

**The Centrality of Corporate Communication in Change
Management and Organizational Value creation
(A Case of Textile Sector in Pakistan)**

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Abstract

The study centered its focus to check the significance of corporate communication (CC) in the process of managing change after the mergers in the textile sector of Pakistan that is based on Employee readiness (ER) to change as well as Employee Openness (EO) to understand the concept of change in light of their behavioral adjustment. With the help of structural equation modeling and Kurt Lewin's three-step model, the data was analyzed and it is found that the centrality of corporate communication (CC) cannot be ignored in order to develop a strong and effective relationship with employees who will encourage Employees Engagement (EE) in the change process in the most important and leading textile sector of Pakistan. Communication with two-way directions bridges the communication gap among all levels of management in an organization which not only supports employees to have a timely voice to participate in decision making as well as to confidently inspires the employees to minimize the uncertainty that is indispensable to establish readiness to change and the outcome is in the form of successful implementation of change. There are many aspects of changes in an organization but it is key to understand that change should be backed by the willingness of the employees that will, on one side enhances the interest level of the employees in understanding change and on the other hand, improves their behaviors for the future challenges. Hence, all these factors will boost up the entire organization's value/ shareholders wealth, which is the real purpose of any organization behind its existence.

Key words: Corporate Communication, Organization Value, Smart PLS Model, Openness, Change, shareholders wealth.

Introduction

In this modern era, variety of challenges such as tough competition, advancement in technology, fast globalization changes in the market structure are the most serious threats facing by almost all types of organizations (Hansen, 2018). These challenges birth different levels of pressures for leaders or managers to adjust their strategies accordingly in order to bear lesser damage or in other words, to survive more effective in such type of rapid changes in both services as well as product sectors. Furthermore, adjustment to such change in terms of advanced technology is indispensable for organization to be successful (Haqq & Natsir, 2019).

A very popular and commonly known statement within organizational and managerial literature around the globe is that “organizational change is the only constant factor within organizations”.

This organizational change has got a place in the form of a topic in different textbooks, magazines, and other managerial literature. It is noteworthy that in spite of such due attention as well as research endeavors in this area of interest, variety of efforts of organizational change have not yet successful. As per the empirical calculation, above 50% of the organizational change programs fail, at deadlock level, or do not get the required findings, which was expecting initially to achieve the targets (Bennebroek Gravenhorst et al., 1999). The reasons behind this organizational change program failure can be attributed to different types of factors like the culture of the organization, the timing of the change effort, and the role of change-agents (Bennebroek Gravenhorst et al., 1999).

To define and explain behaviors of employees, their attitude plays a vital role in the matter. When a change occurs in terms attitude, it is in other words means that during the change process responses and emotions arouses as result of employees experience which resultantly create an attitude and it can be in a positive or vice versa direction while positive will be in the form of change readiness and negative is termed as resisting change (Lines, 2005). In this context, one can better understand the formula for organizational success, as it obligatory to specify the behavioral genesis of employee reactions to adjust him to change. The study of Mangundjayaa et al., (2015) provided a base in this connection while realizing above fifty percent of the organization’s change initiatives were unsuccessful because of no support by the employees, uncertainties during change and employee’s readiness to accept the change.

Communication has its importance in every field of life in common while this importance is growing with a rapid pace in marketing field in specific that creates a big difference between the modern and traditional marketing approaches. It is clear that both of the approaches focuses on the two-way communication process to give more careful listening to the voice of the customers as well as bonding based on interactivity and the basic idea that communication pre, during, and post-transactions can construct or obliterate key considerable brand relationships {McKenna 1991; Peppers and Rogers 1993; Schultz et al. 1993; Zinkhan et al. 1996, Duncan and Moriarty 1997).

The successful application of organizational change is based on an effective and key role of communication is vital to the effective implementation of organizational change (Schweiger and Denisi, 1991, Lewis and Seibold, 1998). According to the study of (Lewis, 1999), it is concluded that the common importance of communication during planned change agreed upon and empirically demonstrated by majority of the practitioners. Further as the statement generated as a result of a study conducted by DiFonzo et al., 1994; Smelzer and Zener, 1992, that is, ineffectively handled change communication results in rumors and resistance against change, while the negative sides of the change has been presented above the real pictures. Similarly, the common importance of communication during planned change agreed upon and empirically demonstrated by majority of the practitioners but there is a room for improvement in this area of interest to be clarified in further research (Lewis, 1999). Furthermore, a focus has been given to create messages and differentiate 5 diverse message domains within change communication (Armenakis and Harris, 2002). Similarly, a keen interest was given by Clampitt et al. (2000) on the strategies adopted by managers in communicating organisational change. In this context Lewis (1999) has centered on the importance of medium that is used in communicating change.

In the context of change management communication, its significance cannot be overruled in changing in organizational structuring (Elving, 2005). In history, change communication has been element of famous change management models, presented as well as empirically concluded by Kanter, Stein, & Jick (1992) and Kotter (1996) in their models respectively. In the context of undertaking and implementing change to guide agents of change, scholars as well as practitioners have pointed out sure tools and models (Lynett, 2015). Another study by the Falkheimer (2014) concluded that during the implementation part internal communication has been included and have a worth mentioning place in the matter. Majority of the managers are lacking to be aware of employee's feelings and in their point of view the management of employees emotions is not out of the definition of professionalism and more clearly it is not part of their responsibility (Barsade & O'Neill, 2016).

In the eyes of employees, it is the constitution of communication that has an influence in terms of their perception and behavior, that at the end provide outcome in the form of mitigating resistance and involving workforce in the change process (Dilling & Moser 2007). In another study of Hadi Davardoost and Seyed Mohammad Javadi (2018), that was a case study on Iranian Petrochemical firms proposed a direct link between change communication and change implementation while the communication was calculated in the shape of the communication mode, communication frequency, and communication direction. In their suggestion for future research declared to test this relationship in other Asian countries particularly in the technology industry. Similarly, Corporate communication is a strategy or management process that combines together the parts of an organization in order to pursue an enterprise where there is focus on the targets like the communicative aspects of organizing. Similarly, as per description of Goodman (1994), when there is complete management of corporate effort to communicate effectively and probably in well balanced manner

that is characterized by coordination, organizing, skills backed by well defined policy and ability to enhance focus, adopting and implementing a larger variety of management activities where information is easily accessible and that the stakeholders are taking equal benefits from the information concerned.

Variety of the previously conducted research studies have centered attention on the applicability of the Kurt Lewin's model while a minimum attention have been devoted to communication with change receptivity and to execute change fruitfully within the organisation based on the three steps of Kurt Lewin's model. In addition to the study of Kurt Lewin, another study conducted by Memon.A.F., et al (2020) in the telecommunication sector of Pakistan in the same area of interest where cross sectional design has been adopted. In order to fill the gap of the study of Memon.A.F., et al (2020), this study is attempted to use longitudinal design to get better results. Furthermore, similarly, this study has focused to pick product-based industry that is the pharmaceutical sector of the Pakistan stock exchange listed firms, that is another gap left in the study of Memon.A.F., et al (2020) who worked on the services sector. As a result this study will cover the uncover areas of interest in the previously conducted study that has a low generalizability of findings.

Hypothesis development

To undergo restructuring changes, the study of McKay, Kuntz, and Näswall (2013) concluded that change in communication has a vital role in change readiness and it will on the other hand decreases resistance to change. Similarly, Haqq and Natsir (2019) selected Islamic mode of banking from east Java based on the application of structural equation modeling with the help of PLS SEM and concluded that communication helps in various elements of readiness for change like cognitive readiness affect based readiness as well as global readiness. Further, this study also concluded that organizations needs to manage their employees positive perceptions for the change implementation and the only best way to do this is the corporate communication. Similarly, reorganization of the entire system is necessary for organizational change because the employees have experienced a deficiency between their expectations and new experiences (Balogun & Johnson, 2004). Another study of Bartunek (1984) examined this matters and found that an effective communication is the key requirement for reorganization because employees can be enabled with the help of communication which not only cover the gap but to clarify them about the real meaning connected with process of change. Further in the same line, the study of Klein (1996), also provided an empirical proof that is focused on the experiences of a system-wide organizational change in many of the manufacturing units where communication plays a vital role to engage employees in organizational change due to their firm belief that any hurdle in the way of change process can be overcome through communication strategy. Similarly, in the same line of action, the level of readiness of employees can be enhanced provided employees explore their ambiguity that arises from from the strong support of the management for the handling of newly invoked behaviors (Welch, 2014). As per the study of (Fugate, et al., 2013), the receptive power and the reaction of an individual employee is considerably effected

by the various leadership as well as management approaches to change. Another study investigated hurdles to change application in European government agency by analyzing quantitative as well as qualitative data, the study concluded a lack of proper communication is a main difficulty in the way of readiness of employees to change and next to implement change (Van Praet & Van Leuven, 2019). Their further argument is that communication has given very minimum attention in research literature. Similarly the study of Armenakis and Harris (2002) concluded that a significant attention shall be given to change management handling more carefully in order to present a real angle of intervening change to the employees. The following hypothesis is derived from the above discussion:

H1: there is a direct relationship of CC with ER in pharmaceutical sector.

Another important specious domain is the employee engagement that shows synergetic interface of employees with their parent firm. A specified and distinguished level of communication that reflects emotional association of employees with their organization is termed as engagement (Bin, 2015). The study suggested that employee involvement is target specific, while a need to test change engagement parallel to organizational changes. Before a successful change implementation, the association between communication and the development of readiness to change plays the role of a prerequisite for the employees. The foundation of a successful implementation of change is one of the objective of communication during the process of change is mitigate or minimize the resistance to change following by another objective of decreasing the uncertainty in employees regarding their future position and hence it create readiness to accept change (Elving, 2005).

Various types of studies have been conducted to judge the relationship between employee acceptance and engagement, like the study of (Granziera & Perera, 2019) found a direct relationship between the above two variables of interest while there is a change noted in both positive and reciprocal covering not only the cross-sectional and the longitudinal studies as well. According to the study conducted by (Jimmieson., et al., 2004) that was based longitudinal concept with the use of data from public sector firms undergoing regionalization process. There study concluded that employee readiness is the product of CC that has a direct connection with the employee engagement and satisfaction from their job. Similarly, according to the findings of the study of (Soumyaja., et al., 2015) that for the implementation of change within an organization, the best possible way is the change readiness. In light of the above discussion, the second hypothesis is as under:

H2: There is a direct relationship between ER and EE.

While during the change implementation process, the most significant and noteworthy thing for the occurrence of change is the ER. Majority of the previously conducted studies declared in their findings that EE plays the role of predecessor to change encouraging behaviors (Bouckennooghe., Et al., 2015). There is a direct relationship witnessed between ER and implementation of TQM while further findings showed a ER for change has perform as a mediator with a positive association between organizational culture and implementation of TQM policy (Haffar., et al., 2017).

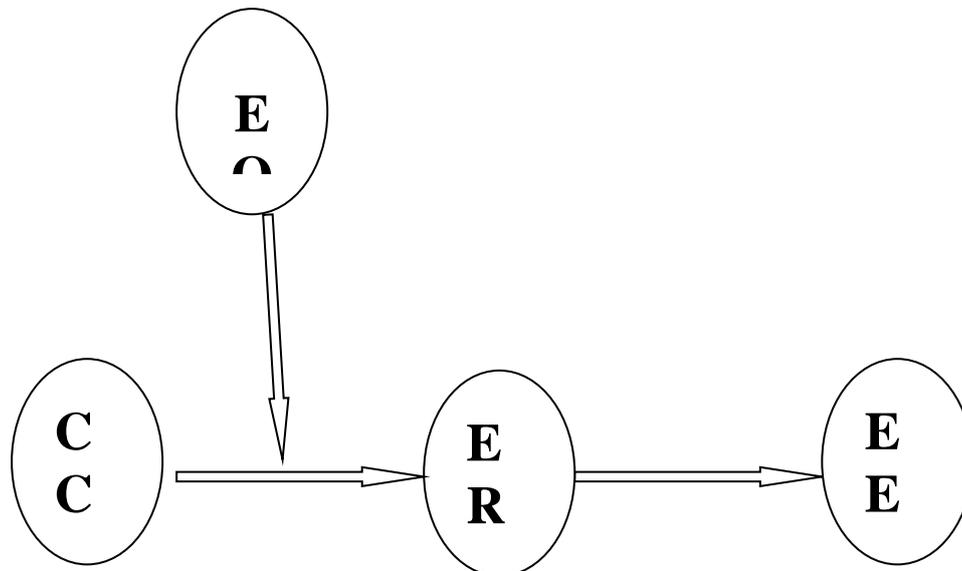
Additionally, in another endeavor it is found that ER for change plays the role of a mediator in between the link of leadership and commitment to change (Santhidran, et al., 2013). Furthermore, the study of (Bakari, et al., 2017) was also conducted in the same area of interest while the data has been collected from Pakistani hospitals; adopted the famous three steps Kurt Lewin model, this study declared that an association between authentic leadership and behavioral support for change is mediated by readiness for change while the study was an initiative study in the same area of interest. The following hypothesis has been derived from the above empirical discussion:

H3: The relationship between CC and EE positively mediates by ER.

The study of (Bordia, et al., 2004) suggests that ER and employee trust may have jurisdictions while in order to minimize strain and turnover intention the role of communication is tested. It noted that role of satisfaction mediates but it is dependent on the degree of employee openness (EO) to change. Similarly, EO is the mind set where an employee feels safe and sound especially in a newly ambiguous environment, that is, post-change environment. Furthermore, in some research studies openness to change is at par to that of readiness for change, but it has a different corner from readiness, that is, the willingness to evaluate and pay attention to change messages is termed as openness. On the other hand, a more mature feeling of being willing to accept, after detailed investigation the change system and its expected effects. Those employees who are open to change will wishers to accept change and will be ready to accept change happily based on the felt compensation of the changes (Devos, et al., 2007). More clearly speaking, due to involvement and communication it can be possible to establish openness by the way of information sharing as well as clarifying questions and ambiguities. In this way, another study conducted by Wanberg and Banas (2000) while concluded that based on the predictors and outcomes of openness to change in an organization, more openness to change has seen in those employees who not only get change specific information but they are part of change related decisions making. According to the Erwin and Garman (2010), there is a correlation between open-minded employees and willingness to change their behaviors, while they can bring a success in the already determined organizational way out. In the same line of action, maximizing the receptive power of employees can help to control the resistance of employees regarding change, while it can be done through top management communication for the generation of the employee's trust (Smollan & Parry, 2011). The openness of employees with respect to high degree can be specified in such a way more trust in top management and they think that there is no negativity of management because in their eyes believe that top management intentions are trustworthy (Michaelis, et al., 2009). The study of Blau (1964) showed a positive association between trust in the supervisor and employees' ambition to act in response to the organization.

H4: Employees with more openness results in a strong relationship between CC and ER

Schematic Model



Mergers in the textile sector is specifically the focus of the current study that include the merger of M/s. Anwar Cotton Mills (Pvt) Limited and M/s. Aslam Industries Limited with and into M/s. ACRO Textile Mills Limited, Merger of Libaas Textile Limited with and into Ghani Global Glass Limited, Merger of (Colony) Sarhad Textile Mills Limited with and into Suhail Jute Mills Limited, Merger of M/s. Colony Mills Limited and M/s. Colony Industries (Pvt) Limited with and into M/s. Colony Textile Mills Limited, Merger of M/s. J.K. Fibre Mills Limited & its Members and Abid Faiq Textile Mills Limited & its Members with and into M/s. J.K Spinning Mills Limited. Similarly, EE is an important aspect for an organization the current study is looking for the mediating role of EO for ER among the employees and pursuing the desired by the top management in the textile sector of Pakistan. Due to the dispersed location of the respondents, online questionnaires were distributed through emails to the CEOs and supervisors while simple random sampling technique has been adopted in this study. Similarly, the scales for CC and ER has been picked from the work (Bouckenoghe,. Et al,. 2009) with respect to the angles of quality of change communication and readiness for change respectively. Furthermore, openness to change scale was adopted from the work of Susskind et al. (1998) to check attitudinal acceptance of the structural change. While the EE scale has been picked from the work of Schaufeli et al. (2006).

Results and Discussion

The following table 1 shows the demographic detail of the respondents. Furthermore, total 500 questionnaires have been distributed via email while total 300 respondents were positively responded, that is, the study has a response rate of 60%.

Table 1

	Frequency	Percent
Gender		
Male	200	66.67
Female	100	33.33
Total	300	100.0
Textile sector (Company)		
Anwar Cotton Mills (Pvt) Limited	57	19
Aslam Industries Limited	45	15
ACRO Textile Mills Limited	45	15
Libaas Textile Limited	40	13.33
Suhail Jute Mills Limited	38	12.67
Colony Industries (Pvt) Limited	35	11.67
J.K. Fibre Mills Limited	40	13.33
Total	300	100.0
Province		
Sindh	110	36.67
Punjab	80	26.67
Baluchistan	50	16.67
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	60	20.0
Total	300	100.0
Qualification		
HSSC	115	38.33
Bachelor Degree	95	31.67
Masters Degree	60	20.0
MS or M.Phil Degree	30	10
Total	300	100.0
Employment Tenure		
below a year	75	25.0
2-5 years	90	30.2
6-10 years	80	26.67
11-15 years	35	11.67
More than 15	20	6.67
Total	300	100.0

Based on the measurement model analysis, the following table 2 shows the indicator reliability because of the fact that values of the outer loading is above the standard value of 0.50 (Hair et al., 2017 and Memon.A.F et al., 2020). Similarly, the standard

value for composite reliability is above the 0.7 value while in this study it is also exceeding the standard value of 0.7 that shows internal consistency reliability (Hair et al., 2006 and Memon.A.F et al., 2020). For the convergent validity, the standard is above 0.5 values that is also exceeding the same in the present results (Hair et al., 2006 and Memon.A.F et al., 2020).

Table 2

Construct	Items	Outer Loadings	CR	AVE
CC	ECOM1	0.882	0.950	0.760
	ECOM2	0.903		
	ECOM3	0.901		
	ECOM4	0.852		
	ECOM5	0.822		
	ECOM6	0.869		
EE	EE1	0.723	0.934	0.739
	EE2	0.896		
	EE3	0.894		
	EE4	0.907		
	EE5	0.865		
EO	EO1	0.715	0.875	0.638
	EO2	0.808		
	EO3	0.875		
	EO4	0.790		
ER	ER1	0.738	0.915	0.684
	ER2	0.877		
	ER3	0.877		
	ER4	0.856		
	ER5	0.778		

Table 3: HTMT

	1	2	3	4
CC				
EE	0.665			
EO	0.611	0.715		
ER	0.615	0.710	0.585	

The above table 3 shows the establishment of HTMT because the values are above the standard 0.05 value.

Table 4: significance and Relevance of Path Coefficient

	Hypothesised	Beta	Std Error	T-value	p-value	R2
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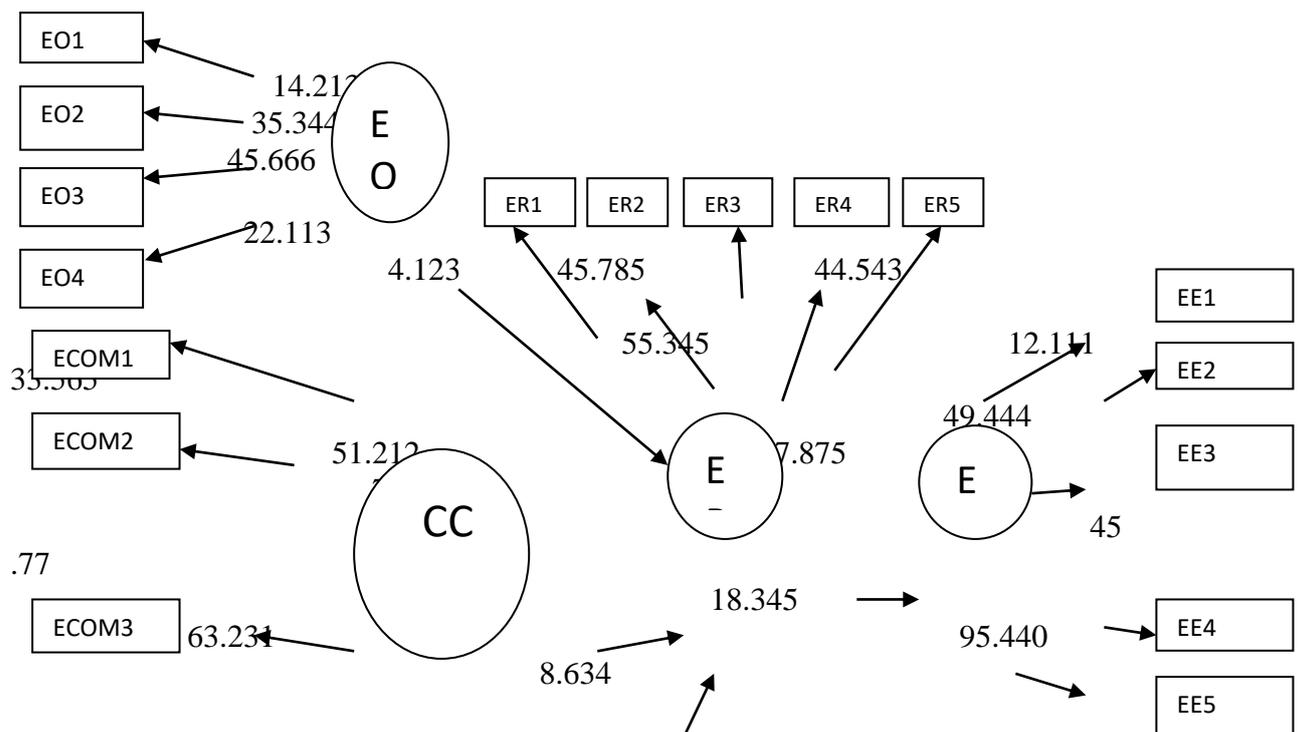
	Relatedness					
H1	CC → ER	0.611	0.060	10.183	0.000	0.311
H2	ER → EE	0.777	0.039	19.923	0.000	0.744
H3	CC → ER → EE	0.488	0.051	9.568	0.000	0.343
H4	CC*EO-ER → ER	0.235	0.049	4.795	0.002	0.020

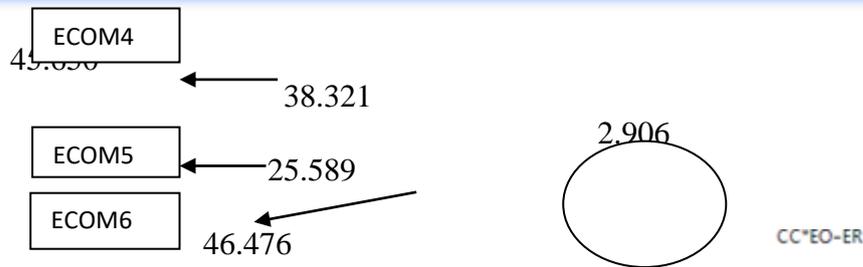
Sig <0.05 (one tailed test)

In the above table 4 it is indicated that the association between CC and ER is both positive as well as significant ($\beta = 0.611$, t-value 10.183, $p < 0.05$) with R2 is equal to 0.311 that is in line with the findings of Preacher and Hayes (2008) as well as Memon.A.F et al., (2020), that is also the acceptance of H1. Similarly, there is an effect on the size of the relationship in the form of R2 that is 0.311 while it is bigger. Furthermore, there is a positive and significant effect of ER on EE, that is ($\beta = 0.777$, t-value 19.923, p is less than 0.05). That is also an indication of the acceptance of H2 while the size is also large which has R2 0.744.

Furthermore, ER plays a vital role as mediator and shows that indirect effect of the same has been a favorable effect, that is, ($\beta = 0.488$, t- value 9.568 with a p-value of less than 0.05). This is the evidence that H3 is accepted in the current study at the textile sector of Pakistan.

Figure: SMART PLS Model:





The study reveals a positive and considerable moderating effect of EO, that is, ($\beta = -0.235$, t -value = 4.795 and p value is less than 0.05). The study shows that H4 is accepted while the effect in terms of size is smaller that is 0.020.

The findings in the above PSL model suggest that EO is a significant moderator between CC and ER, that is, in simple words indicates that they will easily accept change provided when they are high on their openness in the textile sector while the effect of the same is lesser in terms of intensity as compare to the effect of the same variables in services business concluded by Memon.A.F et al., (2020). Similarly, the models indicates the moderator role of R-square because of the total variance in EE and ER (chin., 1998 and Memon.A.F et al., 2020).

Furthermore, the first hypothesis is accepted on the basis that there is a direct association between CC and CR as it is in line with the study of Memon.A.F et al., (2020) but the intensity of the findings of this product-based sector study is lesser in intensity against the in tensity of the service based sector study of Memona, (2020). Another study investigated hurdles to change application in European government agency by analyzing quantitative as well as qualitative data, the study concluded a lack of proper communication is a main difficulty in the way of readiness of employees to change and next to implement change (Van Praet & Van Leuven, 2019). Their further argument is that communication has given very minimum attention in research literature.

Similarly, second hypothesis is also accepted as this study concluded a direct association between ER and EE as it is also parallel to the study of Memon.A.F et al., (2020) but with a lower rate of change in the variables of interest. Another important specious domain is the employee engagement that shows synergetic interface of employees with their parent firm. A specified and distinguished level of communication that reflects emotional association of employees with their organization is termed as engagement (Bin, 2015). Similarly, it is also in line with the study findings of Men & Stacks, (2013), that was based on the conclusion that employee is the most important asset for the organization to whom the organization is closely and consistently connected while it is clear that the success of any organization is dependent directly on the behaviors of employees.

Furthermore, there is a positive mediating role of ER has been found between CC and EE that is why hypothesis number three is accepted. There is a direct relationship witnessed between ER and implementation of TQM while further findings showed a ER for change has perform as a mediator with a positive association between

organizational culture and implementation of TQM policy (Haffar, et al., 2017). The findings of this study is also in line with the study of Memon.A.F et al., (2020) as well as the study of Moore (2014) who were of the view that for the immense engagement of employees in the process of change, communication plays a key role in the matter which finally have the result in the shape of change implementation. Other studies like Barrett, (2002), Christensen (2014), and (Lewis, 2006) have also supported the same findings of the current study on the basis that organizations may not implement change successfully until these organizations are not able to change the behavior of their employees to accept change.

Hypothesis fourth is also accepted in the present study because of the fact that when EO is on high scale, it means that there is a strong association between CC and ER in the textile sector of Pakistan whereas, in comparison the intensity is lesser than that of the findings of Memon.A.F et al., (2020) in the services sector of Pakistan. More clearly speaking, due to involvement and communication it can be possible to establish openness by the way of information sharing as well as clarifying questions and ambiguities. In this way, another study conducted by Wanberg and Banas (2000) while concluded that based on the predictors and outcomes of openness to change in an organization, more openness to change has seen in those employees who not only get change specific information but they are part of change related decisions making.

Limitations and Future direction

The study has been conducted in the textile sector of Pakistan; therefore, it is suggested to conduct another study in future by considering other sectors of the economy as well. Similarly, this study is conducted in Pakistan specific while there is potential to go for a study in other economies as well in order to enhance the applicability of the results to generalize for more benefits. Similarly, based on the literature, one can conduct a study with variety of variables of interest that will be more beneficial in terms of impact of the findings as well as to enhance the organization value at the end.

Conclusion

The centrality of corporate communication cannot be ignored in order to develop a strong and effective relationship with employees who will to encourage EE in the change process in the most important and leading textile sector of Pakistan. Communication with two-way directions bridges the communication gap among all levels of management in an organization which not only supports employees to have a timely voice against their grievances as well as to confidently inspires the employees to minimize the uncertainty that is indispensable to establish readiness to change and the outcome is in the form of successful implementation of change. There are many aspects of changes in an organization but it is key to understand that change should be backed by the willingness of the employees that will, on one side enhances the interest level of the employees in understanding change and on the other hand, improves their behaviors for the future challenges.

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