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بِوَسِيْلَتِيْ اِسْلَامًا اَنْبَارًا اِيْجَانًا مِلِّيْنًا

**AGE, SELF-ESTEEM AND RESISTANCE TO
CHANGE, A STUDY ON RESISTANCE TO
CHANGE IN THE INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC
UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA (IIUM)**

BY

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**INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY
MALAYSIA**

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SULAFI MAHMOUD GALANDAR

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requirements for the degree of Master of Human
Sciences (Psychology)**

**Kulliyyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge
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Malaysia**

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ABSTRACT

This study focuses on a major issue in the field of organizational change, which is resistance. The aim of the study was to investigate the correlation of self-esteem with resistance to organizational change, the correlation of age with resistance, and to see whether an older person with higher self-esteem, would experience more resistance than a younger person. A sample of 58 IIUM lecturers was administered a set of questionnaire to measure the levels of self-esteem and resistance. Results of the study showed that there was a positive correlation between age and resistance, a negative correlation between self-esteem and resistance, and a significant interaction effect between self-esteem and age on resistance. These results could help organizations in the future on how to avoid or to handle resistance.

ملخص البحث

تركز هذه الدراسة على أحد أهم المواضيع في مجال التغيير المؤسسي وتحديدًا موضوع المقاومة، إذ تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى فحص العلاقة بين احترام الذات ومقاومة التغيير المؤسسي، والعلاقة بين العمر والمقاومة، وهل يكون الشخص الأكبر سنًا والمتمتع بدرجة أعلى من احترام الذات أكثر مقاومة للتغيير ممن هو أصغر منه سنًا؟ ولهذا فقد تم توزيع استبانة على ٥٨ من محاضري الجامعة الإسلامية العالمية بماليزيا لقياس مستويات احترام الذات والمقاومة. وأظهرت نتائج الدراسة وجود ارتباط إيجابي بين العمر والمقاومة، ووجود ارتباط سلبى بين احترام الذات والمقاومة، ووجود تأثير هام للتفاعل بين احترام الذات والعمر على المقاومة. وستساعد هذه النتائج المنظمات على تجنب أو التعامل مع مقاومة التغيير.

APPROVAL PAGE

I certify that I have supervised and read this study and that in my opinion, it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Master of Human Sciences (Psychology).

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Hazizan bin Md Noon
Dean, Kulliyah of Islamic
Revealed Knowledge and
Human Science

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted as a whole for any other degrees at IIUM or other institutions.

Sulafa Mahmoud Galandar

Signature

Date

INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA

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To Allah who gave me spiritual guidance,
To my father ... who gave me words of strength,
To my mother ... who showered me with comfort.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This present study discusses change in organizational settings by focusing on the resistance of employees to change processes in organizations. The research focuses on age and self-esteem as factors affecting resistance to change, and investigates the combined impact of the two factors in the direction and strength of resistance. The study referred, in its literature review, to past researches on the different characteristics of a person that are influenced by age; for example, age influences on intelligence and the resultant physical and mental influences on performance. It also examines the degree of influence of age on performance and ability in work settings, and the degree of influence of middle adulthood and late adulthood on performance in work settings.

The study then shifts the focus to self-esteem to identify its degree of influence on resistance to change. As self-esteem levels constitute a possible explanation for variations in the level of resistance to change, the study discusses the difference, in characteristics, between those with high self esteem and those with low self esteem, and explores the literature in research of whether high self esteem influences performance at work settings.

Much of the previous research on resistance has investigated age as the main independent variable of resistance, and reported its considerable influence on performance in organizational settings (Barnett and Brenman, 1997; Kiefer, 2005). For example, Morris and Venkatesh, (2000) found that age had an important effect on various factors in technology adoption, and that younger and older adults differed in their preference for what determines the usage of new technology (Smither & Braun, 1994).

Other studies, investigating other variables, found that self-esteem can also influence performance at work (Donovan & Macintyre, 2003; Malhi & Reasoner, 2000; Eilam & Shamir, 2005). Some of these studies found that self-esteem changes as age changes. According to these studies' investigation, children showed high levels of self-esteem, while adolescents showed lower levels of self-esteem than children. The studies also reported that young adults have a slightly higher self-esteem than adolescents, and that their self-esteem increases when they reach middle adulthood. By the time a person reaches late adulthood, a decrease in the level of self-esteem will occur (Robins, Trzesniewski, Tracy, Gosling and Potter, 2002). One of the studies has even found that self-esteem had an impact on several organizational dimensions. The study by Eilam & Shamir (2005), reported a noticeable impact of self-esteem on such organizational variables like job insecurity, absenteeism, and organizational commitment, which all are signs of resistance to change.

1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

Studies have shown a strong human tendency to resist any change to the status quo in the socio-cultural environment to which an individual is accustomed. With the rapid changes that are overwhelming world organizations, change is becoming an important element of human development and international human relations. Though several explanations for the dynamics of organizational change have been provided, resistance to change in its entirety is still far from being satisfactorily explained. The variables that interact to drive humans to resist change are complex, and the strength of the interaction of these variables is still not clearly and satisfactorily identified.

1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

In the past few years, IIUM went through several technological developments in its system which resulted in major changes in some of the tasks, including the tasks of electronic reporting of students' grades by the academic staff members. This change required the academic staff members to use the university intranet to key-in all students' results instead of the traditional system of recording manually the grades by the staff. As the system was introduced with little training to the staff members at the start, much resistance was observed regarding this matter. Though most of the staff members complied, there were several signs of resistance to this new change. The signs of resistance included late submissions of the results, complaining about the new system, passing the task over to other persons (for example secretaries). The signs of resistance also included higher levels of mistakes in students' results which required rechecking and revision of the results in some cases (Galander, 2006).

1.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY:

As limited scientific information linking self-esteem and age, together, to resistance to change has been identified by this researcher, this study attempts to identify the relationship between self-esteem, age and resistance to change. Though much has been written about the influence of age on resistance, and about self-esteem and resistance, the question of what makes older people resist change has not been satisfactorily answered yet. Though it is known that age is a factor in resistance to change, as well as self-esteem a factor in resistance to change, the answer to the question are age and self-esteem together, factors influencing resistance to change is yet to be found. Establishing a scientific explanation to this question may shed some light on this complex process and provide a better understanding of human behaviour in general, and the dynamics of change and resistance to change in particular.

1.4 VARIABLES OF THE STUDY:

This study focuses on the following two predictor variables and tests their impact on the outcome variable:

- 1- Age: A stratified sample is drawn from the staff of the university who have actually lived through and experienced this change and who fall within specific, but different, age ranges. The age of the participants is treated as the predictor variable whose impact is correlated with self-esteem in search of their impact on resistance to change.
- 2- Self-esteem: self-esteem is seen as a variable that interacts with age to impact the process of resistance to change. The identification and measurement of self-esteem is described in the following section.

The outcome variable of the study is:

- 3- Resistance to change: The survey questionnaire is designed to identify the impact of both predictor variables on the degree of employees resistance to the change introduced to the organization.

The following model identifies the variables to be measured in this research.

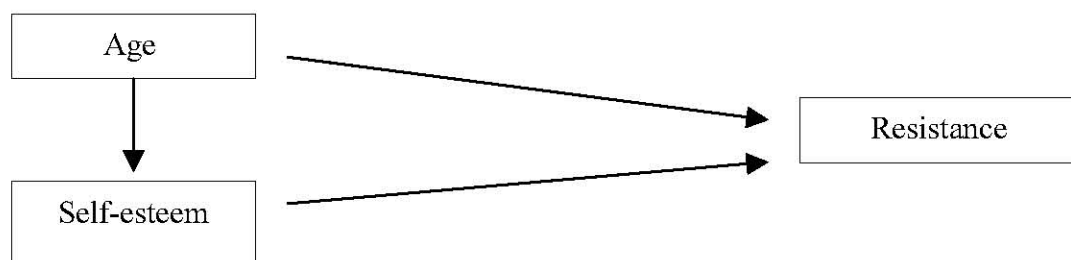


Figure 1: variables of the study

1.5 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

The study investigates the change process, and the resistance to such change, as experienced by the staff of the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) with respect to the electronic submission of students' grades. The study will identify the impact of the two variables of age and self-esteem in the resistance to change as experienced by the staff of IIUM since the introduction of the system, and measure their impact in the resistance of staff members to change.

The study will specifically attempt to fulfil the following objectives:

- 1- Measure the extent of resistance to task change by IIUM Staff.
- 2- Measure the degree of influence of age on resistance to change
- 3- Measure the degree of influence of self-esteem on resistance to change
- 4- Measure the degree of influence of both age and self-esteem on resistance to organizational change

1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

The following research questions have been generated after a careful and extensive study of resistance to organizational change and self-esteem as a factor influencing performance at work.

- Do lecturers undergoing task change in IIUM show resistance?
- Do older lecturers show more resistance than younger lecturers?
- Do lecturers with high self-esteem show different levels of resistance than those with low self-esteem?
- Do older lecturers with high self-esteem show different levels of resistance than those older lecturers with low self-esteem?
- Does self-esteem influence the level of resistance?

- Does age influence the level of resistance?
- Do self-esteem and age influence the level of resistance?

1.7 CONCEPTUAL AND OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS:

The three main variables of this study are resistance to change, age and self-esteem.

These variables are defined as follows:

1- Resistance to Change:

This study adopts the conceptual definition of resistance to change provided by Shermerhan, Hunt and Osborn (1994). According to these scholars, resistance to change is “any attitude or behaviour that reflects a person’s unwillingness to make or support a desired change”.

For the purpose of this study, the variable "resistance to change" is operationally defined through several questionnaire items that evaluate the respondent's level of opposition to change as well as attempts to reduce that resistance. Opposition is measured through such organizational behaviour related items as poor timing, experiencing future shock, lack of resources, fear of the unknown, absence of feeling the need for change, lack of confidence, need for security and vested interests threatened. While the reduction of resistance is measured by such items like facilitation and support for change, feeling of trust, support and confidence, change seen as changing efficiency, manipulation and cooperation, change in line with participant’s values and ideas, explicit and implicit coercion, feedback preventing miscommunication and misunderstanding, education and communication, security and autonomy being protected, negotiation and argument, change has managers support, objections are taken seriously and change is open to review. The Likert scale provides the measurement for the level of resistance of the participants to the chosen issue of change.

2- Self-esteem:

Self-esteem is conceptually defined as "the attitude one has toward oneself based on ... self respect, self confidence, and self responsibility" (Confield & Miller, 1996).

Self-esteem is operationalized through a Likert-scale type of questionnaire which will measure the level of self esteem of the participants in the organization. An example of the items would be 'I count around here'.

3- Age:

Age is operationalized in the form of continuous range which will divide participants into different groups (e.g. group 1 = 30-39, group 2 = 40-49, group 3 = 50-59, group 4 = 60-69).

1.8 METHOD OF ANALYSIS:

The study collected data from the participants and performed the appropriate statistical analysis. As the variables identified for the purpose of the study warranted an investigation into the relationship between several variables, multivariate statistics were used and various correlations were sought. The SPSS package and other appropriate statistical tests (two-way ANOVA) were used to verify the strength of the relationship of the data.

1.9 ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

This study is organized according to the following. Chapter one, introduction, provides introductory information about the study, and includes statement of the problem, background of the problem, objectives of the study, the conceptual and operational definitions of the major variables and a brief explanation of the method of analysis.

Chapter two, literature review, focuses on the conceptual presentation of information about the issue. This includes the definitions of change, resistance to

change, self-esteem and other related personal attributes discussed in the study. Classical views on change, relationship of personal attributes of self-esteem, personality, motivation, and age were also highlighted and explained. The chapter also provides a theoretical framework in which theoretical models of both change and resistance to change were introduced and discussed.

Chapter three, method, focused on the method of investigation and the procedure followed in the statistical analysis. The chapter provided the two survey instruments adopted in the research, and underlined the modifications introduced to these instruments. The chapter explained locale, the population and the sampling procedures, and discussed the various reliability and validity checks applied.

Chapter four, Findings, reported the findings of the analysis of the responses of the study participants to the two survey questionnaires. The analysis depended on the computer-based SPSS software package.

Chapter five, discussion and conclusion, focuses on the result of the analysis provided in the previous chapter. The discussion related the two predictor variables of self-esteem and age to the outcome variable of the study, resistance to change, and established the final findings of the study.

1.10 SUMMARY:

This chapter summarizes the issue investigated in this study and to the steps taken and the method of investigation adopted by the research. The chapter identifies the problem, outlines its background and significance, and highlighted survey method as its tool of investigation. The chapter concludes by providing a typology of the variables.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION:

This chapter explores the literature on the issues related to the study. The chapter begins with an exploration of the concept of change and explores the contribution of several behaviourists to the area, and uses their work to develop its own conceptual frames for the concepts of change, resistance and the related variables of age and self-esteem.

2.2 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.2.1 Organizational Change

Every organization passes through different stages of prosperity and decline and, at certain stages of its development, the organization has to adapt to some changes to reach its peak. Benton (1998) defined change as the function of effort over a period of time to learn new methods of managing an organization. Emphasizing that change is unavoidable; Benton underlined the following basic features of change:

1. Resistance is natural
2. Change must make sense to everyone involved
3. Organizational settings vary
4. Change takes time
5. Change results in role overload
6. Change requires on going technical support
7. All change involves learning

Another human behaviourist, Cherrington (1994) distinguishes between the following two types of organizational forces that cause change; internal forces and environmental forces:

2.2.3 Internal forces of change or the forces within the organization:

According to Cherrington, these forces include the following:

- a) Technology: advances in computer technology and communications systems are the most significant changes in recent years, old jobs are deleted and new jobs are created.
- b) Work values: new members might have different values, therefore organizations must respond to them.
- c) Knowledge explosion: new knowledge requires managers to find methods to store useful information and convert it into profitable products.
- d) Product obsolescence: because of technological advances and knowledge explosion, new ideas for products appeared and made old products no longer wanted in the market.
- e) Alternative work schedule: people focus more on leisure time and hobbies, which put greater demands on organizations for alternative schedules of work, some people work part-timers while others work from home.

Some scholars, however, (John 1996) argue that the internal forces of the organization are basically in the organization itself. Some of the forces that are identified as triggers of change are productivity, strikes, high absenteeism, and turn over and conflict (whether between employees, ideas, concepts etc.).

2.2.3 Environmental forces of change or the external force:

Cherrington lists some of the following outside forces that cause an organization to face change:

- a) Competition: changes in the market can destroy a company's profit; therefore, managers need to know what is new and what is old from their competitors.
- b) Consumer demands: managers must be concerned about changes in consumer's taste, because it might change due to small changes in the products.
- c) Resource availability: organizations depend on the environment for raw material and other resources; any change in the raw material or natural resources will change the nature of the organization.
- d) Social and political changes: organizations are forced to adapt to these changes e.g. in the Civil Rights Act of 1964, discrimination was reduced by requiring organizations to eliminate discriminatory employment practices.
- e) International forces: example of forces that influence organizations are wars, balance-of-payment problems, lower labour rates in foreign countries have a high influence on organizations.

Another scholar, Johns (1996) supports this view by saying that organizations are open systems that take input from the environment, transform it, and send output into the environment. Therefore if the environmental resources change, the organization must change its own resources in order for the organization to remain effective. An example he gives for such dynamics is competitiveness.

Another scholar, Foo Seong (2004) posits that when change happens in an organization, it happens in many domains. He gives culture, norms, attitudes,