

**An International Comparison of Enablers of Individual Readiness for Change: The Case of Executives Working in France, GCC and India**

**Une comparaison internationale des déterminants de l'aptitude individuelle au changement : le cas des cadres issus de France, des pays du Golfe et de l'Inde**

**Comparación internacional de los determinantes de la capacidad individual de cambio: caso de los dirigentes procedentes de Francia, países del Golfo, India**

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Résumé de l'article

L'objectif de cet article est d'examiner les dimensions qui favorisent l'aptitude individuelle au changement organisationnel. Pour répondre à cette question, nous avons procédé à une comparaison internationale des perceptions des managers de différents niveaux hiérarchiques. Cette recherche s'est appuyée sur un protocole quantitatif administré à deux cent cinquante-six salariés inscrits dans différents programmes de formation continue et évoluant dans des organisations en France, dans les pays du Golfe (pays arabes du conseil de coopération du Golfe) et en Inde. Notre recherche soutient l'idée que la perception du processus du changement contrairement au contexte du changement est un déterminant significatif de l'aptitude au changement des employés. L'étude retient plusieurs variables de contrôle relatifs à des antécédents individuels clefs de l'aptitude au changement. Il ressort ainsi que l'aptitude au changement peut varier en fonction de la nationalité et de la position hiérarchique de l'individu. Nous concluons qu'une mise en oeuvre réussie du changement ne peut être réalisée sans qu'un véritable besoin du changement ne soit établi, lequel peut être déclenché et consolidé à travers des processus de management du changement adéquats.

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Le cas des cadres issus de France, des pays du Golfe et de l'Inde

Comparación internacional de los determinantes de la capacidad individual de cambio:  
caso de los dirigentes procedentes de Francia, países del Golfo, India

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to examine the components that foster individual readiness for organizational change. To address this question, we conducted an international comparison of the perception of managers at different levels of organizational hierarchy. This research employed a quantitative survey research design administrated to two hundred and fifty-six employees, in different hierarchical levels in organizations, from France, GCC (Arab states of the Gulf Cooperation Council) and India enrolled in several executive training programs. Our research supports the idea the perception of the change process unlike the context of change is a significant determinant of employees' readiness for change. The study controls for key individual antecedents of change readiness. Accordingly, we have shown that readiness for change may vary according to nationality and hierarchical position of an individual. We conclude that successful implementation of change cannot be reached without a need for change being established, which can be triggered and nurtured through the appropriate change management processes.

Keywords: Readiness for change, Organizational change, France, Gulf Cooperation Council, India

## Résumé

L'objectif de cet article est d'examiner les dimensions qui favorisent l'aptitude individuelle au changement organisationnel. Pour répondre à cette question, nous avons procédé à une comparaison internationale des perceptions des managers de différents niveaux hiérarchiques. Cette recherche s'est appuyée sur un protocole quantitatif administré à deux cent cinquante-six salariés inscrits dans différents programmes de formation continue et évoluant dans des organisations en France, dans les pays du Golfe (pays arabes du conseil de coopération du Golfe) et en Inde. Notre recherche soutient l'idée que la perception du processus du changement contrairement au contexte du changement est un déterminant significatif de l'aptitude au changement des employés. L'étude retient plusieurs variables de contrôle relatifs à des antécédents individuels clefs de l'aptitude au changement. Il ressort ainsi que l'aptitude au changement peut varier en fonction de la nationalité et de la position hiérarchique de l'individu. Nous concluons qu'une mise en œuvre réussie du changement ne peut être réalisée sans qu'un véritable besoin du changement ne soit établi, lequel peut être déclenché et consolidé à travers des processus de management du changement adéquats.

Mots-Clés : Aptitude au changement, changement organisationnel, France, Pays du Golfe, Inde

## Resumen

El propósito de ese artículo es examinar los componentes que favorecen la capacidad al cambio organizacional. Para responder a esa pregunta, llevamos a cabo una comparación internacional de las percepciones de los administradores de diferentes niveles jerárquicos. Esta investigación se apoya en un protocolo cuantitativo administrado a doscientos cincuenta y seis empleados inscritos en diferentes programas de formación continua, desarrollados en organizaciones de Francia, países del Golfo (países árabes miembros del consejo de cooperación del golfo) e India. Nuestra investigación apoya la idea que la percepción del proceso de cambio es un determinante significativo de la capacidad de cambio de los empleados, a diferencia del contexto de cambio. Se estudian muchas variables de control relacionados con antecedentes personales claves de la capacidad al cambio. Resulta que las capacidades de cambio pueden variar en función de la nacionalidad y de la posición jerárquica de la persona. Concluimos que la aplicación del cambio no se puede realizar sin crear una real necesidad de cambio que puede ser provocada y consolidada a través los procesos de gestión adecuados.

Plabaras Clave: Capacidad de cambio, Cambio organizacional, Francia, Países del golfo, India

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Success (Meyer *et al.*, 2007) and sustainability (George and Jones, 2001) of any change is dependent on behavioral support of employees towards organizational change. Further, for change to be sustainable, it is imperative that individual members of an organization adjust their on-the-job behaviors in appropriate ways keeping in mind that they actively interpret and respond to what is happening in their environment (Greehalgh *et al.*, 2004). In this context, the concept of readiness for change introduced in the 1970s appears to be a key to addressing the issue of organizational change. Bouckenoogh *et al.* (2009) define readiness for change as “*a reflection of organizational members’ beliefs, attitudes and intentions, regarding the extent to which changes are needed and the organization’s capacity to make those changes*” (p. 364).

Thus, to ensure successful implementation of change and sustainability of these changes, it is important to consider individual employees’ readiness to change rather than solely relying on objective measures of organizational change readiness (Jansen, 2000). Individuals’ perception of change readiness is determined by their behavior and attitude towards change (Spreitzer, 2007). The relationship between the employee’s perception of the organization’s change management process, the context of change and its impact on his/her readiness for change may be influenced by a gamut of organizational and individual factors. In order to control for these, the present study analyses nationality and hierarchical position in an organization as control variables considering that the cultural and leadership dimensions (see: Hofstede 1980, 2001; Trompenaars 1994) may also influence readiness for change.

Thus, this paper attempts to address this gap in literature by questioning employees based on their previous experiences about the impact of their perception of organizational change context and change management process on their readiness to change. Instead of analyzing readiness of change as an independent or mediator variable, this study proposes to investigate on other organizational factors that may influence ex-ante the readiness of change leading to advancement in the understanding of its perception in different cultural contexts.

By comparing individual perception of the context and the change management process by managers with different cultural and geographical backgrounds namely France, India and GCC, our purpose is to analyze the relevance of these enablers in increasing readiness for change in different cultural contexts.

## Theoretical Framework and Hypothesis

According to Levovnik and Gerbec (2018) inadequate or absent management of change is often among of the causes of major accidents in the industrial organizations. In this regard, most existing studies address change management either at the organizational level or the individual level. While some studies have analyzed change management at an individual level (Al-Abrow 2013; Cunningham *et al.*, 2002), some others have analyzed it at the level of an organization (Armenakis, Harris and Field, 1999). Earlier studies laid greater emphasis on the role of individuals in implementing change (Armenakis *et al.*, 1993). However, more recent studies emphasize four major aspects of change viz. change content, change context, change process and change criterion while studying an organization’s readiness for change (Armenakis and Bedeian 1999; Judge *et al.*, 1999). One of the main differences between these approaches is the importance given to the role played by individual organizational members in the process of organizational change (Porras & Robertson 1992). In this context, Piderit (2000) highlights the importance of attitudes based on personal beliefs, behaviors or emotions considered as key drivers of individual responses to change. Attitudes can thus be determined by individual evaluation of past behaviors and future intentions to act.

This paper is premised on the works of Eby *et al.* (2000) and Bookenoogh (2008) and aims to analyze the relation between employees’ perception of change context and change process on their readiness for change among executives working in Europe and Asia, working in different hierarchical positions in an organization. In this regard, Worley and Cummings (2013) highlight the importance of creating a felt need for change in order to enhance readiness for change. By facilitating their participation, commitment, and loyalty through appropriate change management processes (Schneider, Brief and Guzzo, 1996), employees will not only feel empowered but also increase their coping abilities and readiness perceptions. Holt *et al.* (2007) consider readiness for change as a comprehensive attitude that is influenced simultaneously by the content, the process, the context and the individuals involved.

Recent studies in this field investigate the association between the influence of individual readiness of change and effective quality improvement programs implementation. Haffar *et al.* (2019) highlight the fact that individual readiness



of change influences directly total quality management implementation. The individual change readiness is also supposed to play a mediating role between management practices and employee performance. Iqbal and Asrar-ul-Haq (2018) reveal that individual change readiness provides significant support to employee performance and brings a substantial contribution to the level of organizational change. Considering that individual perception of organization's readiness for change can increase through employees' belief in organization's ability to cope with changing situations, and organizational policies that enable change (Eby *et al.*, 2000), it seems important to analyze the way in which individuals perceive and evaluate the context of organizational change and the organization's change management process (Hutagaol, 2012).

Organizational members will only support change if compelling reasons convince them to do so. Thus, involvement in the change process can be seen to positively influence the perception of readiness for change (Jones, Jimmieson and Griffiths, 2005). However, evidence in this regard is divided. While Bookenoogh (2008) and Holt *et al* (2007) report a positive relation between involvement in change process and an employee's readiness for change, Metsellar (1997) reports a statistically insignificant relationship between the two. We test the relationship among an audience panning across three nationalities and two continents. Further we control for select organizational and individual factors viz. Nationality and Hierarchical position (in an organization). In line with Bookenoogh (2008) and Holt *et al.* (2007), the study posits a positive relationship between individual perception of the change management process and the readiness to change

*H1: Employees' perception of change management process is positively related to their readiness for change.*

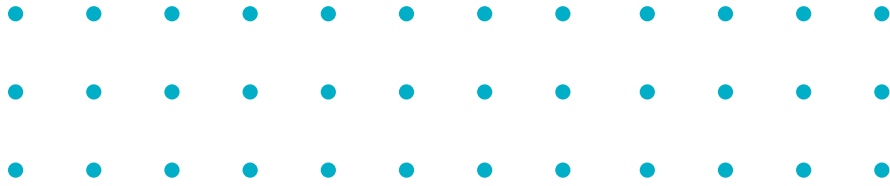
While investigating the factors impacting readiness for change, it is also important to examine the organization's institutionalized roles and relationships, normative orientations, values as well as individual cognitive and perceptual orientations (Quinn and Sonenshein, 2008). The different determinants, cognitive and non-cognitive (intentions and emotions), of employees' behavior cannot be isolated from the organization's change process, context and content. By developing individual and organizational learning capabilities, the organization's culture can facilitate the implementation of successful changes (Halkos and

Bousinakis, 2012; Lundberg, 1995). By nurturing this learning culture, an organization can strengthen its employees' capability to implement change as well as their faith in the ability to cope with rapidly changing organizational conditions. Eby *et al.* (2000) found that certain antecedents such as flexible policies and procedures or trust in peers have a direct impact on what is called "*perceived organizational readiness for change*". These antecedents have been analyzed in more detail by Lehman, Greener and Simpson (2002) who have identified different dimensions relating to motivation for change viz. personality attributes of leaders and staff, organizational resources and climate. A number of studies have linked various aspects specific to the culture of an organization such as leadership and communication between managers and employees (Kavanagh and Ashkhanasy, 2006) or inclusive managerial practices and involvement of employees in the change process (Quirke, 1996), to successful change implementation. Preskill and Tores (2001) argue that the key elements of organizational infrastructure such as culture, leadership, communication and systems and structures form the foundation based on which change management can be successfully implemented. In this regard, Armenakis *et al* (1993) and Holt *et al* (2007) highlight the importance of employees' perception of how organizational infrastructure can facilitate readiness to change and sustain these changes. In line with Armenakis *et al.* (op.cit.) and Holt *et al.* (op.cit.), this study posits a positive relation between individual's perception of the change context in their organization and their readiness for change.

*H2: Employees' perception of change context is positively related to their readiness for change.*

## Control Variables

The relationship between Readiness for change, the change management process and the context of change may be influenced by nationality of a respondent, and by their hierarchal position in an organization. Employees from different nationalities and hierarchal positions may have different understanding and perspective concerning the process of change, the context as well as their impact on readiness for change. Indeed, managerial ideologies, behavior and practice may vary across countries (see: Ayman and Chemers, 1983; Bass, 1990; Haire *et al.*, 1966; Hofstede, 1980; Safranski and Kwon, 1987). National origin of managers significantly



influences their approach to participatory decision making, delegation of power, conflict management or technology acceptance (Cardon and Marshall, 2008; Suutari, 1996). Hair and al. (1966) argue that one third of the variance in work goals and managerial attitudes could be explained by the employees' country of origin. Mellahi (2003) shows that Arab people compared with people from the Western world seem to be characterized by a higher degree of uncertainty avoidance and seek to maintain the status quo. This can also be explained by the lack of trust of employees due to insufficient top management support and communication throughout the change process. Rees and Althakhri (2008) highlight the fact that managers in Arab environments are concerned with losing their position and power within their organization and that there is a lack of trust of employees, which is partially related to ineffective communication from the top management. Moreover, the hierarchical position and leadership competencies (Khwahk and Kim 2008; Cunningham *et al* 2002) related to it can also influence employees readiness for change given that senior-level managers have a critical impact on firm performance. This is due to the significant organizational decisions they are empowered to make (Finkelstein and Hambrick 1996).

Considering that our research protocol does not allow us to explore in depth the impact of culture and leadership styles on readiness for change, we have retained nationality and hierarchical position as control variables to assess their potential influence on readiness for change (Iqbal and Asrar-ul-Haq 2018).

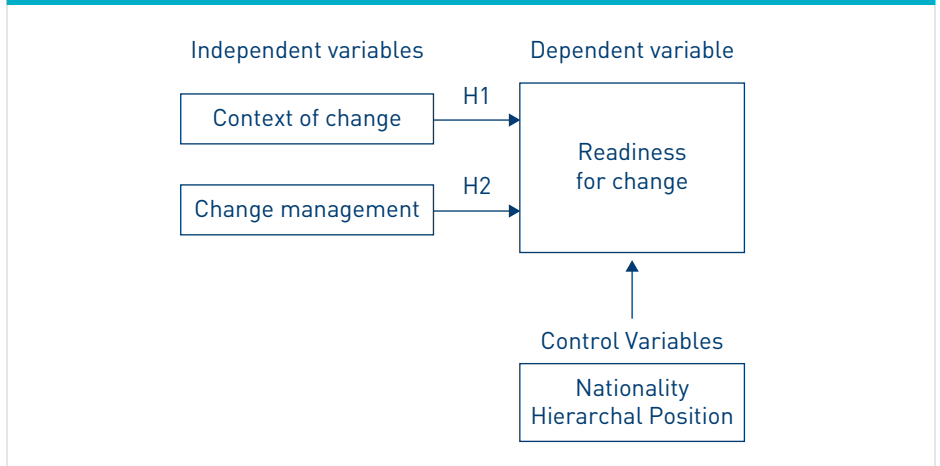
The conceptual model of our study can be presented as in Figure A.1.

## Methodology

Drawing on the previous work and the hypotheses specified earlier, our research protocol aimed to test a conceptual model regarding the individual readiness for organizational change. Our research method was based on a quantitative survey. We analyze the data following the structural equation modeling method.

The target sample for this study was executives working in corporations based in France, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries and India. Given the time and geographic constraints, we chose to survey, executives working in various corporations, who attended the executive education programs at universities in France, GCC (Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait) and India. Considering that readiness for change can be considered as the cognitive

**FIGURE A.1**  
**Conceptual model**



antecedent to the behaviors of either resistance to or support for a change event (Armenakis *et al.*, 1993), we chose not to focus on a specific context of change but rather on executives' perceptions and views about their readiness for change as well as about the degree to which changes are needed in their organizations and could be implemented successfully. The specific neutral context in which the research was conducted allowed these executives to express their views freely keeping in mind that participation was on a voluntary basis and no financial incentive was provided. Considering that individual readiness for change is influenced by individual's beliefs and perceptions, our research aims to assess the willingness of these executives from different countries facing different internal and external organizational pressure to purposefully engage in organizational change management programs. To optimize on time and economic resources, as with similar studies, a non-probabilistic convenience-based sampling technique was followed. This also enabled us to collect data based on availability of the participant. A total of 350 questionnaires were administered of which we received 252 valid responses indicating a 73 per cent response rate.



Our research instrument collected data to capture demographic information in addition to the three major constructs measuring an employee's perception of the context of change (CC) in an organization, the change management process (CMP) in an organization and accordingly the employee's readiness for change (RFC). All the three constructs were developed and validated in different theories and models analyzing readiness for change (see the section on theoretical framework and hypothesis).

The three constructs, CC, CMP and RFC were adapted from prior studies (Armenakis and Bedeian (1999); Judge *et al.* (1999). They were measured using 9, 4 and 10 items, respectively, adapted from (Bookenoogh *et al.* (2009), Holt *et al.* (2007), Eby and al. (2000). All the items used in the questionnaire use a 6 points rating scale (1=Never, 2=Very Rarely, 3=Rarely, 4=Occasionally, 5=Very Frequently, 6=Always) to measure the respondent's degree of agreement to a statement considering that the rater's reliability is independent of the number on a scale, which can start from five and extends up to nine categories (Bending 1954).

To avoid the Common Method Biases (CMB), at the time of designing the questionnaire and administering it, we followed the recommendations in Podsakoff *et al.* (2003) regarding the separation of measurement, the protection of respondent anonymity, evaluation apprehension reduction as well as counterbalancing question order in the questionnaire. In line with Shalley *et al.* (2009) and Chan (2009), we used self-reports particularly appropriate in our case given that our objective was to compare international manager's perception of their organizational context as well as the drivers of their readiness for change. While comparing their individual perceptions, our goal was to assess similarities and differences between managers working in diverse contexts. All participants were surveyed in English language settings. Therefore, the instrument was administered in English to all the participants (Appendix C).

## Analysis of Results

The analysis of the questionnaire is divided into two parts. The first part presents the analysis of the demographic information of the sample and the second part deals with the analysis of each dimension of the questionnaire in relation with our hypotheses.

## Analysis of Descriptive Statistics

Table B.1 presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents. A total of 252 valid responses were collected. Two third of this sample consists of males. The distribution is reflective of the skewed demographic profile of working population in corporations across economies. The survey broadly covers two continents and three countries: India and GCC as part of Asia and France in Europe. Close to 60 per cent of the surveyed population is from Asia and the remaining from Europe. The age range of the sample varied from 25 years to 50 years. Most of the sample was in the age group of 25-35. Most respondents (>60%) were either head of their respective sections, managers or part of the top management team. Close to 80 per cent of the respondents were post graduates.

Also, the descriptive statistics show that while the responses for context of change were close to the mean, a vast majority of the participants indicate positive responses to change management process (Table B.1).

**TABLE B.1**  
**Profile of Respondents**

Demographics	Levels	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	174	68%
	Female	82	32%
Nationality	India	116	45.30%
	GCC	46	18%
	France	94	36.70%
Age	<25 years	54	21.10%
	25-35 years	103	40.20%
	35-45 years	72	28.10%
	>45 years	27	10.50%
Position	Top Management	31	12.10%
	Director	15	5.90%
	Manager	97	37.90%
	Head of Section	23	9.00%
	Employee	87	34.00%



### Analysis of the Measurement Model

To assess the relevance of the measurement model, the following tests were conducted (Table B.2):

- Item reliability: Although all the items used in this study were drawn from the prior literature, given the heterogeneity (geographic, cultural) we test for the reliability of each item by assessing the correlation between each item and the corresponding construct. All the items included in the analysis had loadings of above 0.5 and most had loadings in excess of 0.7 which indicates that the items are sufficiently reliable (Hair *et. al*, 2010).
- Construct reliability: The reliability of the three constructs was tested by computing the Cronbach's alpha. The Cronbach alpha for all three constructs are greater than 0.79, thus, indicating that the set of items included reliably measure the latent construct ( DeVellis, 2003; Robinson, Wrightsman and Andrews, 1991).
- Construct validity: Both convergent and discriminant validity, for each construct, are assessed by computing the Average Variance Extracted (AVE). Given that the square root of AVE for each construct is greater than the corresponding inter construct correlation and that AVE at levels is greater than the Maximum Shared Variance (MSV) the study finds no discriminant validity issues at the item or the construct level (Tebachnick and Fidell, 2007). Further, the AVE for each construct is estimated to be above 0.5, thus establishing convergent validity (Hair and al, 2010).

	CR	AVE	MSV	Readiness	Context	Management
Readiness	0.791	0.558	0.038	0.747		
Context	0.825	0.543	0.493	0.149	0.737	
Management	0.834	0.716	0.493	0.196	0.702	0.846

Note: Factor correlation matrix with the square root of AVE on the diagonal

To complete the CFA and in order to test for existence of Common Methods Bias, in line with Kock (2015), we also tested for possible multicollinearity by estimating the variance inflation factor (VIF). For this author, *“the occurrence of a VIF greater than 3.3 is proposed as an indication of pathological collinearity, and also as an indication that a model may be contaminated by common method bias. Therefore, if all VIFs resulting from a full collinearity test are equal to or lower than 3.3, the model can be considered free of common method bias.”* (2015, p.7). We find a VIF of 2.637 thus indicating moderate correlation among independent variables but not severe enough to warrant any corrective measure.

**TABLE B.3**  
**Collinearity Statistics**

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>		
	Collinearity Statistics	
Model	Tolerance	VIF
Management	0.379	2.637
Context	0.379	2.637

<sup>a</sup> Dependent Variable : Readiness

To further capture the possibility of common variance in the model, we conducted the Common Latent Factor Test by comparing the standardized regression weights with and without the common latent factor. Standardized weights without the CLF are expected to be greater than standardized weights with CLF, hence we subtracted standardized weights with CLF from the standardized weights without CLF. For all the variables, difference between the two was found to be less than 0.02, hence the possibility of a common method bias is rejected (Gaskin, 2012).

### Analysis of the Structural Model

After establishing the reliability and validity of the measurement model, the relationships between the constructs w tested following the Structural Equations Modelling (SEM) technique (Fig.A.1). In order to ascertain the best model fit,

select fit indices are computed (Hair *et al.*, 2010). These are the Goodness of Fit Index (GFI), Normed Fit Index (NFI), Root Mean Square Residual (RMSR), Comparative Fit (CFI), Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI) and Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA). The estimated value of fit indices shows that the proposed structural model fits the data well (Table B.5).

The structural model is depicted in figure A.2. The table B.6 reports the results of the structural model. We find that perceived change management process is a significant determinant of individual readiness for change. It appears that perception of change management processes mainly in terms of perceived support, understanding and involvement from superiors through the initiated change process is instrumental in driving forward individual readiness for change. Unlike previous studies, our paper found that the perception of the context of change did not affect individual readiness for change.

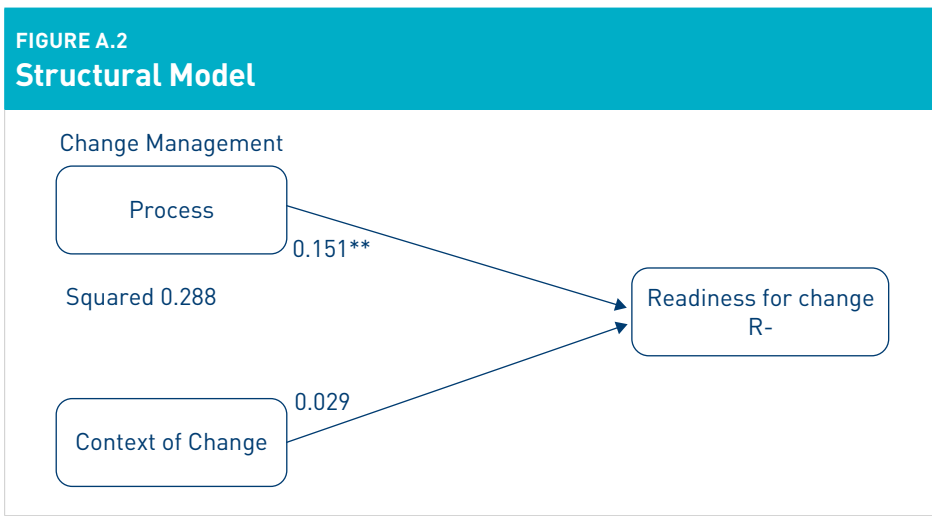
**TABLE B.4**  
**CLF Test**

Standardized Regression Weights: (All - Default model)

	With CLF	Without CLF	Delta
Context1	0,651	0,639	0,012
Context2	0,72	0,71	0,01
Context3	0,804	0,795	0,009
Context4	0,747	0,738	0,009
Context5	0,569	0,559	0,01
Context6	0,597	0,587	0,01
Readiness1	0,755	0,747	0,008
Readiness2	0,451	0,433	0,018
Readiness3	0,456	0,442	0,014
Readiness4	0,739	0,737	0,002
Readiness5	0,739	0,724	0,015
Management1	0,882	0,874	0,008
Management2	0,807	0,798	0,009

**TABLE B.5**  
**Model Fit summary for measurement model**

	Recommended Value Hair <i>et al.</i> , 2010)	Index value
Chi-sq	non-significant at $p < .05$	18.348
Degrees of Freedom	n/a	11
Chi-Sq/Degrees of Freedom	<5preferable<3	1.668
Goodness of Fit index (GFI)	>0.9	0.982
Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI)	>0.8	0.942
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	>0.9	0.987
Root mean square residuals (RMSR)	<0.1	0.017
Root mean square error of Approximation (RMSEA)	<0.08	0.051
Normed Fit Index (NFI)	>0.9	0.97







**TABLE B.6**  
**Structural Model**

Variable	Coefficient
Intercept	3.014***
Change Management Process	0.151**
Change Context	0.029
Nationality	-0.458***
Position	0.063*
R-Squared	0.288
F (4,248)	25.098***

Note: \*\*\*, \*\* and \* denote significance at 1%, 5% and 10% levels respectively

## Discussion

Relying on Pettigrew's (1987) extensively used strategic change framework, we focused on the two key dimensions that are the process of change (the how) and the context in which the change unfolds (the why). Accordingly, we tested the impact of context of change, change management process on individual's readiness for change after controlling for nationality and hierarchical position of the respondent. The results of the structural equation model show that only change management process influences readiness for change (Table B.6). This result gives support to Weiner's view (2009) who considers that receptive context is necessary but not a sufficient condition for readiness. Individual commitment to implement an organizational change as well as self-efficacy judgments seem to be change specific. Armenakis & Harris (2002) highlight in this regard that individual reactions to change seem to be based on a combination of factors including personality, previous life and work experiences, organizational culture, personal habits, mental processes or logical disposition. Bernerth (2004) explains (2004, p40) that readiness for change is '*more than believing in the change, it is a collection of thoughts and intentions towards the change effort*'. It is the cognitive precursor to behaviors of either resistance or support to change (Backer 1995)

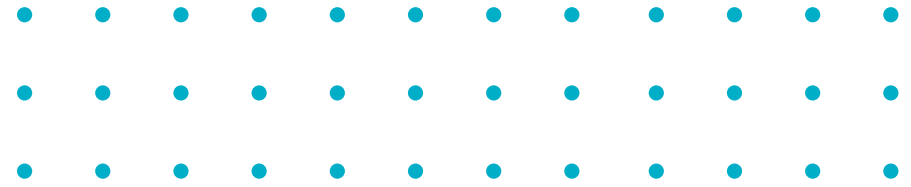
which can vary depending the social relationships in the work place measured by attitudes and perceptions toward supervisors, subordinates, peers or change agents (Weber and Weber 2001, Eby *et al.* 2000, Hanpachern *et al.* 1998).

With regard to employees' nationality, Hofstede (2001) and Ayman and Chemers (1983) highlight that managerial ideologies, behavior and practice vary across countries considering that national origin of managers significantly influences their approach to participatory decision making, delegation of power or conflict management, etc. (Suutari, 1996). Haire *et al.* (1966) argue that one third of the variance in work goals and managerial attitudes could be explained by the employees' country of origin. Mellahi (2003) show that Arab people compared with people from the western world seem to be characterized by a higher degree of uncertainty avoidance and seek to maintain the status quo (Mellahi, 2003). This can be explained by the lack of trust of employees due to insufficient top management support and communication (Rees and Althakhri 2008).

Personal characteristics as well as internal social context enablers (Rafferty *et al.*, 2013) seem to act as key antecedents of change readiness. Thus, changing employees cognitions shall require specific proactive efforts based on pervasive communication and active participation (Armenakis *et al.*, 1993) in order to challenge their current attitudes, intentions and beliefs (Armenakis *et al.*, 1993) and allow them to engage successfully in the implementation of any change project.

## Conclusion

The purpose of this research was to examine the perception of employees from France, GCC and India at different levels of organizational hierarchy and enrolled in executive education programs about the change management process in their organizations, the context of change and accordingly, the determinants of readiness for change. In other words, our research measured how individuals perceived the context of change and change management processes being implemented in their organization and how much they felt ready for the change. While focusing on the concept of readiness for change, we relied on a much more open and dynamic view of change management that allows overcoming resistance to change in a much proactive and systemic way (Bookenoogh, op cit; Holt *et al.*, op cit).



Our research supports the idea that readiness for change can be enhanced by acting on the change management processes in an organization (Holt *et al* 2007; Metsellar, 1997). Thus, for an organization to be agile and adaptable to changes in external environment, it is important that the employee understands and feels assured of the management's involvement and support during the transition.

However, unlike prior studies, our results do not show any significant effect of the context of change on individual' readiness for change. This counter intuitive finding is attributable to the fact that receptive context (Pettigrew *et al.* 1992) does not translate directly into readiness (Weiner 2009). This tends to show the features of context should be combined with management action to really have a positive effect on readiness for change. Moreover, our results tend to support the idea that demographic control variables (Devos *et al.* 2007) viz. nationality or position may be relevant when assessing an individual's attitude towards change.

Considering that intercultural researchers have clearly concentrated their efforts on only a limited number of world regions (Feghali, 1997) and that cross-national data research is quite hard to acquire (Ronen and Shenkar, opcit ), our research has shown that readiness for change can be influenced by the nationality and position. Differences between Western and Asian socio economic and labor markets may impact individual perceptions of their organization's managerial practices and leadership styles.

Like all research studies, this paper is not without limitations. This explanatory study can be extended to cover a larger sample covering various countries, over executives working in the same organization so as to bring in uniformity in understanding the change context and change management process and in the process bring in greater generalizability. Further, we plan to rely on a holistic framework of change management based on a closer and more in-depth understanding of employee's cultural context. This will allow us to assess comprehensively the impact of the situational and personal variables on individual perception of the context of change and change management processes involved in managing any change project.

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APPENDIX.A

**Readiness for Change Questionnaire**

Thank you for filling this readiness for change questionnaire, which is composed of two parts: the first part covers the organizational context and climate for change and the second part focuses on individual readiness for change. Please answer each question as completely as possible. The information provided shall of course remain confidential.

**Part one: Demographic information**

Please put a check mark (✓) on the correct box

Gender	<input type="checkbox"/>	Male	<input type="checkbox"/>	Female	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Nationality	<input type="checkbox"/>	GCC	<input type="checkbox"/>	France	<input type="checkbox"/>	India	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other Nationality	<input type="checkbox"/>
Age	<input type="checkbox"/>	Less than 25 year	<input type="checkbox"/>	Between 35 and 45 year	<input type="checkbox"/>	Between 25 and 35 year	<input type="checkbox"/>	More than 45 year	<input type="checkbox"/>
Position	<input type="checkbox"/>	Top Manager	<input type="checkbox"/>	Manager	<input type="checkbox"/>	Employee	<input type="checkbox"/>	Director	<input type="checkbox"/>
Education Level	<input type="checkbox"/>	BSC	<input type="checkbox"/>	PhD	<input type="checkbox"/>	Master	<input type="checkbox"/>	Others	<input type="checkbox"/>
									Head of Section

**Part two: Organizational Context and Climate for change**

**Instructions:** Please highlight or insert a mark in the cell that indicate the degree you agree with each statement using the Likert Scale printed below.

1. Never    2. Very Rarely    3. Rarely    4. Occasionally    5. Very Frequently    6. Always

Statements	Frequency Degree					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>Dimension 1: Context of change</b>						
1. To what extent you perceive your supervisors and top management as trustworthy?						
2. To what extent your management practice what they preach?						
3. To what extent your management keep their promises?						
4. To what extent your management are honest and fair towards all department?						
5. To what extent you perceive a high political game within the organization?						
6. To what extent your colleagues are accessible?						
7. To what extent you cooperate and trust the competence of your team members?						
8. To what extent staff members are involved and informed about decisions that directly concern them?						
9. To what extent procedures and guidelines can be discussed bottom up?						
<b>Dimension 2: Change management</b>						
10. To what extent you perceive support and understanding from your supervisor through the initiated change process?						
11. To what extent staff is clear about how they must apply change in practices?						
12. To what extent does your management support the change initiative?						
13. To what extent your management is involved in the change?						
<b>Dimension 3: Readiness for change</b>						
14. To what extent emotional readiness for change is the affective reaction toward change?						
15. To what extent you feel excited by change?						
16. To what extent you feel feared by change?						
17. To what extent you are aware of the benefits or disadvantages caused by the change?						
18. To what extent you think that change is needed in your organization?						
19. To what extent you think that change is triggered by external factors (competition, new technology, legal framework, globalization, etc.)?						
20. To what extent you think that change is triggered by internal factors (new management, poor performance, etc.)?						
21. To what extent you think that you have the capacity to successfully undertake change?						
22. To what extent you think change will have a positive outcome for you?						
23. To what extent you are prepared to put your energy into the change process?						