Dynamics of Organizational Change and Employee Identity Retention in R&D Organizations

Mohammed-Aminu Sanda, PhD

Division of Industrial Work Environment
Department of Business Administration, Technology and Social Sciences
Luleå University of Technology
SE – 97187, Luleå
Sweden
E-mail: mohami@ltu.se
Telephone: +46 920 49 3024
Fax: +46 920 49 1030

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to understand the dynamics of employee identity retention and its impact on organizational change in a Research and Development organization. The role played by social embeddedness in enhancing employees’ retention of self-identities and shaping their attitudes in resisting an orientation shift of organizational values and norms from that of civil services to distorting new public management orientation was assessed. The findings showed that the employees’ resistance was influenced by their personal core values which were distrustful towards the organizations change process. Senior staff members were reluctant to forego their independence of working as individuals by adopting a teamwork culture. It is concluded that as a result of the employees holding tight to their self-identities and failing to relate to new organizational norms, the production that emerged from the commercialisation process was not in consonance to the organization’s transformation needs.

Keywords: Organizational change; Self-identity; New public management; R&D organization

Introduction

In most developing countries, research and development (R&D) organizations were structured to function alongside other state-owned parastatals as fully government subsidized agencies. Based on this perspective, they operated as state-controlled non-profit making agencies, mostly offering free products and services to SMEs. Starting from the mid-1980s, however, the orientation of these R&D organizations as fully subsidized government agencies started to change. Along this line of change,
most of them experienced technological transformations in a bid to provide them with the capacity to start generating supplementary income to cater for the reduction in the level of government subsidy they receive to support their operations. The rationale behind the changed images of the R&D organization is related to the fast-changing environment in most developing countries due to economic recession with capital taking a higher surplus of wealth. As it is noted in an Asian Development Bank (2001) report, the privatization of public sector enterprises in most developing countries has been a recurrent theme on the international development agenda since the early 1980s. Assistance for this purpose from international aid agencies has been cautious, placing priority first on supporting stabilization programs and improving existing operational efficiencies. Assistance has also taken the form of technical and financial support for institutional strengthening, enhancing autonomy, and price reforms. The consequence of this was that most governments in the developing countries were compelled by institutions such as the World Bank and other international donor agencies to pull back from their roles as the redistributors of income. An Asian Development Bank (2001) report noted that the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), and the World Bank have promoted privatization in structural policy reforms since the mid-1980s. Monitoring and evaluation of experience have provided a valuable global perspective while identifying changes in the operating environment necessary for privatization reforms. Mixed and often seemingly unpredictable results revealed early the need for a liberal macroeconomic framework, deregulation of banking, and reforms to enhance competition and enforce good governance. Appropriate policy reform for capital market development, together with better management of pension funds and other assets, has become part of the evolving process for effective privatization. This development led to key aspects of the economies of most developing countries being reformed to align with the free and competitive market economy paradigm. In this regard, as noted by Davis et al. (2000), the concept of enterprise was promoted in these developing economies and these were marked by the privatization and deregulation of government agencies. According to Davis et al, privatization is a key part of the so-called “Washington Consensus” they noted that both the IMF and the World Bank include privatization of some or all state-owned enterprises as an integral part of their structural reform packages. The World Bank is the leader in promoting privatization as an economic reform policy, but the IMF has cooperated closely with the World Bank in this regard. The majority of IMF programs in recent years have included some form of conditionality on privatization. The justification for this, according to Laban and Wolf (1993) is that privatization can lead to greater factor productivity in most cases and that the increased overall factor productivity will lead
to better growth. The conventional wisdom in this respect is that the profit incentive will spur private organizations to improve production processes in a way the government, lacking those incentives, would be unable to do. The RTOs were affected in this respect, and the consequence of their privatization is the significant reduction in the subsidy they used to receive from their governments (Mengu and Grier, 1999). The consequences of these reductions in subsidies were the emergence of continued pressure from governments for the R&D organizations to become self-income generating. This situation resulted in most developing countries making several efforts to improve the technology capacity of their R&D organizations. This was based on the conviction that the R&D organization would possess the ability to provide effective services and products to potential clients, and hence be able to generate an equivalent income to compensate for the cuts in government’s financial support to them. In this regard, there is the expectation that such public management reforms will lead to savings in public expenditure, improvement in the quality of public services, enhancement of the operations of government, and an increase in the chances that the policies which are chosen and implemented will be effective. Therefore by taking a cue from Clarke and Newman (1997) on the need to investigate this prescription in a country specific empirical research, and focusing on local circumstances (Deem, 2001), this paper investigated, a recent commercialization drive among public sector institutions in an African country. The purpose is to understand the impact of organizational and management changes that took place in the country’s R&D Organizations and the implications of shifting organizational values, and norms within the mist of strengthened, but segregated professional identities among employees. A particular focus here is to understand the role played by social embeddedness (Granovetter, 1992) in possibly shaping, resisting or distorting the intention of the R&D organization’s new public management orientation.

Literature Review

The concept of new public management (NPM) was developed across many OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) countries in the late 1970’s and early 1980’s in response to the growing concerns about bureaucratic inertia and self-serving professionals within public organizations in combination with the costs of managing the public sector by tax-paying middle class voters. In this perspective, Hood (1995) identified two associated shifts. These are the removal of differences between public and private sectors, and also a move towards greater accountability. Hood (1995) delineated the various manifestation of NPM as follows; greater disaggregation of public sector, organizations into separately managed units, enhanced competition using private sector managerial techniques, emphasizing on
‘discipline and parsimony’ in resource use, the use of greater ‘hands-on management’, adoption of measurable standards of performance, and the use of ‘pre-set output measures’. As Metcalfe and Richards (1987) have noted, the field of public management is better defined analytically than institutionally. They noted that public management is concerned with the effective functioning of whole systems of organizations and what distinguishes it from other forms of management is its explicit acknowledgement of the responsibility for dealing with structural problems at the levels of the system as a whole. Therefore, in the opinion of Pierre (1995), public administration can be conceived as the key output linkage of the state towards civil society. However, He noted that the interface between public administration and civil society is a two-way street, including public policy implementations as well as policy demands private actors towards policy-makers.

In the view of Clarke and Newman (1997), people talk about the managerial state because they want to locate managerialism as a cultural formation and a distinctive set of ideologies and practices which form one of the underpinnings of the emergent political settlement. Based on these perspectives, the practice of public administration may be interpreted as a social system existing and functioning in accordance with its own order, but on the other hand, it also depends on environmental conditions in a complex and changing society (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2000). The introduction of changes that can lead to an improvement in corporate performance and increase in productivity are paramount issues for all leaders and their success in one way or the other depend more and more on the people they lead. At the same time, individuals being led in the face of multiple responsibilities, commitments and demands face the tremendous challenge of making a meaningful and significant contribution to their organization without neglecting other important areas of their lives. Consequently, employees have realized that their overall quality of life is largely determined by their work. As such, most appear to be dissatisfied with their careers and lives. Based on this presumption, public sector organizations in both developed and developing countries have been the subjects of transformation carried out within the perspectives of new public management reforms. As Pollitt and Bouckaert (2000) noted, public management reforms consists of deliberate changes to the structures and processes of public sector organizations with the objective of getting them to run better. According to Jarzabkowski (2003), if practice is taken as the repetitive performance that leads to the attainment of recurrent, habitual or routinised accomplishment of particular actions, then it could be argued that practice brings recursiveness and adaptation into a dialectic tension in which the two are inextricably linked. Based on this perspective, practice could be said to occur in both macro and micro contexts. In the macro context,
practice occurs through the provision of commonalities of action, while in the micro context, it occurs through actions that are highly localized. The interaction between these two contexts, as Jarzabkowski (2003) argued, provide an opportunity for adaptive practice in which recursiveness is always improvised. Such adaptive practice also has a durability about it that can constrain attempts to transform activity sequences entailed in it. This durability is considered by Jarzabkowski (2003) as constituents of sedimented rules and resources that govern how to act, and could thus be viewed as a code-of-practice or even best practice. According to Jarzabkowski (2003), practice is an evolving process of social order arising from the interplay between external and internal social structure building. As Jarzabkowski (2003) explained, change is carried out within the internal social structure in interaction with the external social structure with its current of social movement which signifies the wider societal context. Therefore, in every practice there is always a process of social becoming that needs to be realized, and understanding of practice would require the penetration of the situated and localized nature of practice in both contexts (Jarzabkowski, 2003). This is because, in the discourse on community of practice (e.g., Lave and Wenger, 1991; Cook and Brown, 1999), individual thought is viewed to be essentially social. By implication, individuals are seen as developing their thoughts by interacting with the practical activities of their communities, through living and participating in its experiences over time. Practice must be seen as local and situated, arising from the moment-by-moment interactions between actors, on one hand, and between actors and the environments of their action, on the other (Suchman, 1987). Jarzabkowski (2003) noted that rather than looking for structural invariants, normative rules of conduct, or preconceived cognitive schema, therefore, practice scholars should investigate the processes whereby particular, uniquely constituted circumstances are systematically interpreted so as to render meaning shared. According to Cooper et al. (1996), organizational change represents not so much a shift from one archetype to another, but a layering of one archetype on another. Dent et al. (2007) explained that what is exposed at the surface of the organization is the result of a complex and historical process of faults and disruption, and also erosions as well as strengths of the archetype.

Materials and Methods

The study was carried out in an Africa public organization. Before gaining access to the study participants, initial contact was firstly established with the Head of the organization to know if the management was prepared to support the study by allowing unhindered access to employees from whom data could be sourced. The management, in turn, also sought a good understanding of the research purpose and
the expected learning that their organizations could derive from the findings. A short research synopsis was sent to each organization to aide their understanding of the research purpose. Based on this, a commitment of support and cooperation was received from the organization allowing unhindered access to data collection.

**Study participants**

Purposive sampling characterized by a sense of snowballing (Patton, 1990) was used to select the study participants (i.e. data sources). This was based on the researchers criteria that persons each person viewed as source of data must “have-lived” the privatization process and thus have knowledgeable insights of the changes in the work environment. In this respect, twenty employees (i.e. interviewees) were selected. These employees were identified to have played variety of key roles in their organizations’ privatization process. As such, their individual implicit beliefs on actions during the process were sourced in the interviews.

**Data collection**

The mode of understanding implied by qualitative research involves alternative conceptions of social knowledge, meaning, reality, and truth in social science research. As such, there is a move away from obtaining knowledge primarily through external observation and experimental manipulation of human subjects toward an understanding by means of conversations with the human beings to be understood (Kvale, 1996). By implication, the basic subject matter is no longer objective data to be quantified, but meaningful relations to be interpreted (Kvale, 1996). Therefore, data was collected in this study using the interview approach. This was because in the dialogue (i.e. interview conversation), the subjects (interviewees) do not only answer the questions prepared by the researcher (interviewer). They (interviewees) also had the space to formulate their own conceptions of their lived world (Kvale, 1996; Sanda, 2010). The expectation here was that the sensitivity of the interview approach and its closeness to the interviewees’ “lived world” would lead to the evolution of knowledge that could be used to understand the relative outcome of the organization’s transformation processes (Sanda, 2006). Thus the interview process created a platform based on which the interviewees answered not only the lead questions prepared for them, but also had the opportunity to formulate their own conceptions of issues in the organizations in which they worked during the interview conversation. The interviews were tape-recorded and the average time for each interview session was one hour. Duration for data collection was 2 weeks.
Data analysis

The interviews were viewed as conversations about the interviewees’ life-world, with the oral discourse transformed into texts to be interpreted hermeneutically (Kvale, 1996). Since the purpose of hermeneutical interpretation is to obtain a valid and common understanding of the meaning of a text, then hermeneutics is of double relevance to interview research. As Kvale (1996) explains, hermeneutics, firstly, elucidate the dialogue that produces the interview texts to be interpreted. Secondly, it clarifies the subsequent process of interpreting the interview texts that are produced, and which may again be conceived as a dialogue or a conversation with the text. In this respect therefore, the recorded interviews were transcribed and scripted (Kvale, 1996). The validity of the scripts generated for all the interviewees was established by crossing-checking with each interviewee. An interpretive description qualitative approach (Thorne et al. 1997; Brazier et al. 2008; Sanda, 2011) was then used to analyze the scripts generated from the interviews. Using this approach, the experiences of the interviewees during the transformation of activities in their respective organizations are described and interpreted, but without reconfiguring them into a more highly interpretive form, such as the theoretical framework that is created in a grounded theory approach. Instead, the findings were made to stay closer to the words of the interviewees. It described their experiences and at the same time captured the meaning they attributed to these experiences (Brazier et al., 2008; Sanda 2010).

Results

The results are analyzed from the perspectives of the following two themes; (i) path towards Commercialisation, (ii) Institutional restructuring, and (iii) Game-play between new norms and identity retention

Path towards commercialisation

The organization’s commercialisation process emanated from a decision by the country’s Government to cut down on its yearly subvention to all government R&D agencies. This decision was a result of the economic recession in most developing countries which necessitated the privatisation of most government agencies. The government’s expectation was that the organization must acquire the requisite competence to generate income on its own. In order for the organization to be able to align itself towards its new orientation, it undertook to transform its organizational activity system by implementing the RTO best management practices (as a modelled new solution). Thus, the commercialization of the organization, which is the umbrella
body of fourteen research institutes, was initiated under the government’s Private
Sector Development Project (PSDP). This was a World Bank-financed project which
aimed at restructuring and commercializing the operations of the organization’s
secretariat to enable it provide technical support to industry and answer to the needs
of the private sector. The objective was to enable the organization help raise the
technological and productive capabilities of local industries and enhance their
competitiveness. The organization’s commercialization was also facilitated by the
Capacity Development and Utilization Project (CDUP) which was supported by the
United Nations Development Program. This was to enable the organization
commercialize science and technology information through the forging of linkages
with the micro, small and medium scale enterprises at the downstream levels of the
construction, non-traditional exports and tourism sectors.

**Institutional restructuring**

Two government project initiatives constituted the platform for the introduction of the
public management reform concept in the organization. This reform consisted of
deliberate changes to the structures and processes of the organization with the
objective of getting it to run better. In this regard, new structures and programs were
put in place to ensure commercialization of research. Firstly, a Central Business
Development Unit (CBDU) was established and headed by a commercial manager.
The function of this unit was to coordinate the commercialization activities of all the
Institutes under the organization as well as to serve as a focal point and referred center
for clients. Secondly, Business Development Units (BDUs) were established at all
the institutes under the organization. The role of the BDUs was to undertake periodic
client needs assessment surveys and liaise with the CBDU in such matters as
partnership agreements and commercialization projects. Thirdly, a Central
Commercialization Monitoring Committee chaired by the organization’s head was set
up to coordinate the work of all the individual Institutes under the organization. It
was revealed in the interviews that these institutional restructuring generated tension
between the staff and the management.

*To be quite honest, the organization is not a rules-driven organization
anymore. You occasionally have some people who argue that there are
so many rules and constraints in the organization. I think the rules that
are guiding our operations now are the old rules which have been
adopted into the new system. They have never been changed. In fact,
they are not consistent with the way we are supposed to function now.
If we still continue to have confusion about the structure of the*
organization, then how can we really get a clear picture of the division of labour? I think the current management structure is not right.

The emergence of such a development created a platform for “fault-finding” exchanges between government technocrats and the affected staff members of the organization. This gave rise to a scenario whereby the government continued to point its fingers at the organization’s staff for lack of success in the commercialization effort. In the same vein, the organization’s staff also pointed their finger at the government for lack of success.

**Game play between new norms and identity retention**

Despite the attempt to introduce the best practices for business development in the organization, the rules that prevailed were shaped by civil service codes which lacked the requisite flexibility to relate to the requirements of the commercialization efforts. The consequence of this development was that the character of governance in the organization continued to be strongly influenced by the bureaucratic management approach underlined by an organizational structure that remained vertical and hierarchical (based on job description). This observation was opposite to the requirement of the best practices for organizational management which opted for a project-oriented management style (based on objectives). This showed that despite the provision of specific guidelines in the best management practices to enhance the organization’s commercialization effort, its organizational structure and governing rules basically remained vertically hierarchical and highly bureaucratic. The retention of the old management structure also made it difficult for the organization to implement the best practice for personnel management which required inputs from managers and the workers alike. The consequence of this, as highlighted in the interviews, was the creation of distinct class groups within the staff membership, and which situation compounded the management’s difficulty.

*When it comes to the issue of collaboration, I get disappointed. I still think that we have a long way to go in this direction. Whenever you are, say, part of a team in a project, it is very difficult to send your message across to the rest of the team members. Now let us say the project manager from another unit manages that team, but for the unit manager here, those people are still his. So, somewhere along the line, there is going to be conflict, because one will expect them to do something here, but they will end up busily doing something there.*
There is also this thing you see in the team members, thinking that the project is for this unit and not for that unit. So the system does not encourage networking.

The organization’s employees were classified into three main groups whose distinct identities were shaped by the hierarchical management structure. These distinct groups were the management team, senior staff (i.e. researchers/scientist) and junior staff (i.e. technical and administrative support personnel). The result of such distinction was the creation of tension among the three different groups due to their constrained existence. This tension was underscored by the senior staff members most of whom perceived their junior counterparts to be undisciplined and not well-trained on the fundamentals of work ethics. Even among those who expressed such view, there were others who also held the opinion that some of their own colleagues tolerated such acts of indiscipline, and even encouraged them to some extent, by refusing to sanction junior staff members viewed as offenders. In the same vein, some of the middle-level staff members also perceived themselves as being subjected to bias when it came to the issue of job status. The realization here was that the expected input for the best practice in personnel management, especially from the junior staff members during the commercialization was absent. Additionally, the prevalence of this tension led to the generation of mistrust as well as the fear of intimidation among the junior staff members within the organization. This mistrust was so deep-rooted between the different groups to the extent that it rendered the rules underlined by the best practice for business development inapplicable. The relevant structures for this practice were created, but the attempts by the organization’s management to make them institutional were stalled. As exemplified in the interviews, this has to do with the senior staff members resisting the new business rule that required a corporate business development group to handle the organization’s awareness and market strategic planning. The senior staff members argued that, by the nature of the outlined structure for the business development strategy, their control over the direction of research activity in the organization would be diminished. Therefore, the consequent disturbances that emerged as a result of the integration of a significant aspect of the organization’s old rules and the business element of the best management practices did impact negatively on the ability of the organization’s to commercialize.

There is no trust in the working environment. There is also no commitment to the organization’s objectives by the staff. All these have arisen because there is nothing like a new organizational culture with

 ISSN 2076-9202
which the staff could have themselves identified. We are not integrated. We do not have inter-functional teams. Each team is defending its own unit within its own department. Every department head is defending his department. We are not working as one. I saw a copy of the recent strategic plan and I brushed through it, because I am not part of the management that wrote it. I foresee a problem for it to succeed, because the organization still has the same mind-set, the same culture, and the same leaders. I was thinking that maybe, such a strategic plan should have come out after the organization has revived itself. Now we are having these solutions, and for what problems, nobody can understand.

The incompatibility between the activity systems of the senior staff members and their junior colleagues was a result of the historically accumulating structural tensions that had accumulated both within and between their respective activity systems. The activities of the senior staff members were guided by the old object of the organization’s activity system (i.e. carry out scientific research to improve the country’s technological base). This contrasted with the activities of the junior staff members whose actions were guided by the object of the new object of the organization’s activity system, (i.e., commercialize and generate income). The activity system for the senior staff members showed the existence of a cumulated tension between them as a group of scientists and the new rules that emphasized teamwork in the organization’s commercialization process. The indication here was that the senior staff members showed great reluctance to accept change, especially by foregoing their previous independence and partnering others in the community, including their junior colleagues. They rather continued to show their preference for working as individuals as compared to teamwork. This therefore, indicated the existence of structural tension between them, as a group, and the corresponding division of labor that was to have prevailed during the commercialization process. In the same vein, similar tension prevailed between them and other groups in the community. There was a general consensus among the interviewees that the quality of communication within the organization was poor. The breakdown in the information flow process and feedback mechanism within the organization portrayed the inefficiency and ineffectiveness of the communication system. The management failed to enhance regular interaction with the staff members during the commercialization process. This contributed to the segmentation of the workforce, leading to the creation of the tensions between the different groups and consequently creating the disturbances between the different elements of the management’s activity
system.

Discussion

The results generally highlighted a perceptive shift by organization’s staff members towards the commercialization process. This perceptive shift was influenced by the conflict that arose between the staff member’s self-core values and the organization’s professed values for the commercialization process. This culminated in the development of mistrust from the organization’s key stakeholders, especially the government as external stakeholder, and organizational employees as the internal stakeholders. The rationale for such mistrust could be related to the observation that activities in organizations are realized as individuals and cooperative actions, as well as chains and networks of such actions, both of which are related to each other by the same overall objective and motive (Kuutti, 1995; Sanda, 2011). Such mistrust was made visible due to the abilities of the actors to distinguish one activity from another according to their motive (Sanda, 2011). As it was highlighted in the results, the emergence of the conflicts and their accompanying disturbances were a result of the integration of a significant aspect of the organization’s old institutional rules with the new ones entailed in the best management practices. The disturbances appeared in the form of both structural and human tensions and were able to impact negatively on the ability of the organization to commercialize. This is because the goal of an action is a conscious mental representation of the outcome to be achieved with its function being the orientation of the action (Leontiev, 1974). Thus the actions are of actors in the organization constituted fundamental components of their activities which were subordinated to self induced goals other than organizational-set goals (Sanda, 2011). The retention of the organization’s old institutional rules underscores the theoretical position that such actions are normally done, because it leads to the strengthening of government’s control over the bureaucracy entailed in the administration of the affected organizations (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2000). Such retention also leads to the freeing of public officials from those bureaucratic constraints which normally inhibit their capacity to manage government policies and programs, as well as enhancing its accountability to the legislature and the citizenry. The disturbances and tensions in the activity system of the senior staff of the organization could be attributed to their reluctance in relating to the best practices for project management and business development, both of which defined the characteristics of the division of labor. This created the atmosphere that resulted in further tension between them and other groups in the organization. Thus in contrast to the synergy expected to emanate within the organization’s community, what emerged
was structural tensions within the organization which gave rise to the senses of distrust among different groups. This observation could be attributed to the continued influence that the organization’s past history, which was shaped by the civil service culture, had on the staff members’ attitude. It also reflected the inability of the organization’s management to infuse the new and acceptable organizational culture (values and norms) shaped by the best management practices being implemented, and which was an important requirement of the commercialization program. As Jarzabkowski (2003) explained, practice occurs not only in macro contexts that provide commonalities of action, but also in micro contexts in which action is highly localized, and the interaction between these contexts provides an opportunity for adaptive practice. Jarzabkowski views “practice” to be an evolving process of social order arising from the interplay between external and internal social structure building. In this context, external structure is the wider societal context, in which there is a current of social movement, and change is carried out within the internal context in interaction with the external context. Thus a process of social becoming could be said to have emerged in the organization through as a result of the various occurrences, among the different actors. Evidence of this was the senior staff members holding on to their old self-identities (Giddens, 1991) as individuals with the power and authority to dictate the direction of research in the organization. As individuals, the senior staff members portrayed the three aspects of the self as underlined by Harre (1998). In this regard, they could be perceived as each portraying individual sense of self as a singularity in the way they projected the totality of their personal attributes based on the way they feel to seem as individuals in the organization as compared to the other category of staff. The scenario showed that social identification among the organization’s staff is categorical (Taylor, 1998) rather than collective (Jenkins, 2008). It also underscores Clarke and Newman (1997) argument that people talk about the managerial state because they want to locate managerialism as a cultural formation and a distinctive set of ideologies and practices which form one of the underpinnings of the emergent political settlement. Based on this perspective, administering the organization as a privatizing public institution requires that it is perceived as a social system that has to exist and function in accordance with its own order. This because in a ‘community of practice’ individual thought is essentially social and is developed in interaction with the practical activities of a community, through living and participating in its experiences over time (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Cook & Brown, 1999). Thus, in order to understand practice, it is important to move beyond institutional similarities to penetrate the situated and localized nature of practice in particular contexts (Jarzabkowski, 2003). Practice is seen as local and situated, arising from the moment-by-moment interactions between actors, on one hand, and between
actors and the environments of their action, on the other (Suchman, 1987). Jarzabkowski pointed out that rather than looking for structural invariants, normative rules of conduct, or preconceived cognitive schema, therefore, practice scholars should investigate “the processes whereby particular, uniquely constituted circumstances are systematically interpreted so as to render meaning shared”. This view reinforces an earlier view of Cooper et al. (1996) who argued dialectically that organizational change represents not so much a shift from one archetype to another, but a layering of one archetype on another. Thus what is exposed at the surface of the organization is the result of a complex and historical process of faults and disruption, and also erosions as well as strengths of the archetype (Dent et al., 2007). As Dent et al. (2007) noted, there are parallels here with ‘path dependency’ (Wilsford, 1994) although that approach has the advantage of being much more self-consciously historical in assuming that later events (such as adapting to NPM) will be shaped by the earlier ones. An issue of interest that emerges from Dent’s et al. (2007) view relates to the success-prediction of such later organizational event as the adaption of NPM. In agreement with Ravenaugh (1994), implementation is the challenge that comes at the end of all new (and old) methods/practices for improving organizations. But also arguing along the lines of Pollitt and Bouckaert (2000), such an existence might also need to depend on the organization’s environmental conditions in as influenced by the complexity and the changing character of the society in which it exist.

Conclusion

The study has shown that the perception of the staff members towards the commercialisation process was influenced by their personal core values as against those of the organizations. The institutional structures that prevailed lacked the flexibility to enhance change in the organization. This culminated into employee groups’ becoming distrustful and suspicion of the organizations change process. The senior staff members showed great reluctance to accept change, especially by foregoing their previous independence and partnering others in the community, including their junior colleagues. They continued to show their preference for working as individuals as compared to teamwork. The organization also allowed its civil service culture to influence the staff members’ attitude. This made it impossible for the organization to introduce new and acceptable organizational culture (values and norms) which was an important requirement of its commercialisation. These developments made governance in the organization a difficult task. It is therefore concluded that as a result of the employees holding tight to their self-identities and
failing to relate to new organizational norms, the production that emerged from the commercialisation process was not in consonance to the organization’s transformation needs. This was a result of the failure of the organization’s management to ensure the complete overhaul of the previous system prior to starting the commercialisation programme.

References


University Press: Cambridge.
