

Innovations

Organization Change Management and Employee Performance: The Mediating Role of Employee Engagement

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Abstract: *The main objective of this research was to examine how employee engagements mediate the effects of organizational change management on employee's performance at Addis Credit and Savings Institution which is government microfinance. Structural equation modelling was used to analyse the data using AMOS software. The study's result showed that employee performance is significantly impacted by organizational change management. Employee performance is directly impacted by employee engagement in a similar way. Through employee engagement, organizational change management has a considerable indirect impact on employee performance. Consequently, the relationship between organizational change management and employee performance is mediated by employee engagement.*

Keywords: *change management, employee performance, employee engagement*

1. Introduction

Incorporating organizational techniques that can be used to support people through successful personal transitions that lead to the adoption and realization of change is known as change management (Abera, 2020;Ferede et al., 2024). Change is an inevitable part of organizational life due to the continuous rise in economic and technological advancement. To handle the human side of change and accomplish the desired business outcome, change management processes, tools, and approaches must be used.

Organizational change is essential for any organization to thrive in a dynamic environment where the business environment is always changing (Barends et al., 2014).Changes in organizational structure can be a crucial component of organizational change, which can ultimately be a game changer, as they can have a significant influence on enhancing employee performance and organizational effectiveness (Helmold, 2021).

To decrease the negative effects of organizational changes on employees, communication and development are crucial. In order to improve employee performance and the perception of management's new approaches and dependability, management must also gain the trust of the employees through

effective communication, leadership, and employee development strategies (Bekmukhambetova, 2021, Baniamin et al., 2024).

One of the most important causes of employee engagement is organizational change. Organizational change managed through good leadership, communication, employee development, and tolerance assists organizations in creating higher proportions of engaged employees, which in turn helps in improving employee performance (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2013; Huntie et al., 2023; Palumbo, 2024).

Limited research has been done in Ethiopia on the impact of organizational change management on employee performance (Tarekegn, 2020; Abera, 2020; Gemechu, 2021; Bali and Kant, 2023). Despite the accomplishments listed above, the studies stated previously revealed the following gaps. First, there is no study in Ethiopia that can clearly show the mediating role of employee engagement in the relationship between organizational change management and employee performance by applying advanced statistical analysis. Secondly, the researches which examine the effects of organizational change management on employee performance are few which need further research. To bridge the above gaps, this research addresses following research questions:

- Does organization change management have significant effect on employee performance?
- Does organization change management have significant influence on employee engagement?
- Do aspects of Employee Engagement mediate the relationship between organization change management and Employee performance?

2. Literature Review

2.1. Concepts of Organizational Change Management

Because of its importance, change is a constant component of an organization's existence, whether at the level of operation, planning, or strategy. A company must be able to successfully handle changes both internally and externally to flourish and maintain viability in an ever-changing environment (Wanza & Nkuraru, 2016; Archibong et al., 2021). Organizations need change because it helps them keep up with changing consumer demands and maintain their competitiveness. The implementation of a strategy change might result in better performance (Alase, 2017).

Organizational change is a complex, dialectical process that links the old and new in a way that creates a dynamic environment. Organizational change was defined by Shin et al. (2012) as the replacement of out-dated work practices, procedures, and tactics that have an impact on the entire organization. Similarly, Agote et al. (2016) study shows that organizational change has a significant

impact on long-term organizational goals. According to Almanei et al. (2018), change is a behavioural shift throughout the corporate organization as a whole, from one level to another. As stated by Bagga et al. (2023), participation in change refers to how individuals can only be prepared for change if every member of the organization is involved in it.

As Manei et al. (2018) noted, change is defined as "the organization as a whole, shifting from one being to another" in terms of behaviour. The process of continuously updating an organization's direction, structure, and capacities to meet the ever-changing demands of employees is known as management of change. Although it could be challenging, change is unavoidable and also a crucial driver for growth and staying competitive.

To meet the goals of the business, managers must ensure that resources are acquired and employed effectively and efficiently. This process is known as change management (Bagga et al., 2023). An organization that employs successful change management will gather data and analyse it to assess the effectiveness of its resources, which will ultimately have an impact on how the organization behaves and how its strategies are carried out. Additionally, Sheik (2021) described the organizational change as the adoption of new behaviour, thought, and attitude patterns by sizable portions of a population as a result of challenges and opportunities brought about by both the internal and external environment.

Armstrong (2019) defined business change as the redesign of company processes, the enhancement of its goods and services, and organizational changes to organizational structure and culture that are believed to be required for greater performance in the workplace. Decision-making structures among a group of people were conceived as organizational structures. Organizational change includes Mission changes, Strategic changes, operational changes, and technological changes, changing the attitudes and behaviours of personnel, and Counter resistance from different employees of companies and aligning them with the strategic directions of the organization (Helmold, 2021).

According to Armstrong (2019), business change is the process redesign, product or service improvement, or organizational change to organizational culture or structure that is thought to be necessary for higher performance. Organizational change requires shifting the mission, the strategy, the operations, and the attitudes and behaviours of the employees (Helmold, 2021).

The need for organizational change can arise because of restructuring, new leadership, mergers, and acquisitions. Sometimes the change may be carefully planned or could take the organization by surprise due to a change in the working environment (Du Plessis&Mabunda, 2016; Archibong et al., 2021). Only a smaller portion of individuals will be open to trying something new and breaking away from the status quo; the greater portion will see the change negatively and fight it. In the end, an organization's survival can only be guaranteed if it has the

capacity to manage change, adapt, and adjust in response to shifts in its internal and external environment.

In the twenty-first century, organizational change is a key event for both public and private organizations. Organizations must take on the difficult challenge of adapting to the changes in today's rapidly changing business environment (Bali & Kant, 2023).

2.2. Employee engagement

The perceived attractiveness and significance of a job have an impact on how engaged a worker is in their work. To encourage employee involvement, leaders must actively work to make their employees' tasks more fascinating, demanding, and rewarding. They must also give workers a platform to suggest methods to make their employment more challenging and productive (Abera, 2020). Employee engagement, according to Meng and Berger (2019), is the expression of a person's positive views about a company and its ideals through awareness of the workplace environment and collaboration with co-workers to enhance the organization's performance.

Engagement in the organization's jobs enables employees to make operations successful, as it runs with the mutual commitment of organizations and employees. Engaged employees are dedicated and motivated to achieve the goal of the organization (Engidaw, 2021, Ashfaq et al., 2024). In contrast to the three burnout qualities of exhaustion, cynicism, and inefficacy, engagement is characterized by energy, involvement, and efficacy. An enthusiastic, committed, and absorbed state of mind relating to one's work is known as engagement. Engagement is a persistent and pervasive affective-cognitive state that is focused on work (Bagga et al., 2023).

In the modern business world, employee engagement plays a significant role in greater accomplishment. Employee psychological presence is equated with employee engagement, according to Schaufeli & Bakker (2013). While absorption refers to being completely immersed in a position and refers to the intensity of a worker's focus on a role, attention refers to cognitive availability and the amount of time one spends thinking about a role. Employee engagement is creating a happy, contented mental state that is associated with work and is marked by vigour, dedication, and absorption (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2013; Abera, 2020; Huntie et al., 2023).

2.3. Employee Performance

This can be described as the level of accomplishment and achievement of the task by the employee; it reflects the way to achieve it or how the individual performs the job required (Archibong et al., 2021). According to Gupta and Sharma (2016), performance is the level of success of employees in completing their work. Performance is the work achieved by employees in an organization or an indicator of ability in the form of real work in carrying out tasks and

responsibilities; it is not an individual attribute but may arise in the day-to-day running of the business.

According to Archibong et al. (2021), performance can be referred to as the employee's level of accomplishment and achievement of the assignment; it also shows how they go about doing it. Performance, according to Gupta and Sharma (2016), is the degree of success that employees have in doing their work. Performance is the work completed by employees in an organization or an indication of skill in the form of actual work completed in carrying out tasks and responsibilities; it is not a personal characteristic but may occur in the day-to-day operations of the business.

Performance can be seen as an assessment of how well a person, group of people, organization, or system has performed in the pursuit of a particular goal. Although these goals differ greatly from organization to organization, they typically centre on meeting the needs of the main constituencies, including the government, the general public, employees, shareholders, consumers, and employees. According to Mullins (2015), performance is related to things like boosting profitability, enhancing service delivery, or getting the greatest results in crucial organizational operations.

The process of ensuring that an organization pursues strategies that result in the attainment of overall goals and objectives was described as performance measurement. It has been defined more accurately as the process of measuring the efficacy and efficiency of a course of action (Neely et al., 2017).

If a leader is skilled and competent, he or she can more efficiently and successfully manage an organization and organizational change (Zamanan, 2021). Individual job performance is vital for both the organization and the individual. On-time service delivery, which entails a competitive advantage, is possible in organizations where highly performing individuals are available. Furthermore, highly performing individuals will be rewarded and have a better chance of promotion. Better performance is a major precondition for career development and growth in the organization.

2.4. Conceptual framework and hypothesis development

By changing how corporate culture was viewed, Zamanam (2021) looked into how change management affected employees' performance. This study has significant implications for the technical, structural, and human transformation that is affecting employee performance in Kuwaiti educational institutions. The research revealed that modifications in employee attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours had an impact on the organizational structure of the Kuwaiti educational institution.

According to Lin et al. (2016) and Bashir et al. (2021), the LMX theory has a good impact on change management and employees' change behaviour. One of the main theories used to explain management behaviour and influence how employees feel about their role in the organization, their sense of empowerment, and their sense of responsibility is the LMX model (Lee, 2020; Usadolo, 2024). In

the Pakistani banking industry, Khosa (2015) performed research on the effects of organizational transformation on employee performance. The findings demonstrated that organizational transformation significantly improved employee performance.

The findings of Bali and Kant (2023) demonstrate that employee involvement in transformation is a positive step for an organization's change process. Kurt Lewin's models nevertheless have an indirect impact on several stages of the procedure. The effect of change management on employee performance is positively correlated with employee involvement in change and employee motivation for change, according to research. By considering the above evidence from the literature, it is proposed that;

H1. Organizational change management has a positive impact on employees' performance.

The proactive approach of employees in looking for ways to increase income and enhance customer service has a positive impact on employee engagement, which in turn affects organizational performance (Abera, 2020). Employee performance is significantly and favourably affected by employee engagement (Zhang et al., 2022). Therefore, employee performance will be higher with higher levels of employee involvement.

According to Islam et al.'s (2021) research, employee engagement is impacted by change management during organizational transition. The degree to which employees' beliefs and attitudes about change, as well as the actions of change leaders themselves, determine how well organizational change projects are implemented (Cao & Le, 2022).

Employee engagement is nothing but how their performance is positively associated with organizational performance (Amhalhal et al., 2015). Moreover, engaged employees are likely to have trust and quality relationships with the employer (Al-dalahmeh, 2018). This engaged employee, in turn, performs his tasks effectively and contributes extraordinary effects in dealing with customer problems and needs. Accordingly, this study proposes the following two hypotheses:

H2: Organizational change management has a significant effect on employee engagement.

H3: Employee engagement has a significant influence on employee performance.

According to Lin et al. (2016), Bao & Li (2017), and Bashir et al. (2021), the LMX theory broadens the benefits of change management and employees' change behaviour. According to a previous study, employee engagement mediates the effect of change-oriented leadership on workers' performance (Bashir et al., 2012, Diko & Saxena, 2023). Employee engagement is significantly influenced by the positive aspects of change management, including paying close attention to communicating organizational goals, acting as the organization's driving force,

showing concern and understanding for employees' circumstances, encouraging employees to think about problems from a new perspective, and providing them with timely encouragement and assistance (Cao & Le, 2022). These traits allow organisational change management to foster an environment that is conducive to employee engagement, which in turn improves employee performance.

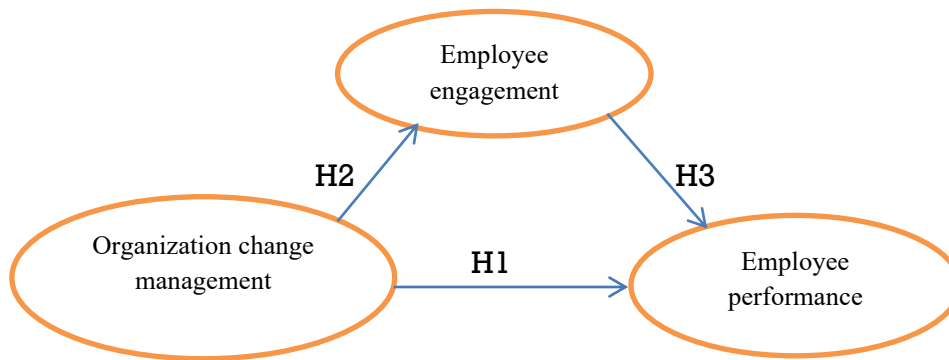
Behavioural and emotional engagement enhances employee performance and loyalty to the company and facilitates the efficient and successful achievement of corporate goals (Huntie et al., 2023). According to Social Exchange Theory, which underpins the relationship between organizational support and employee engagement in improving employee performance by forming social interactions in which there are elements of rewards, sacrifices, and benefits that influence each other, employee engagement is also influenced by organizational support. Employee performance and engagement may increase when there is strong organizational support (Sulistiyawati&Sufriadi, 2020; Utami et al., 2023).

By emphasizing employee engagement as a direct result and key factor in determining employee performance, organisational change management will become more effective (Awan et al., 2020). Increased knowledge of the construct that might mediate the impact of organizational change management on employee performance is therefore important. Therefore, this study intends to investigate the mediating role of employee engagement in the relationship between organisational change management and employees' performance by postulating the fourth hypothesis.

H4. Employee engagement mediates the relationship between organisational change management and employee performance.

The mediating effect is produced when a new third variable intervenes between two related variables, highlighting the distinction between direct and indirect effects. As previously discussed in the present study, the direct effect of organization change management on employee performance is the relationships that involve a single relationship, while the indirect effect is the relationships that involve a series of relationships. It highlights the distinction between direct and indirect effects. The direct effects are the relationship between two constructs with a single arrow (Hair et al., 2019). As discussed above in the present study, the direct effect of organization change management on employee performance and the indirect effect are the relationships that involve between organization change management and employee performance with employee engagement as an intervening variable. Thus, in the present study, the researcher has tried to find the mediating role of employee engagement in the relationship between organisational change management and employee performance (see figure 1 below).

Figure 1: conceptual framework and hypothesis



3. Research Methodology

In order to investigate the mediating role of employee engagement on the relationship between organizational change management and employee performance, this study used an explanatory research design with a quantitative approach. The study focused on Addis Credit and Savings Institution workers who work in the Addis Ababa city administration. The organization has 1500 employees, according to the human resources department report for the year 2022. The sample size was calculated to be 350 using the Morgan table. Using information collected from the human resources department, a self-report questionnaire was developed and then delivered to a random sample of 350 employees in order to gather the primary data pertaining to the study variables. 300 questionnaires were returned with complete answer which was 85 % response rate.

Based on the objectives of the study, and the theoretical model three variables were built. The independent variable of the study was organization change management, the dependent variable was employee performance, and the mediating variable of the study was employee engagement. This study's instruments were derived from those utilized by earlier researchers (Witemeyer, 2013; Koopmans, 2015; Bashir et al., 2021; Bagga et al. 2023; Hunitie et al., 2023; Utami et al., 2023). The questionnaire's items were all written in English before being translated into Amharic, the national language of Ethiopia. Additionally, a five-point Likert scale was used to evaluate these issues, with a value of 1 denoting strong disagreement and a value of 5 denoting strong agreement. Because the factor loading values were less than 0.6, two items—one related to employee engagement and the other to organization change management—were eliminated from the final model.

The data were analysed using structural equation modelling (SEM), which makes use of Analysis of Moment Structure (AMOS) version 23 and the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25. SEM offers several benefits. Because measurement errors are approximated and eliminated, latent variables have the advantage of being more accurate measures than observable variables.

It also makes it simple for the researcher to analyse models that have numerous dependent variables (Hair, 2019).

4. Result and Discussion

This study looked at the relationship between employee performance and organization change management and the mediating role that employee engagement plays in that relationship. Data were collected from 300 employees to achieve this goal. Structural equation modelling with AMOS software was used to analyse the collected data.

The hypothesised model presented under the conceptual framework was tested using the structural equation modelling approach, which typically entails a two-step analysis. First, the measurement model is assessed to ensure that the constructs utilized in the study are appropriate for structural analysis. Accordingly, test the hypotheses under this section based on structural analysis carried out by AMOS software. The measurement model is tested and validated using confirmatory factor analysis, and finally the path analysis structural model is tested. Hypothesized model is a suitable and fit indices were within recommendable levels (CMIN/DF=2.488, GFI=0.95, AGFI=0.9, CFI=0.957, RMSEA=0.07).

Table 1: Standard regression weights and their significance

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Result
Employee engagement	<---	Organization change mgt	.043	.122	.354	.723	insignificant
Employee performance	<---	Organization change mgt	.434	.091	4.788	***	significant
Employee performance	<---	Employee engagement	.169	.051	3.334	***	significant

The results of this study showed a clear and positive correlation between organization change management and employee performance with a β value of 0.434 and a p-value of 0.000 at the 0.05 level of significance. Table 1 illustrates the direct significant positive association between organization change management and employees' performance and the first hypothesis is accepted. With a β value of 0.043 and a p-value of 0.723, the organization change management and employee engagement had no significant relationship. Additionally, there is a direct and significant positive relationship (β value of 0.169 and p-value of 0.000 at the 0.05 level of significance) between employee engagement and employee performance. As a result the third hypothesis is accepted.

Table 2: Hypotheses results

Hypothesis statement	Estimate	p-value	Result
H1. Organization Change management has a positive impact on employees' performance.	0.434	0.001	significant
H2: organization change management has significant effect on employee engagement.	0.043	0.723	insignificant
H3: employee engagement has significant effect on employee performance.	0.169	0.001	significant
H4. Employee engagement mediates the relationship between organization change management and employee performance.	0.093(0.03*0.31)	0.000	significant

The researcher evaluated the role that employee engagement had as a mediator in the relationship between organizational change management and employee performance. The indirect impact was analysed using the bootstrapping approach, and Table 2 result showed that the indirect effect was significant. Based on the structural equation result employee engagement has mediating role on the relationship between organization change management and employee performance.

4.1. Discussion

This study used the bootstrapping method to measure the indirect effect of the proposed conceptual mediation model. First, the structural equation modelling result clearly revealed a significant relationship between organization change management and employee performance, and hypothesis one was accepted. This significant association concluded that if change management in the organization is good enough at motivating employees, they can effectively achieve organizational goals. This finding was supported by the Zamanam (2021) study in Kuwaiti educational institutions. His study found that organizational change management has a significant effect on employees' performance. The existence of effective organizational change management plays a significant role in creating a positive work environment and effective employee performance. The findings of this study were in line with the prior findings (Gupta & Sharma, 2016; Lee, 2020; Archibong et al., 2021; Bali & Kant, 2023; Bagga et al., 2023; Huntie et al., 2023). Second, the path analysis showed that organizational change management is not significantly related to employee engagement, as shown in Table 1, and hypothesis two was rejected. Addis Credit and Savings Institution is not good enough at engaging employees during the process of change in the organization. According to Huntie et al. (2023) study, emotional engagement among employees improves employee performance and facilitates the successful achievement of goals.

Third, the results of the study revealed a significantly positive relationship between employee engagement and employee performance. Consequently, the third hypothesis is accepted. This positive relationship suggests that improving employee engagement is a key element in raising the effective performance of employees. Organizational change management has the potential to improve employee engagement, which produces better organizational results (Bashir et al., 2021).

The company's efforts in supporting employee engagement are needed to improve employee performance. As a result, employees can play a significant role in the organization's performance and improve the quality of employee performance (Lai et al., 2020; Ilhami et al., 2021; Sulistyawati&Sufriadi, 2020; Zhang et al., 2022). Similarly, the Zhang et al. (2022) study clearly showed that employee performance will be higher with higher levels of employee engagement. Loyal and dedicated employees can give the business a competitive edge by improving customer service and productivity. Previous research relating employee engagement to employee performance supports this finding (Mullins, 2015; Al-Dalahmeh, 2018; Meng& Berger, 2019; Abera, 2020; Engidaw, 2021; Cao & Le, 2022; Bagga et al., 2023).

According to the table 2 result, employee engagement has a mediating effect on the relationship between organizational change management and employee performance. According to this study, employee engagement greatly boosts worker performance, and organizational change management is a good predictor of employee performance. According to Huntie et al., (2023) study, behavioural and emotional engagement enhances employee performance and loyalty and facilitates the efficient and effective achievement of organizational goals. The study's findings demonstrated that it is wise for the organization to develop effective change management and ensure that employees are engaged in their work in order to produce sound performance. The study comes to the conclusion that in order to boost employees' performance, the company needs to consider both effective employee engagement and organizational change management.

In this study, the mediation effect is partial mediation. Employee performance at the institute will increase if the organization's change management variable and employee engagement both rise. Addis Credit and Savings Institution can offer efficient organizational change management by means of beneficial initiatives, including training programs that enable staff members to acquire expertise in their work. Employees at Addis Credit and Savings Institutions can actively use change management to boost morale, which in turn leads to better work output. The results of this study are in line with other researches (Bhatti et al., 2018; Nazir& Islam, 2018; Motyka, 2018; Sulistyawati&Sufriadi, 2020) that indicate employee engagement mediates the relationship between change management and employee performance.

5. Conclusion and Implication

The main aim of this research was to investigate the mediating role of employee engagement in the relationship between organisational change management and employee performance. Structural equation modelling using AMOS software was employed for analysis. The study indicated that organisational change management has a positive significant effect on employee performance. Employee engagements in addis credit and saving institution play a significant role in improving employee performance. Moreover, employee engagement has a partial mediation role in the relationship between organisational change management and employee performance. Employee engagement must rise for an organization to successfully implement organisational change. Improved employee performance and the accomplishment of organizational goals can be attained through an effective organisational change management strategy that raises employee engagement. The study's findings showed that in order to improve worker performance the two most crucial components are organizational change management and employee engagement.

Cooperation should be emphasized in the institution's change management strategy. The management ought to involve the workforce in decision-making. Participation and human development should be given strategic importance. Employee performance will improve as a result of this large increase in focus on their set goals. In order to improve employee performance, the institution's administration should also incorporate change management within the company through shared norms and values.

Based on the findings discussed, it is recommended that organizations prioritize employee engagement during times of change management. This can be achieved through various strategies, such as involving employees in the change process, providing clear communication and training, offering support and resources, recognizing and rewarding employee contributions, and creating a positive work culture. It is also important for organizations to regularly assess and monitor employee engagement levels to ensure that they are meeting the needs and expectations of their workforce. By prioritizing employee engagement, organizations can improve employee performance and ultimately achieve their goals and objectives.

The current study's findings demonstrated a wide range of theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, this study advances the body of knowledge on the mediating role of employee engagement in the relationship between employee performance and organization change management. From a practical standpoint, the study suggests that companies can improve their performance by creating organizational changes that are inclusive of employee input and draw in workers who are eager to participate in the workplace. Furthermore, through a variety of events and competitions based on its vision, Addis Credit and Savings Institution is expected to offer a more exciting work environment in the future. This improves job performance and increases organizational effectiveness.

Limitation and directions for future research

This study has certain limitations that were taken into account. First, the sample size is quite small compared to the entire population. As a result, the study's findings are unable to provide a comprehensive picture of all the microfinance organizations operating in Ethiopia. To support the current study's conclusions, a large sample size with longitudinal investigation should be conducted in the future. Second, more research is needed to understand the specific strategies that are most effective in promoting employee engagement during change management. This could involve conducting experimental studies to test different interventions or conducting qualitative research to gain a deeper understanding of employees' experiences during change. Finally, future research could also explore the long-term effects of employee engagement on organizational outcomes, such as productivity, profitability, and employee retention.

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Data Availability

Data will be made available on request.

Declarations

Conflict of Interest: The authors declare no potential conflict of interest.

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