

The study of the dimensions and components of change management among the managers in Azad Islamic Universities (8th district Branches) and presenting an appropriate conceptual framework

Seyed Habib Maktabi¹, Ariba Hanifi²

¹ Department of Management, Qeshm Branch, Islamic Azad University, Qeshm, Iran; ² Faculty of Consulting and Education, Rudehen Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran

Abstract

The present article has been taken from a research which purpose was to examine administrators' performance and attitude at Azad Islamic university, branches of 8th district according to dimensions and components of change management and to present an appropriate conceptual framework. To achieve the above goals, first the research literature was reviewed deeply and 138 components of change management in higher education were extracted, which reduced to 108 components by expert judgment. The extracted components categorized in 5 dimensions under the names of competencies of change leader traits, the culture of change, policies and strategies of change, change environment, change content. Then, a 108-item questionnaire was developed. The questionnaire was administered among a randomly selected sample consisted of 267 presidents, vice-presidents, deans, associate deans and head departments after establishing its validity (by expert judgment) and its reliability (by calculation of Cronbach's Alpha coefficient=98/0). The collected data was analyzed using descriptive statistics methods as well as inferential tests such as ANOVA, Chi square, factor analysis, and path analysis. The finding showed that there was no significant difference between three groups of administrator's performance. The same result was found about their attitudes. To present the conceptual framework, the extracted factors were analyzed by factors Analysis through SPSS and were named by Expert Judgment (ten specialists). Then the final conceptual framework was drawn by path Analysis through LISEREL and GFI test confirmed the

conceptual framework factors and their interaction and correlation by calculation GFI (GFI=0/97).

Keywords: change management, attitude, performance, conceptual framework

Introduction

Nowadays, all dimensions of men 'life is transforming with high speed as knowledge and technology. According to Drucker's interpretation "now, the only stable thing is change", and also Lao Tse and Tao expressed "Resisting against change is like trying not to breath, if you succeed... you die." so, organizations have to accept continuous changes and innovation to ensure their survival. Among all, higher education institutions should be initiator of every changes in society and effecting on social, political, economic and technological transformation, too. It is need for higher education institutions to be transformed in their vision and missions in facing present challenges. Barnett (2000) pointed out to the complex universities in his research and stated "universities should take away the stereotype ideas and beliefs and assist people to enjoy of uncertainty and an assurance which are the characteristics of present age".

To change effectively, it is necessary for organizations to have certain planning, designing and managing which is called change management. Change management is as one of the most important methods to face the quick changes in present age. Also, change management refers to all activities associated with the interaction of technology, processes, and people. Change management strategies

Corresponding author: Seyed Habib Maktabi, Department of Management, Qeshm Branch, Islamic Azad University, Qeshm, Iran. E-mail: habibmaktabi@yahoo.com.

comes through project team and end-user training, the understanding of new processes, communications, and job redesign as some of the main activities (Al-Shamlan and Al-Mudimigh, 2011). Some scholars have remembered it as transition management which means striking of present situation and to transit it in order to reach to the desired one in future. Gatto (2000) has summarized change management in six letters of the word “change” and interpreted each letter as a trait needed for managers on the time of changing as follow:

- “C is taken of ‘courage’. The courage of risking, questioning, challenging and affording future needs.
- H is taken of ‘have’: Having comprehension and suitable knowing of self and people.
- A is taken of “analysis”: Analysis of public and profession knowledge of organization.
- N is taken of ‘need’: Need to knowing, searching and developping.
- G is taken of ‘go’: Movement with the emphasizing on his biggest strength.”
- E is taken of “expected” :set the expected result.

Backhard and Harriss in 1987 in their change management framework have mentioned that change in organization is the movement to go from present situation (A) to the future one (B). They believed that this process has got three following stages:

1. To comprehend the basic need to change.
2. To create the change process in the organization.
3. To practice and do the new work (Dawson, 2003).

Dowson has determined the dimensions of change in the organization on the base of following areas: the policy of change, the context of change, and the nature of change and its dimensions (2003, pp. 113-115).

Nilikant and Ramnarayan (2006) suggested that there are practical benefits as no one has all the answers. Staff, with detailed knowledge of client needs and existing processes, are best positioned to provide input for critical decisions. There is more likely to be creativity in decisions with wider involvement and it is likely to be reduces resistance while staff exploring the benefits of change and contribute to the change itself. Additionally, the authors propose that staff involvement in change is a development process for staff. Change offers the opportunity to develop new skills

and new perspectives.

Al-Shamlan and Al-Mudimigh (2011) mentioned that the basic problems of change management as identified by Lashunda (2010) are related to the adoption of new strategies in an older format of work culture, need for professional leadership, acceptance to the original implemented strategies and above all to have the right attitude to accept the new proceedings. On the other hand, several scholars have pointed to managers’ role while changing in the university such as the following ones.

Nichols (2004) has done a research about the managers’ role and skills in change and found that the change skill is a leadership skill not management, so the change management steps are as follow:

- 1.” To choose the leader of change who is responsible to direct and organize the change management activities.
2. To educate the leader and project team members and its executives with the emphasis on the change management. techniques, processes and principles.
3. To evaluate change and organization and to choose change management team with specialist and professional human resources about change management.
4. To make a supportive model and team structure.
5. To create change management plans”.

Most of the scholars believe that to do change management effectively, there is necessary need to have suitable climate, assistant environment, and capable people accepting changes. These elements are part of the culture and as several researchers have found that culture is one of the key elements to comprehend and perform change successfully (Dawson, 2003; Maurer, 2006; Ricker, 1991; Al-Shamlan and Al-Mudimigh, 2011).

Al-Shamlan and Al-Mudimigh (2011), in their research, take successful ERP system as case study to see what are the change management factors and strategies has been used in an implementation, and what is the impact of these change management strategies in employees. They investigated that successful enterprise system use three phases change management strategy and adopt all critical processes and methods like: top management commitment ,communication, training, involvement, and awareness. They concluded that successful strategies should be consist into three phases: pre imple-

mentation phase, implementation phase, and evaluation phase. The preparation and studying done in pre implementation phase .In implementation phase should be apply the change management activities and processes such as: training, and communication. In evaluation phase the top management must be monitor the employee's job performance. Moreover, top management commitment, communication, and training are more critical change management processes in ERP implementation.

Keup (2001) in a study about "the relationship between the organizational culture and change in the university" found that culture can be effective in change plans in three ways; to make preparation for organizational change and accountability to it, to decrease resistance against change plans, to improve the result of change process.

Maurer (2006) has used of some elements in his research to assess the amount of managers' preparation in change. Those elements are; the background of change, orientation of change, cooperation and confidence, culture, harmony, reward, respect, control, acceptance, comprehension of present situation and the desired one and change management skill. Although the significant change happens when the change agents (as professors) are interested in it, this has the same benefit that the book's for its author. Aune (1995) has mentioned that staff and faculty see themselves and their situation due to the role they've got in change process. He concluded that change causes people feel un tranquility in their new role and complain of losing their previous situation. People resists against change because of uncertainty toward the new situation which was made and it will be stable after duration of time.

Kustka and Moench (2005) believe that if the managers perceive the change procedures and act according to it, they will be able to manage change process successfully without losing motivation and people's commitment (Maurer, 2006).

Prosci (2003) has presented an organizational model for change management. It helps the managers to identify the essential steps to performs the change successfully and play the effective role in this process .He has named his model, ADKAR change management model. This name has been caught of the first letters of the following five words; Ability, Desire, Knowledge, Awareness, Reinforcement. He has drawn his model on a graph, its horizontal axis is about human resources characteristic under the name of five key stages and vertical axis is about the stages of performing the project. He believes that

if both orientations go forward synchronized, the change will happen successfully.

In this model, the five key stages mentioned were emphasized. It is obvious that if change occurs without preparation and quickly, people resist against it, because they are not aware of it. So, the universities should change the people's attitude first by creating knowledge and it will be very effective.

As mentioned in the literature and previous researches, it seems the universities have got the main center role as the chief effective base on society and its transformations. On the other hand, universities managers have got key role in change process and every transformation in universities and also, there is the same point about their performance and attitude in amount of the successful change programs (Titus, 1998; Brandon, 1996; Brooks, 1998) so, it is necessary to clarify the universities managers' attitude and performance toward change management dimensions. Thus this research was to extract the dimensions and components of change management and investigate the universities managers' attitude and performance towards them and present the suitable conceptual framework of change management in Azad Islamic university branches of 8th district.

Methodology

The method of the mentioned research was descriptive of survey one. Its statistical population concludes the managers of Azad Islamic university branches of 8th district (president, vice- president, deans, associate deans and head departments) who were 395 people and 267 ones have been selected among them through of Kokran formula sampling and the method of stratified sampling. The researcher made questionnaire, includes 108 components which were set in 5 dimensions and it investigates the managers' performance by the calculation of their points in present situation and the managers' attitude in desired situation. The way of validity calculation was expert judgment and the method of reliability calculation was cronbach's Alpha coefficient that was 0/98 after experimental performing among 36 people and its reliability was confirmed. 314 questionnaires were distributed with the 15 percent probability of fall and 267 questionnaire were collected. To analyze the collected descriptive statistic data, were used (Frequency, Percent, Standard Deviation, Mean)and inferential one (Variance analysis, Chi Square, Factor analysis, Path analysis) through SPSS and Liseral.

Results

Q1: what are the main dimensions and components of change management in the university?

To reply this question, the theoretical bases (theories, models, approaches, frameworks) and previous researches in Iran and world have been studied deeply with the emphasis on higher education and about 138 sub-components were extracted through librarian studies that reduced to 108 ones after reforming and naming by expert judgment and they were set in 5 dimensions as follow:

Table 1. The number of subcomponents in each dimensions of change management.

The dimensions of change management	Number of sub-components
The traits of change leader	18
The culture of change	25
Policies and strategies of change	32
The context of change	4
Technology and the content of change	29

Table 2. The comparison of managers' performance means in each dimension of change management.

Change dimensions	Around of mean	Acquired mean	The number of sub-component	Sub component (the question)	Skewed in each dimension	The amount of performance
The traits of change leader	highest	5/67	11	To have patience in directing people to cause change	Little negative	intermediate
	Lowest	4/18	2	To be able to cause change in university affairs		
Culture of Change	highest	6/05	55	To create sincere climate in work environment	Little negative	intermediate
	Lowest	3/94	72	To create change-oriented culture in university		
Policies and the strategies of change	highest	5/15	63	To impose the power and to manage affairs in creating change	positive	low
	Lowest	3/49	46	To educate the skills of identifying problem, solving it and comprehensiveness		
The context of change	highest	5/15	21	To create change in university proportionate to political situation	Little negative	intermediate
	Lowest	4/42	19	To change in university proportionate to technological development		
Technology and the content of change	highest	4/85	96	To create change in university faculty promotion system	positive	low
	Lowest	3/45	100	To create change in university organizational structure		

Q2: How is the universities managers' performance toward the dimensions and components of change management in university?

To answer this question, the different groups of managers (presidents, vice presidents, deans, associated deans, head departments) were asked to determine the amount of the application of each named sub-components of change management in their

area of management with the point of 1 to 10. The analysis of the collected data by one-way ANOVA as it is clear from table 2.

1. There is no significant difference among the compared managers' ideas about the current amount usage of mentioned dimensions of change management in their university area.

2. The highest mean (6/67) belongs to "univer-

sity education process” and the lowest (1/63) belongs to “tendency to change in university affairs”.

3. From the compared managers’ point of view, the university managers haven’t had suitable performance toward change management dimensions, that is, it have been low or very low, but they have used the sub components from high to low according to acquired mean as follow:

- To create change in university education process
- To create sincere climate in work environment
- To have patience in directing people to cause change
- To accept of new ideas, solutions and suggestions

- To have self confidence in directing and performing change plans
- To identify the people resisting against changes
- To have flexibility in managing university affairs

Q3: How is the universities managers’ attitude toward the dimensions and components of change management in university?

To respond this question, the researcher made questionnaire was distributed among the managers and they were asked to mark the amount of the importance that they have determined for change in each dimensions with a point of 1 to 10. After collecting data, ANOVA-one way test was used as it is clear from table 3.

Table 3. The comparison of the managers’ attitude means toward management dimension.

Change dimensions	The ledge of mean	Acquired mean	The number of subcomponent	Question	Skewed in each dimension	The amount of importance
The traits of change leader	Highest	9/10	15	To have creative thinking in performing change plans	Much negative	Much
	Lowest	8/33	3	Being able to direct and lead change		
The cultural change	Highest	9/23	13	The acceptance of new ideas, solutions and suggestions	Much negative	Much
	Lowest	7/97	62	To cause continual changes in university reply in external pressures		
Change policies and strategies	Highest	9/14	44	Teaching of change management skills to Personnel	Much	Much
	Lowest	8/01	74	Locating of convervative people beside of innovative ones		
The context of change	Highest	8/82	19	To create change in university proportionate to technological improvements	Much	Much
	Lowest	7/77	21	To create change in university proportionate to political situation		
The content of change	Highest	9/10	79	The usage of ICT to redesign the university affaires	Much	Much
	Lowest	8/12	101	To create change in teaching method in university		

Q4: what is the suitable conceptual framework for change management in universities?

To answer this question, it has been used of Factor Analysis and Path Analysis. First, K. M. O and

Bartlett tests have been done and they confirmed the analyzing of subcomponents, after performing factor analysis, seven main components were extracted among 108 subcomponents of questionnaire and their factor yield load has been recognized.

Then, the basic names have been set and they have been reformed and confirmed by expert judgment finally as follows:

1. The competencies of change leader
2. The content of change and modern technologies
3. Preparation and acculturation and empowering personnels to creat change
4. Accountability in situation
5. Adaptation of change
6. Participative leadership

7. Structural change

Second, path analysis has been used to explain the conceptual frame work and to determine the direction and the effect of extracted components. The result showed that;

1. The participative leadership and structural change components (sixth and seventh components) were omitted because they have got less than 3 subcomponents.

2. Correlation of Matrix and Co-variance of change management components have been studied. The Co-Relation between them was confirmed. (more than 0/5)

3. Path analysis estimated γ and β coefficients and displayed the effect and direction of each dimension upon each other Figure 1 shows:

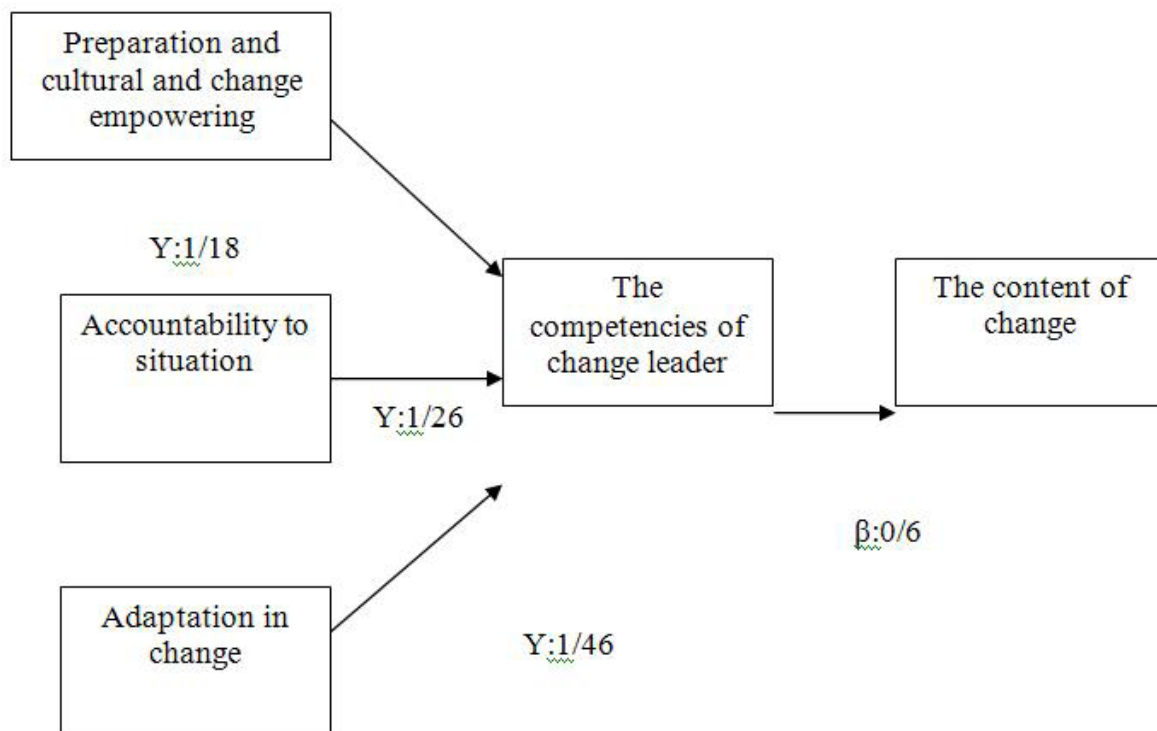


Figure 1. The diagram of conceptual framework for change management in university and the orientation of their effect on each other.

The amount of the explained variance of components according to be predicted and predicting one were studied as shown in table 4.

As table 4 shows, the correlation of preparation and acculturation, adaptation and the competencies of change leader is 0/81 that is very high, on the other hand, 0/81, the competencies of change leader

depends on preparation and acculturation and empowering change and adaptation to create change. This correlation for the competencies and the content of change is 0/43, that is 0/43 of the content of change depends on the competencies of change leader. And, the correlation between three independent variable (preparation and acculturation, adap-

tation, accountability) and the content of change (as dependent variable) is 0/34, that is 0/34 the cre-

ated change depends on the preparation and acculturation, adaptation and accountability.

Table 4. Variance of components.

Predicting variables	Predicted variables	R3
The preparation and acculturation (adaptation)	The competencies of change leader	0/81
The competencies of change leader	The content of change	0/43
The preparation and acculturation(adaptation)	The content of change	0/34

To measure the conceptual framework for change management in university has been used of good fitness test(GFI). The result showed that; RMSEA is 0/161 (which is) high in Iran community as the root of squares mean error and GFI=0/97 and GFI= 0/91 that is more than 0/90 accepted one, so

the given conceptual framework has got high fitness. According to total result of path analysis, the presented framework is proportionate for the branches of Azad Islamic university communities. So, the conceptual framework of change management in universities is as follows:

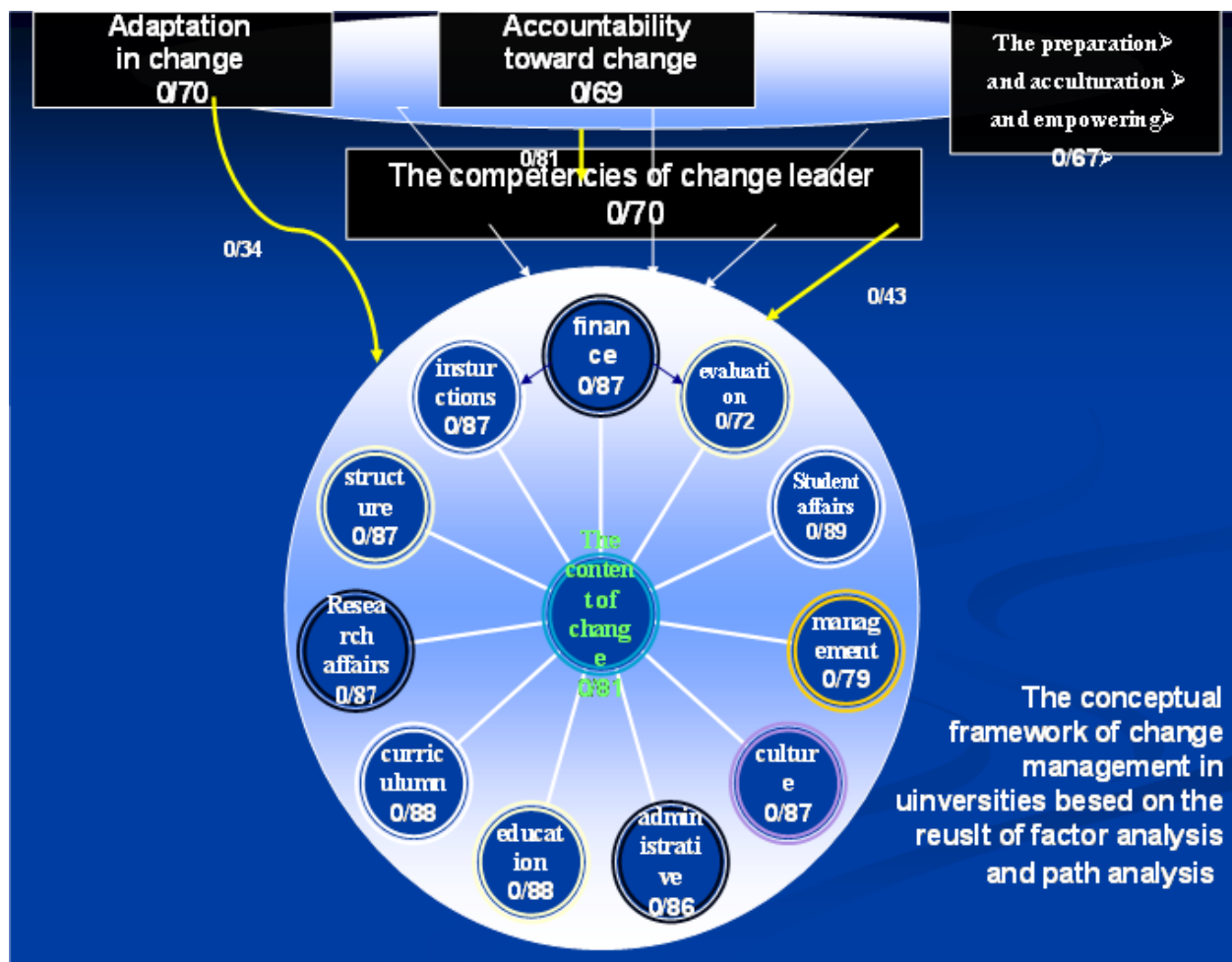


Figure 2. The conceptual framework for change management in university

Conclusions

In the present age, the quickly change is the obvious characteristic in which all organizations have to meet them to ensure their survival and development. As Sadler stated (Safics, BC 400) “change is “as a cutter knife and two edges razor” that no one can avoid it, but we should give it to empower and aware and expert surgeon to cure in the benefit form. Thus, In the age of hastily changes, Azad Islamic university managers’ attitude and performance and ability have got high importance in change management dimensions.

This importance has been emphasized in several researches (Brandon, 1997; Titus, 1998; Brooks, 1998; Moaednai, 2006; Prosci, 2003).

In this study, first, five dimensions of change management were identified and named as the competencies of change leader, the culture of change, the content of change. Then, the study was done with the emphasis on managers’ attitude and performance in change management dimensions. The findings showed that although they considers high importance to create change in different mentioned dimensions, but they have low performance. The probable of this reasons is less attention to managers and personnel’s improving and their developing programs.

Thus, because managers have considered high importance for diverse dimensions of change management and have got positive attitude, this is one of their important strength factor. It can be concluded that universities authoritarians can make policies and arrange educational programs to strengthen managers’ low performance according to their positive importance.

Desloriers (1993) has performed a research and expressed his own findings as; “the shortage of adaptation, innovation, creativity” is one of the five main obstacle of inter organizational changes, according to this finding, in the present research, researcher has considered adaptation as the main component in her conceptual framework. The result showed that universities managers while creating change in the management domain have less creative thinking and innovation morale but they consider high importance for each of them. It seems that the present situation as centralization does not allow to managers to used creativity and innovative morale in their current management domain. On the other hand, He has mentioned lack of confidence morale, power and individual security as other main obstacle

in creating inter organizational changes. The present research findings about this subject showed that universities managers do not confide in the involved personnel while creating change and either do not use of power strategy as creating change but they believe they should use power strategy and confidence toward the personnel involved change management with high attention.

Barnetts’ (2000) findings showed that universities should be prepared to face with the challenges of new age. He has stated “It is necessary to present a new conceptual framework in order to perceive university and its rounding environment. This framework causes the social roles and issues which are purposeful”. According to this Barnett’s finding, researcher in the present research has provided the change management conceptual framework in universities (as drawn) in Figure2 and also she has considered the preparation and acculturation as main and independent component. The result showed that the preparation component has got high fact oral load (0/74) as one of the main component in the framework with high importance but a low performance in university managers’ management domains. So, some policies can be made to increase managers’ performance and their preparation and empowerment by acculturation.

Aune (1995) has introduced human dimensions as competencies, abilities, attitude, knowledge .He stated that the perceiving of human dimension is an effective and key element to create integration. In the present research, researcher has used of Aunes’ finding and chosen “competencies of change leader” as one of the main component in the given conceptual framework, the result shows that this framework and its application is so useful in promotion of managers’ abilities while creating change. And also their attitude have been tested according to Aunes’s statement. The other components of the presented framework were “ contentet of change”, “preparation and empowerment and “acculturation,” “adaptation,” “accountability”.

One of the important and effective and key elements in change management is culture. So, for having successful perform of change and to face it suitably, personnel preparation and acculturation is main component in change management, Otherwise that fail is unavoidable.

In Maurer’s research, the main reasons of organization failure while creating change are the low level of organizational quality, less attention in personnel preparation through education. So accord-

ing to these findings “preparation and acculturation” has considered as the chief dimension in the presented framework.

In addition to the above mentioned reasons, the managers’ and personnel’s empowerment has much effect on the content of change and its success. This finding is as same as some researches findings like Maurer’s (2006) and Brandons’s (1997).

The other two components of conceptual framework are “adaptation and accountability”. It is necessary to emphasis on this fact that the survival of all organization and especially universities (on the emphasis on Islamic Azad universities) depend on their adaptation amount and to harmonize their programs with society requests. Therefore, the awareness of increasing changes in external and internal aspects of university environment and necessary feeling to create continual changes in different affairs of university proportionate to political and environmental situation are key elements. So, the university managers should pay attention to internal and external environmental pressures.

External and internal organizational problems in order to develop change culture and the skills to face with quick changes. Thus managers should be able to determine suitable strategies, goals, according to present age traits and plan change programs and then perform purposefully.

As Nichols (2004) and Maurer (2006) have found in their researches, “change management needs to a leader not manager and a change leader can play his role successfully when he has got the necessary competencies such as knowledge and awareness, skills and abilities, tendency and suitable attitude. These competencies effect on leaders’ actions before and while creating changes”. These competencies have got high importance in change management according to this research findings. So it can be recommended to an authoritarian to pay attention to change leaders’ competencies while managers’ selection and designation in order to make them professional and also identifying and reinforcing managers who have got high change culture is very effective because of their key role in performing of change management.

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