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CHANGE MANAGEMENT: A STRATEGIC TOOL FOR CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY IN CONTEMPORARY TIMES

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ABSTRACT

The environment of business is complex and unpredictable. Such complexity and unpredictability impose both opportunities and threats on the business as a result of changes (political, economic, technology, social etc.). These changes can make or mar the organization's sustainability if not effectively managed. Therefore, this study conceptually examined how managers in contemporary business settings can utilize effective change management in pursuit of corporate sustainability in the face of rapid changes. In view of the study purpose, the paper critically and extensively assessed the literature on the two study variables in order to understand the features of each, as well as their correlation. Thus, the study found that: i) managers find it increasingly difficult to cope with the rapid changes that characterize contemporary business; ii) in situations of human resource, organizational culture and others, an incremental change management approach is found to be appropriate for sustainability; iii) radical change management approach applies better to situations of organizational structure, strategy, technology, products and services to attain sustainability; iv) there are situations where neither of the two approaches is sufficient to bring about sustainability. Therefore, the paper concludes that change management is a strategic tool for corporate sustainability in contemporary times through the adoption of incremental and radical approaches and a continuum of the two in some cases. Based on this, the study recommends that to remain sustainable in the face of changes, managers should: (i) continuously embrace change as an inescapable aspect of the environment; (ii) adopt an incremental change management approach in situations relating to human resource and organizational structure issues; (iii) employ radical change management approach where an organization is confronted with issues pertaining to the structure, culture and strategy; (iv) apply an appropriate combination of the two approaches in situations of punctuated equilibrium.

Keywords: change management, incremental change, radical change, corporate sustainability, economic sustainability, environmental sustainability, social sustainability

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Organizations are considered artificial beings. This is because it virtually exhibits every characteristic of a human being. It can be birthed just like a newborn, it requires adequate nurturing to grow and blossom in size and stature as applicable in every newborn; it attains maturity age through the process of time as common in human being, it is also prone to die (entropy) as a result of old age (obsolete products/services or wrong management) as well as revived (Nega-tropy) through proper management, the same way human beings could die as a result of old age/ sickness or saved through adequate medical care. This observation is further proven by the emergence of several organizational life circle concepts developed by different scholars to explain the biological nature of an organization. For instance, Tichy (1980) argued that organizations are born, Mintzberg (1989) stressed that organizations strive to grow in different forms, Kimberly and Miles (1980) asserted that an organization eventually dies; Hanks (1990) proposes that organizations go through five main phases of evolution i.e. start-up, expansion, consolidation, diversification and decline.

Consequent to these shared characteristics with a human being, it is believed that when investors float a business, they see that business as an artificial human being that needs every support to develop, grow and mature adequately for the benefit of all stakeholders. It is on this premise that the quest for sustainability in business management is considered prime among other business objectives. Akindele Oginni and Omoyele (2012) consolidated this assertion wherein they stated that the goal of organizational survival reinforces every other goal of a business. Similarly, Bartlet (2006) warned that corporate sustainability and growth are natural business goals requiring an investment of energy and resources. Sustainability covers all those managerial practices or actions that managers bring into business operations in relation to its goals, while also considering the environment and other socio-cultural issues. Carter (2008) posits sustainability advocates realistic vision and goals, high-quality products and services, workforce effectiveness and efficiency.

However, banking on the fact that the current environment in which business operates is characterized by forces within and outside the control of managers, oftentimes because of turbulence, organizations slide into situations that threaten their sustainability. For instance, Bello (2011) pointed out that the Nigerian business operating atmosphere is saturated with unlimited trepidations provoked by macro and micro environmental forces which affect business in varied ways. These forces manifest as a result of political imbalance, technological shifts, terrorists' attacks, natural disaster, market rigging by the government, employees' educational and cultural differences, wrong structural configurations (Koontz & Weihrich, 1999; Umoh & Amah, 2013; Wobodo, Asawo & Asawo, 2018). Accordingly, Worthington and Britton (2003) stressed that these forces impinge not only on the transformation process itself but also on the process of resource acquisition and consumption of goods or services. Admittedly, these forces due to their unpredictability and complexity are seen as antecedents of change which can make or mar the sustainability objective of a business depending on how managers respond to it. Thus, Ogunro (2014) contends that the survivability of an organization depends on its success in surmounting identifiable environmental constraints as well as the seizure of latent opportunities.

Given this observation, Robbins, David and Courter (2011) maintained that to comprehend and synchronize the unpredictable nature of human beings and global forces, there is an urgent need for managers to effect some changes in the organization; noting that these changes may be in the area of its structure reconfiguration, adoption of new technology as well as workforce composition. In the same vein, Kubr (2002) in his earlier groupings stated that change in organizational settings should focus on issues bordering on technology, product and services, organizational culture, managerial practices and styles, and other components of the trade. This affirms Macredie, Sandom and Paul (1998) assertion that successful organizations of the future, whether private or public must always be prepared to embrace change management or face extinction. In furtherance of this, Beer and Nohria (2000) argued that it is as a result of organizations' realization that if they do not change and manage change effectively, they stand to perish faster than imagined.

Yet, De Matos and Clegg (2011) contend that there is no greater challenge for organizational change management in modern business than achieving greater sustainability. Stating that achieving sustainability requires an organization to address broad issues that relate to pollution and waste created by industrialization, invest in emerging technologies that provide innovative solutions to many of today's environmental problems and respond effectively to the challenges of increased poverty and inequality around the globe. Thus, Prastacos, Soderquist, Spanos and Wassenhove (2002) asserted that contemporary organizations must fashion out ways to develop further their capacity to manage change with the imminent problem of resistance. Although, we have observed the presence of several empirical and theoretical studies in this direction most of which centred on the concept of change rather than its management (Lewis & Seibold, 2008; Moran & Brightman, 2011), while those that examined it from the perspective of management did that outside the context of Nigeria's business environment as well as used other criterion variables rather than sustainability (Osei-Bonsu, 2014; Wanza & Nkuraru, 2016). Therefore, following this lacuna, this paper theoretically reviews how change management can be used to advance corporate sustainability.

2.0 THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

In this paper, adaptation theory is adopted as the most suitable theoretical foundation that offers a clearer explanation of the interaction between change management and corporate sustainability. According to Starbuck (1971), as cited in Adriana (2013), organizational adaptability theory suggests that an effective organization must develop norms and beliefs that support its ability to receive and understand signals from its environment and translate these into internal cognitive, behavioural and structural changes. Thus, Emery and Trist (1965) added that the process of adaptation is critical to firms because the capacity to adapt can determine success or failure. Consequently, the general statement of this theory is revealed based on emphasis that organizations should modify how they operate or how they function in an effort to keep up with changing market conditions or shifting environment factors (Bates, 2005). In the same vein, Purna (2017) stated that organizational adaptation theory stressed that in the face of adversity, organizations will fare better if they adjust their practices to suit the prevalent situation. These changes could all be due to things like the emergence of new business regulation, technological breakthroughs, ecological factor such as climate change, and sudden shift in customer loyalty as a result of the introduction of new substitute products in the market by other competitors in the field etc. Thus organizations that adapt, according to the theory, are more successful and sustainable.

2.1 The Meaning and Nature of Change Management

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Scholars have generally acknowledged that conflict and crisis are endemic phenomena that every business is bound to face at any given phase of its life circle, so also is the issue of change, thereby making its management a strategic action for survival. For instance, Salerno and Brock (2008) proclaimed that change is inevitable and necessary; Robbins et al. (2011) hold that it is an organizational reality, while Abrahamson (2000) opined that change has been with us like "forever". Thus, indicating that change is an inescapable part of organizational life (Wobodo & Oparanma, 2019). Consequently, Pryor, Taneja, Humphreys, Anderson and Singleton (2008) alluded that it is only organizational leaders who anticipate change and act rapidly and responsibly are successful. Given this situation, change management becomes an integral part of the managerial function. And today, the subject of change management is observably one of the most talked-about topics in organizational behaviour literature and the reason behind this surge is mainly tied to its indispensability in the pursuit of positive business outcomes such as survival. Change management as it were is made up of two concepts which are change and management.

According to Van de Ven and Poole (1995), change refers to any difference in form, quality, or state overtime in an organizational entity. Additionally, Cummings and Worley (2005) viewed change as the movement of a business from the existing plateau towards a desired future state in order to increase its efficiency and effectiveness. Change can take place in an organization in the area of mission, strategy, operations, technology, employee behaviour and attitude (Krietner & Kinicki, 2007); strategy, structure, process, workforce, culture, product knowledge and technology (Geak, 2016); organizational structure, technology and individuals (Al- Zaradat, Nagresh, Al-Sheeran & Jadellah, 2013). On the other hand, the concept of management is viewed as the act of planning, organizing, leading and controlling of capital and organizational resources to achieve its predetermined goals (Mayer, Ashleigh, George & Jones, 2007). Robbins et al. (2011) while leaning on Follett's approach (1921) viewed management as the process of getting things done effectively and efficiently with and through people. This definition in its entirety captures what today contemporary business environment entails. Consequently, Frost (2017) stated that the roles managers play at the workplace are perhaps the most significant in terms of impact on organizational performance. Also, Hannagan (2008) revealed that change management is the most important management task and skill.

Now, what is change management? Moran and Brighton (2011) referred to change management as the process of continually renewing an organization's direction, structure and competencies to serve the ever-changing needs of external and internal customers. Cameron and Green (2004) see change management as a planned approach in bringing about important changes for living up to individuals' needs to advance the business easily. Lewis and Seibold (2008), on the other hand, maintained that it is concerned with the processes of unfreezing, moving, and refreezing values, practices, and procedures within organizations. Drawing from Lewis and Seibold (2008), we observed that their definition towed the same part with Lewin's (1951) model of change management wherein the author posited that every change initiative requires three chronological steps (unfreezing, moving, and refreezing) it is to be effective. According to Mullins (2002), unfreezing looks at the process of reducing those factors that contribute to the entrenchment of the current status quo or behaviour that needs to be changed. Since change is mainly about people, in doing this, managers ensure that all the individuals expected to be affected by the imminent change are convinced as to why the

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change is necessary for the organization at that time and the need for their support and cooperation instead of resistance. This is particularly pivotal because it is impossible to change an organization that does not acknowledge the dangers of its present way of operation (Hannagan, 2002). Moving which is the second step focuses on the execution or implementation of the proposed change has convinced all the affected stakeholders of the need for change and gained their support to do so. Finally, refreezing centres on situating every necessary tool that will drive the new order to permanency. These tools cut across the human element and other processes that support successful implementation. Here, the manager ensures that the right people are positioned where they are best fitted and ensure that quality leadership, structure, culture, strategy, motivation etc. are in place to stimulate compliance and commitment.

The foregoing discussions, however, show that the need for effective change management in contemporary business cannot be overemphasized as it helps prepare the organization for smooth adaptation to both planned and unplanned change that characterizes the workplace; knowing that organization as a social system will always be a victim of every change that takes place in the environment. This explains why Sidikova (2011) reiterates that change presses organizations out of their comfort zone, and if this is the case, it then means that the only way to cope is to manage the change. However, because of the complexities associated with the manifestation of change be it internal and external, the extent to which it is successfully managed will depend on the top management's commitment.

Fischer and Pollock (2004) clarified this argument when they stressed the significance of active participation of a leader in a change effort through their roles in facilitating change. This, therefore, suggests that top management must be ready and willing to drive the needed change using available resources to develop the necessary processes that will help cushion resistance. This is particularly important because the management of change in an organization is an area of potential conflict as the people concerned may become frightened as to what the change agenda holds for them, thereby giving room for resistance and sabotage. But with appropriate tools in place, managers can inspire all individuals' attitude and behaviour in manners that give the organization a competitive strategy (Bonnie & Huang, 2001), instead of resistance. This gives credence to McLagan (2002) advice that an organization going through change should have quality leadership on the ground since constant motivation and guidelines are needed to induce workers to change direction. Hence, Collins (2001) stated that the most successful organizations should have disciplined people, disciplined thought and disciplined actions.

2.2 Dimensions of Change Management

According to Chou and Chou (2007) and Daft, Murphy, and Willmott (2010), organizational change can be managed incrementally/ evolutionarily and radically/ revolutionarily. This study adopts these dimensions.

Incremental Change Management: According to Nadler and Tushman (1995), incremental or evolutionary change is a type of change management approach that involves a series of minor changes, each of which attempts to build on the work that has already been accomplished and improves the functioning of the organization in really small increments. Daft (1998) opined that it is associated with a series of continual progressions that maintain the organization's general equilibrium and often affect only one aspect of the organization. Similarly, Borwick (2013) maintains that this type of change approach occurs very slowly, while Beer and Nohria (2000) contend that incremental or continuous change calls for a focus on culture and human resources only. Contrary to this, Swedberg and Douglas (2005) argued that incremental change management only makes relatively minor adjustments in a system. This assertion implies that managing change incrementally allows organizations to make changes in any part of their systems and processes as against Beer and Nohria (2000) specificity of culture and human resource alone. Thus, we add that incremental or evolutionary change management involves the use of gradual processes to bring about a change in some specific parts of the organization over time. And these changes are usually operational (De Wit & Meyer, 2004) and small scale (Burnes, 2009) in nature.

Again, Swedberg and Douglas (2005) specifically suggest that incremental change management best serves the organizations when in dilemma. Organizations undergoing incremental changes may have been prompted by environmental pressure and other pressures, as in keeping up with technology or addressing the needs of stakeholders more effectively. In other instances, incremental change may be stimulated by intense competition as the organization strives toward market share growth and profit maximization. However, this approach is about altering the existing systems to create a positive force in every aspect of the organization. The idea here is not to replace the existing systems, but to adjust them with a view to furthering organizational members' commitment and overall business results through a high-performance culture transformation consisting of several interdependent components. It is closely associated with the concept of strategic renewal. This is as Floyd and Lane (2000) argued that strategic renewal has emerged more specifically around incremental and ecological perspectives of strategy making. The concept of strategic renewal covers both discontinuous and incremental changes (Rajes, Lachner & Floyed, 2013). Incremental change here has become more narrowly associated with the study of renewal of established organizations, in contrast to corporate venturing, which is mainly related to the birth of new businesses in existing organizations (Rajes, Lachner & Floyed, 2013).

Radical Change Management: According to Kanter, Stein and Jick (1992), when managers adopt a radical approach to change management, they are said to be employing bold strokes whereby big strategic decisions and changes are made in order to sustain and improve on their competitive advantage. It is strategic in nature and completely alters the frame of reference for the organization, often transforming the entire organization. This is in line with Burnes (2005) view that radical or transformational change management is strategic and more important than incremental. For Senior (2002), radical change almost always involves a new organizational structure, culture and strategy. In our view, radical change management is any organization-wide change characterized by a complete shift in organizational technology, structure, strategy, products and services and other strategic decisions. It alters perspectives and calls for wide mobilization; meaning that for such change to thrive, it must win people's support at all levels. A well-executed radical change brings about a redistribution of resources and power in the organization as it may give room for emergent policies and entrant of new stakeholders with different contribution margins. This is why most times it is not devoid of resistance which every manager must deal with appropriately. This observation is also in corroboration with French and Bell (1995) who asserted that through the adoption of radical change management, managers redesign the organization's core work processes to create tighter linkage and coordination across the organization's functional areas.

Since radical change is an organization-wide change, it implies that is a planned change. That is to say, it is borne out of the top management conscious reasoning and as such commitment to its realization is assumed to be guaranteed. In this view, Balogun and Hailey (2007) contend that the success of this type of change is premised on the inalienable support of all relevant stakeholders. This is because beyond usual resistance that may arise from different quarters as a result of corporate inertia (Scott, 2000); the change agents also need huge resources from the stakeholders to drive the change against all odds. The essence of radical change is to reposition the organization for the best so as to adapt adequately, especially during a crisis situation. Some of the actions here may border on merger and acquisition, diversification, technological, structural change, and human resources policy, leadership, organization development etc. In fact, it may also focus on the individual, group and organizational level at the same time but with different strategies.

2.3 Corporate Sustainability

The concept of corporate sustainability is considered one of the indispensable business objectives irrespective of their scope and sizes. This is because no organization would want to see itself kicked out of business even in the face of violent perturbations arising from within and outside its control. It is associated with the quest for business survival and as such effective managers take both proactive and reactive actions to remain sustainable. Ugwuzor (2017) validated this view when the author stated that organizations expect that they will remain viable and continue to exist and operate in the foreseeable future. Thus, Silva and Quilhas (2006) define corporate sustainability as a managerial quest for equilibrium between what is socially expected, economically feasible and ecologically sustainable. Munck, Dias and Borim-de-Souza (2012) in their view, refer to it as a firm's ability to leverage on its economic, social and environmental capital in contributing towards sustainable development within the political domain. Similarly, Kim and Park (2017) posited that it is an effort towards an organization's long-term success instead of short-term financial performance. In consonance with these definitions, we refer to corporate sustainability as a managerial outcome achieved through sustained resource acquisition, latent opportunity seizure, timely renewal of obsolete resources and environmental pollution minimization through the adoption of green management production systems.

Bearing in mind the strategic nature of sustainability to organizations, Joseph (2002) maintained that an organization that is sustainable is essentially driven by its mission. The is because an organization's mission statement serves as a guide and summarily defines the products and services the business seeks to offer, the target market and customers, why the organization exist and what it hopes to achieve. A business operating without sustainability mechanisms places every other organizational goal in jeopardy. This is because every other organizational goal is bound to suffer failure when an organization becomes unsustainable, and performance also becomes elusive. When this is perpetuated over time, entropy sets in as a result of financial instability to keep afloat with reality. Thus, to remain sustainable, an organization must carry its strategic stakeholders along by meeting their goals and expectations. Just as Gabriel and Arbolor (2015) stated that to survive (sustainability) firms are required to continually meet the demands of the market, its staff, shareholders, investors, host communities, the government and other interested parties.

It is in the light of this that the quest for corporate sustainability can be perceived as a complex task requiring top management unwavering commitment. This is because stakeholder’ interests or needs vary in relation to their group, and the satisfaction of one group’s needs cannot guarantee corporate sustainability without the satisfaction of other groups or constituencies at the same time. The key stakeholders here include shareholders, employees, customer, host community and government with each weighing unequal influence on sustainability goal. Venkatarman (2001) argued that the success of a business depends on collaboration and stakeholders’ shared interests, they must be working for the same purpose, otherwise, the business will come to an end and new collaborations will be formed. However, where there is synergy among stakeholders, the quest for sustainability can easily be achieved as there would be fewer tendencies for sabotage. Also, Al-Swidi and Al-Hosam (2012) posited that the success and sustainability of an organization is partly dependent on its capability to satisfy its customers through the nature and quality of its products and services. This could be traced to the fact that the customers are kings and are the main reason businesses are in business. Therefore, the sustainability of an organization can be seen in the area of corporate growth, productivity, survival skills, agility, adaptability and organizational learning abilities.

2.4 Indicators of Corporate Sustainability

According to Dow (2008), the quest for corporate sustainability is built on economic, social and environmental sustainability. It is also regarded as the triple bottom lion. Marques, Cruz and Pires (2015) in their metabolism model of sustainability adopted health and hygiene, social and cultural, environmental, economic, functional and technical. Schmidt, Zanini, Korzenowski, Schmidt and Benchimol (2018) argued that corporate sustainability activities of contemporary organizations focus on values and transparency, internal audience, environment, supplier relationships, customer and consumer relationships, and community relationships. For this study, we adopted three of Dow (2008) typology: environmental, economic and social sustainability.

Environmental Sustainability: The importance of safeguarding and preserving the environment in which business operates in the quest of corporate sustainability can never be undermined. This is because without ensuring environmental protection, organizations will have to search for a new world or planet (Abdulsattar, Najm & Jasser, 2017), on which to operate. This, therefore, confirms the interdependency of business and society; a situation whereby neither the business nor the society can exist without each other. Therefore, environmental sustainability is a managerial effort at ensuring that the activities of the organization do not pose a threat to the environment and its inhabitants. It is focused on minimizing environmental degradation such as soil erosion, land pollution, depletion of aquatic habitat, deforestation, energy waste, pollution and general ecosystem damage. This became necessary as a result of the fact that organizations in pursuit of their objectives take input resources from the environment and in return dump waste and pollute the environment, which in the long run not only ruin the environment but also constitutes a health hazard to the humans living in the effected environment. Thus, it is said that the greater the damage a company causes to the environment, the poorer its corporate performance (Kocmanová & Dočekalová, 2011). Most of the crises today raging particularly between oil and gas firms and oil-bearing communities within the Niger Delta Region are consequences of none alignment of environmental sustainability with the organizations' economic sustainability.

In this regard, Pandey, Singha, Mysore and Senthil-Kumar (2015) warned that human actions as reflected in their economic pursuit have brought about a threatening shift in the ecological balance through industrial pollutants. Consequently, Eweje (2011) opined that organizations should act socially and environmentally responsibly as well as assist in community development. The most notable case of gross negligence of environmental sustainability is the case of Shell Petroleum Company and the Ogoni people of Rivers State, Nigeria. As a consequence of such a strategic blunder, Shell has not been able to go back to Ogoni land for any form of drilling operations, thereby leading to unsustainable business operation in that zone. In order to ensure a sustainable environment, managers and researchers are now beginning to develop different strategies. Today, many organizations are beginning to hook up with green human resource management practices, smart manufacturing or green production all in a bid to run an ecosystem-friendly business activity. Kazzy (2014) proved this when he discovered that green growth and environment in Arab nations promotes economic integration and environment through job creation, social equity and sustained natural environmental endowment; thereby ensuring sustainability.

Economic Sustainability: The economic perspective of corporate sustainability agenda is perceived as the primary responsibility of every business. This is because when shareholders pool their resources together, they do so to create value which in turn is expected to accrue them some benefits in the form of dividends and recognition, while the same accrual on the part of the employees who are contracted to act as agents on their behalf will earn good salary and wages. Carroll and Shabana (2010) reflected this view when they stated that economic sustainability includes responsibilities toward shareholders and employees. This is why when an organization is unsustainable its first point of manifestation is on the financial status (Joseph, 2002). A business is said to be economically sustainable if it is able to make profits through its customers' satisfaction. With economic sustainability, organizations maximize their own income first before assessing the degree to which they must seek funding outside. However, irrespective of the importance of this paradigm in keeping business alive, scholars have stressed that over-concentration on economic values over other issues such as the environment can be detrimental. This is because the economic perspective solely believes that the main purpose of floating a business is to maximize shareholders' returns.

They consider the firm's economic value generation as prime over every other component of sustainability. According to Abdulsattar et al. (2017), this dimension is built on the fact that organizations are private investments only concerned with economic values and not environmental values. They went further to allude that it is as a result of this mindset that we have generated a lot of environmental problems affecting us today. And in our observation, most of these problems are so destructive in nature, with a wide range of impacts. In fact, this philosophy can be traced to the shareholders' theory which contends that organizations are not set up by society but are owned privately by shareholders (Hasnas, 1998); and as such, it is the prerogative of the organization to be accountable only to its shareholders as they attempt to maximize the shareholders' wealth. Furthermore, in this perspective, an organization can only be socially responsible at the behest of the shareholders (Dang, Dang & Danladi, 2014).

Social Sustainability: This aspect of sustainability goal is centered mainly on individuals' welfare. It defines the extent of relationship that exists between an organization and its stakeholder groups. Thus, we refer it to as an organization's orientation which focuses on the identification and implementation of practices that enhance stakeholders' welfare. This definition shares a similarly view with Gilchrist and Allouche (2005) assertion that social sustainability is design to satisfy human needs and to fulfil social justice. This observation also validates Harris and Goodwin (2001) as they argued that a socially sustainable system has gender equity, political accountability and participation, fairness in distribution and opportunity, and provides adequate social services including health and education. Generally, the goal of business sustainability is to achieve business success and continuity without bleeding the environment and its inhabitants. This is why its social dimension immensely focuses on internal and external community welfare reinforcement. This means that an organization's social sustainability goal has both internal focus (i.e. employee interest) and external focus (i.e. society interest).

Therefore, when an organization provides its workforce with enabling work environment wherein occupational safety and health is guaranteed, employee skill development opportunities, fair distribution of income, equal opportunities etc., the organization's social sustainability goal is said to be internally or in-house (within the organization) driven. This argument is in tandem with the views of scholars, that organizational practices have serious implications in building socially sustainable organizations (Walker & Jones, 2012; Linnenluecke & Griffiths, 2010). This is because these actions not only benefit the members of the organization but also benefit the organization as they reinforce employee commitment in seeing that the organization succeeds in all it does.1On the other hand, when an organization operates in line with established laws of the land, avoid corruption, ensures product safety, respects human right, remains ethically compliant, respects people's cultural orientation etc., the organization's social sustainability is assumed to be externally focused (society based). Hence, affirming DesJardins (2016) when the author argued that social sustainability could not be separated from environmental sustainability.

2.5 Change Management and Corporate Sustainability

In our view, organizations can be perceived as a non-static entity. They continuously strive to be at par with the demands of the environments in order to remain sustainable. The entire process of synchronizing these rapid and ever-changing demands is the focus of change management. The essence of change management is to create a flexible business operational pattern that is adaptive to environmental uncertainties which are capable of inhibiting corporate sustainability if left unattended. This is because days are gone when organizations controlled their destinies without external forces' interventions and moderations. Therefore, today, to remain sustainable, organizations must ensure that the needs or interests of all their strategic constituents are met. This view reinforces Boafo and Kokuma (2016) assertion that organizational goals are inseparable from the society and environments within which they operate. The pressure each of the constituencies of organizations mounts on them is unpredictable and unstoppable because of the unbreakable interdependency between business and society (Jaja, Gabriel & Wobodo, 2019), and without synchronizing it with effective change management approach such as radical and revolutionary change for smooth adaptation, corporate sustainability objective may be truncated faster than expected.

This is because change management emphasis the synchronization of emergent issues proactively and reactively, and a successful adaptation portends corporate sustainability. According to Nickols (2004), managing change can be both 'making of changes in a planned way' (proactive) and 'the response to changes over which the organization exercises little or no control' (reactive). Some changes are relatively small, while others are sweeping in scope, amounting to an organizational transformation (Fisher, 2001). Change management cuts across every aspect of an organization's processes and this is connected with the reason the issue of corporate sustainability becomes unrealizable the moment change efforts go wrong. Today, many organizations are incrementally or evolutionarily altering their structural configurations to create a fit between the organization's structure and its environmental demands, thereby creating a clearer picture of strategy type that will spur corporate sustainability. For instance, Timmer and Szirmai (2000) in their structural bonus hypothesis discovered a positive relationship between structural change and economic growth, and within the building blocks of sustainability, economic sustainability is considered primarily as some literature has argued that finance is the lifeblood of every business activity and sustainability by implication. Also, Kute and Upadhyay (2014) found a positive association between change management factors and workers task performance. This also has an important implication on sustainability as such performance will translate to customer satisfaction through quality product and services offering.

Again, change management effort in the direction of culture can also spur corporate sustainability. This is because the culture of an organization shapes the belief, attitude and behaviour of the employees. Michael (2007) reveals that a well-developed organizational culture serves as an immune system to the organization; meaning that it protects the organization from unwanted behaviour such as employee deviant work attitudes - stealing, lateness to work, work sabotage etc. An organization with a work-oriented culture that frowns at risk-taking in a competitive environment may maybe indirectly jeopardizing its sustainability tendency as such culture inhibits innovation, creativity and entrepreneurial orientation necessary for corporate sustainability performance. Studies have shown that organizations that adopt these entrepreneurial actions stand a better chance at success and even leading the market (Gabriel & Arbolo, 2015; Wobodo, 2019), thereby resulting in economic sustainability. The ability of an organization to navigate and inculcate these sustainability-driven entrepreneurial behaviours into its workforce depends on the effectiveness of change management and organizational sustainability. Improving, maintaining or changing organizational culture aids in making organizations more competitive as well as helps in revitalizing declining organizations, thereby leading to sustainable performance.

Finally, change management focus towards the people's side of organization resources is considered the bedrock of every other organizational change management. This is because it is people that drive the change processes that lead to corporate sustainability. For instance, in today's organizations especially in the manufacturing industry, the quest for environmental hazard-free production is ongoing and many organizations are beginning to embrace hi-tech systems and management processes such as green growth strategy that drives not just environmental sustainability performance but also that of the economic dimension. This view consolidates Burnes (2004) when the scholar posits that change management has the propensity of aiding a wide range of business projects such as execution of new processes, new frameworks, upgraded structures or innovation. For this change to be successful and sustainable, the people involved must be changed intellectually by up-scaling their skills and competencies to suit the requirements of the new order; culturally, their perception toward the new system and processes need to be established and renegotiated accordingly. This aligns with Huang's (2001) position that a well-thought-out change management effort will smoothly motivate all individuals and directly influence attitude and behaviour in ways that lead the business to achieve its competitive strategy, which also provide a framework for corporate sustainability as everybody will act in one voice.

Incremental Change and Sustainability: Bearing in mind that organizations operate in a fast-changing environment, every proactive management, in order to remain sustainable, makes conscious efforts to follow up on every atom of change taking place in the environment. This is because lack of such changes may render them obsoletes. It is mainly the reason behind organizations' act of environmental sensing. As pointed in Jaja et al. (2019), learning organizations continuously engage in environmental scanning, research and development programs and organizational espionage to ensure that they are not operating in obscurity in relation to the rapid changes taking place in their environment. For example, changes in technological tools, customers taste, government regulations, inflation, competitors' new moves etc. must be properly monitored. It is therefore based on the outcome of this sensing that managers adopt incremental or gradual change management approach to fix identifiable areas of concern. Incremental change can enhance corporate sustainable because it is less risky and not too expensive to implement and also because it only builds on the existing systems and processes without major alteration. Thus, Burnes (2005) reiterates that incremental change is essentially associated with the practice of organizational development which is focused on identifying areas in which a business operation needs alteration to optimize efficiency, productivity and profitability; and these speak to environmental sustainability.

Managers also use incremental change as a means of tiquimization (TQM) (Jaja & Zeb-Obipi, 2005). This helps the organization to continuously meet the needs of the customers and other stakeholders, thereby achieving sustainability through customer patronage and other primary stakeholders' support. According to Dunphy and Stace (1992), incremental change can be used to drive performance when the organization wants to minor adjustments to remain stable and sustainable or when the organization is out of fit but has all the needed time to gradually execute the change; this they called "participative evolution". Similarly, Scott (2005) states that incremental change is more useful in hampering inefficiency and maintaining adequacy which in the long run impact positively on sustainable business growth. This also explains that incremental change managers do not wait for everything to go wrong before the adjustment; it rather approaches change as the need arises in each specific context to ensure sustainability.

Radical Change and Corporate Sustainability: According to Jaja et al. (2019), while harnessing and maximizing business opportunities, organizations also adopt different forms of approach to undermine the survival-threatening influence of change drivers so as to remain not only in business but also achieve their goals in an effective and efficient manner. Thus in pursuit of sustainable performance, organizations consider radical change essential in some situations, for instance when the organization is in short of needed time to respond to a change. This is because there are some changes that will occur in the environment and their impacts render organizations' current systems and process ineffective thereby making the organizations susceptible to failure. Unlike the incremental change that implements change in piecemeal, the radical approach to change management addresses change through the lens of holism wherein every part of the organization experiences totals reengineering. Radical change managers view change as an organization-wide action geared toward keeping the organization in tune with environmental realities; thus promoting sustainability. This assertion is in line with Dunphy and Stace (1992) when they emphatically stated that radical change best serves business outcome such as sustainability when the organization is out of fit and there is little time for extensive consultation; this they regarded as "transformational evolution".

This is why Beckhard and Pritchard (1992) explain that change management is a generative process that changes with respect to organizational needs while still maintaining its overall vision. What this means is that the adoption of a particular change management approach is dependent on the type of problem the organization is facing. Furtherance to this, Jacobsen (2006) suggests that most time a continuum of incremental and radical approach work best to secure organizational survival including sustainability. A hybrid or continuum of these two dimensions is regarded as punctuated equilibrium (Kalle & Mike, 2008; Gersick, 1991). Thus, Wind and Maine (1999) reiterate that for organizations to survive in the 21st century, they must shift from traditional practices of management to contemporary practices characterized by attributes commonly described as contemporary values, quality mindset, stakeholders' focus, speed orientation, innovativeness, flat structures, cross-functionality, flexibility global focus and networking.

3.0 CONCLUSION

In tandem with the goal of this paper which was to examine the literature relating to how change management tool could be used to foster corporate sustainability in contemporary business times, extant literature exploration indicates that change is a part of human existence or experience. Some changes in the environment occur as a result of natural tendencies; while others may be artificially (man-made) induced. However, whether a change is naturally or artificially motivated, its impact on a business can either be positive or negative depending on how the organization responds to it. Consequently, the study-specific findings showed that; i) managers find it increasingly difficult to cope with the rapid changes that characterize contemporary business; ii) in situations of human resource, organizational culture and others, an incremental change management approach is found to be appropriate for sustainability; iii) radical change management approach applies better to situations of organizational structure, strategy, technology, products and services to attain sustainability; iv) there are situations where neither of the two approaches is sufficient to bring about sustainability. It also generally discovered that in the face of business operational turbulence, without effective application of change management approach such as incremental and radical approaches as the situation demands, organizations may slide into early entropy as a result of its multidimensional consequences on a business bottom-line. Therefore, the paper concludes that change management is a strategic tool for corporate sustainability in contemporary times through the adoption of incremental and radical approaches and continuum of the two in some cases.

4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the forgoing, the study recommends that to remain sustainable in the face of changes, managers should:

(i) Continuously embrace change as an inescapable aspect of the environment.

(ii) Adopt incremental change management approach in situations relating to human resource and organizational structure issues.

(iii) Employ a radical change management approach where an organization is confronted with issues pertaining to structure, culture and strategy.

(iv) Apply an appropriate combination of the two approaches in situations of punctuated equilibrium.

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