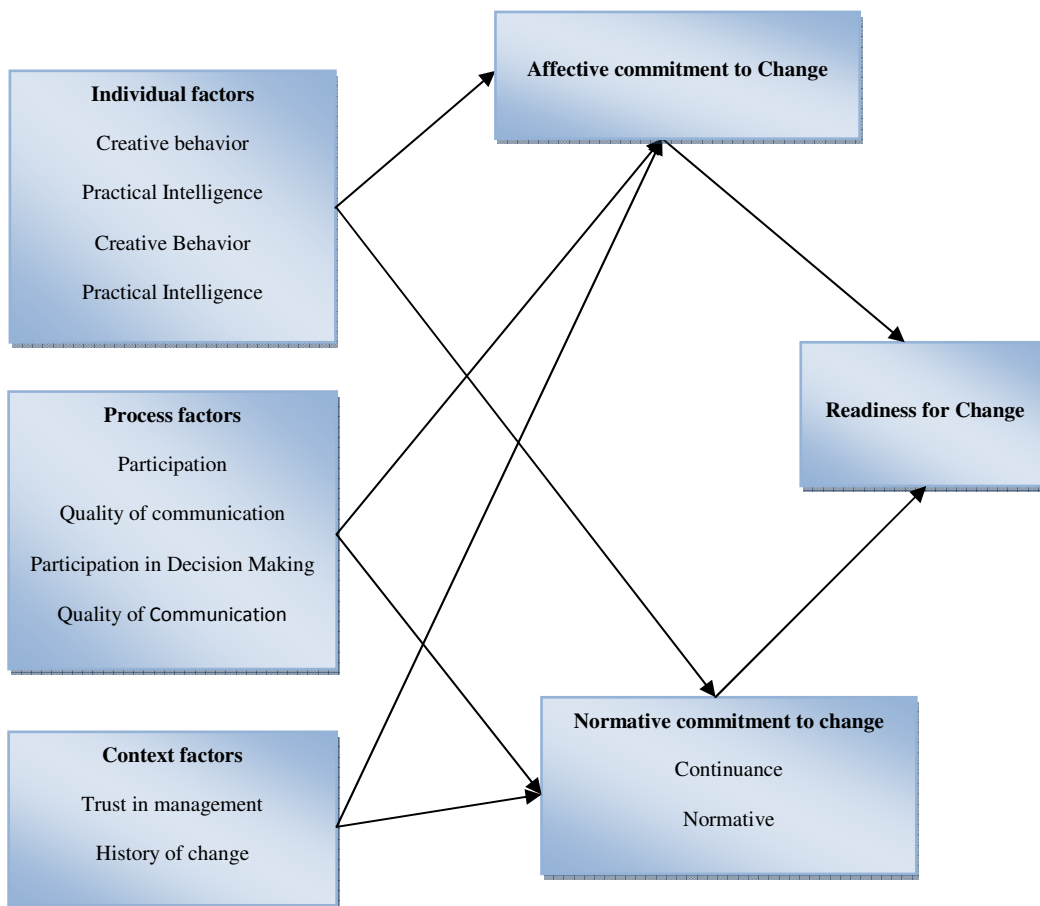


Figure 1: Conceptual framework

H1: Affective commitment to change mediates the impact of individual, process and context factors on readiness for change

H2: Normative commitment to change mediates the impact of individual, process and context factors on readiness for change

RESEARCH METHOD

Sample and Data Collection Procedure

A descriptive research design was adopted for this study. A cross sectional survey research design was used to empirically test the hypothesized relationships among the various study variables. Data collection was done by using convenient sampling. The data was collected from large sized organizations in manufacturing and IT sector, which were undergoing transformational changes. The transformational changes considered in the study are restructuring and mergers and acquisitions. These organizations were geographically spread across the cities of Chennai, Bangalore, Hyderabad and Mumbai. Twelve organizations (6 manufacturing and 6 IT) agreed to participate in this survey and a total of 331 responses were obtained from these organizations. Out of these 331 responses, only 305 responses were in usable form. Employees with minimum two years of work experience in their current organizations were considered for the study so that they would have considerable experience with the change that is happening in their organization.

During the survey administration, we chose to follow the procedure that Herscovitch and Meyer (2002) described and to collect written verbatim descriptions in response to the following statement: "Please describe a recent or ongoing organizational change that has had an impact on the way that you perform your job." The same procedure with some variations have been used by several researchers (Rafferty and Simons, 2006; Parish et al., 2008). This procedure ensured that all the employees under the sample indeed went through transformational change.

Measures

Two sets of questionnaires were used for data collection. In the first set, respondents were presented with a situational judgment inventory to measure the variable practical intelligence and

they were asked to pick the best and the worst answer, for each given situation. The situational judgment inventory was developed by the researcher for the purpose of the study. The inventory consisted of 14 items and it was found to have a test-retest reliability of 0.69.

All the other variables considered for the study are well established in literature and hence we adopted existing measures for the study. Likert scales with a five-point response format (1 = strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3 = neutral, 4=agree, 5 = strongly agree) were used for all the items in the questionnaire. These items were taken from already existing scales and have already proven their reliability, validity and practical relevance.

The variable 'participation in decision making' was measured by a two -item scale borrowed from Lines (2004) and Wanous et al. (2000). The reliability of this scale was found to be more than adequate ($\alpha = 0.78$). Quality of change communication was measured by six items from Miller et al. (1994). This scale also yielded good internal reliability ($\alpha = 0.83$). Trust in top management was measured by a three-item scale based on instruments developed and used by Albrecht and Travaglioni (2003), and Kim and Mauborgne (1993). The reliability of this scale was found to be more than adequate ($\alpha=0.72$). The measurement of history of change was adapted from Metselaar (1997) three item scale with internal reliability ($\alpha =0.83$). The commitment to change questionnaire was the one developed by Herscovitch and Meyer (2002). The reported reliability of the scale is 0.89. Even though all the items considered for the study had established reliabilities we subjected the present data to variable-wise reliability testing by the coefficient alpha method, the details of which are given in table 1. The reliabilities for all the scales were above 0.60, which represents good reliability measure (Hair et al., 2006). In order to confirm the underlying structures between the latent variables and the observed factors a Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was done. Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) provides the model fit Summary and Comparative Fit Index (CFI) provides the baseline comparison scores and is a measure to test unidimensionality. The GFI and CFI values should be above 0.90 to indicate robust unidimensionality and model fit. Except

for readiness for change (0.86) and practical intelligence (0.85), the CFI reflects good fit. The RMSEA (Root Mean Square Error Approximation) is a test for parsimony. Though RMSEA values less than 0.05 is ideal, values less than 0.1 are also acceptable. It can be noted that RMSEA for creative behavior, and normative CTC are a little above 0.1. (CFI, GFI and RMSEA have been calculated using AMOS version 16). For normative commitment to change Herscovitch and Meyer (2002) reported reliability of 0.86, and the studies which have used this scale have reported reliabilities ranging from 0.66-0.90. Hence for normative commitment to change, the reliability found with our study sample, 0.67 falls within the range. Affective commitment to change was reported to have a reliability of 0.94 by Herscovitch and Meyer (2002). In our study the reliability for this scale was found to be only 0.77, wherein most of the other studies have reported very high reliabilities ranging from 0.83-0.95. One notable exception is the study by Yang (2005) which reported a coefficient alpha of 0.77 for affective commitment to change which is the same as indicated by our study sample.

RESULTS

Descriptive Statistics

The individual demographic variables considered for the study were gender, age, marital status, total work experience and current work experience. The organizational variables considered for the study were the industry sector and the type of change. The details of the demographic variables considered in the study are given in table 2. The means, standard deviations, and correlations among the variables are given in table 3.

All the study variables were found to be positively and significantly correlated to the criterion variable readiness for change, except normative commitment to change. These findings provide support for the hypothesized relationships among the predictor and criterion variables in this study. However, more rigorous tests such as multiple regression analysis is required for the final conclusion. Among the predictor variables, high and significant positive correlations were obtained, indicating the possibility of multicollinearity. Multicollinearity can have several harmful effects on multiple regressions, particularly when interpreting the results (Hair et al., 1998). Hence all the predictor variables were subjected to multicollinearity testing, before proceeding to multiple regression analysis. (table 3)

Table 1: Reliability and Unidimensionality scores for sample

Variable	No. of items	Cronbach's alpha	GFI	CFI	RMSEA
Creative behavior	8	0.83	0.915	0.904	0.116
Participation in decision making	2	0.81	1.00	1.00	0.000
Quality of communication	3	0.85	1.00	1.00	0.010
Trust towards top management	3	0.77	1.00	0.98	0.000
History of change	3	0.75	1.00	1.00	0.000
Affective CTC	5	0.77	0.989	0.992	0.046
Normative CTC	5	0.65	0.967	0.910	0.115
Readiness for change	11	0.76	0.920	0.860	0.077
Practical intelligence	14	0.65	0.945	0.849	0.042

Table 2: Demographic frequencies of the sample (N=305)

Demographic	Categories	Frequency
Gender	Male	242
	Female	63
Age	21-30	150
	31-40	74
	41-50	43
	Above 50	38
Marital status	Married	165
	Single	140
Industry sector	IT/ITES	164
	Manufacturing	141
Type of change	Restructuring	134
	Mergers & Acquisition	56
	Top management change	115
Total work experience	Mean =10.42 years SD = 8.75	
Current work experience	Mean= 7.39 years SD= 8	

Table 3: Means standard deviations and bivariate correlations between study variables

Variable	Mean	SD	Creative behaviour	Practical intelligence	Participation In decision making	Quality of communication	Trust	History of change	ACTC	NCTC	Readiness for change
Creative behaviour	3.92	0.55	1								
Practical intelligence	4.03	0.37	0.159*	1							
Participation	3.31	0.97	0.175*	0.059	1						
Quality of communication	3.36	0.85	0.211*	-0.073	0.566*	1					
Trust	3.31	0.77	0.226*	0.000	0.435*	0.656*	1				
History of change	3.57	0.68	0.207*	0.002	0.327*	0.443*	0.582*	1			
ACTC	3.64	0.63	0.256*	0.078	0.252*	0.280*	0.279*	0.278*	1		
NCTC	3.27	0.63	0.023	0.041	0.021	0.068	0.082	0.068	0.174*	1	
Readiness for change	3.37	0.48	0.241*	0.172*	0.205*	0.258*	0.214*	0.275*	0.237*	0.073	1

The multicollinearity diagnostic values are as presented in table 4. A common cut off threshold for multicollinearity is a tolerance value of 0.10 which corresponds to a VIF value of 10. Thus if the tolerance value is less than 0.10 or the VIF value is greater than 10 one can assume the presence of multicollinearity (Hair et al.,1998). As none of the independent variables in the study exceed the cut off values as given in table 4, it can be concluded that there is no multicollinearity among the independent variables.

Mediated Regression Analysis-Affective Commitment to Change and Normative Commitment to Change

Baron and Kenny (1986) four step procedure

along with a Sobel test was performed to check the mediation effect of commitment to change. Baron and Kenny (1986) procedure demanded that the predictor variables should be correlated with the mediator variable. Results discussed in table 5 indicated that only affective commitment to change is significantly related to the predictor variables. None of the predictor variables were found to be related to normative commitment to change. Hence, the mediation analysis was done only for affective commitment to change. The hypotheses stating the mediation effect of normative commitment to change was not tested, as this variable did not meet the requirements for conducting mediation analysis.

Table 4: Collinearity diagnostics for independent variables

Variable	Tolerance	VIF
Creative behavior	0.858	1.165
Practical intelligence	0.916	1.092
Participation in decision making	0.647	1.547
Quality of communication	0.465	2.148
Trust in management	0.458	2.184
History of change	0.639	1.565
ACTC	0.825	1.212
NCCT	0.966	1.035

Table 5: Relationship of ACTC and CCTC with readiness for change

Predictor variables	ACTC as dependent variable		NCTC as dependent variable	
	Std. β	t value	Std. β	t value
Creative behavior	0.170	3.032**	-0.006	-0.097
Practical intelligence	0.050	0.957	0.048	0.810
Participation in decision making	0.096	1.456	-0.040	-0.566
Quality of communication	0.097	1.234	0.047	0.558
Trust in management	0.057	0.725	0.052	0.608
History of change	0.135	2.040**	0.031	0.435

***p < 0.001(two-tailed), ** p < 0.05(two- tailed),*p < 0.01 (two-tailed)

Table 6: Results of mediating effect of affective commitment to change on the relationship among individual, process and context factors

Predictors	Step 1 (Criterion: RFC)		Step 2 (Criterion: ACTC)		Step 3 (Criterion: RFC)	
	β	Adj. R^2	β	Adj. R^2	β	Adj. R^2
CB	0.175**		0.150**		0.136**	
PI	0.148**		0.050		0.111	
PART	0.057		0.096		0.046	
QUALCOM	0.138**		0.097		0.126	
TRUST	0.050	0.231	0.057	0.235	0.057	0.242
HOC	0.188**		0.135**		0.172**	
ACTC					0.120**	

** p < 0.05 (two-tailed), *p < 0.01 (two-tailed); CB-Creative behavior, PI-Practical intelligence, PART- Participation in decision making, QUALCOM-Quality of communication, Trust- Trust in management, HOC-History of change, ACTC-Affective commitment to change, RFC-Readiness for change

Sobel's (1986) procedure again was employed to test the significance of these mediated effects. The partial mediation effect of affective commitment to change on the relationship between creative behavior and readiness for change is found significant by the Sobel test (Mediated effect = 0.039; Z-score = 2.30, p < 0.05).

Sobel test also revealed that the partial mediation effect of affective commitment to change on the relationship between history of change and readiness for change is significant as well (Mediated effect = 0.016; Z-score = 1.95, p < 0.05). Thus, affective commitment to change was found to partially mediate the relationship of creative behavior and history of change with readiness for change.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this paper was to ameliorate our knowledge about commitment to change among employees in the IT and manufacturing sector in India. The study examined the influence of individual, process and context factors on employee readiness for change and also the mediating effect of commitment to change. Affective commitment to change was found to have partially mediating effect on the relationship between the predictors and employee readiness for change (Machin et al., 2009). The results indicated that affective commitment to change partially mediates the relationship between creative behavior and readiness for change. Affective commitment to

change was also found to partially mediate the relationship between history of change and readiness for change. Another interesting finding of the study was that none of the predictor variables were found to be related to normative commitment to change.

Not all of our findings matched those reported in the literature. The correlation between Affective and Normative Commitment to Organizational Change (r = 0.174) was smaller than the correlations reported by Herscovitch and Meyer (2002; r = 0.57 for Study 2 and r = 0.48 for Study 3). These components are generally positively related, but the relation has been found to vary considerably across studies. In their meta-analysis, Meyer et al. (2002) reported an overall corrected correlation of 0.63 between affective and normative commitment to organizations. They also found that the correlation was greater in studies conducted outside North America (r = 0.69) than in studies conducted within North America (r = 0.59). Studies in collectivist cultures such as China (Cheng and Stockdale, 2003), South Korea (Chen and Francesco, 2003) and Turkey (Wasti, 2005) have reported particularly strong correlations between AC and NC. Wasti (2002) suggested that the strong societal norms that exist in collectivist cultures not only make NC a particularly salient component of commitment, but might also affect its relations with AC and CC. The only other study done in Indian context is Meyer et al. (2007) also reported a high correlation (r= 0.59) between affective and

normative commitment to change. However, in the same study by Meyer et al. (2007), Canadian sample showed a low correlation ($r = 0.17$) between affective and normative commitment to change. Machin et al. (2009) study on Australian government employees also reported a low correlation between affective and normative commitment to change. Shin et al. (2012) study on South Korean IT employees reported a high correlation ($r = 0.71$) between affective and normative commitment to change. Indian culture, was rated as collectivist, but Indians were found to be both collectivist and individualist and that they combined collectivist and individualist behavior and intentions in different ways to suit a situation (Sinha et al., 2001; Sinha et al., 2002). Tu (2011) indicated that India has highest individualism attitude compared to Brazil, Russia and China. However with so few studies available for comparison, we feel that it is too early to know whether these discrepancies reflect genuine cultural differences. Apart from culture, the specific nature of the job of the employees in the sample might also provide insights for the relationship between affective and normative commitment to change.

The reported low correlation between affective and normative commitment to change can also explain the result that only affective commitment to change and not normative commitment to change is related to the predictors of employee readiness for change, considered in the study. This is in contrary to the findings of Shin et al. (2012) wherein normative commitment consistently emerged as a stronger predictor of employee behaviors during the change period than affective commitment to change. Specifically, employees' normative commitment to change was found to have positive relationships to their behavioral and creative support for change and they attribute this result to the strong collectivistic nature of their sample which is from South Korea. However in our study affective commitment to change was found to partially mediate the relationship between creative behavior and readiness for change. Rafferty and Restubog (2010) found that an employee's perception that he or she had a poor change history was negatively associated with affective

commitment to change and thus supports our study results wherein affective commitment to change was found to partially mediate the relationship between positive history of change and readiness for change. Further researches in this direction are needed to explain the impact of culture on the potential differences between affective and normative commitment to change.

IMPLICATIONS

The study findings have several implications, which can be broadly classified into two sections- managerial and academic. The major managerial implication of the study is that all the three factors namely, individual, process and context factors significantly influence employees' commitment to change. Hence, equal importance should be given to all the three factors. Another managerial implication of the study is that among the dimensions of commitment to change, affective commitment to change is the only dimension which was found to be significantly related to readiness for change. Thus, focusing on the employees' emotional attachment to the change could be one way for increasing employees' readiness for change. The study also has academic implications. Commitment to change is a relatively new construct, developed by Herscovitch and Meyer (2002). Several researchers have called for a need for commitment to change studies to be done outside North America in order to check the generalizability of the three component model of commitment to change (Herscovitch and Meyer, 2002; Meyer et al., 2007). The results of this study provide valuable information on commitment to change in the Indian context.

CONCLUSION

The study gave valuable insights on the mediation effect of affective commitment to change on employee readiness for change. Contrary to prior research, affective commitment to change was found to be related to predictors of employee readiness for change and not normative commitment to change. Among the three dimensions of commitment to change, affective commitment to change alone was found to have a partial mediation effect. The results showed that affective commitment to

change partially mediates the relationship of creative behavior and history of change with readiness for change.

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