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Effect of Leadership Change on Organizational Performance: A Case Study of X Ltd in the Garment Industry of Sri Lanka

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Abstract:

The study mainly focuses on the X Ltd of XYZ group; a Strategic Business Unit of a well reputed and global level garment manufacturer in Textile and Garment industry of Sri Lanka. Within the financial year of 2015-2016 X Ltd started to face radical and frequent changes in their leadership hierarchy, which eventually resulted in a drastic drop in the overall Organizational performance; specially in terms of increased garment airfreight which continuously happened for several seasons to meet the committed delivery dates. This overall scenario became the core reason for the researcher to carry out this case study. Thus the study sought to ascertain the effect of leadership change on Organizational Performance using X Ltd. as the study case. Data was collected using standardized questionnaires from 60 executive employees of X Ltd who were selected using the simple random sampling. The study employed a multiple regression to analyze the association between the Organizational performance and the explanatory factors which could affect the level of employee job satisfaction in a situation of leadership change and it also tries to order each factor based on its level of importance. Accordingly, the study finds that there is a significant positive relationship between the level of employee job satisfaction and overall Organizational performance during a leadership change where the industry specific fundamentals applied in effective change management has the most variance in the employee satisfaction. Furthermore, the study also perused whether there was a difference in the level of Organizational performance due to the effects of gender, age and the educational background of employees where it was ascertained using the one way ANOVA test. The findings of the study revealed that the higher the number of years of industry experience, higher the resistance and negative response towards a leadership change whereas in contrast the gender effect and the educational background proved to have no any significant impact. The study recommended that the Organizations to develop an effective change management programmes throughout the time of significant leadership change while incorporating proper mechanisms of advance communication of the change, proper discussion and justification with the existing senior management about the leadership change and also selection of new leaders who have considerable years of experience in the same business model.

Keywords: Leadership, Leadership change, Employee job satisfaction, Organizational performance

1. Introduction

Leadership is the ability to evaluate and or forecast a long term plan or policy and influence the followers towards the achievement of the said strategy (Mayowa, 2009). Simply, a leader shapes and shares a vision which gives point to the work of others (Handy, 1992). Northouse (2009) initially argues that the leaders are not being made, but born. However he later argues that leadership is a capability which could be gained and developed by nature or by exercise while possessing the skill to lead people is of importance. In the modern business environment, leadership plays a crucial role (Goleman, 2000) where leadership behavior and decision making are root causes for 50% of the discrepancies between success and failure of a change where it directly responsible for the Organizational climate and reflects one third of the financial achievements within the Organization.

The study mainly focuses on change in Organizational leadership and its impact to the overall Organizational performance. Accordingly change at its most basic level is a movement out of a current state through transition state to a future state. It is an inevitable part of existence for individuals and Organizations and is crucial for leaders in the workplace in dealing with adaptation to a dynamic business environment. However humans do have better faith on stability and continuity (Brooks and Bate, 1994). In an Organization's point of view, these changes can be internal as well as external to the

Organization which can affect the Organizational performance directly or indirectly. As per Terry, Carey and Callan, (2001), it is acceptable that an Organizational change may create job insecurity to individual esteem whereas most of the Organizations do not have the level of competency to convince employees for change related situations. As per Kirkpatrick and Ackroyd (2000), people's opinions and perceptions towards an Organization will be carried through its culture and employee's attitudes and mostly they believe that the Organizations should be much more than a profit pumping, KPI driving appliance. In support, Parker and Bradley (2000) signifies on the struggle of changing Organizational culture which is strongly entrenched within Organizational culture and background which cannot be forced to change. Further some of the people who have undergone such changes will still require to be remaining unchanged (Bride, 1991) where it shows the reluctant nature of human being towards a change, given that the Asian countries are more towards an inward culture. Thus the Organization itself is responsible to be attentive on ensuring the proper adaptation of employees to the particular change introduced in to it (Hiatt, Jeff, 2010) or otherwise these alien situations could lead the Organization and its profitability to a stance that stagnates the day to day achievements (Razali and Vrontis, 2010).

Changes in leadership style from a more strict structure towards a more flexible structure concentrates on the concept of serving to effectively adapt to the resources of a company. In this regard, Georgiades and Macdonell (1998) describes the leadership style to contain characteristics such as evolving relationships, personal behaviors, providing suitable guidance, creating and supporting the vision and the cultural factors of the Organization. Effective leadership caters to the demands of the Organizational staff whilst do not deviate from the norm that a leader should normally have a bias in favor of justice over injustice and right over wrong. Many scholars have argued that there is a negative relationship between the longer tenured leaders and the Organizational performance due to the reason that they favor the status core. According to Bantel and Jackson (1989) these longer tenured leaders have a greater identification with the Organization, yet they are reluctant to take risks, so as towards these changes. However Murray (1989) argues on a positive relationship of the above where the sudden leadership might result to have leaders with shorter tenure within the company where there willingness to understand the changing environment and facilitate the change management process could be achieved accordingly. Supporting the above Dutton and Duncan (1987) also argue on a receptive nature exists among new leaders towards change.

Guimareas and Igbaria et al. (1997) state that the top management support of an Organization towards changed leadership will determine on the positive implementation outcomes such as implementation success of new leadership aspects, increase of employee acceptance and Organizational overall performance improvement. Organizational imbalances such as hiring of leaders who lack prior industrial exposure where they do not care about long range planning will create negative vibes within employee's mindset for an expected change (Kirkpatrick and Ackroyd, 2000).

2. Statement of Problem

X Ltd of XYZ group has implemented a major downsizing decision across the entire Organization with the intension of improving its current performance. However it seems to have no progress in improving the expected level of Organizational performance. Further within the period of research, employee's job satisfaction seems to have seriously affected where it has impact on the Organizational performance. Accordingly many scholars have looked upon the relationship between change and Organizational performance as well as leadership and Organizational performance whereas the current study seeks to contribute to literature by assessing the relationship between leadership change and Organization performance by looking in to the factors that could significantly affect the employee job satisfaction in a situation of leadership change.

3. Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the study is to assess the effect of leadership change on overall Organizational performance, however, the specific objectives are:

- a. To identify the factors contribute to the Organizational performance in a situation of leadership change.
- b. To understand the association between the explanatory factors and Organizational performance during a leadership change.
- c. To understand the importance of the order of aspects in relation to leadership change
- d. To determine whether there is any significant difference in Organizational performance in relation to gender, age and the educational level of employees.

4. Data& Measurements

The study uses a regression model where dependent variable and each of the independent variables are measured using the following criteria;

4.1. Dependent Variable

4.1.1. Overall Organizational Performance

This has been operationalized using the Balance Score Card (BSC) approach to have a proper balance between financial and non-financial measurements of Organizational performance. Thus it uses current business growth, level of employee commitment, smoothness of operational functions and improvement level of the standards of work and benefits aspects within the questionnaire.

4.2. Independent Variables / Explanatory Variables

4.2.1. Organizational Approach for Managing Change

This was captured through the duration for planning change execution, usability of practical change ideas for personal grooming purposes, responsibility of total management of change, justifiable business reasons for change, awareness of the change among project teams, ways to overcome resistance towards change, level of interdepartmental support after change implementation.

4.2.2. Fundamental Applied in a Leadership Change

This uses discussion and justification done by the existing senior management, similar industry exposure, prior communication about change and its level of controllability.

4.2.3. Internal Communication and Business Process Improvements

Under this, the study looks upon the surrounding aspects such as seasonal requirements, capacity constraints before the new process implementation, discussion with all employees of X Ltd, pre communication of decided changes, post communication of executed changes and feasibility testing of the change and the successfulness of newly implemented systems in examining the asymmetric effects that could have on Organizational performance.

4.2.4. Level of Employee Work Life Satisfaction

The study captures factors such as level of bonuses, salary increments, additional benefits such as insurance, willingness of new leadership in improving the employee level of benefits and faith on new leaders in increasing the benefit levels.

5. Development of Hypotheses

The objectives of the study will be assessed using the following sequential two hypotheses;

➤ Hypothesis 1

- H₀: There is no relationship between leadership change and level of employee job satisfaction
- H₁: There is a relationship between leadership change and level of employee job satisfaction

➤ Hypothesis 2

- H₀: There is no impact from level of employee job satisfaction on overall Organization performance
- H₁: There is an impact from level of employee job satisfaction on overall Organization performance

6. Methodology

The study employed a case study research method on the selected Organization which is an in depth study of the particular problematic situation that can be used to narrow down a very broad field of research into one easily researchable topic. Furthermore study employed a cross sectional design in which the data was taken at a specific point in time for the purposes of the study and a descriptive design was also employed to analyze the feedback in related with the study objectives. The feedback was obtained through a standard questionnaire which includes all significant aspects covered in the extant literature. The observations are then analyzed quantitatively using the SPSS software to make them more explicit.

7. Population and Sampling

The population of the study comprised of all the executive employees within the strategic business unit; X Ltd. Within X Ltd, study selects 60 respondents from the executive grade representing all departments where they have been selected using simple random sampling giving an equal chance for all executives to be within the sample. More importantly, researcher has used the law of inertia and law of statistical regulatory techniques to emphasize that if the selected sample size is more than 30 it will represent the whole of the considered community. Further researcher considers the hierarchical aspects and the interdepartmental coverage in sample selection to ensure both factory production staff and office staff do have a fair representation.

8. Instrumentation

The study employed the widely used Balanced Score Card approach (BSC) adapted by Kaplan and Norton (1996) to operationalize the impact on overall organizational performance through the affected employee job satisfaction due to leadership change. This approach covers the main Organizational aspects such as financial, customer, internal business processes and learning and growth. On the other hand, the standard questionnaire is a 19- itemized that is rate from 0-5. Thus, 0 being "Strongly agree" to 5 which is interpreted as "Strongly disagree". The questionnaire uses a Likert-scale response format with each item presenting the respondent with five response options ranging from 1 to 5.

8.1. Internal Consistency of Variables: Usage of Cronbach's Alpha

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	No: of items
Organizational approach in managing change	.675	8
Fundamentals of leadership change	.561	3
Internal communication & Business process improvement	.842	7
Work life satisfaction	.713	3
Benefits of employment	.722	5
Organizational Performance	.734	4

Table 1: Reliability Statistics
Source – Generated by the researcher via SPSS

All variables show a higher level of internal consistency due to Cronbach's Alpha values exceeding 0.5, except for work life satisfaction. Hence it is divided further in to effectiveness of prior leadership and seeking for a new job as its internal consistency is less. Hence work life satisfaction is operationalize in relation to three items which have high level of internal consistency which are as employee satisfaction regarding the leadership change, effectiveness of the newly appointed leadership, effect on the productivity level of the individual employee.

9. Analysis and Findings

→ Objective 01: Usage of a bivariate analysis of Pearson correlation

Variables		Performance
Change management approach	Pearson Correlation	.448**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	60
Leadership change fundamentals	Pearson Correlation	.449**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	60
Internal Communication & Process improvements	Pearson Correlation	.390**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002
	N	60
Work life satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.283*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.028
	N	60
Effectiveness of Prior leadership	Pearson Correlation	.218
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.094
	N	60
Seeking for a new job	Pearson Correlation	-.163
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.212
	N	60
Benefits of employment	Pearson Correlation	.330**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.010
	N	60

Table 2: Association between the Organizational performance and Explanatory factors
Source – Generated by the researcher via SPSS

The probability of association between change management approach and Organizational performance is 0.000 which is highly significant at the level of 1%. Coefficient of correlation of 0.448 demonstrates that there is a highly significant positive association between them. Similarly there is a significant positive association between the factors such as fundamentals applied in changing leadership, internal communication, process improvements and benefits of employment and Organizational performance. Further work life satisfaction is also significant at 5% level, having a positive relation. Effectiveness of prior leadership is a marginally significant factor at 10% whereas current job seekers found to be an insignificant factor.

→ Objective 02

The second objective of the study has been analyzed with related to multiple regression model.
Factors affect the Organizational performance in a situation of existing leadership changes.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.588a	.346	.258	.49302	1.568

Table 3: Model Summary

Source – Generated by the researcher via SPSS

R value; multiple correlation of 0.588 indicates that there is a jointly positive association between the explanatory variables and the level of Organizational performance. The value of R square depicts that 34.6% of the performance is covered by the regression model. Furthermore, Durbin-Watson test statistic of 1.568 which is almost closer to 2 and also between 1.5-2.5 indicates no serial correlation problem in residuals. The study findings will further be strengthening through the following ANOVA test.

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
1	Regression	6.694	7	.956	3.934	.002b
	Residual	12.639	52	.243		
	Total	19.333	59			

Table 4

Source – Generated by the researcher via SPSS

The probability of F statistic shows a highly significant value of 0.002 that is at 1% level of significance, indicating that the model employed in the study is highly appropriate and hence all the explanatory factors collectively influence on the level of Organizational performance in a situation of leadership changes.

9.1. Test of Individual Effect

To test the influence of each variable have on the level of Organizational performance, study looked upon the individual effect.

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	1.309	.570		2.296	.026		
	Change management approach	-.082	.239	-.074	-.341	.734	.269	3.720
	Fundamentals of Leadership change	.288	.146	.326	1.964	.055	.456	2.192
	Internal Communication & Process Improvement	.126	.114	.157	1.105	.274	.623	1.605
	Work Life satisfaction	.076	.123	.095	.618	.539	.533	1.875
	Effectiveness of Prior leadership	.178	.077	.286	2.314	.025	.825	1.212
	Currently job seeking	-.124	.082	-.183	-1.522	.134	.867	1.154
	Benefits	.148	.131	.160	1.130	.264	.630	1.588

a. Dependent Variable: Performance

Table 5: Coefficients-Individual Effect

According to the above table, fundamentals of a leadership change are significant at 5% level indicating a positive association with the Organizational performance. Within that advance communication within an allocated time frame, discussion with the existing senior management and the industry exposure of the new leadership will have a positive effect towards organizational performance. Further if the prior leadership proves to be an effective and influential one that will positively affect the Organizational performance within the particular period.

The other factors are insignificant indicating that they lack any individual influence on the Organizational performance, however they jointly create a positive impact on the performance.

Under Collinearity Statistics, VIF values of less than 10 and tolerance values of greater than 0.1 demonstrates that there is no multicollinearity problem which could further validate the results.

9.2. Diagnostic Tests

These tests are to check further validity of the above regression results.

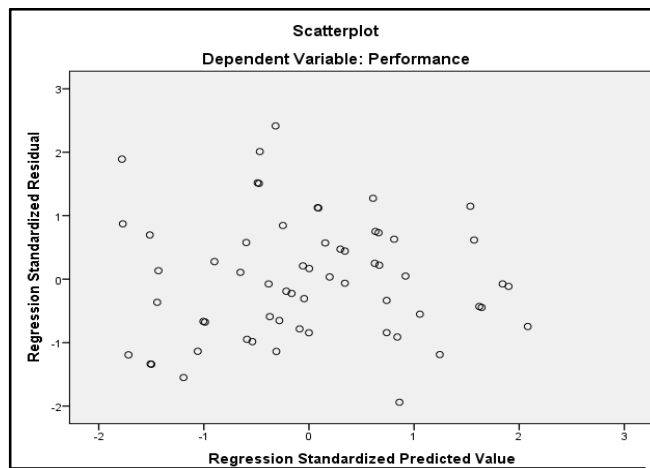


Figure 1: Test of residual behavior
Source – Generated by the researcher via SPSS

Standardized residuals have been presented against standardized predicted values to identify the behavior of the residuals where all of them were proven to be randomly distributed. This means constant variance of residuals, justifying on no heteroscedasticity problem.

9.2.1. Normality Test of Residuals

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	Df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Standardized Residual	.057	60	.200*	.986	60	.715
*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.						
a. Lilliefors Significance Correction						

Table 6: Mathematical approach
Source – Generated by the researcher via SPSS

The study tests the behavior of standardized residuals using Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests. Both the p values show insignificance indicating that the standardized residuals have been distributed normally with zero mean.

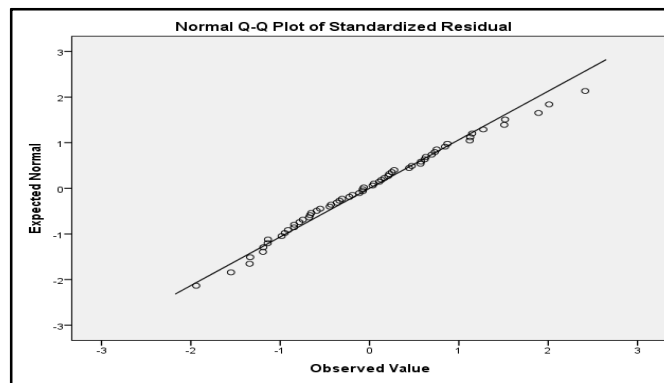


Figure 2: Graphical Approach
Source – Generated by the researcher via SPSS

The above represents the Q-Q plot of standardized residuals graphically and it shows the residuals are distributed very closer to the linear line, indicating normal distribution of residuals. This further validates the study findings.

Variables		Standardized Residual
Change management	Pearson Correlation	.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	1.000
	N	60
Crucially	Pearson Correlation	.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	1.000
	N	60
Communication	Pearson Correlation	.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	1.000
	N	60
Life satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	1.000
	N	60
Prior leadership is better	Pearson Correlation	.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	1.000
	N	60
Currently job seeking	Pearson Correlation	.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	1.000
	N	60

Table 7: Test of association between explanatory variables and Standardized residuals

Source – Generated by the researcher via SPSS

Explanatory variables show perfect insignificance with a p value of 1.000 and Pearson correlation of 0.000 indicating no association between the explanatory variables and the standardized residuals.

Objective 03 - Importance of the Order of aspects in relation to leadership change

This has been tested by ordering the aspects according to the sum of frequencies in very important and important criteria selected by the respondents.

Rank	Variable/ Aspect	Cumulative %
1	Requirement for process alignments	61%
2	Provision of career paths and learning facilities	56%
3	Job description with fixed leadership	50%
4	Set of valid qualifications and values in new leadership	43%
5	Provision of business visibility and continuity on business units	42%

Table 8

Source – Generated by the researcher via SPSS

Objective 04- Impact from Gender, age and education level of employees on Organizational performance in a leadership change

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper	
Performance	Equal variances assumed	7.244	.009	-.837	58	.406	-.12571	.15028	-.42654	.17511
	Equal variances not assumed			-.879	57.912	.383	-.12571	.14297	-.41191	.16048

Table 9: Gender effect on Organizational performance- Usage of Independent sample t-test

Source – Generated by the researcher via SPSS

0.009 Probability of F statistic with regard to Levene's test for equality of variances indicates a difference between male and female in terms of the impact to Organizational performance and in contrast probability of t-test shows an insignificant value of 0.383 indicating that there are no different responses from male and female to the Organizational performance during a leadership change.

Performance					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	4.574	3	1.525	5.785	.002
Within Groups	14.759	56	.264		
Total	19.333	59			

Table 10: Age effect on Organizational performance- Usage of one way ANOVA test
Source – Generated by the researcher via SPSS

0.002 probability of F statistic indicates that age has a significant impact on Organizational performance during a leadership change. In order to clearly identify that difference, study employed the following.

Dependent Variable: Performance						
(I) Age	(J) Age	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
21-30	31-40	.47632*	.15625	.018	.0626	.8900
	41-50	.39643	.17137	.107	-.0573	.8502
	51-60	1.20000*	.37725	.012	.2011	2.1989
31-40	21-30	-.47632*	.15625	.018	-.8900	-.0626
	41-50	-.07989	.18082	.971	-.5587	.3989
	51-60	.72368	.38164	.241	-.2869	1.7342
41-50	21-30	-.39643	.17137	.107	-.8502	.0573
	31-40	.07989	.18082	.971	-.3989	.5587
	51-60	.80357	.38808	.175	-.2240	1.8312

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 11: Multiple comparisons- Tukey HSD test
Source – Generated by the researcher via SPSS

0.018 probability of multiple comparisons in relation to the age group 21-30 and 31-40 indicates a significant difference between these two age groups in terms of performance during a leadership change. Similarly age group 21-30 is has different responses when compared with the 51-60 age group due to the probability of 0.012. Through the following descriptive statistics researcher identified the difference as follows.

Performance								
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
21-30	25	3.4500	.39528	.07906	3.2868	3.6132	2.50	4.25
31-40	19	2.9737	.51971	.11923	2.7232	3.2242	2.00	3.50
41-50	14	3.0536	.68063	.18191	2.6606	3.4466	2.00	4.25
51-60	2	2.2500	.35355	.25000	-.9266	5.4266	2.00	2.50
Total	60	3.1667	.57244	.07390	3.0188	3.3145	2.00	4.25

Table 12: Descriptive Statistics – Age based responses towards leadership change and impact on Organizational performance
Source – Generated by the researcher via SPSS

The age group of 21-30 and 31-40 have a mean response of 3.45 and 2.97 respectively. The minimum response was from the age group of 51-60.

Performance					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.049	4	.262	.789	.537
Within Groups	18.284	55	.332		
Total	19.333	59			

Table 13: Education effect on Organizational performance – Usage of one way analysis of variance under ANOVA test
Source – Generated by the researcher via SPSS

0.537 probability of F statistic indicates an insignificant result at 5% which demonstrates that the level of education has no effect on performance during a leadership change.

10. Discussion of Results

The model variables; change management approach, fundamentals applied in a leadership change, internal communication and process improvements, benefits of employments and level of Organizational performance were proven to be valid in assessing the effect of leadership change on Organizational performance whereas they collectively and positively influence on the Organizational performance (Murray,1989 and Dutton and Duncan,1987). Hence both the null hypotheses developed throughout the study could be rejected whereas both the alternative hypotheses are accepted. Furthermore, study results find that there is no any multicollinearity and heteroscedasticity problems exist and the residuals are normally distributed.

Under the order of aspects in relation to leadership change, researcher identifies requirement for process alignment and provision of career paths and learning facilities as of greater importance during a leadership change whereas provision of business visibility and continuity of the business units and set of valid qualifications and values in new leadership place on the other end.

The effect from gender is found to have no any different responses towards changed leadership, thus on the Organizational performance. Secondly, similar to Bantel and Jackson (1989), the age effect reveals that the employee responses show a negative direction when they are having a higher age limit which could be realized through the minimum number of responses obtained in the age group of 51-60. The education was proven to have no any significant impact during such a situation towards the Organizational performance.

11. Conclusion and Recommendation

Based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that, during a sudden leadership change within an Organization, it impacts on the level of employee's job satisfaction and thus on the level of overall Organizational performance, if there lacks a proper mechanism in related to the following. a. change management approach: logical business reasons for change, considerable time period before executing the change, responsibility by the same strategic business unit regarding total management of change, opportunity for employees to come up with practical and workable ideas of changes for them to use for personal grooming, interdepartmental support b. fundamentals applied: advance communication of the change, justification of relevant changes by existing senior management, industry exposure as a selection criteria for new leaders c. internal communication and improvement in business processes: discussion on seasonal requirements and capacity constraints, pre and post communication procedure for managing change, effectiveness of the newly implemented systems such as ERP d. work life satisfaction and level of employee benefits: employee acceptance for the new leaders. However the effectiveness of prior leadership and level of new job seekers within an Organization has no impact to the Organizational performance during a leadership change. Thus if the above factors are well monitored and fulfilled by a given Organization, the level of employee job satisfaction could be enhanced even though they are undergoing a totally new leadership and the Organizational performance will also increase (Murray,1989). Furthermore, the age factor also plays a different effect on the performance where high age limit staff were proven to have more reluctance in accepting changes where young and middle age were proven to be taking these new leadership changes more openly with positive attitudes where they are easily able to move with the changing nature of the business environment. However male and female basis and the level of education basis will not significantly impact on the Organizational performance during a sudden leadership change.

Considering above remarks, Organizations need to be well prepared before introducing a new leadership to the existing Organization, especially through the ways of justification of the change by existing senior management where Guimareas and Igbaria et al. (1997) also state that the top management support of an Organization towards changed leadership will determine on the positive implementation outcomes such as implementation success of new leadership aspects, increase of employee acceptance and Organizational overall performance improvement. Further it would always be good to convince the genuine reason for change to the high experienced employees first than the newly joined employees due to the reason that higher possibility of resistance may come from them and also their loss will hardly affect the company. Further they could also be used as change leaders in influencing the newly recruits. It is always advisable to replace the existing leadership positions with people who have similar industry exposure rather than a totally different exposure in order to ensure the career protection and growth of employees. Advance communication of the change is a must in order to make employees feel that the Organization is genuinely looking forward to improve the business rather than as a major threat to their job protection. Hence the study identifies that a there exists an impact from leadership change on the overall Organizational performance.

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