

# Managing Organizational Change in Higher Education: Lessons From the University of Botswana

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**ABSTRACT.** Utilizing data collected from a randomly selected sample of 360 academic and managerial staff, regression analysis was performed to identify the determinants of acceptance of change among employees at the University of Botswana. The results showed moderate levels of employee acceptance of innovations and revealed that, of the four categories of substantive factors analyzed, managerial features were the most important determinants of acceptance of organizational change. It was concluded that management action is needed to boost the levels of acceptance of change and that a more participative approach to the management of the change process is necessary to guarantee the involvement of all stakeholders from the decision-making to the implementation and administration stages of the process.

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Higher education is critical to national social progress and economic growth (Castells, 1993; Council of Higher Education, South Africa, 2001). It is crucial to the resolution of the complex problems and the development challenges that face the world in general and the continent of Africa in particular. To illustrate, higher education is the source of knowledge and produces the human resources responsible for generating sustainable socio-economic development. It boosts the rate of participation in decision-making and contributes to the advancement of democracy by fostering open and critical debate and a vibrant civil society. Higher education also contributes to the development, monitoring, evaluation and the implementation of social policies as well as to improving the quality of schooling, health care, welfare and other public services (Council of Higher Education, South Africa, 2001). At the attainment of independence, African governments established national universities to help produce the much needed qualified human resources to take over from withdrawing colonialists (Hinchliffe, 1987; Nwamuo, undated). They invested in university education as well as provided scholarships and other incentives to learners. Although the newly established African universities initially succeeded in providing high-level personnel for the public, parastatal and private sectors, by the 1980s they were facing major challenges that called for innovations and hence change.

This study focuses on the management of change in higher education utilizing the University of Botswana as a case study. Its goal is to examine the level of acceptance of organizational change among employees at the University of Botswana and explore for factors that may undermine the effective implementation of the change process (or innovations) in higher education with the view to drawing lessons that can be applied to cognate institutions in Africa and the world. By acceptance of organizational change we mean the employees' readiness and willingness, support, and commitment to the organizational ideals during periods of significant internal and external shifts in the organization's structure (Bennett, 2000; Marks, 2000). Acceptance of change signifies the willingness

of the affected parties to embrace and function in a newly established order and their commitment to effect and implement the changes. As underlined by scholars such as Mink, Mink, Downes, and Owen, (1994), Eales-White (1994), Scarborough, Swan, and Preston (1999), and Baron, Haman and Burton (2001), for planned change to bear its desired outcomes, it must be introduced, implemented, and managed in such a way that it attracts and gains the support of all the affected parties. This requires willingness and commitment from the affected parties to drive the changes to achieve the desired goals, and the existence of a common vision that change for the organization is necessary and inevitable. Without the employees' buy-in, commitment and dedication, no progress is possible (Scarborough, Swan, and Preston, 1999).

With particular reference to this study, we argue that to successfully promote innovations in institutions of higher learning, like the University of Botswana, it is not enough for management to have the skills and expertise required for the introduction and management of change; they must also develop an understanding and appreciation of the major factors that may promote and/or impede employee support for change. This is important because employees are major stakeholders as well as the implementers of change in the organization. For them to embrace and oversee the implementation of innovations, these must be acceptable to them. Within the context of higher education, the success of innovations is dependent upon support from and ownership by both academic and non-academic employees. Furthermore, innovations in higher education require strategic plans embodying the vision, goals, priorities, and alternative courses of action. For these plans to be successful, they require the joint effort and interpersonal trust of all employees from the top to the bottom of the organizational hierarchy; in this case from the president/vice-chancellor/rector to academic and baseline nonacademic staff.

### ***THEORETICAL ORIENTATION***

By way of a theoretical background to this study we present an overview of the major challenges facing higher education in Africa today. Existing evidence shows that higher education across Africa appears to be facing similar challenges and threats. The broadest

of these is limited access (Duderstadt, 2002; Nwamuo, undated; Egron-Polak (2005). During the last few decades, the demand for higher education places has grown significantly making it impossible for existing universities in many countries to admit the thousands of candidates qualified for university education. This situation is rather unfortunate considering that knowledge has become not only the wealth of nations but also the key to one's personal prosperity and quality of life (Duderstadt, 2002). In many countries, governments have responded to limited access to higher education through what has come to be referred to as the massification of higher education (Council of Higher Education, South Africa, 2001; Egron-Polak, 2005). This has taken the form of governments requiring universities and other tertiary institutions to admit more students than they have capacity to cater for effectively. Unfortunately, rising student enrollments due to the massification of higher education has put most institutions under great strain. It has been responsible for overcrowding in classrooms, halls of residence, and laboratories and libraries among others.

The adverse effects of the massification of higher education have been compounded by another major challenge facing universities and other tertiary institutions today, namely diminishing financial support from governments. As the demand for access to higher education and expectations on universities grow, public support is either stagnating or actually decreasing. Competition from other socio-economic development projects for public funds coupled with the collapse of many African economies, mainly due to corruption and mismanagement, has made it impossible for most governments to cater adequately to the needs of the higher educational sector (Sutherland-Addy, 1993; Council of Higher Education, South Africa, 2001; Egron-Polak, 2005; Nwamuo, undated). This has resulted in governments making drastic cuts in spending on public higher education. Declining government financial support has left many institutions of higher education in financial crisis or total ruin. This has been evident in the deteriorating buildings, inadequate libraries, scientific equipment that cannot be used because of lack of supplies, and the lack of modern electronic and technological infrastructure which have become common features of current African higher education provision (Nwamuo, undated; Council of Higher Education, South Africa, 2001; Egron-Polak, 2005). Declining resources are also said to be responsible for dramatic decreases in the per student expenditure, limited support for research, and the poor working conditions

of faculty members leading to low morale and its associated poor academic quality. The dwindling public support for higher education has occurred at a time when there are tremendous expectations on higher education and research institutions to respond to global challenges, including addressing the Millennium Development Goals (Egron-Polak, 2005).

A third challenge facing higher education today is related to the problem of academic dishonesty. This is a major concern to universities worldwide and is thought to be growing at an alarming rate (Eckstein, 2003; Marsden, Carroll and Neil, 2005). The practice is often associated with a typology of behaviors including cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, and misrepresentation (Whitley and Keith-Spiegel, 2004). Academic dishonesty diminishes the quality of higher education and the reputation of institutions of higher learning as well as demoralizes both students and staff. Another problem paralyzing higher education in Africa today is the massive brain drain of well-trained and skilled academic staff, professionals, and scientists to Western Europe and North America where pay and benefits are better and more commensurate with expectations (Blair and Jordan, 1994; Egron-Polak, 2005). Citing World Bank estimates, Blair and Jordan (1994) indicated that some 23,000 qualified academic staff are emigrating from Africa each year in search of better working conditions in the West. Because of brain drain, faculty is often under-qualified, and students are poorly taught and curricula under-developed. A closely related challenge is how to attract and retain more students and researchers in the basic sciences and how to make the scientific and research career, in fact the academic career, more attractive (Egron-Polak, 2005).

To address the crisis facing higher education, many countries and institutions have turned to innovations. It has become apparent that for universities and other providers of tertiary education to meet the growing demand for higher education and to weather the many challenges undermining their efforts in this direction, they must look for creative solutions; they must innovate. Among others, innovations in tertiary institutions could take the forms of activities targeted at improving the quality of studies, sustaining and developing the quality of educational programs, increasing access to higher education, and improving the management of higher education. Good examples include the restructuring of teaching curriculums, quality assurance, semesterization, opening up greater space for distant learning, and new models of funding.

The University of Botswana, whose mission is to achieve academic excellence in Africa and the world, is not immune to most of the problems enumerated above. Like most other universities in the world and in Africa, it is facing challenges that undermine its capacity to attain its mission thus calling for the institution to reinvent itself. To illustrate, the university is currently reeling from the massification of higher education in the country. Being the only university on the land, a few years ago the University of Botswana was required by government to double its intake. As a result, the institution which has a planned capacity of about 7,500 students now houses about 15,000 full time students. The increase in student numbers has occurred without a corresponding increase in facilities thus occasioning congestion in classrooms, high student-staff ratios, and inadequate access to important services such as computers. Also related to the massification of education are other problems such as declining academic standards, lower staff motivation, and academic dishonesty. Concerning academic dishonesty, results of a survey conducted by a Task Group on Academic Dishonesty (TGAD) appointed by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic Affairs, to investigate the problem showed that academic dishonesty among students is not only prevalent but also well organized. The most common forms include copying assignments, tests and examinations, taking unauthorized materials into examinations and plagiarism (or the failure to acknowledge other person's ideas or works) (TGAD, 2005).

Like most other institutions grappling with multiple challenges, the University of Botswana has sought solutions through innovations. The institution is committed to innovate different aspects of its academic program, including curricula, teaching methods, examinations, and the learning environment. In particular, since the 1980s two major forms of change have been initiated with significant implications for the way the institution operates. These are the 2002 shift from the year long to a semesterized academic program and an administrative and management restructuring exercise whose resultant structure was implemented between 1998 and 2000. The former constituted a movement away from teaching and learning programs extending over a one-year (two terms) period punctuated by prolonged holidays running from May to August to an academic year composed of two fifteen-week semesters. The latter had as its most striking feature an expanded administrative cadre incorporating seventeen directorates (some with deputy directors), each with line

managers and ancillary staff. Not only was the organizational structure expanded, but new language reflecting managerial tendencies also emerged with the new structure. The nomenclature traditionally associated with the university (e.g., registrar, bursar, assistant registrar) disappeared from statutes books as new managerial terms such as director, manager, senior management team, and strategic planning, took their place.

The expanded structure of the university was contrary to the initial goal of the restructuring exercise; to develop a leaner and streamlined structure. Although council at its August 1998 meeting to consider the final draft documents on restructuring questioned the expanded nature of the proposed structure (Tabulawa, 2004), the executive deflected this concern by arguing that it was a futuristic structure. According to them, the expanded structure would obviate the need for another restructuring exercise in the foreseeable future occasioned by increases in university enrollment beyond the numbers projected at the conception of the restructuring exercise. Council acceded. The administration and management restructuring at the University of Botswana was accompanied by the review of University Statutes (such as those on Senate and the Staff Appointments and Promotions Committee) and committee system. The statutes are not just rules and regulations guiding operations of an institution, but also embody power and act as the devices for distributing power amongst the various governing bodies of the university (University of Botswana, 1998: 4). Through the review of University Statutes, whose climax was the February 1998 consideration of the draft statutes by a Senate Reference Group, power was re-distributed from top academics such as professors in favor of Executive Management, leading to a managerial approach to decision-making.

### ***DATA AND METHODS***

A sample of 360 employees selected from the 936 academic and managerial (or administrative) staff utilizing the simple random sampling technique was analyzed for this study. Data were collected utilizing self-administered questionnaires. To identify possible barriers to innovations, regression analysis was used to identify factors that were significant determinants of acceptance of organizational change among employees. The respondents included 246 (68.3

percent) academic staff and 114 (31.7 percent) administrative/managerial employees. Whereas 125 (34.7 percent) were females, 235 (65.3 percent) were males. Those interviewed incorporated a broad mix of employees, from senior academic and administrative staff to lower-level academic and supervisory staff. They ranged in age from 21 to 67 years, with the mean age being 40.7 years. Their educational attainment varied from diploma to doctoral degrees, with the majority (73.4 percent) having attained master degree education. Whereas 54.6 percent of the respondents worked on permanent and pensionable terms, the remaining 43.4 percent were contract workers. The respondents' work life experience ranged from 1 to 41 years; the mean working period was 14.7 years.

To identify possible barriers to innovations, the study focused on a broad range of factors (or variables) that have previously been demonstrated to impact on change acceptance among employees. These were grouped into four major categories, namely, workplace features, managerial features, employee personality traits, and employee affective responses. A fifth category of variables was used by the study as controls. Under workplace features, the following factors were analyzed: communication, job security, promotional opportunity, work overload, role conflict, resource inadequacy, and job-skill match. At the realm of managerial features analyzed, on the other hand, we focused on participative management, supervisory support, quality of leadership, and trust in leadership. Four factors-social boldness, receptivity, endurance, and enthusiasm-were analyzed as important employee personality traits that may impact on the acceptance of organizational change. Under the category employee affective responses to the job and organization three variables-job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and desire to leave-were examined. The study also utilized five variables-gender, age, education, category of staff, and tenure-as controls. The definitions of all variables analyzed are presented in Table 3 (see Appendices).

As a precursor to the analysis of the determinants of the acceptance of organizational change a brief descriptive overview of the variables analyzed as causal factors was undertaken. All variables were measured utilizing a four-item Likert-type scale coded 1 to 4. Table 1 presents the mean scores for all variables analyzed. Overall, the results revealed that the level of employee acceptance of changes taking place at the University of Botswana was moderate. Out of a total possible score of four points, the mean score for the acceptance

TABLE 1. Mean Scores for Determinants of Acceptance of Change<sup>a</sup>

Variable	Mean	Std Deviation.	Range
<b>Workplace Features:</b>			
Communication	2.68	0.96	1-4
Job Security	3.07	1.05	1-4
Promotional Opportunity	2.36	0.97	1-4
Work Overload	2.78	0.85	1-4
Role Conflict	2.83	0.55	1-4
Resource Adequacy	2.64	0.79	1-4
Job-Skill Match	3.32	0.84	1-4
<b>Managerial Features:</b>			
Participative Management	2.83	0.92	1-4
Supervisory Support	2.88	0.61	1-4
Quality of Leadership	2.58	0.87	1-4
Trust in Leadership	2.68	0.80	1-4
<b>Employee Personality Traits:</b>			
Social Boldness	2.28	0.96	1-4
Receptivity	3.10	0.81	1-4
Endurance	3.36	0.61	1-4
Enthusiasm	3.40	0.62	1-4
<b>Employee Affective Responses:</b>			
Job Satisfaction	3.08	0.78	1-4
Organizational Commitment	3.20	0.78	1-4
Desire to Leave	2.45	0.96	1-4
<b>Endogenous Variable:</b>			
Acceptance of Change	2.67	0.90	1-4

Note. <sup>a</sup>All items were measured using scales of 1.00–4.00. The scores are rated as follows: 1.00–1.59 = low, 1.60–2.79 = moderate, 2.80–4.00 = high.

of change was 2.67 points with a standard deviation of 0.90 points. Turning to the determinants of the acceptance of organizational change, employees ranged from moderate to high in all factors analyzed; mean scores ranged from 2.28 points (for social boldness) to 3.40 points (for enthusiasm). For workplace features, employee mean scores ranged from 2.36 points (for promotional opportunity) to 3.32 points (for job-skill match), whereas mean scores for managerial features ranged from 2.58 points (for quality of leadership) to 2.88 points (for supervisory support). On the other hand, scores for employee personality traits ranged from 2.28 points (for social boldness) to 3.40 points (for enthusiasm). Results for employee affective responses showed that employees were high in job satisfaction ( $\bar{X} = 3.08$  points) and organizational commitment ( $\bar{X} = 3.20$  points) but moderate in the desire to leave ( $\bar{X} = 2.45$ ).

TABLE 2. Regression Results for Determinants of Acceptance of Change<sup>a</sup>

Variables	Beta Coefficients
<b>I. Workplace Features:</b>	
Communication	.097
Job Security	.077
Promotional Opportunity	.092
Work Overload	-.084
Role Conflict	.103*
Resource Adequacy	.055
Job-Skill Match	-.086
<b>II. Managerial Features:</b>	
Participative Management	.100*
Supervisory Support	-.090
Quality of Leadership	.139**
Trust in Leadership	.130*
<b>III. Employee Personality Traits:</b>	
Social Boldness	.149***
Receptivity	.108*
Endurance	-.071
Enthusiasm	-.078
<b>IV. Employee Affective Responses:</b>	
Job Satisfaction	.040
Organizational Commitment	.052
Desire to Leave	-.131**
<b>V. Control Variables:</b>	
Age	-.114*
Gender [Male]	.068
Education	.087
Academic Staff	-.139**
Tenure	-.094*
<b>R<sup>2</sup> - value</b>	<b>.316</b>

Note. <sup>a</sup>Standardized coefficients are reported.

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$ ; \*\*\* $p < .00$  (one-tailed tests).

Results from the estimation of a causal model for acceptance of organizational change for all four categories of substantive and control variables analyzed jointly are presented in Table 2. For every category of variables, standardized (b) regression coefficients are reported. These indicate the relative influence (predictive power) of each reward on the acceptance of organizational change. As evident from the table, out of the 18 substantive variables analyzed seven have statistically significant net effects on the acceptance of change. The findings indicate that employees who experience high level of role

conflict in their jobs, participate in the making of decisions and policies that affect them and their work organization, perceive the quality of leadership in the organization to be high, and have trust in the leadership of the organization are more receptive to organizational change. The same is also true for employees who are socially bold and receptive to the ideas of others even when these stand in opposition to their beliefs and values. Similarly, employees who desired to leave the University of Botswana were less inclined to support change relative to their counterparts who planned to continue working for the university. All these relationships are in the expected direction.

The results also showed that out of the five control variables incorporated in the model, three had statistically significant net effects on the acceptance of organizational change by employees. These are employee age, category of employee (whether academic or administrative), and tenure. Specifically, older employees, academic staff, and those who had been working at the university for longer periods were shown to be less receptive to the changes taking place at the university relative to those who are younger, managerial workers, and those who had been working for shorter periods, respectively. Jointly, the substantive and control variables explain about 32 percent of the variance in acceptance of change.

### ***INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS***

This study sought to examine the level of acceptance of organizational change among employees and to identify factors that may impede the effective implementation of change in higher education utilizing the University of Botswana as a case study. In doing so we were guided by the argument that for institutions of higher learning to weather the challenges facing them today, they must rethink the way they conduct business. This requires them to embrace change and, most importantly, to ensure that the change process is implemented successfully. For this to occur employee buy in and hence support of and commitment to change is imperative. For instance, if the University of Botswana is to attain its vision of being a leading academic center of excellence in Africa and the World, the changes (or innovations) designed to steer the institution in that direction must be acceptable to all stakeholders as well as implemented to

the full. However, the successful implementation of change and other transformations at the University of Botswana is a function of the level of ownership of, identification with, and support for that change by the two umbrella categories of human resources, namely managerial/administrative and academic staff. Their commitment to and a willingness to champion the implementation of change is a necessary precondition for the transformation of the institution.

Based on the existing theoretical and empirical literature, the negative evaluation of and resistance to change may occur on account of a number of factors. Resistance to change, regardless of the form it may take—direct defiance or refusal to go along (Cohen, Fink, Gadon, and Willitz, 2001) or disguised, camouflaged, and passive—may be caused by a legitimate concern that the change is not good for the organization and that the proposed change should be rethought. Although there are cases where organizational members simply prefer (or like) the status quo, the negative evaluation of change may occur because the benefits of the proposed change are unclear or because organizational members perceive those benefits to be outweighed by the costs of the change (Carrell, Jennings, and Heavrin, 1997; Cohen, et al., 2001; Bateman and Snell, 2002). Resistance to change or innovations may also be caused by fear of the unknown (or uncertainty), self-interest, timing, habit, general mistrust, and social disruptions (Nadler, 1983; Stanislaw and Stanislaw, 1983; Carrell et al., 1997; Cohen, et al., 2001; Bateman and Snell, 2002). Individuals are likely to resist change if it involves moving from the known to the unknown (from relative certainty to relative uncertainty); they associate it with the loss of something of value (e.g., their job, income, power, influence, status, and privileges, among others); the change is sudden, unexpected, or extreme; it requires new ways of accomplishing tasks; they do not trust the motives of those advocating the change; or if they fear that change will disrupt existing traditions. Furthermore, change initiatives fail because organizations try to implement a number of activities too quickly and without proper co-ordination or thought about the implications for people management. This leads to “initiative fatigue” where employees become disillusioned and more resistant to change (Cohen, et al., 2001; Collins, 2001). Finally, change programs may fail because “they lack accountability, they fail to achieve credibility and they have no authenticity” (Collins (2001:3)) and are thus evaluated negatively by stakeholders including employees.

Overall, the study found that employees at the University of Botswana have a positive attitude towards change. The mean acceptance of change for all respondents was moderate. This finding suggests that change managers at the University of Botswana have the opportunity to rally employees to support innovations whenever these become necessary for the institutions effective delivery of its mandates. The finding also implies that since employees at the university, in general, are likely to evaluate change positively, they are not opposed to it for opposition's sake. Put differently, they are likely to embrace change and will resist it only if it raises certain legitimate concerns among them. This is consistent with the views expressed in the existing theoretical and empirical literature (see e.g., Carrell, et al., 1997; Cohen, et al., 2001; Collins, 2001; Bateman and Snell, 2002) that negative evaluation of and resistance to change may be a pointer to a legitimate concern among employees.

With reference to the various categories of determinants of acceptance of change analyzed in this study, the results showed that workplace features do not constitute potential barriers to the adoption of innovations by employees. Out of seven variables analyzed for this category, only one-role conflict-emerged as a significant determinant of the acceptance of change. On the contrary, the study underlined the importance of managerial features and employee personality traits as potential barriers to employee acceptance of change (or support for innovations). Three out of four managerial factors and two of four employee personality traits analyzed were significant determinants of employee acceptance of change. Generally speaking, these findings are consistent with the exiting literature which shows that individuals may resist change or innovations because of uncertainty, general mistrust, peer pressure, personality conflict, and differing perceptions (Carrell et al., 1997; Cohen, et al., 2001; Bateman and Snell, 2002). In particular, that participative management (or consultation), quality management, and trust in management emerged as important determinants of acceptance of organizational change points to the centrality of management in driving the change process and in making it both legitimate and acceptable among employees at the University of Botswana. This suggests that innovations initiated by management alone or imposed by forces external to the university are less likely to be supported by employees compared to those resulting from adequate consultation between management and all cadres of staff.

The results that employees whose jobs are characterized by high levels of role conflict and who are socially bold are more likely to accept change, while those who have high levels of desire to find a job elsewhere are less likely to support the same are not surprising. Logically, employees who experience role conflict are more likely to support organizational change, particularly where the change is likely to offer a solution to this dilemma. Similarly, risk takers are more likely to embrace change given that change itself constitutes a form of risk. It involves abandoning the known to venture into new ways of doing things (the unknown) without sufficient guarantee that the new approach will be successful. On the other hand, employees who desire to leave can be said to have lost interest in the organization and, therefore, do not care much about the processes taking place within it including the initiation of change. Other not so surprising findings are the observations that older employees, academic staff and those who have been with the university for longer periods are less likely to embrace change. Consistent with the existing literature (see e.g., Triolo et al., 1995; Iverson, 1996; Iverson and McLeod, 1996; Bennett, 2000; Chou, 2000), it is not unlikely for older and long tenured employees to suffer the nostalgia of tradition and, therefore, to exude conservatism (status quo) when confronted with the prospects for change. Lastly, as pointed out earlier, change resistance among academic staff can be understood in terms of perceived disadvantages suffered by these due to the restructuring.

Based on the findings of this study, academics are more likely to resist change than administrative staff. This is consistent with the fact that the administrative and management restructuring implemented by the University of Botswana between 1998 and 2000 generated mixed reactions among both administrative and academic staff with academics feeling that the new structure marginalized and alienated them. This sentiment was captured in the *Report of the Task Group on the Review of the University of Botswana Act and Governance Structures of 2004* (or what is commonly referred to as the Youngman Report) which observed that:

The implementation of the restructuring of the University from 1998 to 2000 and the perceived shift to greater executive power at the expense of collegiality highlight the issue of the role of Executive Management in relation to the governance structures. The decline in the authority and effectiveness of Senate in 1999

can be seen as a symptom of an unclear management/governance relationship (University of Botswana, 2004: 14).

In light of the above, the changes associated with the restructuring at the University of Botswana are more likely to be supported by administrative and managerial workers and resisted by academic staff simultaneously. The general consensus that the new structure has shifted the balance of power amongst the various administrative structures within the University, with a tilt towards more corporate management practices is consistent with Newson (1992) who opined that one effect of an expanded middle management in universities is the de-professionalization or marginalization of faculty. This is achieved through the proliferation of cross-institutional and non-disciplinary academic support units (Henkel, 1997) which take power away from the academic and specialist base and render decision making subject to institutional rather than academic definitions. In short, the work of academics is redefined with "management [assuming] more organizational space and visibility in running the enterprise" (Gumpert, 2000: 78).

Part of the goal of this study was to draw lessons from the management of change at the University of Botswana that can be applied to cognate institutions in Africa and the world over. The first lesson that can be drawn from this study is that the corporatist model implied above does not appear to sit very well with academic staff. As such, it is hurting the implementation of necessary change at the University of Botswana. This can be extrapolated to institutions of higher education across the rest of Africa and the world over. As evident from the results of this study, high levels of managerialism tend to strip academic professionals of their autonomy; a highly valued attribute of their job. This creates in-group out-group dynamics which is a recipe for resentment, resistance and conflict. In addition, managerialism is compounded by the fact that top executives (such as presidents, vice-chancellors, and/or rectors) are academics turned managers who often may lack the requisite managerial skills to drive the change process. As such, although their role is to promote the academic function-the core business of institutions of higher learning-their views are frequently eclipsed by those of the well-versed administrative/managerial staff who partner them in this process. Where this obtains, the contributions of academics to the change process is marginalized if not totally lost.

As implied above, where managerialism holds sway, decision-making including the initiation of change, is the preoccupation of administrative rather than academic staff. This is rather paradoxical given that the main business of institutions of higher learning is academic. It has an alienating effect on academic staff that causes them not only to resent change but also to resist its implementation even where it (change) is necessary or good for the survival and functioning of the institution. The alienation of academic staff from the change process sets in place conditions for conflict between administrators and academics as well as leads to a power struggle between the two camps. In such an environment, the level of support for and commitment to the change process by academic staff is likely to be very low. Given the pivotal role that academic staff must play as drivers of change in academic institutions, this impedes the implementation of the change process and threatens its very success. In addition, as each camp fortifies its defenses, the change agenda, which was initially the basis for the contestation, is lost completely. Countering this situation calls for a more participative approach to the initiation and management of the change process in institutions of higher education in which the representation of academic staff clearly reflects the centrality of the academic function in these institutions. However, the pursuit of improved inclusion of academic staff in the change process must be undertaken with great care so as not to shift the problem of alienation to administrative staff. Rather, a balance must be struck between the views of both camps with each contributing in their areas of relative strength. This is imperative because change in institutions of higher learning, while weighing heavily on the academic side, also has an administrative component that if, marginalized or totally ignored, becomes a recipe for failure. In short, successful innovations in higher education require the concerted efforts of both academic and administrative/managerial staff with each group having the opportunity to contribute in areas of relative competence.

### **CONCLUSION**

Based on the results of this study, it may be concluded that, despite the existence of the potential for employees to rally around change at the University of Botswana, management action is needed to boost the levels of acceptance of change among all cadres of employees. The

moderate score in the acceptance of organizational change realized by this study must be improved if most innovations are to succeed and produce the desired effect of making the University of Botswana a leading academic institution in Africa and in the world. For management to strengthen the acceptance of change among its employees it must rethink its approach to the change process. One may applaud management's recognition that change is imperative in an increasingly globalized world characterized by greater competition in most spheres, including tertiary education. But, at the same time, one cannot lose sight of the dire need to involve all stakeholders in the change process. Specifically, management must adopt a more participative approach that guarantees that all stakeholders are involved right from the decision-making stage to the implementation and administration of the change process. This way it will win the support of all those who are likely to be affected by the change and ensure that employees own the change processes, defend it, and guard against its failure. Furthermore, greater participation in the change process is likely to eliminate the fear, cynicism, and aloofness that have characterized academic staff in particular.

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## WEBSITES

- <http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/leader/leadchr.html>  
<http://www.chadduck.com/yamarines/useful/traits.htm>  
<http://www.onlinewbc.gov/docs/manage/traits.html>

## APPENDIX 1. Definitions of Study Variables

Variables	Definition
<b>Workplace Features:</b>	
Communication	Refers to the degree to which employees can transmit with ease their ideas, feelings, and feedback from their jobs to higher level administrators and/or managers (Mulinge and Mueller, 1998)
Job Security	Refers to the extent to which an employee is guaranteed his/her job as long as he/she is cautious and performs at a minimal level of competence (Leonard, 1977).
Promotional Opportunity	Is defined as the degree of potential vertical mobility within the organization (Mulinge and Mueller, 1998).
Work Overload	Refers to the extent to which role expectations perceived by the focal person are in excess of the amount of time and resources available for meeting them (Blunt and Jones, 1992)
Role Conflict	Represents the degree to which incompatible demands are made upon an individual by two or more persons whose jobs are functionally interdependent with that of the individual (Blunt and Jones, 1992).
Resource Adequacy	Refers to the extent of sufficiency in infrastructural and material resources and equipment that are necessary for the employee to execute his/her duties with the minimum of discomfort (La-Anyane, 1985).
Job-Skill Match	Represents the degree of fit between the employee's skills and the tasks performed.
<b>Managerial Features:</b>	
Participative Management	Refers to the extent to which the organization's management involves employees in the adoption of major policy decisions that affect the organization and its employees (Blunt and Jones, 1992; Mulinge and Mueller, 1998).
Supervisory Support	Is the degree to which supervisors are friendly, helpful and supportive to their subordinates (Mottaz, 1985; Mulinge and Mueller, 1998).
Quality of Leadership	Represents the efficiency and effectiveness of the organization's management
Trust in Leadership	Is the extent to which employees can rely on the organization's management to take care of them.
<b>Employee Personality Traits:</b>	
Social Boldness	Is defined as the degree to which the employee is a spontaneous risk-taker ( <a href="http://www.onlinewbc.gov/docs/manage/traits.html">http://www.onlinewbc.gov/docs/manage/traits.html</a> ).
Receptivity	Refers to the extent to which the employee is willing to listen to and consider others' opinions and ideas even when these are inconsistent with his/her beliefs and values.
Endurance	Is the extent to which an employee displays calmness when under stress ( <a href="http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/leader/leadchr.html">http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/leader/leadchr.html</a> ).

(Continued)

## APPENDIX 1. Continued.

Variables	Definition
Enthusiasm	Refers to the extent of an employee's sincere interest and exuberance in the performance of duties ( <a href="http://www.chadduck.com/ymarines/useful/traits.htm">http://www.chadduck.com/ymarines/useful/traits.htm</a> ).
<b>Employee Affective Responses:</b>	
Job Satisfaction	Refers to the degree to which an employee likes his/her job (Kallerberg, 1977; Mulinge and Mueller, 1998).
Organizational Commitment	Is defined as the employee's identification with, and involvement in, a particular organization (Mowday, Porter, and Steers, 1982).
Desire to Leave	Represents the degree to which the employee wishes to leave or to quit working for the organization if alternative employment is available.
<b>Control Variables</b>	
Gender	Refers to the sex of the individual
Age	Represents the actual number of years the individual had lived by the time of the study.
Education	Is the highest level of formal schooling or training an individual has had.
Tenure	Refers to the individual's length of service in the organization.
Category of Staff	Represents the type of employee the individual is; administrative, or academic.
<b>Endogenous Variable:</b>	
Acceptance of Organizational Change	Represents the employees' readiness and willingness, support, and commitment to the organizational ideals during periods of significant internal and external shifts in the organizations structure.

## APPENDIX 2. Research Questionnaire

## SECTION I: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

**QUESTIONS 1 THROUGH 8: The following questions are intended to gather information regarding your present job. Please circle one answer or fill in the gap for each question.**

1. In which of the following sections is your department located?

- |  |                            |
|--|----------------------------|
| 1. Faculty of Business                   | 12. Human Resources        |
| 2. Faculty of Education                  | 13. Campus Services        |
| 3. Faculty of Engineering and Technology | 14. Information Technology |
| 4. Faculty of Humanities                 | 15. Student Affairs        |

- |                                    |                            |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 5. Faculty of Science              | 16. Academic Services      |
| 6. Faculty of Social Sciences      | 17. Student Welfare        |
| 7. Academic Affairs Division       | 18. Careers and Counseling |
| 8. Academic Development            | 19. Sports and Culture     |
| 9. Centre for Continuing Education | 20. Health Services        |
| 10. Library Services               | 21. Bookstore              |
| 11. Financial Services             | 22. Other [specify]_____   |

2. Which of the following best describes your rank?

1. Professor
2. Associate professor
3. Senior Lecturer
4. Lecturer
5. Staff Development Fellow
6. Director
7. Deputy Director
8. Assistant Director/Manager/Chief Technician/Faculty Administrator
9. Assistant Manager/Senior Officer/Senior Lab Technician
10. Officer/Technician/Lab Supervisor/Office Assistant
11. Other [Specify]\_\_\_\_\_

3. How long have you been working in this organization? \_\_\_\_\_ [Enter actual number]

4. For how many years have you been working with your current job description? \_\_\_\_\_  
[Enter actual number]

5. What is your overall working experience in years? \_\_\_\_\_ [Enter actual number]

6. What type of contract do you have with your employer?

1. Permanent and pensionable
2. Fixed term for two or more years
3. Temporary-Full time for one year
4. Other [Specify]\_\_\_\_\_

7. Which of the following best describes your current responsibilities?

1. A mixture of teaching and research, with some administrative duties [e.g. Head of Department]
2. Teaching and research, including some service
3. Academic support services and administration [e.g., Counseling, library, finance]

8. Which of the following categories best describes your citizenship status?

1. Citizen of Botswana
2. Permanent Resident
3. Temporary Resident
4. Other [specify]\_\_\_\_\_

**SECTION II: FACTORS AFFECTING ACCEPTANCE  
OF CHANGE**

**QUESTION 9 THROUGH 33:** The following questions address your workplace experiences in terms of your current job. Select from the following scale to indicate your agreement or disagreement with the following statements [Only one answer should be selected for each statement].

1. Strongly agree      2. Agree      3. Disagree      4. Strongly disagree

Item	Rating
<u>Workplace Features:</u>	
9. Overall conditions of work in my job are good	
10. I am very secure in my job	
11. Communication between management and staff in my organization is very good	
12. I have good prospects for promotion in my job	
13. My skills and training are appropriate for my responsibilities at work	
14. My co-workers are supportive in my job	
15. I receive conflicting work demands from my supervisors and/or co-workers	
16. In my job my duties and responsibilities are very clear to me	
17. I am generally overworked	
18. There is adequate equipment and other resources for the type of job I do	
19. My organization has effective orientation programmes for new staff	
20. The job I do largely involves routine operations	
21. There is considerable variety and variability in my job	
22. I am satisfied with the overall management of my organization	
23. The management of my organization is trustworthy	
24. I always have the freedom to make the decisions that affect my job	
25. I participate in making important decisions at work	
26. I have great willingness to take risks	
27. I am tolerant to the views of others even when they are at odds with my beliefs and values	
28. I have the ability to go through tough situations	
29. I am full of enthusiasm in performing my job	
30. I am satisfied with the job I do	
31. If I had my way I would work for my organization forever	
32. I wish I could find another job elsewhere	
33. I do not like the changes that have taken place in my organization during the last five years	

**SECTION III: BIOGRAPHIC DATA**

**QUESTIONS 34 THROUGH 42:** The final set of questions is intended to collect information on your personal background. Please either fill in the blank or circle the response that best describes you. Although the questions are about you please keep in mind that they are to be used in statistical form only.

34. How old were you during your last birthday? \_\_\_\_\_ [Enter actual years]

35. In what gender category do you belong?

1. Male            2. Female

36. Which of the following best describes your marital status?

- |                                       |                                  |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Single and never married           | 6. Legally separated from spouse |
| 2. Single but living with a partner   | 7. Divorced                      |
| 3. Married and living with spouse     | 8. Widowed                       |
| 4. Married but not living with spouse |                                  |

37. How many children do you have? \_\_\_\_\_ [Enter actual number]

38. How many children are entirely dependent on you for their livelihood? \_\_\_\_\_ [Enter actual number]

39. How many adults (excluding yourself) are entirely dependent on you for their daily livelihood? \_\_\_\_\_ [Enter actual number]

40. What is your highest academic qualifications?

- |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Doctorate degree      | 4. Bachelors degree      |
| 2. Masters degree        | 5. Other [specify] _____ |
| 3. Post graduate diploma |                          |

41. Which of the following best describes your basic monthly salary?

- |                    |                       |
|--------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. P 5 000 or less | 5. P11 001–13 000     |
| 2. P5 001–7 000    | 6. P13 001–15 000     |
| 3. P7 001–9 000    | 7. P 15 001 and above |
| 4. P 9 001–11 000  |                       |

42. Is there anything else that you would like us to know about your job [Use the space provided below so document it]

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**Thank you very much for your cooperation.**