



# Identifying and Classifying Behavioral Barriers in Implementation of Strategic Transformation Plans: Qualitative Meta- Synthesis Approach

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## Abstract

Existence of behavioral barriers in employees is not a subject to be easily ignored in implementation of strategic transformational plans, but it is often neglected or less addressed because in this process the preparation of technical and feasibility aspects of transformational plans is the focal point and implementation steps and evaluation of these plans are ignored. Therefore, this research seeks to identify and classify behavioral barriers in the implementation of strategic transformational plans by reviewing previous researches and based on a qualitative meta-synthesis analysis method. Statistical population includes papers and researches related to the implementation of strategic transformational plans and the sampling method is also meaningful. The data analyzed in the present study are extracted from (secondary data) researches published from 1985 to 2019 from two ISI and Scopus databases, the subject of which is "strategy implementation". The method of data analysis is open source coding based on which selected papers have been reviewed and the initial codes have been extracted and the results are classified in 112 initial codes, 14 concepts and 5 categories. Finally, five categories including Inefficiency of managers, Inefficiency of leaders, Inefficiency of employees, Cultural inefficiencies and Systems Inefficiency, were identified and introduced as behavioral barriers in the implementation of strategic transformational plans.

## Keywords:

Behavioral Barriers;  
Implementation;  
Strategy Implementation;  
Strategic Plan;  
Transformational Plans

## Introduction

### Statement of Problem

In a business world today, the existence of a highly variable and complicated situation in the foreign environment governing organizations and companies, as well as the increasing competition between large and small companies, would stimulate the senior managers of such organizations and companies to make new managerial decisions instantaneously. These decisions often violate previous decisions to the extent which the implementation of the new decision requires major changes within organizations. However, in terms of the necessity of changes occurred in the decisions of managers at the macro level, more often, the executive bodies of organizations and employees are not simply capable to change and adapt internally,

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and consequently, the executive bodies of transformation plan and senior managers of organizations would encounter a lot of problems and limitations in the implementation stage and execution of such decisions [1].

In a clear-cut definition, the transformational plans include the pre-planned processes and systematic principles that utilize methods and principles of applied behavioral science in organizations to increase individual and organizational efficiency.

These processes account as the reflex for change and a type of educational complicated strategy for changing beliefs, attitudes, values, and structure of org., in a way that these factors can adjust itself with technologies, markets, and new challenges and by speed change in conditions and environment [2].

According to a study published by fortune valid magazine, most of the world's largest companies fail to achieve their transformation plans and fail the implement such stages, which can be referred to as structural, behavioral, environmental, and technological factors that are among the most effective elements on failure to achieve success as the implementation barriers for strategic transformational plans [3]. In Iran, various organizations have applied methods and tools for transformational plans, but they cannot often achieve competitive advantage factors. The statistics indicate that 90 percent of the world's largest companies fail to achieve their transformational purposes of which 30 percent had not been successful in the compile stage and 70 percent been not successful in implementation and execution [4].

The existence of behavioral barriers of employees is not a subject to be easily ignored in the implementation of strategic transformational plans, but it is often neglected or less addressed because in this process the preparation of technical and feasibility aspects of transformational plans is the focal point and implementation steps and evaluation of these plans re ignored [4].

Therefore, it is necessary to pay special attention to the identification and classification of behavioral barriers in the implementation stage of strategic transformational plans in order to take serious percussion of the adverse consequences of implementation and improper execution of such decisions. Therefore, this research seeks to identify and classify behavioral barriers in the implementation of strategic transformational plans by reviewing previous researches and based on the qualitative meta-Synthesis analysis method. The advantage of the meta-analysis method is the capability of this method to identify the common subjects and create a conceptual framework from the review of the literature [5].

## **Review of the Related Literature**

### **The concept of strategy and strategic management**

Various definitions have been offered for strategy in managerial texts. As Hauffer pointed out, a strategy is meant to integrating opportunities and existing precautions in external environments with the capabilities and resources of an organization in order to achieve organizational purposes. J.B. Quinn suggested that strategy is a plan or prototype which systemize basic aims, policies, and an organization's measure chain within a systematic plan and framework. Andrews has defined the strategy as a pattern of decisions in an organization that formulates goals and missions. Henry Mintzberg, the great management expert believed that the Five Ps framework presents another way of defining strategy. It suggests that a strategy may be viewed as a plan, pattern, position, and perspective, and ploy [6]. Strategic management is defined from different perspective of which it can be referred to two definitions: first and for most, from the perspective of Fred R David, Strategic management can be defined as the art and science of formulating, implementing, and evaluating cross-functional decisions that enable an organization to achieve its objectives. Or based on Robert Lamb, strategic management can be defined as the leading and continuous process for investigating the commercial or industrial

scope of activity of org., evaluating competitors, setting goals and necessary strategy for taking benefit of the available and potential capabilities. Afterward, reexamining each strategy regularly (seasonal, annual) would be defined to investigate how to implement it and the scale of practical success or substituting it with another strategy in case of failure and in order to be accountable for the environmental condition changes, new technologies, new competitors or economic, financial, social and political status [6].

### **Barriers related to implementing strategic transformational plans**

Stating the barriers to implementing strategic transformation plans, Kurt Verweir addressed five basic reasons for the unsuccessful implementation of these projects:

- 1- In the strategic issue, the focal point is on financial resources;
- 2- Performance strategies are not replaced by macro-commercial strategies;
- 3- Implementation of the strategy will involve different areas of the organization.
- 4- Managers communicate with the content of strategic transformational plans, but forget to turn them into action;
- 5- Implementation of the strategy is based on leadership abilities and skills in the organization.

Wheelen and Hunger [7] came up with the following problems in the implementation of strategic transformational plans:

- 1- The implementation time of these projects will take longer than the original scheduled time;
- 2- Major unpredicted problems and crises in the implementation phase;
- 3- Processes and activities are regulated inappropriately and inefficiently;
- 4- The creation of activities set inappropriately and inefficiently.
- 5- The employees involved in the implementation of transformational plans are not capable and skilled enough to perform their duties;
- 6- Low-rank employees of the organization and operation section are not qualified and do not have the necessary knowledge;
- 7- The leader and managers of different areas of the organization provide inappropriate orientation in implementing these plans;
- 8- Key executive activities and duties are poorly defined
- 9- Information and control systems enough during implementation do not have enough supervision over the activities [8].

Abok et al. [9] carried out research titled the effect of culture in the implementation of strategic transformational plans in non-governmental organizations in Kenya. The results of this research indicate that organizational culture plays an important role in the implementation of strategic transformational plans among mentioned-above organizations. Applying these findings, the researchers recommend that the organizational culture should be seriously taken into account for enhancing the spirit of general acceptance of personnel in the implementation stage of strategic transformational plans. In this research, which was carried out amongst 258 non-governmental organizations in Kenya, it is shown that the existence of “valuable organizational culture” is more effective for the implementation of strategic transformational plans than the existence of ineffective organizational culture [10].

Besides, the existence of conflicting beneficiary groups inside and outside the organization is another barrier in implementing strategic development plans. No shadow of a doubt that the groups for which maintaining the status quo are important to show much less interest and more resistance to the implementation of these projects than those that are looking to improve the status quo through the implementation of transformational plans. The difference between these two groups inevitably creates many problems in the process of implementation and implementation, so that the presence of conflicting beneficiary groups in organizations is one of the most important and fundamental limitations of personnel and management. Also, it

should be acknowledged that it is difficult and complicated to get all beneficiaries in or out of the organization. Also, it should be acknowledged that it is difficult and complicated to get all beneficiaries in or out of the organization [11].

In research, Mohammadi Janaki examined the barriers to implementing strategic development plans in Petro Pars Company and mentioned three major indicators, including the inefficient senior management team, conflict in organizational culture, and lack of agreement among the organization's leaders. In this research, other indicators such as lack of utilization of internal managers or knowledge of the necessities or how to improve implementation, as well as lack of support from senior managers, were less important than the three mentioned indicators[12].

By examining the literature review of the research and analysis of successful organizations in execution and implementing strategic development plans, researchers have found that the role and position of human resources and personnel should not be underestimated in this matter. One of the most important factors affecting this field is as follows:

- 1- Failure to implement compensation policies and payments in accordance with personnel' performance;
- 2- Lack of education and human resource development policies in organizations;
- 3- Lack of effective communication within the organization of personnel with each other and lack of information communication
- 4- Discrimination and discrepant in the organization promotion of personnel;
- 5- Lack of flexible policies in the field of human resources;
- 6- Lack of HR policies for the growth and development of management;
- 7- Lack of a specific policy on the recruitment of human resources [12].

Njiri [13] carried out their research to identify barriers to implementation of strategic development plans in Iranian health and treatment services organizations, which are: 1- resource limitations, 2- organization's record 3- poor and inappropriate communications, 4- conflict of objectives and priorities, 5- environmental uncertainty, 6- disharmony, 7- inactive human resources [14].

In another study, barriers to the implementation of strategic development plans have been investigated in the field of human resources in seven Canadian factories. The following barriers, as the most important barriers to implementation and overcoming them, are the most important success factors. These barriers include:

- 1- Lack of the unity of procedure in the way of implementing transformational plans among managers and personnel, 2- resistance to change between personnel and supervisors, 3- Avoiding the performance of implementing previous strategic transformation plans by personnel and managers, 4- Slowness in different stages of implementation process due to various reasons a result of human resources, 5- lack of perception of various motivations of personnel by managers and supervisors, 6- inappropriate communication of personnel and managers as well as inefficient consultations by managers, 7- Lack of incentives for better work by personnel, 8- lack of a proper timetable for implementing strategic transformation programs, 9- lack of voluntary participation by managers and personnel, 10- Lack of access to skilled labor, 11- Lack of complementary policies in the field of human resources to implement the transformation plan, and 12- Lack of proper and sufficient training [15].

The research titled to an analysis of S8 (Structure, systems, style, personnel, skills, strategy, shared values, and sodality) in Netherlands Red Cross indicated that the classification of structure, strategy, systems, personnel, skills, style, shared values, ethics, and commitments, direct barriers to the implementation of strategic transformation plans will be considered. The main barriers in the organizational "structure" section include: 1- lack of coordinated processes and activities with the implementation of strategic transformational plans 2- disagreements in decision-making processes 3- negative effects of organizational structure on the results of the

implementation process. Also, the barriers in the "Strategy" section include 1- non-systematic implementation processes, 2- lack of an integrated strategic transformation plan. The barriers in the section of "systems" include Lack of special information technology system (developed) to support the implementation process, 2- lack of continuous control system of the implementation stage 3- lack of a monitoring system to control the effectiveness of the implementation process. In addition, the barriers in the section of "personnel" include: 1- lack of definition of special duties or special expertise and skills for personnel in the field of implementation, 2- the existence of a large number of high quality and inefficient personnel and different gaps between them. The barriers in the section of "skills" include 1- Lack of interest in moving personnel to change position, 2- lack of necessary skills and expertise in attracting new personnel 3- Insufficient facilities for the development of employee skills (through training). The barriers in the section of "style" is of vital relative importance in a way that the findings of the research showed that in this section it can be noted to failure to support of the line and central office from execution operation section. Furthermore, in the section on barriers to "common values", it has been noted that the failure to design a "valuable common perspective" resulting from the implementation of the strategic transformation plan in the organization will cause this area to encounter many problems. Ultimately, in the section on barriers to "ethics and obligations", it can be mentioned to the following items: 1- lack of commitment of personnel against change, 2- the average level of employee commitment, 3- the average level of employee motivation. In general, the classification of style, skills, and values is common, which is considered as the main driver for successful implementation of strategic transformation plans [16].

According to Omuse et al. [17] and Heide et al. [18] strategic changes mean organizational changes. When organizations encounter problems and limitations, they need proper management to achieve a successful strategy. The process of change always causes many problems, fears, and stresses among the personnel of the organization. These problems and fears are different, but whatever they are, they lead to resistance against change and the implementation of transformational plans. Pearce and Robinson [19] state that besides the structure, "organizational leadership" plays an important role when implementing a transformational plan, which means that an organization needs leaders and managers who lead transformational plans and introduce the personnel with the necessary skills to match it. In addition to these two factors, "organizational culture" will play an important role when implementing a strategic transformation plan. Culture in an organization determines common values that create how individuals react to certain situations. Since culture affects the beliefs and actions of personnel, it will also have a significant impact on the implementation of transformational plans.

According to Tasa et al. [20], not only the method of preparing strategic transformation plans but also the role and position of the organization's high managers will play an important role in its implementation process. The successful fulfillment of the implementation of transformational plans will have a direct relationship with the solidarity of the decisions of senior managers and the actions of all personnel at all levels of the organization. Pereira et al. [21] carried out a study and claimed that one of the important issues which organizations come up with implementing transformational plans is the development of strategic competencies that enable the organization to survive and thrive in its environment [16].

Waihenya [10] indicated that the leadership factor is an important driver in the implementation of strategic transformational plans. Pella et al. [22] addresses that implementation is an operational and pragmatic human behavioral activity that requires executive leadership and key management skills. On the other hand, there are many scholars Herberniak [23] who defined leadership as a barrier. This issue will have to cause a barrier to the implementation of transformational plans, instead of efficiency, concerning the lack of a

leader or having an inefficient leader on the site. According to the findings of Herberniak [23], subjects related to personnel construed as barriers in implementing strategic transformational plans. Njiri [13] also mentioned two other barriers in this area. 1- The objectives and incentives of personnel are not in the same way as the content of transformational plans, and 2- Human resources have not been developed effectively to support the implementation of development projects. Heide et al. [24] discuss managing personnel as a barrier to achieving success of implementing strategic transformational plans, given the fact that managing personnel is a fundamental part of the preparation, compilation, and implementation of these transformational plans. Because personnel has dreams, needs, and feelings that affect the organization's performance. Plans that ignore these factors will likely face a lot of resistance when implementing them. Herberniak [23] points out that transformational plans are developed by senior organizational managers ("smart people"), but are implemented by lower-level (not fully smart) personnel who are forced to do so. According to Arabi [24], Alexander [25], discuss the "skills" group can act as a stimulus for the implementation of transformational plans. The most common aspects that are considered as a stimulus in this field are the supply and allocation of resources, as well as the supply of education (knowledge/skills). Hosseini [26] points out that a successful change often needs sufficient resources (skill) for supporting the process of needs. Nosratollahi [27], Heide et al. [18] discuss the available barriers in categories of skills. They identified the following negative factors that affect the implementation of transformational plans, which are as follows:

1- Allocation of resources is not in line with the developmental plans developed in the organization 2- Social capitals have not been developed effectively to support the implementation of strategic transformational projects 3- Lack of resources, 4- No type of learning or training has been provided for the implementation of strategic development plans. The last concept is "ethics and obligations", which relates to the human side of the organization.

Beyer and Eisenstate[28], Makina and Keng'ara [29], Herbrniak [23], succeeded to compile and edit several of them. Waihenya [10] state that it is necessary to have consensus and obligation between the personnel for the implementation of successful strategic transformational plans. Muthoni [6] state that Change must be organized through the whole organization, and the organization must follow up on the process of change. According to Samson et al. [4], several factors must be in common when implementing transformational plans. Communicating with the change, motivating others to change, managing personal transformation, facilitating the process of change, and listening to the organization's beneficiaries are all required for effective management of strategic transformation plans. According to Waihenya [10], there are several factors that must be in line with implementing transformational plans. Establishing communication with the change, motivating others to change, managing personal transformation, facilitating the process of change, and listening to the organization's beneficiaries are all required for effective management of strategic transformation plans [16]. Makina and Keng'ara [29] stated that social-cultural factors mainly concentrate on the attitudes of societies and cultural values. They also noted that attitudes and values are made up the backbone of a society and drive demographic, economic, political, legal, and technological conditions and changes. Richard Lynch believes that various social and cultural factors such as changes in values and culture, changes in lifestyle, attitudes to work and leisure, green bio-environment issues, education and health, demographic changes and income distribution are among the factors affecting the implementation of strategic transformational plans and analyzes it [30].

Verweire [31] states that the implementation of strategic transformational plans will be time-consuming action which is more than expected, as the commitment, time, emotions, and energy required by individuals to implement strategic transformational plans are often ignored. In addition, possible problems are often not addressed. Poor and inefficient coordination of

activities during the implementation of strategic transformational plans is another barrier. Coordination means "merging or linking different parts of the organization together to perform a set of type of task force." Coordination of operation activities should be managed by committees, superiors, or personnel. If coordination is not done right, it can cause inconsistencies. "Lack of attention to implementation" is another barrier that leads to failure. This means that there is much more attention to competitive activities, external factors, or crises than the implementation of strategic transformational plans. Furthermore, paying special attention to the human resources factor is essential for the success of an organization and creating a competitive advantage. Human Resource Management endeavors to perform well through human and social capital. It is important to note that these resources are managed properly, otherwise it will have a negative result, as an inappropriate management team will also be considered a barrier to implementation; This means that the negative leadership and orientation of senior managers in implementing strategic transformation plans will make them encounter serious limitations. However, the implementation of successful strategic transformation plans requires more than one leader and teamwork. There is a need for teamwork in the group of leaders and managers to communicate appropriately with the knowledge of the entire organization through communication and cooperation. In addition, it is important that the management style be aligned with the company's strategy, because the lack of alignment between the two can lead to the failure of the implementation of strategic transformational plans. Besides, a lack of understanding of the content of developmental projects can also be a barrier. This means that the personnel of an organization does not clearly understand the goals of the organization or how to implement strategic transformational plans. In this case, the main activities and tasks of the performance are not clear or well-identified [32].

### **Summarization and Criticism of Literature Review**

The findings of the previous literature review, in the area of implementing strategic transformational plans, indicate that the studied resources have investigated these barriers more from structural, technical, and environmental perspectives and less have dealt with personnel' behavioral barriers'. To institutionalize strategic transformation plans, managers must design and implement an effective program to encourage employee behavior. These programs should start weeks earlier. To make sure managers get the transformation message received from employees.

For strategic transformation plans to be widely implemented, the manager must prepare a "separate plan for employee behavior" that aims to create the right environment to always welcome change.

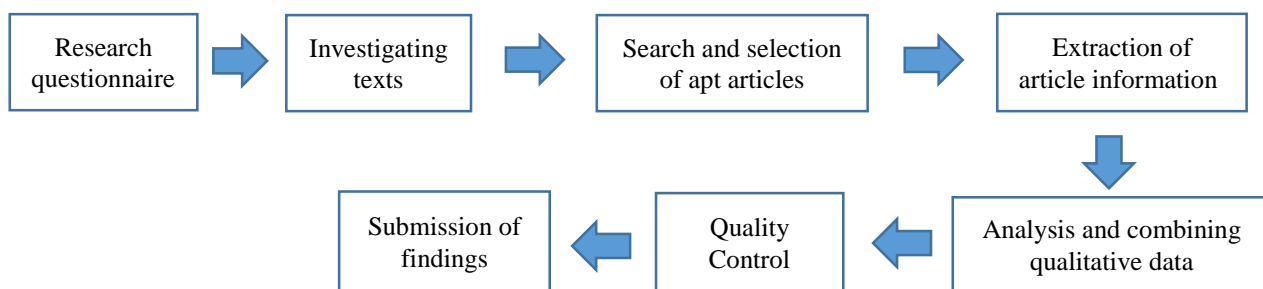
In previous researches, there has been less much attention to these issues: commitment, emotions, personality and psychological characteristics, the energy needed by individuals to implement strategic plans, job impact and workplace conditions on human resources, how to manage human resources as social and human capitals, how to overcome people's resistance to change, create and strengthen the spirit of empathy, active and voluntary participation and creating a sense of consensus among human resources as effective human factors in implementing strategic transformational plans.

### **Research Methodology**

It has been used from the qualitative meta-synthesis analysis method in this study. The strong point of the qualitative meta-synthesis analysis method is its ability to identify common categories and create a conceptual framework at the heart of the background. According to Zimmer, the meta-synthesis analysis method is a type of qualitative study that investigates the

information and findings extracted from other qualitative studies with the similar and related subject, so the desired sample for the meta-synthesis analysis method is made up of selected qualitative studies and based on their relationship with the research question. In the methodology section of the present research, it has been used from the seven-step method of Sandelowski and Barroso of which the summary of these steps is shown in Fig. 1 [5]. Concerning the aim of the research, the qualitative meta-synthesis analysis method would help to identify the behavioral barriers in the implementation of strategic transformational plans. The type of qualitative meta-synthesis analysis method is library study.

In studies related to the implementation of transformational plans, researchers have not yet been able to achieve a suitable framework for identifying barriers to implementation of transformational plans, so the present study has been able to help to estimate these dimensions by using the qualitative meta-synthesis analysis method. The sample population of this study includes all the documents (articles books, conferences, and thesis) related to the implementation of transformational plans. The data analysis of this research was extracted from the research published as of 1985 until 2019 with the title of implementation of strategic transformational plans. In order to investigate these studies, the most repudiate information databases such as “Scopus and ISI” and search engines such as “Google Scholars and Google” was used. Also, it has been used from the keywords “Strategy Executive” and “Strategy Implementation” in information databases to find a related article. In the present study, the total number of primary articles was 400 which ultimately the number of 25 articles have selected amongst them titled “behavioral barriers”.



**Fig. 1.** Meta-synthesis steps

The most commonly used tool to assess the quality of the first studies in qualitative research is the Critical Assessment Skills plan. The number of primary articles and sources found was 400, according to which 25 articles and sources were analyzed. The method of screening articles and resources based on this plan is reflected in Fig. 2. Data screening was conducted in terms of "title relation", "abstract" and "content and quality of articles" with the title of the research. The search for articles continued to be rounded up to reach saturation. Since the data of this paper have been extracted from the secondary data, the "open source coding" method was used to analyze the data. By doing so, each article was encoded separately, then the concepts were classified in terms of "categories".

Number of found articles  
N=400



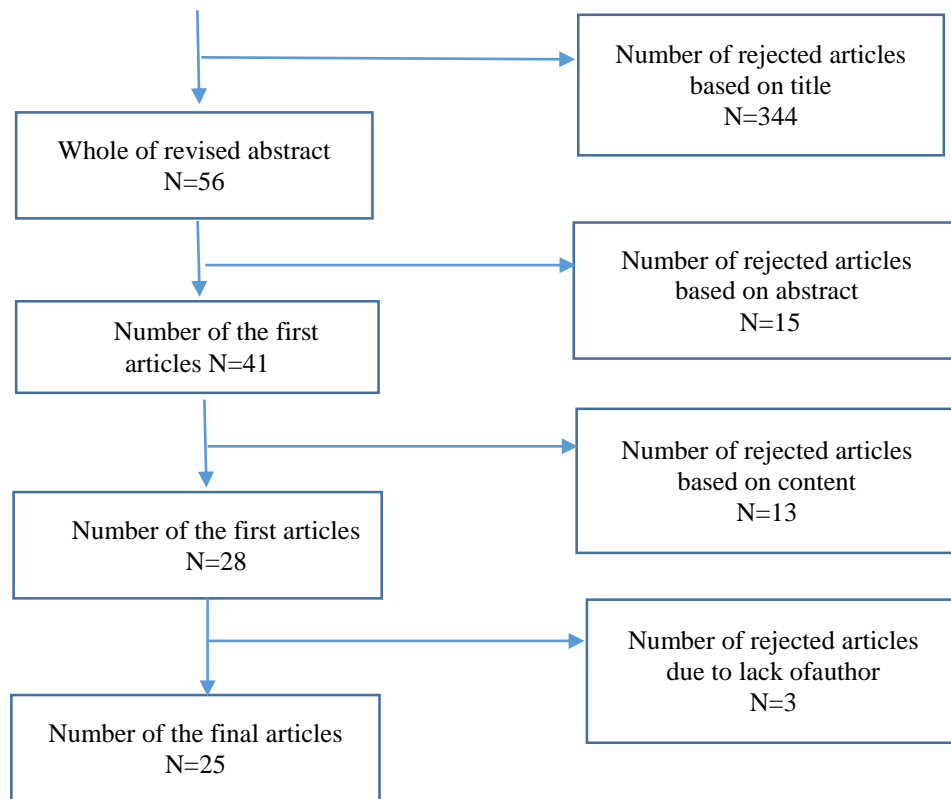


Fig. 2. How to screen articles based on CASP

## Research Findings

Whereas none of the researches conducted on behavioral barriers in the implementation of strategic transformational plans has comprehensively and systematically addressed the title, the present study, according to the articles and resources investigated, merely addressed behavioral barriers in implementing the mentioned projects based on the following table in the form of primary codes, concepts, and categories, and the identification and classification stages were completed.

Table 1. Codes, concepts and categories taken from the literature along with extracted sources

categories	concepts	primary codes	References
Inefficiency of mangers	lack of apt mental model and critical thinking before mangers	1- lack of proper understanding of the change and transformation with managers 2- lack of enough motivation for change before managers 3- acceptance of existing conditions and 4- lack of feeling of the need of managers to implement transformational plans 5- The existence of previous mental templates before managers 6- Lack of alignment of management style and transformation plans in managers 7- Preventing change by managers 8- Existence of project-based and time-based perspective of managers to transformation plans	Hosseini et al. (2016), Verweire (2014), Nabwire (2014), Verhagen (2017), Alexander (1985)
	lack of apt interaction and efficient	9- Managers 'attention failure to the opinions, beliefs, needs, and demands of personnel	Hosseini et al. (2016), Donselaar (2012), Hourani (2017),

categories	concepts	primary codes	References
	organizational communication of managers	10- Lack of ability to cooperate and non-participation in activities by managers 11- Lack of exchange of thoughts and consultation of managers with the personnel of the organization 12- Interaction and vague communication between managers and personnel 13- Disagreements among managers about the content of transformational plans 14- Lack of appropriate and insufficient communication between different layers of managers 15- Lack of appropriate extra-organizational communications 16- Creating the risk of dominance and exercising the power of personnel	Alexander (1985), Derya and Gökhan (2013)
	lack of manager's merits and eloquence	17- lack of General and specialized competency of managers 18- Scientific and practical inefficiency of managers 19- Lack of familiarity and mastery of managers by preparing and designing transformational plans and its processes 20- Lack of sufficient experience and knowledge in managers 21- Lack of long-term commitment of managers to transformational plans 22- Lack of innovation and creativity in managers 23- Lack of leadership and leadership skills by managers 24- Lack of continuous support and support of managers from implementation and implementation of transformation programs 25- Inability to design a common, transparent and suitable vision of the future for personnel 26- Managers' incapacity in prioritizing the goals and plans of transformation 27- Inappropriate management of human resources (discrimination, immoralities, injustice, etc.) 28- Multiplicity and delay in decision-making of managers 29- Existence and occurrence of extra and out-of-framework current affairs for managers	Pereira et al. (2019), Wolczek (2018), Hosseini et al. (2016), Beer and Eisenstat (2000), Hourani (2017), Nabwire (2014), Al. expander (1985), Maleki et al. (2010)
<b>leader's Inefficiency</b>	lack of specialized and behavioral merit of leadership	30- lack of knowledge and expertise in leaders 31- lack of development of various skills in leadership 32- lack of participation and operational inefficiency of leaders 33- the inability of leaders to evoke managers and personnel 34- Considering individual and group interests in selecting and implementing transformation plans 35- Lack of agreement and immersive empathy among leaders 36- Inability of leaders to adapt and integrate internal and foreign environments of organization 37- Improper allocation of decision-making power 38- Reducing employee involvement in the process of implementing transformational plans	Njiri (2016), Beer and Eisenstat (2000), Pearce and Robinson (2005), Wolczek (2018), Maleki et al. (2010), Hosseini et al. (2016)
	lack of strategic leadership	39- lack of leaders and standard-bearers of transformation in organization 40- lack of a powerful coalition of leaders to implement transformation plans 41- Lack of use of domestic leaders 42- Lack of appropriate leadership style for implementation of transformational plans	Wolczek (2018), Verhagen (2017), Pearce and Robinson (2005), Beer and Eisenstat (2000), Maleki et al. (2010), Makina and Keng'ara (2018)

categories	concepts	primary codes	References
		43- Lack of managerial stability in different layers of organizational leaders 44- lack of enough authorities of leaders in presenting transformational plans 45- Lack of single command center for implementation of transformational plans	
<b>inefficiency of personnel</b>	Lack of specialized and behavioral merit of leadership	46- Lack of general and specialized competencies of personnel in implementing transformational plans 47- Existence of multiple learning barriers for personnel 48- Lack of commitment and work conscience among personnel 49- Lack of relevant and specialized education of personnel 50- Lack of personal development skills of personnel 51- obsolete knowledge and skills of personnel 52- Lack of appropriate amount of initiative, creativity and systemic thinking in personnel 53- Lack of necessary experience and knowledge about the implementation of transformation plans 54- Conflict in different interests of personnel	Wolczek (2018), Oke and Oke(2007), Alexander (1985), Donselaar (2012), Chijioke et al. (2018), Beer and Eisenstat (2000), Pella et al. (2013), Nabwire (2014), Samson and Mary (2012), Derya and Gökhan (2013), Muthoni (2012)
	Failure in interaction and communication of personnel	55- Lack of presentation and useful information and knowledge by personnel 56- Lack of consensus of personnel in the methods applied of doing affairs and activities 57- Gap, multiple behavioral and communication misunderstandings between personnel 58- apathy and communication insurance of personnel 59- The existence of excessive vertical communication	Donselaar (2012), Wolczek (2018), Verhagen (2017)
	Daily routine and resistance of personnel against change	60- High attachment of personnel to previous plans and programs and resistance to change 61- Lack of firm belief among personnel to developmental plans and its objectives and benefits 62- Avoiding personnel from reviewing implemented transformation plans 63- Low tolerance of personnel against change 64- Lack of change motivation in personnel 65- Attention and concentration of personnel on daily operational activities 66- Loss of personnel' freedom of action	Makina and Keng'ara (2018), Oke and Oke (2007), Donselaar (2012), Wolczek (2018), Hosseini et al. (2016), Hourani (2017)
	Habits	67- The existence of stress resulted by a change in personnel 68- habits and daily routine activities of personnel 69- the existence of a sense of security in the present and past 70- Fear of unknowns of transformation and future plans 71- Excessive commitment of personnel to other activities	Derya and Gökhan (2013), Donselaar (2012)
<b>Cultural inefficiency</b>	Structural, planning and process weaknesses	72- Lack of active participation of beneficiaries in the implementation of transformational projects 73- Existence of numerous and conflicting interests of beneficiaries inside and outside the organization 74- Coalition and heterogeneous and unconventional communications of non-intimate groups against transformational plans	Makina and Keng'ara (2018), Wolczek (2018)
	Cultural inconsistency	75- The existence of a culture of resistance resulting from attitudes, beliefs, and values incompatible with change 76- lack of welcoming cultural diversity 77- lack of flexible, strong, integrated and dynamic culture	Hourani (2017), Abok et al. (2013), Muthoni (2012), Oke and Oke (2007)

categories	concepts	primary codes	References
		78- The existence of cultural conflicts (cultural puzzles) 79- The existence of the unsuccessful background and the organization's reputation for the failure of transformation plans 80- The existence of an individual-centered culture in place of a team or network to implement transformation plans 81- Lack of a culture of commitment and enough loyalty	
	Communication and interaction weaknesses	82- the existence of a culture of non-follow-up 83- the existence of inefficient relationships and interactions 84- lack of voluntary participation culture 85- lack of inconsistencies, weakness and inefficiency in interactions and communications 86- Existence of conflicting accountability culture 87- Existence of a culture of trust among personnel to promote developmental plans 88- Lack of communication and information system	Hourani(2017), Janaki et al. (2015), Wheelen and Huger(2012), Verhagen(2017)
<b>System inefficiency</b>	Structural, planning, and process weaknesses	89- Lack of clarity and transparency of the aims of implementing transformational plans for personnel 90- uncertain, ambiguous and conflicting content of the objectives of transformational plans for managers and personnel 91- Causing confusion about the goals or final expectations for personnel 92- Lack of clarity of personnel' roles and responsibilities in implementation process 93- Lack of coordination of decisions by all organizational levels 94- Lack of shared perception of managers and personnel of transformational plans 95- Existence of poor information and interactional systems between personnel and managers 96- Financial, technical and structural facilities for implementation of developmental projects 97- Lack of attention in implementation stage 98- Lack of having plans to reduce personnel' resistance to change 99- The existence of a deep, dry and non-flexible vertical structure 100- Lack of participation of the executives of transformation plans in the stages of preparation and compilation of it 101- Failure to define and share the executive responsibilities of transformation plans for personnel 102- The impossibility of evaluating the correct and appropriate stages of the process of implementation of transformational plans 103- Lack of mechanism for evaluating managers' performance with the obtained results.	Wheelen and Huger (2012), Verhagen (2017), Beer and Eisenstat (2000), Hourani (2017), Janaki et al. (2015), Alexander (1985), Donselaar (2012), Wolczek (2018)
	Human resources system weaknesses	104- Lack of access to skilled and handy workforce 105- Lack of necessary and insufficient training for personnel 106- Lack of clarity in defining duties and missions for personnel 107- Lack of appropriate and fair service compensation programs in line with the objectives of transformational plans 108- Lack of motivational programs for personnel in line with the objectives of transformational plans 109- lack of empowerment of key personnel	Janaki et al. (2015), Wheelen and Huger (2012), Nabwire(2014), Donselaar (2012), Samson and Mary (2012), Wolczek (2018)

categories	concepts	primary codes	References
		110- Asymmetric and heterogeneous distribution of personnel in organizational units 111- Lack of performance evaluation mechanism of personnel 112- Lack of job security plans for managers and personnel	

To control her derivative concepts, the researcher has compared her opinions with another expert and measured the results using the kappa index. Kappa index when two rankers rank the respondents and we intend to measure the agreement of these two rankers; Is used. The kappa index fluctuates between zero and one, and the closer it is to one, the better the ratings. The kappa coefficient calculated by SPSS software was 0.884, which was higher than the acceptable value (0.6) [33]. Therefore, the assumption of extractive code independence is rejected and code extraction has had good reliability.

## Classification of primary codes, concepts, and categories

### First category: Inefficiency of managers

This concept is classified into three concepts:

#### *Lack of apt mental model and critical thinking before managers*

The initial codes extracted in this concept include 1- lack of proper understanding of the change and transformation with managers 2- lack of enough motivation for change before managers 3- acceptance of existing conditions and 4- lack of feeling of the need of managers to implement transformational plans 5- The existence of previous mental templates before managers 6- Lack of alignment of management style and transformation plans in managers 7- Preventing change by managers 8- Existence of project-based and time-based perspective of managers to transformation plans.

#### *Lack of apt interaction and efficient organizational communication of managers*

The initial codes extracted in this concept include 9- Managers 'attention failure to the opinions, beliefs, needs, and demands of personnel 10- Lack of ability to cooperate and non-participation in activities by managers 11- Lack of exchange of thoughts and consultation of managers with the personnel of the organization 12- Interaction and vague communication between managers and personnel 13- Disagreements among managers about the content of transformational plans 14- Lack of appropriate and insufficient communication between different layers of managers 15- Lack of appropriate extra-organizational communications 16- Creating the risk of dominance and exercising the power of personnel

#### *Lack of manager's merits and eloquence*

The initial codes extracted in this concept include 17- lack of General and specialized competency of managers 18- Scientific and practical inefficiency of managers 19- Lack of familiarity and mastery of managers by preparing and designing transformational plans and its processes 20- Lack of sufficient experience and knowledge in managers 21- Lack of long-term commitment of managers to transformational plans 22- Lack of innovation and creativity in managers 23- Lack of leadership and leadership skills by managers 24- Lack of continuous support and support of managers from implementation and implementation of transformation programs 25- Inability to design a common, transparent and suitable vision of the future for personnel 26- Managers' incapacity in prioritizing the goals and plans of transformation 27- Inappropriate management of human resources (discrimination, immoralities, injustice, etc.)

28- Multiplicity and delay in decision-making of managers  
29- Existence and occurrence of extra and out-of-framework current affairs for managers.

### **Second category: leader's Inefficiency**

This category is classified into two concepts:

#### *lack of specialized and behavioral merit of leadership*

The initial codes extracted in this concept include: 30- lack of knowledge and expertise in leaders  
31- lack of development of various skills in leadership  
32- lack of participation and operational inefficiency of leaders  
33- the inability of leaders to evoke managers and personnel  
34 -Considering individual and group interests in selecting and implementing transformation plans  
35- Lack of agreement and immersive empathy among leaders  
36- Inability of leaders to adapt and integrate internal and foreign environments of organization  
37- Improper allocation of decision-making power  
38- Reducing employee involvement in the process of implementing transformational plans

#### *lack of strategic leadership*

The initial codes extracted in this concept are: 39- lack of leaders and standard-bearers of transformation in organization, 40- lack of a powerful coalition of leaders to implement transformation plans, 41- Lack of use of domestic leaders, 42- Lack of appropriate leadership style for implementation of transformational plans  
43- Lack of managerial stability in different layers of organizational leaders  
44- lack of enough authorities of leaders in presenting transformational plans, and 45- lack of single command center for implementation of transformational plans.

### **Third Category: inefficiency of personnel**

This category is classified into four concepts:

#### *Lack of specialized and behavioral merit of leadership*

The initial codes extracted in this concept include: 46- Lack of general and specialized competencies of personnel in implementing transformational plans, 47- Existence of multiple learning barriers for personnel, 48- Lack of commitment and work conscience among personnel  
49- Lack of relevant and specialized education of personnel, 50- Lack of personal development skills of personnel, 51- obsolete knowledge and skills of personnel, 52- Lack of appropriate amount of initiative, creativity and systemic thinking in personnel, 53- Lack of necessary experience and knowledge about the implementation of transformation plans, and 54- conflict in different interests of personnel

#### *Failure in interaction and communication of personnel*

The initial codes extracted in this concept include: 55- Lack of presentation and useful information and knowledge by personnel, 56- Lack of consensus of personnel in the methods applied of doing affairs and activities, 57- Gap, multiple behavioral and communication misunderstandings between personnel, 58- apathy and communication insurance of personnel, 59- The existence of excessive vertical communication.

#### *Daily routine and resistance of personnel against change*

The initial codes extracted in this concept include:

60- High attachment of personnel to previous plans and programs and resistance to change,  
61- Lack of firm belief among personnel to developmental plans and its objectives and benefits,

62- Avoiding personnel from reviewing implemented transformation plans, 63- Low tolerance of personnel against change, 64- Lack of change motivation in personnel, 65- Attention and concentration of personnel on daily operational activities, 66- Loss of personnel' freedom of action.

#### *Habits*

The initial codes extracted in this concept include: 67- The existence of stress resulted by a change in personnel, 68- habits and daily routine activities of personnel, 69- the existence of a sense of security in the present and past, 70- Fear of unknowns of transformation and future plans, 71- Excessive commitment of personnel to other activities.

### **Fourth Category: Cultural inefficiency**

This category is classified into three concepts:

#### *Structural, planning and process weaknesses*

The initial codes extracted in this concept include: 72- Lack of active participation of beneficiaries in the implementation of transformational projects, 73- Existence of numerous and conflicting interests of beneficiaries inside and outside the organization, 74- Coalition and heterogeneous and unconventional communications of non-intimate groups against transformational plans.

#### *Cultural inconsistency*

The initial codes extracted in this concept include: 75- The existence of a culture of resistance resulting from attitudes, beliefs, and values incompatible with change, 76- lack of welcoming cultural diversity, 77- lack of flexible, strong, integrated and dynamic culture, 78- The existence of cultural conflicts (cultural puzzles), 79- The existence of the unsuccessful background and the organization's reputation for the failure of transformation plans, 80- The existence of an individual-centered culture in place of a team or network to implement transformation plans, and 81- Lack of a culture of commitment and enough loyalty.

#### *Communication and interaction weaknesses*

The initial codes extracted in this concept include: 82- the existence of a culture of non-follow-up, 83- the existence of inefficient relationships and interactions, 84- lack of voluntary participation culture, 85- lack of inconsistencies, weakness and inefficiency in interactions and communications, 86- Existence of conflicting accountability culture, 87- Existence of a culture of trust among personnel to promote developmental plans, 88- Lack of communication and information system.

### **Fifth Category: System inefficiency**

This category is classified into two concepts:

#### *Structural, planning, and process weaknesses*

The initial codes extracted in this concept include: 89- Lack of clarity and transparency of the aims of implementing transformational plans for personnel, 90- uncertain, ambiguous and conflicting content of the objectives of transformational plans for managers and personnel, 91- Causing confusion about the goals or final expectations for personnel, 92- Lack of clarity of personnel' roles and responsibilities in implementation process, 93- Lack of coordination of decisions by all organizational levels, 94- Lack of shared perception of managers and personnel of transformational plans, 95- Existence of poor information and interactional systems between

personnel and managers, 96- Financial, technical and structural facilities for implementation of developmental projects, 97- Lack of attention in implementation stage, 98- Lack of having plans to reduce personnel' resistance to change, 99- The existence of a deep, dry and non-flexible vertical structure, 100- Lack of participation of the executives of transformation plans in the stages of preparation and compilation of it, 101- Failure to define and share the executive responsibilities of transformation plans for personnel, 102- The impossibility of evaluating the correct and appropriate stages of the process of implementation of transformational plans, 103- Lack of mechanism for evaluating managers' performance with the obtained results.

#### *Human resources system weaknesses*

The initial codes extracted in this concept include: 104- Lack of access to skilled and handy workforce, 105- Lack of necessary and insufficient training for personnel, 106- Lack of clarity in defining duties and missions for personnel, 107- Lack of appropriate and fair service compensation programs in line with the objectives of transformational plans, 108- Lack of motivational programs for personnel in line with the objectives of transformational plans, 109- lack of empowerment of key personnel, 110- Asymmetric and heterogeneous distribution of personnel in organizational units, 111- Lack of performance evaluation mechanism of personnel, and 112- Lack of job security plans for managers and personnel.

### **Conclusion and suggestion for further studies**

Investigating the background and results of similar researches during the writing process of this paper it can be seen that researchers in their researches and studies have pointed out the generalities (generalizations) on the barriers to implementing strategic transformational plans, which are often central to these models, technical, structural and systemic barriers and limitations, and a careful and precise investigation of behavioral barriers to leaders, managers, and personnel in the implementation phase of transformational plans has been neglected which construed as an innovative and distinctive feature of the present research in this area. For this purpose, by reviewing the literature review of previous researches, the researcher identified and categorized behavioral barriers and finally addressed five main topics including Inefficiency of managers, Inefficiency of leaders, Inefficiency of personnel, Cultural inefficiencies, and Systems Inefficiency. The outcome of this research would be applied in order to suggest to organizations that in order to implement strategic transformational plans and institutionalize change in the organization, long before the execution and implementation stages and in the first stages of preparing and formulating transformational plans, it should be implemented a very specific and central look at the human subject in the organization and behaviors and considered the necessity of preparing systematic and efficient plans for their behavioral development and control in the organization.

Preparation, development, and training of the organization's leaders and policymakers in the areas of knowledge, skills, and behavior shall be considered as one of the priorities of this plan. The immersive growth and development of executive and operational managers, including individual, organizational, etc., in order to eliminate their losses and inefficiencies, as well as the familiarity of managers with critical and searching mental models and templates, along with improving and strengthening the skills and mechanisms of creating and developing effective organizational communications, should be accounted as one of the main focal points of human resources programs in implementing transformational plans. Meanwhile, the necessity of the existence of mentioned above developmental plans for the personnel and the executive body of the organization is also necessary and in addition, they should be planned to reduce the amount of resistance and not repeat disruptive habits and behaviors and prevent the implementation of transformational plans. Addressing elements and factors of fundamental categories, such as



organizational culture and resolving issues resulting from its failures, including in the field of beneficiaries inside and outside of the organization, cultural inconsistencies should also be considered as other priorities of these programs. The main infrastructures, structure, plans, processes related to transformation plans, and human resources should also be on the top of the agenda of the programs in this area.

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