

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

6.1 Limitations

Concerns arose in the planning of this study. One was with the participants in the Delphi in-depth data collection. Project managers were chosen for their accumulated experience and subjective view of user resistance to ES. However, project managers usually left projects soon after systems were implemented, and so could not provide long-term observations of the effectiveness of resistance management. Longitudinal research on different resistance management strategies would collect deeper information on strategies for managing user resistance.

Secondly, Taiwan has a characteristic political, economic, and societal environment. SMEs (Small and Medium Enterprises) play an important role in all the Asian economies, typically contributing over ninety percent of all enterprises, and in Taiwan many companies are family-owned firms with eighty percent more private employment (Hall et al. 2003; Huang 1994). Most of the companies hire fewer than 200 employees. Entrepreneurial spirit is high and personal friendships are very useful in business, as well there are clear authority hierarchies and a strong association between CEO personality and corporate culture (Huang 1994). Therefore, the results of the present study may be more applicable only to small-sized companies. It would be necessary to test the framework on different sizes of organizations with different cultural backgrounds.

6.2 Academicals contribution

This study has reviewed resistance on literatures in the past thirteen years; including both general IS resistance and change management. Factors are identified for popular used commercial package software, the Enterprise Systems. It is believed that this framework could be applied to other new technologies that bring in company-wide changes.

6.3 Managerial implications

This study hopes to help business managers mitigate resistance brought by IT-enabled changes, diagnosing resistance with proper strategies applied to it, shorten the unstable period before benefits realized, and lead to successful changes of enterprise-wide implementation. Business managers are expected to gain practical clues of top management support, communications, and proper trainings to different types of users, and plan effective strategies for managing ES changes.

6.4 Further Research

In addition to the difference between managerial and operational user resistance, it is also noted by interviewees that users of different processes may also behave differently. Finance users usually have more experience in adopting packaged software and accept the system with less resistance, while sales and marketing users usually have their own ways of running business and tend to resist the software's logic of decision-making. It will be useful to understand the difference among various changed processes. In the past, IT department was usually found to place no resistance to Information Systems for their roles of system development (Dickson et al. 1970). While Enterprise Systems are package software developed by experienced vendors some interviewees mentioned that the IT staff somehow has become one of the resistors. Apply this framework it would be beneficial to know the different view of IT staff towards the new type of information system. In addition to understanding the resistance of different stakeholders, as mentioned before, it is also interesting to know the differences among different cultures. Because of the cultural impact on different type of users' reasons and behaviors of resistance would possibly be different and strategies would also be applied differently. As suggested by Hofstede (Hofstede 1980), there are at least four major cultural profiles around the world, the Anglo/Nordic, the Germanic, the Latin and the Asia, if this study represents resistance under Asian cultural impact there is a need for understanding user resistance with users under the influence of the other cultural dimensions. The framework presented in this study would provide a useful base for the cross-cultural study.

6.5 Conclusion

This study sought to present research results with explanations for user resistance and descriptions of operative strategies. The results show that different types of users have different reasons for resistance, and behave in different ways towards ES implementation; thus, strategies for managing resistance should be different as well. In those interviewees' cases, managerial users resist the system mainly because of doubt about its proposed benefits. They tend to express negative feelings in meetings with project managers, but destructive behaviors are seldom noted. Participative management style with communication and involvement are strategies for project managers to consider. Operational users resist the system for many reasons, mainly due to additional time and effort at work, unfamiliarity with the system, and loss of autonomy. They tend to deny mistakes and attribute faults to the system or to others, and they complain widely. It is important to manage resistance with enhanced training, timely rewards, and provide frequent communication and emotional support. Since these two types of users tend to affect each other, it is important to gain managerial users' support in managing

operational resistance. Managerial users should be trained not only in the use of new systems, but also in communication skills.

The value of the findings should be to assist business managers in diagnosing resistance symptoms with a better understanding of their underlying causes. The framework proposed should be applied for studies of organizational changes with other types of enterprise-wide integration. It is hoped that the study results will contribute to research into change management by building an integrated view of user resistance with important factors considered, while future research could be directed towards a closer understanding of the variations in reaction to change by different stakeholders in different-sized organizations.