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# An Organizational Diagnosis for Change Readiness: A Case of the Department of Special Education Government of Punjab

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**Abstract:** Organizational diagnosis (OD) is a comprehensive review of an organization's objectives, resource allocation, and utilization to achieve those objectives. This study employed OD to enhance the effectiveness of the Department of Special Education within the Government of Punjab. A questionnaire based on Weisbord's six-box organizational model called the Organizational Diagnostic Questionnaire (ODQ), was administered to N=1200 participants, consisting of heads of top, middle, and bottom tiers at district and tehsil levels of special education schools, centers, and the main office. Out of these, 506 participants voluntarily completed the ODQ survey. The study findings indicated that the employees of the department possess a good understanding of the organization's objectives. However, there is a lack of opportunities for employee participation in departmental discussions, centralized decision-making, irrational task distribution, and unsupportive allocation of human resources. Additionally, there is poor communication, unsatisfactory promotions, incentives, and a lack of knowledge sharing among employees, as well as poor inter-relationships, conflicts, and ineffective help-seeking mechanisms. The study also revealed low readiness for change in the organization. Respondents' opinions differed significantly based on their qualifications, job experience, years served, and gender. To improve the department's capacity to absorb change, the study recommends enhancing collaboration and inter-departmental communication, soliciting comprehensive input from all tiers, and promoting employee participation, supportive supervision, and communication. The study contributes to the body of knowledge on OD and highlights the need for improved communication, collaboration, and employee participation, as well as a supportive and supervisory support system to enhance the effectiveness of organizations.

**Keywords:** Organizational Diagnosis; Special Education; Readiness for change; Weisbord's model

## 1. Introduction

Employee retention is influenced by six key elements: people and culture, workplace appreciation, meaningful benefits, continued training, the workplace environment, and alignment of goals and values [1]. Effective human capital management involves the use of systems and tools to ensure the right individuals, possessing the right attitudes and skills, are in the right place at the right time [2], [3]. Organizational readiness for change is a complex, multi-level construct that can vary in degree at the individual, group, unit, department, or organizational level [4], [5]. Such readiness can be conceptualized, evaluated, and studied at any of these levels of analysis [6]. However, organizational change readiness is not a uniform, multi-level construct. Five crucial factors to

consider when assessing preparedness areas include leadership, culture, system, organization, and personnel [4]. An organization is more likely to initiate and sustain significant changes when readiness levels are high [7], [8]. Employees who are open to change tend to exhibit greater effort, resilience in the face of obstacles, and cooperative behaviors [8].

A careful analysis of public organizations' cultures is necessary to overcome bureaucratic inertia, high formalization, rigorous departmentalization, and centralization of government. The culture of public sector organizations is complex, particularly in areas where corruption, bureaucracy, bad governance, political and individual influences, a lack of resources, prejudice, favoritism, and a lack of protection for public rights are common factors [9], [10], [11], [12]. The diagnosis of culture is extremely important and in great demand in literature, particularly when it comes to public organizations that operate in complex and compelling social, political, and economic environments [13]. Scholars and practitioners also affirm that examining the culture of public organizations is a very complex and challenging task [14]. It is well-known that any organizational development initiative through a change of culture fails dramatically because the culture diagnosis is either ignored or not understood [15]–[17]. By the way, empirical findings of the cultural diagnosis are either nonexistent or sketchy in the public sector.

Organizational Diagnosis (OD) is an effective technique to analyze an organization and identify gaps between its existing and desired performance and how it might reach its objectives [18], [19]. OD has emerged as a unique or significant technique used in the organizational development process in recent years [20]. The technique is used to assess people's cognition, feeling, and behavior patterns in relation to the organizations in which they work. The overarching goal is to systematically identify areas for growth or opportunity, pinpoint the factors that influence the underutilization of human resources, and determine the interventions to be implemented to maximize performance both individually and collectively. Therefore, any organizational development program must start with a diagnosis since it tries to change the efficacy and efficiency of the organization's systems, processes, and positions, which in turn affects the attitudes and behaviors of its human resources. Each diagnostic procedure should be centered on enhancing institutional capacity, which will enable the Human Resources department to function as a strategic agent, identifying, promoting, and evaluating the essential adjustments that affect performance, beyond the person. As such, any organizational diagnosis process or approach should be viewed as a strategic endeavor [21], [22].

OD involves a study of the entire organization in terms of its objectives, resources, the allocation and utilization of these resources for the achievement of its objectives, as well as its dynamic interaction trends with the external environment [23]. In today's dynamic economic, social, and political landscape, organizations must adapt to change quickly and effectively. Skillfully determining the direction of change is crucial for achieving success and staying relevant [24], [25]. Organizational diagnosis is a crucial step in identifying and addressing organizational problems, as well as selecting the most suitable interventions, whether the change is planned or emergent [26]. Without a rigorous diagnostic process, organizational leaders and consultants run the risk of addressing the wrong issues or selecting the wrong solutions [23], [25].

It is worth noting that scholars and practitioners recognize the complexity of organizational diagnosis and emphasize the importance of carefully selecting the appropriate diagnostic model or approach. The effectiveness of OD depends largely on the quality and rigor of the diagnostic process. Therefore, practitioners must be well-versed in various diagnostic models and techniques and be able to customize their approach to suit the unique needs of each organization [27], [28].

## 2. Study Rationale

Organizational analysis is a powerful tool for enhancing the overall efficiency of an organization. By conducting a thorough diagnosis based on the analysis, actionable steps can be taken to improve various aspects of the organization. These steps may include optimizing administrative processes, introducing new and effective management systems, reducing wasteful expenditure, implementing time-saving measures, revising personnel policies to enhance employee motivation, restructuring certain departments, providing training, eliminating redundant structures and procedures, and

enhancing the general health of the organization. By implementing these measures, organizations can become more efficient, competitive, and successful in today's rapidly changing business environment.

### **3. Education of Special Needs in Pakistan**

The provision of special education aims to cater to the needs of children with various types of impairments, ranging from emotional, behavioral, cognitive, intellectual, hearing, vision, and speech, to learning disabilities [27]. The definition of special educational needs varies across different countries, but in general, it refers to those learners who face learning difficulties that are greater than those of their peers of the same age [28]. In Pakistan, at the time of its independence, the educational and rehabilitation services for disabled children were almost non-existent [29], [30]. However, recognizing the significance of special education, the Government of Punjab has identified it as a high-priority area for development [29], [33], and has taken various measures to enhance the sector's welfare. These measures include increasing enrollment, employing more teachers, improving the quality of facilities, adopting best practices, providing vocational training, and establishing an international rehabilitation center [33]. In 2003, the Department of Special Education was established as an independent body, and since then, it has achieved noteworthy results in improving the quality of services for special students. The Department has developed a comprehensive plan to ensure stable financial flows, maximize the coverage of special students, prepare policies on education for children with disabilities, and upgrade the system of special education institutions to provide quality services, including skill development, socializing, economic empowerment, recreation, and sports, at the doorstep of disabled students [33]. The goal of the Department is to enable special students to become self-supporting and valuable members of society despite their disabilities. Special Education, which is distinct from general education, involves providing education to children with special needs [34]. It necessitates a comprehensive approach that covers the entire process from planning to monitoring [35]. Specific learning challenges include visual and hearing impairments, slow and difficult learning processes, as well as physical and mental handicaps [36]. The Special Education Department, a part of the Government of Punjab, provides a variety of services to school-aged special needs children through a network of 303 institutions [37]. In addition to schools and vocational training centers, the Department also offers services for the production of Braille books, pre-service teacher education leading to B.Ed. and M.Ed. in Special Education, in-service teacher training for special education teachers, and screening services for students in general education institutions, and provision of special aids such as cochlear implants. Furthermore, the Department offers inclusive education through the integration of children with mild disabilities into mainstream schools [38]. To address the significant challenges of educating all children with special needs, the Department intends to adopt a three-pronged strategy of inclusion, mainstreaming, and segregation, in order to enable children with special needs to live high-priority independent lives.

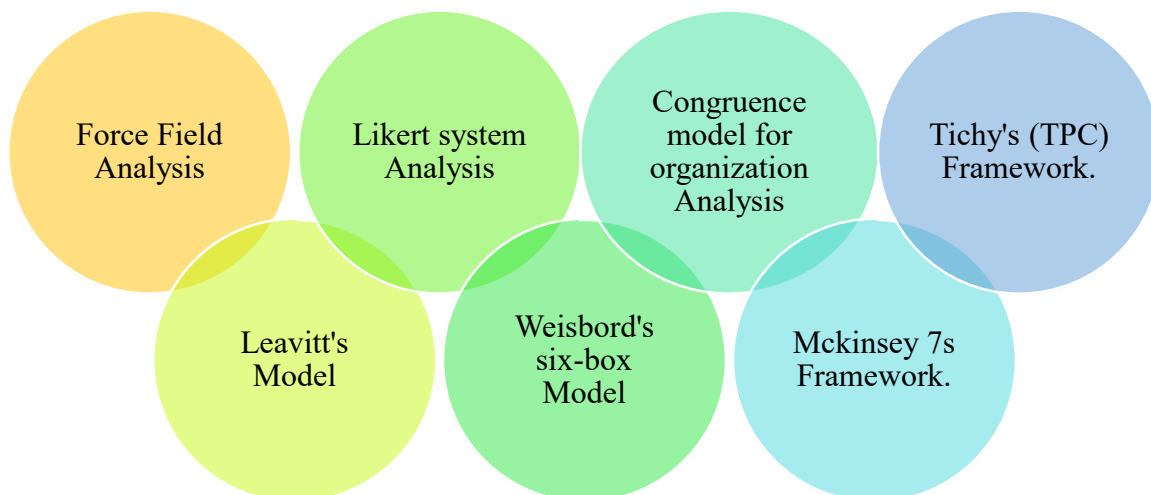
### **4. Mandate of Special Education Department**

The goal of the organization is to provide educational opportunities for all children with special educational needs (SEN) to help them reach their full potential as productive members of society. The mission is to ensure that all children with SEN can utilize their abilities and skills to become positive and constructive citizens. To achieve this goal, quality education, vocational training, and psychiatric and rehabilitative treatments are offered to children with SEN in specialized settings and supportive environments. The department's core policy objectives are to provide quality education, need-based training, rehabilitative services, assistive devices, and equitable access to education for children with SEN. The department is committed to providing a safe emotional and physical environment for students with SEN. To achieve objectives, the department collects reliable, updated, and relevant data on disabled children. The department also takes steps such as the capacity building of staff, improving emotional stability and physical access of Persons with Disabilities (PWD), targeting remote areas to cater to disabled students for schooling, extending rehabilitative practices,

collaborating with other allied departments including the private sector and civil society to enhance service delivery, and gradually increasing the structure of the special education department [39].

## 5. Organizational Diagnostic Models and Techniques

Diagnostic models are primarily used to help people comprehend the functioning of an organization and enable effective action within it by reducing complexity [40]-[42]. Various diagnostic models have been developed to facilitate organizational diagnosis, such as:



The diagnostic models play a significant role in simplifying reality and providing an understanding of the organization's effective action [40]-[42]. All models are based on the Open System Theory (OST) [43], [44], which focuses on the relationship between organizations and the environment they operate in. Katz and Kahn (1978) applied the concept of OST to analyze how organizations adapt to changes in environmental conditions, with or without information processing.

For the diagnosis of the management practices of the Department of Special Education, Weisbord's Six-Box Model was employed. This model uses six categories, namely purposes, structure, relationships, rewards, leadership, and helpful mechanisms, to perform organizational diagnosis [43]. Various perspectives can be applied while analyzing organizations, depending on the analysis's purpose and the professional background of the analysts [45], [46].

## 6. Objectives

1. To investigate how employees, perceive the goals of the Department.
2. To examine the administrative structure of the department in place to achieve its objectives.
3. To explore the leadership practices related to guidance, collaboration, and supervision of administrative staff.
4. To examine the relationships among employees and how they impact the achievement of organizational goals.
5. To assess the system of employee efforts and rewards.
6. To investigate the availability of help-seeking mechanisms in the department.
7. To evaluate the department's ability to adapt and respond to changes.

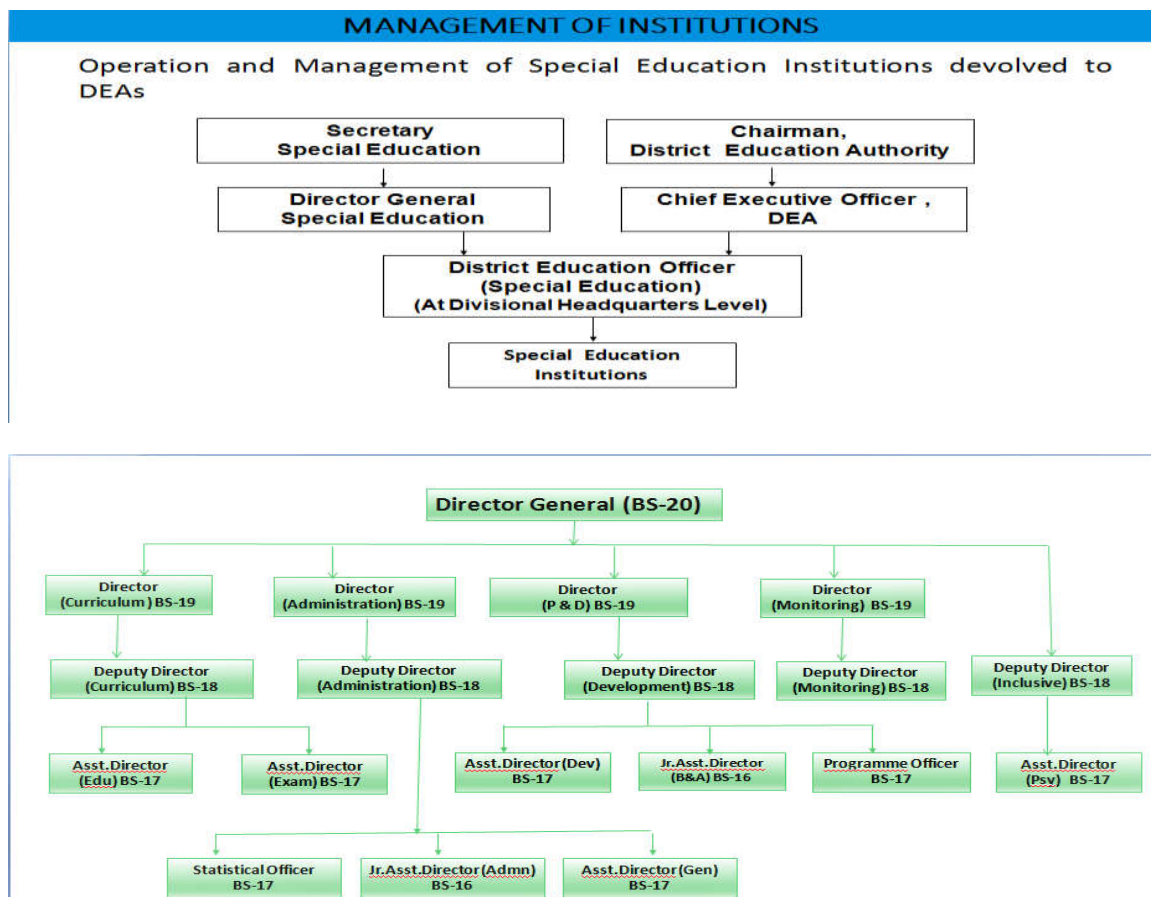
## 7. Methodology

To assess the organizational functioning of the Department of Special Education, we utilized Preziosi's OD scale and expanded on Weisbord's six-box model [47], [48]. Data was collected using a questionnaire distributed to managerial staff. The survey-feedback instrument used was the Organizational Diagnostic Questionnaire (ODQ), based on Weisbord's Six-Box Organizational Model (1976), which measures seven variables: purposes, structure, relationships, rewards, leadership, helpful mechanisms, and attitude toward change [49]. In addition to the six areas covered by Weisbord's model, we included the last variable to assess the readiness of the department for change

[50]. The ODQ is a systematic approach for analyzing the relationships among the variables that influence how an organization is managed [51]. While the ODQ measures the informal aspects of the system, it may be necessary to gather information on the formal aspects and examine the gaps between the two [52]–[54]. The questionnaire can be used alone or in conjunction with other data collection techniques such as interviews and observations [48].

## 8. Sample and Sampling

We gathered data from personnel holding managerial and administrative roles in the Government of Punjab's Department of Special Education. This staff consisted of individuals at various levels of hierarchy, including heads of departments at district and tehsil level special education schools/centers. The total staff population is estimated to be around 1,200. Out of which, we received voluntary responses from 506 participants through the ODQ survey.



## 9. Results

Table 1.1. Descriptive results

Sr. No.	Indicator	N	Min	Max-	Mean	Std.Dev.
1	Purpose	506	1	5	3.26	1.315
2	Structure	506	1	5	3.06	1.445
3	Leadership	506	1	5	2.11	1.353
4	Relationships	506	1	5	2.19	1.613
5	Rewards	506	1	5	2.44	1.681
6	Helpful Mechanism	506	1	5	1.78	1.464
7	Attitude Toward Change	506	1	5	2.24	1.431



<b>Total</b>	<b>2.44</b>	<b>.587</b>
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The results predicted that various factors e.g., leadership, relationships, rewards, mechanism for help-seeking, and change acceptance is poor. The overall mean score shows that administrative functions toward change acceptance are poor.

**Table 1.2.** *Comparison of opinion on the basis of variation in job Experience of respondents*

Factor	N	Std. Error	F	Sig.
Purpose	506	.05434	15.826	.001
Structure	506	.05873	13.538	.001
Leadership	506	.07318	13.638	.002
Relationships	506	.05434	14.001	.003
Rewards	506	.03840	11.348	.006
Helpful Mechanism	506	.05815	16.387	.008
Attitude Toward Change	506	.07318	14.857	.002

**Table 1.3.** *Comparison of opinion on the basis of qualification*

Factor	N	Std. Error	F	Sig.
Purpose	506	.03605	15.826	.003
Structure	506	.17130	17.538	.332
Leadership	506	.03605	13.638	.003
Relationships	506	.17255	11.001	.001
Rewards	506	.17130	14.348	.002
Helpful Mechanism	506	.17255	17.387	.002
Attitude Toward Change	506	.03605	10.857	.073

**Table 1.4.** *Comparison of opinion on the basis of Salary*

Factor	N	Std. Error	F	Sig.
Purpose	506	.02646	15.826	.094
Structure	506	.12573	16.538	.000
Leadership	506	.02646	17.638	.094
Relationships	506	.12665	16.001	.000
Rewards	506	.12573	14.348	.000
Helpful Mechanism	506	.12665	16.387	.000
Attitude Toward Change	506	.02646	10.857	.094

Table 1.5. *Comparison of opinion differences on the basis of training attended*

Factor	N	Std. Error	F	Sig.
Purpose	506	.02646	15.826	.094
Structure	506	.12573	16.538	.000
Leadership	506	.02646	17.638	.094
Relationships	506	.12665	16.001	.000
Rewards	506	.12573	14.348	.000
Helpful Mechanism	506	.12665	16.387	.000
Attitude Toward Change	506	.02646	10.857	.094

Table 1.6. *Comparison of opinion on the basis of gender differences*

Indicators-	Gender	N	Mean	S. D-	t	Df	Sig.
Purpose	Male	237	3.26	.331	-1.45	506	.058
	Female	269	3.06	.408			
Structure	Male	237	2.11	.177	1.63	506	.052
	Female	269	2.19	.344			
Leadership	Male	237	2.44	.177	1.63	506	.002
	Female	269	1.78	.344			
Relationships	Male	237	2.24	.177	1.63	506	.001
	Female	269	2.90	.344			
Rewards	Male	237	3.06	.177	1.63	506	.002
	Female	269	2.11	.344			
Helpful Mechanism	Male	237	2.19	.177	1.63	506	.004
	Female	269	2.44	.344			
Attitude Toward Change	Male	237	1.78	.177	1.63	506	.001
	Female	269	2.24	.344			

## 10. Discussions

### *Purpose*

The objectives of the organization are clearly defined and most of the employees agreed with organizational goals. They understand the purpose of the establishment of the department. Whereas, input from employees regarding major decision-making is not sought. The decision-making is centralized in most cases. Statements of the organization's vision and mission are thought to be essential elements of its strategic management strategy [55]. It is applicable to all different sizes and types of companies, including public and private, for-profit and nonprofit, and international ones [56]. A well-written vision and mission statement would distinguish one organization from another by emphasizing the unique characteristics that made it stand out from the rivalry [57].

### *Structure*

The deployment of human resources is determined by the needs and is committed to achieving the organization's goals. However, the distribution of job tasks is rather illogical. Human resource allocation is a little off. Because of the centralized recruitment procedure, the majority of personnel are from the Lahore district, and they frequently wish to relocate or have been relocated to their native station. This causes an imbalance in the distribution of human resources. A well-structured

organization allows your company to perform optimally, resulting in improved communication and faster growth [58].

#### *Leadership*

Responses revealed that there is a less supportive and supervisory support system in the department. Most of the upper tier use an authoritative approach to follow the tasks. Organizational leadership is a management style that entails leaders contributing to the formulation of the organization's strategic goals and inspiring team members to successfully perform duties in support of those goals [59], [60]. A critical management role is to direct an organization's resources toward enhanced efficiency and goal achievement [61]. Effective leaders establish clear objectives while also inspiring and directing their teams to achieve the organization's aims. Organizational leaders may develop teamwork, inspire cooperation, and establish realistic goals by maximizing the specific skill set present in their team [62].

#### *Relationships*

There is a lack of harmonious inter-relationships among employees and the communication or collaboration for task discussion was found to be poor. There is no such system that supports collaboration and inter-relationship building among employees. It has been found that conflicts at various levels exist in the system. Workplace relationships are vital, especially in this day and age of increasing telecommuting and digital communication [63]. According to studies, having genuine, trustworthy relationships at work enhances job happiness, which increases engagement, productivity, and employee retention, and even lowers healthcare costs [64], [65]. A great leader uses these connections to collaborate with and influence others in order to achieve shared goals and develop a shared vision [65]. This capacity allows leaders to affect meaningful change and can be an important component of team building [66].

#### *Rewards*

Most of the respondents are unsatisfied with promotions, task-based rewards, and incentives. Through an effective compensation system, employees should be encouraged to perform harder and to align their goals with those of the organization for which they work [67]. The current trend toward performance-based incentive schemes is meant to motivate and reward those who work the hardest [68]. Strategic incentive management is critical because it helps employees feel valued for their contributions to the organization [69].

#### *Helpful Mechanism*

The findings showed that employees don't share their knowledge too much. Employee relationships on the job appeared to be weak. The system for asking for aid is inadequate overall. Seeking help lets to learn how to deal with issues that can have an impact on your well-being and mental fitness. You will provide your best effort even if you are under pressure [70].

#### *Attitude Toward Change*

The department is not well towards accepting change. The policies are static and bound organizations to go between the lines. Individual employees cannot adopt any of the emerging trends on their own. The overall results show that the readiness for change level of this organization is pretty low. The causes of organizational transformation can vary widely [71]. Successful change management depends on a number of factors, such as strong leadership and a common vision, strategic management, accountability, purpose, teamwork, respect, and other people's support, as well as open communication, problem-solving skills, active participation, and information flow [72]. In order to explain why change occurs (driving forces of change), how change will occur (stages, scale, timing, and process), and what will occur change models must be explained in depth [73]. The Weisbord six-box model, one of many outstanding models [74] to highlight and focus on the



organization's internal management, provided a good guideline for figuring out what internal factors need to be acquired by people or organizations in order to facilitate the adaptation of organizational change management practices at the operational level. The need for change was previously mentioned, and this model helped to conceptualize that need.

## 11. Summary

According to the survey results, administrative functions in the organization are weak when it comes to change acceptability. All aspects, including purpose, structure, leadership, relationships, rewards, helpful mechanism, and attitude toward change, had mean ratings lower than the neutral point of 3. This suggests that respondents have a negative attitude towards the administrative responsibilities associated with change acceptance in the organization. Inferential analysis was used to see if there were any significant changes in respondents' attitudes depending on employment experience, qualification, remuneration, training received, and gender. The results of the analysis showed that there were significant differences in the opinions of the respondents on all factors except for structure and attitude toward change based on their qualifications. There were also significant differences in the opinions of the respondents on all factors based on their salary and training attended. The results showed significant gender differences in the opinions of the respondents on all factors except for structure. Females had a more positive opinion about the administrative functions towards change acceptance in the organization compared to males. The difference in opinions between males and females was statistically significant for all factors except for structure. The results suggest that the administrative functions towards change acceptance in the organization need improvement. The findings also suggest that organizations should focus on providing appropriate training to employees and offer competitive salaries to retain qualified employees. Additionally, the findings suggest that organizations need to focus on gender diversity and inclusion to ensure that there is no gender bias in administrative functions related to change acceptance. Overall, the study provides insights into the perceptions of employees towards the administrative functions related to change acceptance in organizations, which can be used by organizations to improve their administrative functions and achieve better results in managing change.

The results of this study have important implications for managers and leaders in organizations. The findings suggest that organizations need to pay more attention to leadership development, relationship building, reward systems, and mechanisms for providing help and support to employees during change processes. These findings also suggest that managers need to be aware of the impact of demographic factors on employees' attitudes towards change and should design strategies to address these differences. For example, managers can provide targeted training and development programs to employees with different levels of experience and education to help them better understand and adapt to organizational changes.

The study contributes to the body of knowledge on organizational change by providing empirical evidence on the importance of leadership, relationships, rewards, and helpful mechanisms in promoting change acceptance in the workplace. The findings of this study can help researchers and practitioners to develop more effective strategies for managing organizational change. The study also highlights the importance of considering demographic factors when designing interventions to promote change acceptance in organizations. Future research could explore the effectiveness of different strategies for promoting change acceptance in different demographic groups and contexts. As this study has revealed that the administrative functions toward change acceptance are poor in the organization under study. The findings highlight the importance of leadership, relationship, rewards, and helpful mechanisms in promoting change acceptance in the workplace. The results also suggest that demographic factors such as job experience, qualification, salary, and training attendance have a significant impact on employees' attitudes toward organizational change. The study has important implications for managers and leaders in organizations and contributes to the body of knowledge on organizational change by providing empirical evidence on the importance of leadership, relationships, rewards, and helpful mechanisms in promoting change acceptance in the workplace.

## 12. Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the organizational diagnosis conducted in the Department of special education, it was determined that employees are well-informed about the purpose of the organization; however, their input regarding major decision-making is not sought, as the decision-making process is predominantly centralized. Additionally, the distribution of work tasks is found to be irrational, and the allocation of human resources tends to be deviated due to the centralized recruitment system, leading to most employees arriving from the Lahore district and seeking to move or transfer to their native stations. The supervisory support system in the department is also deemed to be inadequate, with most upper tiers utilizing an authoritative approach towards task-following, causing a lack of harmonious inter-relationships and poor communication or collaboration among employees. It was observed that conflicts exist at various levels in the department, and most of the respondents expressed dissatisfaction regarding promotions, task-based rewards, and incentives. Further, knowledge sharing among employees and professional ties were found to be poor, while the help-seeking mechanism is inadequate.

The department also showed low readiness for change, with static policies that limit the organization's ability to adapt to emerging trends, and individual employees unable to adopt changes on their own. Moreover, a significant difference in opinion was found among respondents in terms of qualification, job experience, years of service, and gender. It is, therefore, recommended that the department enhances its collaboration and inter-departmental communication mechanisms and incorporates comprehensive input from all tiers in decision-making. Further, a decentralized recruitment system should be implemented to meet local needs.

In conclusion, the study highlights the need for the Department of special education to adopt a more inclusive approach toward decision-making and to implement a supportive supervisory system to promote harmonious inter-relationships and effective communication among employees. The results also suggest the need for policy revision to enhance the department's capacity to adapt to change and for further studies to devise a framework for the department's capacity building to absorb change effectively.

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