■ *Research Paper*

Diversity Management in Organizational Change: Towards a Systemic Framework

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Change is now a key concern of most business organizations, but the management of change (MOC) appears weak, with research suggesting that, at least in part, the methodologies used are responsible for this weakness. By outlining an alternative systemic MOC framework for action, and pointing to how this might be applied, this paper recommends an approach to MOC which seeks to address some of these current methodological shortcomings. A critical examination and classification of organizational change are conducted, leading to a categorization of approaches to change, and allowing critical assessment of the benefits and limitations of current approaches. Systems perspectives and their relevance to MOC are discussed, and by combining MOC and systems perspectives a systemic MOC framework is developed. This study suggests that MOC is characterized by diversity and interaction, for which systemic perspectives are more appropriate than the approaches currently applied. The systemic framework developed is thus seen to be a useful way of helping understand and manage organizational change more effectively. Copyright © 2003 John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

Keywords systems thinking; framework; change management

INTRODUCTION

The twenty-first-century organization is characterized by ever-increasing global competition, ever-increasing customer expectations, and ever-increasing change. To respond to these pressures, many organizations face a situation where they 'either change or die' (Beer and Nohria, 2000, p. 133), with 'approximately 84 per cent of American companies . . . undergoing at least one major business transformation' (Romano, 1995, p. 6). However, while the management of change (MOC) has become an increasingly important area for management attention, the downside is that it seems to suffer adversely high failure rates (at times above 70%: Stanton *et al.*, 1993; Spector and Beer, 1994; Strebel, 1996; Siegal *et al.*, 1996).

This research first aims to determine the key factors which give rise to these poor success rates. Fundamental to this is the argument that

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organizational change is a dynamic process encompassing different but interrelated forms of diversity, which has not been adequately addressed by current MOC approaches (Cao et al., 1999; Cao, 2001). This diversity might refer to particular dimensions such as organizational structure and culture, or the interactions between dimensions of a whole organization; it might arise from the interactions of technical and human activities, the organization with its environment, or organizational design and management style. Failing to deal with this diversity adequately often contributes to the failure of change programmes. For example, the implementation of Business Process Re-engineering (BPR), the widely used approach to MOC since the early 1990s, often leads to fundamental change within an organization's structure, culture and management process (Fowler, 1998; Stebbins et al., 1998; Al-Mashari and Zairi, 1999). However, BPR literature often emphasizes change based on one aspect of an organization (Stebbins et al., 1998) for example on process, with inadequate treatment of the human aspect (Valiris and Glykas, 1999; Marjanovic, 2000). Consequently, BPR failure can frequently be traced to ineffective communication, ineffective management of organizational resistance to change, or the failure to create the new organizational culture and structure needed to support it (Hill and Collins, 1998; Al-Mashari and Zairi, 1999). Conversely, it is evident that a BPR programme can be a powerful change approach if it is integrated with a variety of change initiatives such as cultural and structural change (Stebbins et al., 1998), highlighting the need for a holistic view of MOC within BPR implementations (Galliers and Baker, 1995; Werr et al., 1997; Fowler, 1998; Valiris and Glykas, 1999; Cao et al., 2001). Similarly, while Total Quality Management (TQM) often leads to major changes in people, culture, technology and structure, resulting in a transformed organization (Almaraz, 1994; Waldman, 1994; Spector and Beer, 1994; Hill and Collins, 1998), TQM is primarily able to deal with business processes and organizational culture (Jackson, 1995; Cao et al., 2000). The tendency is for it not to be integrated into a business as a whole, and lacking integration with

management theory (Bennett and Kerr, 1996). For these and other reasons it has been suggested that a systemic or holistic perspective is needed for TQM to be applied successfully (Gull, 1995; Bennett and Kerr, 1996; Cao et al., 2000).

Essentially, a holistic view of the diversity and interaction of organizational change suggests that there is a need for improving MOC methodology, which is characterized by 'a wide range of confusing and contradictory theories, approaches and recipes' (Burnes, 1996, p. 1):

> Managers end up immersing themselves in an alphabet soup of initiatives. They lose focus and become mesmerised by all the advice available in print and on-line about why companies should change, what they should try to accomplish, and how they should do it. This proliferation of recommendations often leads to muddle when change is attempted. (Beer and Nohria, 2000, p. 133)

Such a holistic approach sees conventional MOC methodology as characterized by reductionism, with organizations 'breaking change into small pieces and then managing the pieces' (Duck, 1993, p. 109); or 'manipulat[ing] the parts of systems without regard to how their manipulations affect the whole through interactions of the parts' (Ackoff, 1995, p. 43). The outcome is that change programmes achieve dramatic improvements in individual processes, but a decline in overall results (Hall et al., 1993).

These arguments lead to the suggestion that holistic, or systemic, approaches to MOC offer an improved way forward. This paper reports on one such research programme with the purpose of improving MOC methodology informed by systems perspectives. It starts to suggest a new classification, highlighting the diversity and interaction of various types of change. This further gives rise to a categorization of approaches to change, allowing critical assessment of the benefits and limitations of current MOC approaches. Systems perspectives are then briefly reviewed and their relevance to MOC assessed. By combining systems perspectives and MOC, a systemic framework for the more effective management of organizational change is then developed.

CLASSIFYING ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

Organizational change has been categorized in a number of different ways. There is: strategic and non-strategic change (Pettigrew, 1987); incremental and radical change (Burnes, 1996); incremental change and 'quantum' change (Greenwood and Hinings, 1993); changes of identity, coordination and control (Kanter *et al.*, 1992); human-centred classifications of change at individual, group, inter-group or organization level (Burnes, 1996); planned change and emergent change (Wilson, 1992); and change in terms of scale (from incremental to radical) and centrality (from peripheral to core) to the primary task of the organization (Buchannan and Boddy, 1992).

In an attempt to establish a more overarching classification, based on systems approaches, Flood's (1995, p. 21) four dimensions of an organization (process, design, culture and politics) was initially used in this research, giving rise to: process change, structural change, cultural change and political change (Cao *et al.*, 1999; Cao, 2001).

Change in organizational process refers to 'a related group of tasks that together create a result of value to a customer' (Hammer, 1996, pp. 5–9), such as product development and order fulfilment. Process change may involve material flow (from raw materials to finished products), cash flow (from investments to profits), human resource input and information flow. Processes can also be looked at from various perspectives depending on the kind of information required, and four views are thus identified by Bal (1998). First, a functional view relates to what element of the process is going to be done. Second, a behavioural view relates to when and how it is being done. Third, an organizational view represents who is performing the process. And fourth, an informational view considers both the data involved and relationships between these data.

Structural change involves changes to organizational functions, their organization, coordination and control, such as changes in horizontal and vertical structures; in the decision systems or policy and resource allocation mechanisms; and in the criteria used for recruitment, appraisal, compensation and career development (Greenwood and Hinings, 1993). In general, Reed (1992a), based on several authors' work, suggests that organizational forms in developed industrial societies have been changing from rational bureaucratic structures to flexible, network-based configurations. The typical form of the former is characterized by extreme internal differentiation and rigid hierarchical control, aimed primarily at achieving efficiency and effectiveness. The adequacy of such forms in conditions of economic uncertainty, and the globalization of competition, has been challenged (Whitaker, 1992). Managers need to find ways to manage this great turbulence. The outcome has been a search for organizational flexibility of, for example, product ranges, technology and organizational structures. Thus the emphasis in the study of organizational form has been shifting towards network structures, which are characterized by a flat authority structure and multiple horizontal linkages between the inner core of a firm and its outside suppliers, contractors and customers.

Organizational culture encompasses such issues as values, beliefs and human behaviour in terms of relationships to social rules and practices. Culture had been considered as an important factor as major US and UK companies in a range of industries experienced a decline in their economic fortunes throughout the 1970s (Collins, 1996; Morgan, 1997, p. 119). It became a popular topic in management in the 1980s and early 1990s, the main argument being that in order to compete managers would have to act on large-scale cultural change (Collins, 1996). Interest in and emphasis on the study of the cultural change approach is growing (Reed, 1992b, p. 4; Collins, 1996). Recently, cultural diversity management (Cox and Blake, 1991; Chemers *et al.*, 1995; Milliken and Martins, 1996) argues that cultural diversity is a competitive advantage and thus a 'multicultural organization' should be created. This, it is suggested, will encourage more creativity, better problem-solving and flexible adaptation to change, keeping the company ahead of the competition through mutual learning among organizational members.

Finally, there are changes in power distribution and the way organizational issues are influenced (Pugh, 1978; Morgan, 1997; Kanter *et al.*, 1992; Pfeffer, 1992; Mintzberg, 1998). Power

has been defined as the potential ability to influence behaviour, to change the course of events, to overcome resistance, and to get to do things that people would not otherwise do (Pfeffer, 1992). Politics and influences are the processes, the actions and the behaviours through which this potential power is utilized and realised. In getting things done, it is imperative to understand that different groups of people have different issues of concern, regarding the sources of power and how these sources can be developed. Thus organizations are seen as coalitions of interest groups in tension; for example, management versus workers, production versus sales, accounting versus research and development, head office versus production location. The resultant organization is a particular balance of forces, which is continually subject to modifications.

There is not only diversity but also interrelation between key organizational components. The four types of organizational change are seen as highly interconnected through a dynamic process: change in any one dimension will often result in compensatory change in others. For example, 'Shifts in the large culture influence individuals, who influence organizational culture, which in turn affects organizational structure' (DeLisi, 1990, p. 85). Another example, mentioned earlier in the discussions of BPR and TQM, is that drastic process-focused changes affect virtually all aspects of the organization, with multiple change initiatives being evolved in tandem. Consequently, any attempt to carry out change through isolated single efforts is likely to fail. A significant organizational change needs to address effectively the diversity and interrelations in the change process (Cao *et al.*, 1999; Cao, 2001).

In summary, the four interrelated types of organizational change, based on Flood (1995, p. 21), Cao *et al.* (1999) and Cao (2001) can include:

- process change—change in flows and controls over flows;
- structural change—change in functions, their organization, coordination and control;
- cultural change—change in values, beliefs and human behaviour in terms of relationship to social rules and practices;
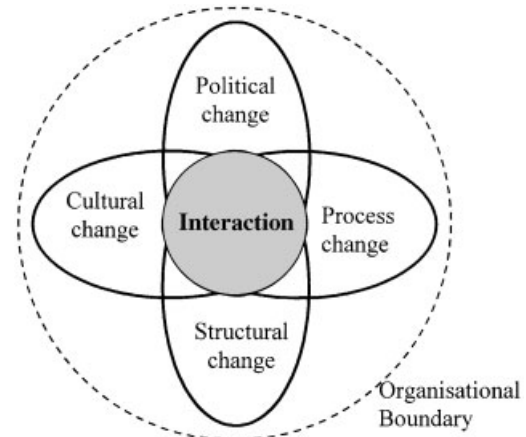

Figure 1.   Four types of organizational change and their interactions

- political change—change in power distribution and the way organizational issues are influenced.

A holistic view of the four types of organizational change based on this classification is shown in Figure 1. The four ovals represent four types of organizational change, while the intersection of the four in the middle represents the interactions of different types of organizational change. The dashed line represents the organizational boundary.

This four-dimensional view of organizational change leads to the understanding that managing organizational change needs diversity in theories and methodologies: we cannot focus on a single methodological or even a single theoretical perspective, since the four dimensions have each been taken as relying on particular methodological and/or theoretical positions. One of our key tasks in this research has been the attempt to bring together this variety of approaches in a single framework of application. Accordingly this means that there must be four categories of MOC approaches to deal with different types of organizational change. However, this in no way means that each of the four types of organizational change is to be managed separately by using different types of methods, which is often the case with the conventional approaches to change. A holistic approach is therefore necessary to deal with the diversity and

interaction by using different types of methods together. This holistic approach is the subject of the following sections.

CLASSIFYING APPROACHES TO CHANGE

If classifying change into the four categories of process, structure, culture and politics is to be of value, it should be possible to take key approaches to change and fit them to the different dimensions of this categorization. Starting with process change, typical approaches may include Total Quality Management (TQM) and Business Process Re-engineering (BPR) (Burnes, 1996, p. 172; Siegal *et al.*, 1996; Genus, 1998). BPR and TQM, it could be argued, are valuable in improving organizational process, but lack the power to deal adequately with other types of organizational change (Cao *et al.*, 2000, 2001).

Typical structural approaches may include contingency theory and transaction cost economics. The former argues that organizational structure and performance are contingent on the situational variables it faces, such as organizational environment (Thompson, 1967), technology (Woodward, 1965) and size (Pugh *et al.*, 1969a, 1969b). It follows that if the key variables of an organization can be determined, then organizational change can be effectively managed. Little has been said about the human factors within an organization. Transaction cost economics (Williamson, 1975), it could be argued, explains organizational change by exclusively seeking causes originating in markets, which are assumed to determine the course of organizational change, focusing on improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the more tangible sides of an organization (Cao, 2001, pp. 36–38). The role of power has generally not been called into question. Consequently, this depoliticizing view fails to consider the totality of economic and non-economic social conditions (White and Jacques, 1995).

Two main cultural approaches may be distinguished: unitary culture development (Peters and Waterman, 1982; DeLisi, 1990; Kanter, 1988; Kotter, 1996) and cultural diversity management (Cox and Blake, 1991; Chemers *et al.*, 1995;

Milliken and Martins, 1996). Cultural approaches direct people's attention to the human side rather than to processes, structures, markets and technologies. They show the importance and the possibility of culture in creating and shaping organizations by influencing values and beliefs. However, there are potential negative consequences as well. Convinced by the benefits of a strong culture, managers might attempt to create a new value system, believing this will be good for all in the organization. But this is potentially dangerous in that it could be developed into a process of ideological control (Morgan, 1997, p. 150). Further, Reed (1992a) argues that organizational culture is shaped by organizational politics, and will direct long-term structural development. Another danger is that culture is often reduced to, and managed as, a set of variables (White and Jacques, 1995; Morgan, 1997, p. 151). Finally, the cultural approach does not tell managers how to structure complex organizations (Flood and Jackson, 1991a, p. 12; Cao, 2001, pp. 43–46).

Political approaches can be broadly associated with the political models of organization developed by Pugh (1978), Mintzberg (1998), Morgan (1997), Pfeffer (1992) and Pettigrew (1985). They can help understand organizational actions as interests based, where power plays a key role in addressing diverse interests. From this perspective, organizational efficiency and effectiveness are always political; they may be rational for some groups of people, but not for others. However, the potential danger is that this might increase the possibility of people behaving politically for their own personal interests, resulting in cynicism and mistrust (Morgan, 1997, p. 212). Political approaches may also overemphasize the need to handle political issues, while downplaying the importance of other organizational factors such as organizational structures, responding to market changes, etc. (Flood and Jackson, 1991a, p. 14).

The implications of the above arguments may be summarized as follows (see Figure 2):

● Currently, each approach to MOC is primarily focused on a specific dimension or range of dimensions of organizational change. Current
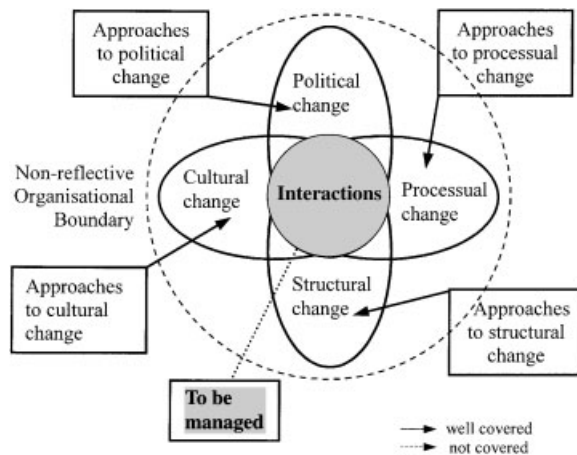
Figure 2. Strengths and weaknesses of approaches to change

approaches lack the power to deal with situations where more than one type of organizational change is surfaced.

● Since different types of organizational change are interrelated, they need to be managed together through a holistic approach.

● If interaction within the management of change is to be successfully managed, multiple methods and/or methodologies will have to be applied to a single change context. However, current approaches seem to have little to offer beyond a single method focusing on a specific problem, and fall well short of the ideal of how to manage diversity and interaction methodologically, choosing between approaches and using different methods together.

● Finally, where any change approach is being followed, there is the need to determine whether the change is being managed effectively. This points to a need for a process which *reflects critically* on the possible shortcomings and sources of deception contained in a proposed solution, or in the definition of the problem (Ulrich, 1994): critical reflection should be integrated into the process of MOC.

Systems thinking therefore seems to have a clear relevance to MOC, in that it might better enable a holistic approach to organizational problem contexts, which it sees as interdependent subsystems within the larger organizational

system. In addition, through the work of the critical systems community, there is the potential for a critically reflective approach.

SYSTEMS PERSPECTIVES AND THEIR RELEVANCE TO THE MANAGEMENT OF CHANGE

If systems perspectives are seen to be of value to the management of change, then in what way can they possibly help address the interactions of different types of change, the use of multiple methods and critical reflection? Further, will systems perspectives alone be sufficient to do so? To answer these questions, a brief discussion of the relevance of systems perspectives to the management of change in terms of the well-known classification of Hard Systems Thinking (HST), Soft Systems Thinking (SST) and Critical Systems Thinking (CST) is given below, from which a systemic framework for the management of change is then developed.

In relation to MOC, HST perspectives may be seen to be able to provide general principles to guide the management of changes in processes and structures, but, since hard systems methods are fundamentally concerned with problem solving, they tend to force a characterization of MOC in terms of problems to be solved. This leads to cultural and political issues being often addressed in a depoliticized way. The need for changing more than a single component of the change context has been recognized, but the use of multiple methods has been ignored. Furthermore, reflection on MOC process does not form part of an HST approach. All this renders HST perspectives as useful in helping with changes in process and structure, but insufficient where the change context is characterized by diversity and interaction (Cao, 2001, pp. 54–57).

SST perspectives can be seen to provide a richer picture of organizational change, but may be seen as inadequately addressing issues of process and structure (Clarke *et al.*, 1998). Also, while SST-based approaches may provide general principles for gaining an enhanced understanding of the meanings and values which participants attribute to their actions, they are

not without their problems. The ability of such approaches to address multicultural organizations in terms of employing multiple methods can be questioned, and the viewpoints of the powerless and the disadvantaged are often ignored.

Critical systems perspectives seem particularly applicable to MOC. Since CST commits to human emancipation or improvement by addressing all problem situations through the use of other systems perspectives, it has the potential to provide guidance upon surfacing different types of organizational change and their interactions. Since it commits to methodological pluralism, it can provide guidance on how to employ multiple methods in order to address the whole. Finally, in its commitment to critical awareness, it explicitly addresses the critical reflection seen to be lacking in other MOC approaches.

CST perspectives, then, show greater potential for managing the diversity and interaction of different types of change by using multiple methods in a critical way (see Figure 3).

While seeing CST perspectives as powerful means, it might be argued at the same time that they alone do not seem to be sufficient to provide all of the necessary guidance for managing organizational change. Although, through methodological pluralism, CST together with other systems perspectives may be able to provide

general systemic principles to guide any change programme, CST seems unable to provide specific guidance such as how to reduce business cycle time, re-engineer business processes, improve product quality, organize electronic commerce applications, develop a network structure, develop a multicultural organization or stimulate change politically. Therefore in any attempt to manage a change programme holistically, systems perspectives must be integrated with the knowledge of organizational change and approaches to change.

A SYSTEMIC FRAMEWORK FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF CHANGE

The previous discussions suggest that MOC approaches are strong in managing specific types of organizational change, but weak in managing the interactions, the use of multiple methods and critical reflection on the decision-making process. Critical systems perspectives, on the contrary, are seen to be strong in providing general principles such as how to address those MOC weaknesses, but relatively weak in addressing specific dimensions of organizational change. Therefore, it is necessary and beneficial to bring them together to give rise to a stronger systemic framework for the management of change (see Figure 4) (Cao *et al.*,
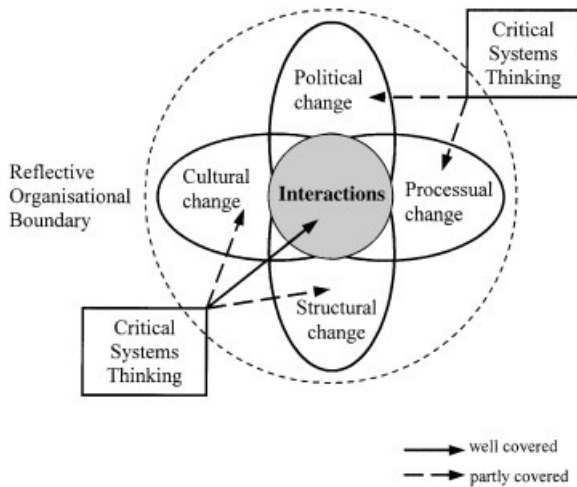

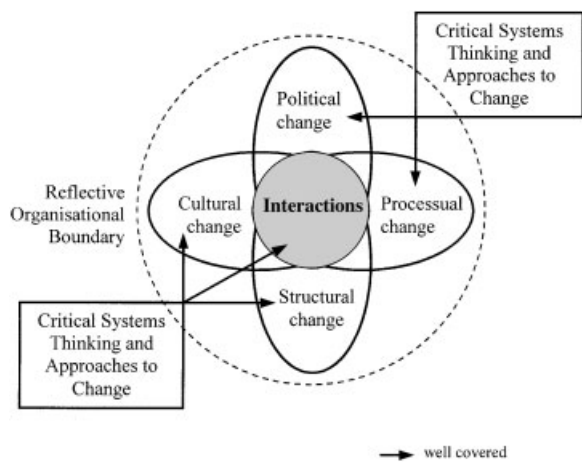Figure 3. *Critical systems thinking and organizational change*

Figure 4. *A systemic framework for managing organizational change*

1999; Cao, 2001, pp. 188–211). It is intended that this framework provide a coherent conceptual structure to help specify the main elements of change management, order their relationships, and manage change more effectively by focusing on, and at the same time managing, specific types of organizational change, their interactions, the use of multiple methods and critical reflection on the decision-making process. This proposed systemic framework encompasses two main components: organizational change including the four types of organizational change and their interactions, and the systemic way to change— the integration of critical systems perspectives and different types of change approaches. Critical systems thinking provides methodological guidance such as how to understand organizational change as a whole, how to use multiple methods within one intervention and how to critically examine the decision-making process. Change approaches, on the other hand, provide knowledge of managing specific organizational issues.

This systemic MOC framework may be used in the following ways to help analyse and address diversity and interaction in organizational change systemically and critically. First of all, this framework can help develop a fuller and better understanding of any change context. Since the framework includes four types of organizational change, it allows the practitioners to focus on change in processes, structures, culture and politics simultaneously, rather than just to think about any one or some of them. Since the framework emphasizes the interactions of different types of organizational change, it enables the practitioners to understand the relationships between different types of change rather than to treat them separately. For instance, consider a case of developing an electronic commerce project in a retail company. A processual point of view will help us understand that the project triggers the re-engineering of the whole business processes within and across organizational boundaries, encompassing the entire online process of developing, marketing, selling, delivering, servicing and paying for products and services purchased by customers. A structural perspective will focus our attention on whether to implement the project as a semi-autonomous

division, or integrated in the parent firm in current functions, or as a parallel organization or some other form (Moore, 2000). Regarding cultural change, there is a question of whether the project should be matched by an 'Internet culture' where risk taking is encouraged and failure is merely education (Moore, 2000), or by a 'welcoming culture' where awareness of change, employee involvement and learning are essential measures (Pawar and Driva, 2000). Finally, change in business process, structure and culture may also result in the rebalancing of power distribution within and between companies, and therefore affect the way business decisions are made. Furthermore, the most important issue of concern here is that an electronic commerce project often combines technical, human and organizational variables (Krcmar *et al.*, 1995; Kappelman *et al.*, 1996). They are interrelated rather than isolated. Therefore, methodologically, the systemic MOC framework makes it possible to understand both the diversity and interaction in organizational change simultaneously.

One way to apply this analysis is to use it to surface the key, or the 'dominant' and 'dependent' (Flood and Jackson, 1991b; Jackson, 1997, 1999) types of organizational change, and the interactions between them. Dominant change issues become the principal problems to be concentrated on more weightily, while dependent issues are of less importance and are focused on less. This contrast between dominant and dependent can be approached through dialectical debate (Churchman, 1971, 1979), where one prevailing perspective (thesis) is challenged by an alternative different perspective (antithesis), to enrich and challenge perceptions about organizational change. This debate should be a continuous process, since the dominant and dependent issues will not remain constant throughout the organizational change.

Once the key types of organizational change and their interactions are surfaced, the approaches to be used will be decided. This may start with a critical assessment of the current approaches suitable to tackle the surfaced types of organizational change and their interactions. If the current approaches are not appropriate, then a new method will have to be created. Once these

are determined, then the use of a mixture of methods will be necessary since there is diversity and interaction (see Nicholls *et al.*, 2001). For instance, in the earlier electronic commerce project, if the dominant types of organizational change within a single intervention are about changing business processes and developing a semi-autonomous division that is to nurture, and at the same time be supported by, an 'Internet culture', then processual, structural and cultural approaches will have to be selected and used together to realize the desired transformation. To successfully manage such change situations where diversity and interactions are surfaced, mixing methods is a central difficulty, not only because there are inherent tensions between the theoretical assumptions of different methods but also because creativity and skills are needed. Nevertheless, precisely because it is more difficult than merely using a single approach, the mixed use of multiple methods is more likely to manage organizational change effectively. The first step in this, it might be argued, is to develop an awareness and understanding of the diversity and interactions in organizational change and the need to mix methods creatively, leading to accumulated learning and experience in managing this kind of diversity.

Finally, how might we judge that what we are doing is systemic? Ulrich (1994, 1996) argues that we can never truly know this since it is impossible to know all the facts and values that could lead to alternative conceivable options and consequences. This is where critical reflection is invaluable, in reflecting on the shortcomings and sources of deception contained in a proposed solution or definition of a problem. It is thus proposed that the systemic MOC framework developed be used as a basis for the critique, in addition to the ongoing assessment of dominant and dependent organizational change contexts.

It can be argued that whether any change should be undertaken to bring about the desired consequences or improvement will be dependent upon who should define the system of concern and the desired change or improvement from specific viewpoints, while it is very unlikely that different people will have the same opinion. Without revealing the attached meanings and

assumptions, it is not only meaningless to say that the change is going to make any improvement, but also possibly dangerous in that the change might be taken for granted before a more comprehensive investigation might be otherwise undertaken. Furthermore, to attempt any change there is also an issue of who is, or ought to be, involved to determine what methods are seen to be appropriate, and what is to be reflected upon by using what methods and by whom. Therefore, it is important to critically reflect on improvement, boundary judgement, methodological mix (Nicholls *et al.*, 2001; Midgley, 1997) and participation (Cao, 2001). Examining these aspects critically will help make transparent the normative issues of what *should be done* to bring about the most desired consequences through the intervention, thus enabling us to learn and improve decision making.

While, for the purpose of explanation, the issues above are separated, in practice they should be interconnected. So, for example, when distinguishing the dominant types of organizational change, thought also has to be given simultaneously to who will be involved, what approaches will be relevant and how these will be mixed. These analyses will then be repeated throughout the change process.

In summary, the key idea of the systemic MOC framework is to help understand and manage the diversity and interactions in organizational change and the approaches to change. Rather than addressing one or some dimensions of organizational change by using a single method in an unreflecting way like the conventional change approaches, the proposed framework is fundamentally based on a holistic view that perceives organizational change as a multifaceted and interrelated whole, which can be addressed adequately only by using multiple methods together critically.

CONCLUSIONS

By developing a systemic framework for the management of change (MOC), this paper provides a characterization of MOC in terms of four

types of organizational change, their interaction and approaches to change. It intends to bring together these different elements within a coherent conceptual structure supported by critical systems thinking, and allows inferences to be drawn concerning the implications for understanding and managing organizational change.

Conventional change approaches are seen to be methodologically inadequate to address the diversity and interaction of different types of organizational change faced by today's complex organizations. Critical systems perspectives, while seen to be useful to help address key change issues, are not sufficient alone. By combining critical systems thinking and change management, a systemic framework is seen to be the improved way forward, which emphasizes managing organizational change as a whole, and promoting the use of different change approaches together within a given organizational context. The overall aims are to help practitioners understand diversity and interaction in organizational change, encourage the creative use of mixed methods and assist with the application of the approach within a critical framework.

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