

## MANAGERS AND CHANGE MANAGEMENT IN WORKPLACE

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### **Abstract**

*Change and expectations of change are increasingly exponentially, especially with modern organization with distinctive managerial skills that encourages innovation and employees creativity in human relation. This is true for all modern organization, employees and stakeholders that are engaged in such phenomenon. Globally, there is also a growing interest in managing change and how managers are faced with several obstacles that threaten the implementation of change. This paper focuses on literature in change management contexts considering recent events. It is important to understand the philosophy and constraints that inhibit change, and what managers experience in a developing country context. We draw insight about the subject using integrated literature review from past studies, based on our review, it was observed that, factors driving change, in change management process, leadership style, change resistance and acceptance, and organizational operational philosophy and other related issues hinders change process, and maybe cause failure. Furthermore, employees sensitivity, and interface with managers stimulate change management. The author conclude that stakeholders, managers must create a conducive environment and initiative to support and promote such.*

**Keywords:** Change Management, Organizational Philosophy, Change Resistance, Change Acceptance, Change Drivers, Employee's.

### **Introduction**

Modern contemporary work poses different requirement for continuous workflows. Contemporary management studies thinking patterns is required to solve problems and challenges faced by organizations today. In addition of globalization trend creates a rethinking strategies concepts of works practices for managers, and for their employees. Change is inevitable and occurring continuously in every sphere of life. So organization need to embrace it to avoid extinction.

Organizations needs change strategies acceptance to survive. Manager are responsible for these strategic implementation. Change management entails accepting new organizational development, process alteration of components strategic operations, such as changes in corporate culture, technologies, organizational structure, or major initiatives and goals. Several studies have uncovered how managers contributes to

change management at work (Inceoglu et al, 2018; Lundqvist et al, 2022). According to Mintzberg, (2009), being a manager means having responsibility for an entire or part of an organization (e.g. a department). Manager jobs are focused on handling crises and disturbance while working on designed tasks. Managers tries to change management practices in workplace by choosing how different tasks are to be resolved, who are delegated in resolving tasks and making an indelible mark in workplace.

However, practitioners and academic researchers view it separately. Robbins and Judge (2013) states that change management is a systematic process by which the organization can predict and respond to the changing business strategies in an environment such that enhances organizations goals. Palmer, Donford and Buchanan (2016) emphasized managers role in change management in traits such as character disposition, leadership skills and styles, and their interplay during change process in such a way to achieve organizational goals. Saka (2003) states there is a gap between what the rational linear change management approach prescribes and what change managers do, this disconnect may make it difficult to determine the suitability and appropriateness of using different technique to promote change (Pollack and Pollack, 2015). Hughes (2007) thinks that practitioners and academics may have trouble communicating because they use different terms such as models, theories, and concepts by academician, and tools and techniques by practitioners. A tool is an isolated application, in a technique integrated approach (Dale and McQuater, 1998). Hughes (2007) express that classifying change management tools and techniques can help academics identify what practitioners do in the field and evaluate the effectiveness of practitioners implementations. However, scanty research has focused on change management from theory to practice. The limited research that exist shows that managers and change management is a so-called “active work process” that must be strategic in practice (Philip and Klein, 2022, Hubbart, 2023) meaning a high degree of demand, couple with a high insight in extant literature is needed to unravel this concepts (factors driving the change and the concept of change management; the importance of managers role and leadership styles in managing the change effectively; change resistance and how change acceptance affect a successful change initiatives, and organizational and operational philosophies outcome in moments of change management). Studies have shown that manager’s main challenge is the standardization of operations, the use of new information systems, and technologies and the challenge of human resource to adapt to these innovation which is part of change management (Baum, Joel and Mannis, 2002), which is often stated as a possible explanation of resistance to change. However, what constitute manager’s concept of change management is limited, especially in relations to manager’s roles, leadership, resistance and acceptance to change, and the general philosophy of organization in respect to moment of change. This is troubling due to a growing body of research that indicates the challenge of change aversion in change management (Hubbart, 2023). Howbeit, the millennial managers, managerial jobs are fragmented, hectic and stressful. Therefore, we argue that knowledge gaps and retrospective concept is an important agenda for future research in a holistic perspective. Therefore, this research aims to explain how managers could manage change management strategies and its implementation.

### **Statement of Problem**

Organizations are globally connected with the linking technologies that have been globally designed to facilitate organization transaction. This has probably made some homogeneous, and other challenging, managers are uncertain about the emerging needs, due to the changing work process over the years. For example, organization without software, to concert or an environment with no team support, the needs of the managers to respond to these wants within the workforce is inevitable.

Managers intends to navigate the variations helps to effectively recognize their abilities to tackle change management. The onus is on managers to be competent in filling the demand gap by empowering employees adequately for visionary management. However, these shift would not occur instantly, managers must follow judicious process. Past research work has focused on managing and leading a diverse workforce as one of the main challenges in management (Shaban, 2016) manager's development environment; an integrative literature review (Reineholm, Lundqvist and Wallo, 2023) organizational change: the challenge of change aversion (Hubbart, 2023). Inspite of these studies, there is still more to understand in terms of how it affects change concept, roles and leadership styles of managers, change resistance, and acceptance, organizational operations and philosophy. This would enable organization to formu late change management programs that incorporate the managers. The study also identified resistance to change by employees, some of the strategies to improve change management acceptability have also be identify in the study. It is in this context that the present study was conducted to explore managers in change management in Nigeria context.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The main objectives of the study is to examine the relationship between managers and management of change in workplace. The specific objectives are to;

- (i) Examine factors driving change in change management process.
- (ii) Find out managers leadership style in process of change management.
- (iii) Investigate change resistance and acceptance initiative in change management process
- (iv) Evaluate organizational operational philosophy in moment of change management process.

### **Significance of the Study**

Change management process is synonymous with highly competitive business environment. So adaptability as an effective approach helps in achieving organizational goals. On the contrary, organizations that managed change effectively becomes a model for other to emulate. With the New Normal organization need to tailored a change management model that enhances sustainability.

### **Research Questions**

Using the systematic literature review, the following research question were raised;

RQ<sub>1</sub>: What factors do drive change in change management process in workplace?

RQ<sub>2</sub>: What significance do leadership style plays in change management process in workplace?

RQ3: To what extent is change resistance improve change acceptance initiative in workplace?

RQ4: What organizational operational philosophy do employees stands to gain or loss in moment of change management process in workplace?

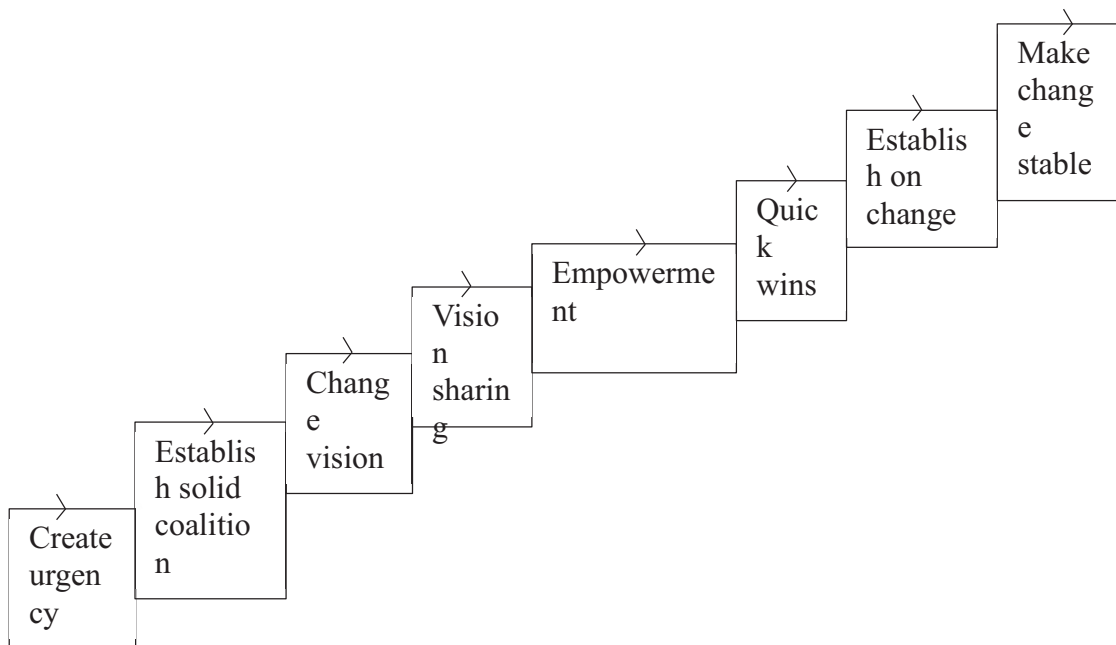
### **Literature Review**

The questions of work issues in manage change management process is handle by managers. Previous research points to access of opportunities for the concept of change management, others view factor driving change as a major reference point. Extant literature that have examined the relationship between managers and change management over the past decades have produce unsatisfactory results (Hussain et al, 2018). Therefore, change management is viewed as a double-edge sword by managers. The significance of change management is acknowledge in changing employees mental psyche towards work environment – instead of focusing on deficiencies, and negative implications that cause profound life change for employees, with negative emotions. Based on previous study, change management was found to be resisted by employee which leads or lower performance (Baum et al, 2002, Davenport, Dallemule and Lucker, 2011).

Another study concluded that a sustainable work situation for managers is their influence over the organization of work and employees well-being as part of change management (Reineholm et al, 2023). This is due to the fact that managers are seen as leadership that can create sustainable balance for employees in worklife, joy and satisfaction as the change management process begins. On the other side, in other studies it was found that communication is vital, so change managers should furnish employees with such vision regardless of status and vividly explain why the change implementation, resistance to change could be defined as the degree of unwillingness to adapt to new techniques, circumstance or adapt to change. Employee tendency to maintain their current beliefs and attitude despite being exposed to new information or persuasion. This is due to the fact that shifts do not occur overnight this change might arise from many factors, it can be proactive or reactive to sudden market volatility or on technology advancement that change focus on employees ability to adapt to a change seamlessly. Additionally, some studies concluded that change management requires meticulous planning to overcome employee resistance and win acceptance, the process might end in futility if employees engagement and interest aren't considered during the changes initiatives, leading to an increased in unplanned attrition (Evans and Evans, 2018; Sedley and Muller, 2013; Petus et al, 2009). Nevertheless, driving change in organizations must equipped the employees with new technological innovation that requires a preparatory phase, work flow upgrade training programs. Based on the above review, it could be deduced that most studies focused more on the advantages and disadvantages of change management process rather than it management and implementation, therefore, this research is aimed to fill this gap on how managers could manage, lead and implement a change management in order to gain from the positive implication of managing change and to curtail the adverse implication of change management.

### Theoretical Foundation

This study adapted the Kotter eight steps change management model. In his book, *Leading Change*, Kotter provided his change management model that consist of eight steps: creating urgency, forming a powerful guiding coalition, creation a clear vision for change, communicating the vision, empowerment actions achieving wins in the short-run, building on the change based reached, and making change stable (Kotter, 1996). Off-starting, managers need to create a kind of change urgency among all stakeholders where they should focus on the powerful stakeholder such as top and middle managers which will help them market the change ideas among other stakeholders starting by employee's (Kotter, 2008) after marketing the change ideas, managers should create a well-defined vision of change so that all stakeholders can understand the change required and helping achieving the change effectively. Moreover, effective participation is required to enhance motivation. Additionally, managers should commence new system based on the change reached so that all upcoming plans and activities be related to change reached which makes the change achieve stable one (Kotter, 1996).



**Source:** Kotter's change model (1996)

Kotter's model, considered three stages for change management; change importance, transmission stage, achievement and stability. The model showed that unfreeze including change urgency, coalition, effectiveness and change vision. As for change proper, it contains vision sharing, empowerment, short-run wins, furthermore, refreeze consist of establish on change and make change stability.

Hiatt and Creaby (2012) pointed out the importance of enhancing employee's engagement in the change processes, its success factor in change management process. Kotter (1996) model advantage in the detailed plan included in the change management it pointed out the importance of shaping clear vision and share it with the employees furthermore, employee's short-term win. Precisely, this may lead to active employee's



participation. In addition to understanding change management models, manager's adoption of appropriate leadership style to manage change effectively.

### **Factors Driving Change in Change Management Concept**

Management is responsible for building organizations. Therefore the managerial approach to any social system, must take account of planning for efficient achievement of organizational goals. Every organizations, regardless of its status must adapt to change and the ability to effectively adapt to this condition, lie in the responsibility of managers. Managers who learn and adapt to change are more capable to react and innovate. Change strategies demand a systematic approach to avoid business stagnation. Planning is paramount in driving factor for successful initiative. However, managers need to be programmed for change. The driving factors in change management include;

**Developmental factor:** A change management process that optimizes an established processes, strategies and procedures factors. Managers implement many developmental change to mitigate against declining performance. E.g. assessment of outdated strategies that are unprofitable.

**Transitional factors:** Placing the organization in a current stage, and change process that moves it to its desired future replacing obsolete process. E.g. implementing, automation, mergers or acquisition.

**Transformational factors:** Implies change process of mature organizations that absorb, reshapes business strategy, corporate culture resulting in paradigm shift. E.g. focusing on integrating digital technology (e.g. social media, cloud etc.). These change management process are needful for organizations and enterprise, where workflow are obsolete. The COVID-19 pandemic sudden global outbreak had made change management more complex and challenging.

### **Leadership in Managers**

Leadership is critical in managing change management process. The visionary and communication abilities of leadership in managers are essential to explain why change is inevitable and how change mandate is of essence to the organizations. Manager must build and develop the existing system to pave way for a new vision that would advance organizational productivity (Hubbart, 2023). To achieve these goals, managers should develop a programs in training, mentorship, coaching and other support avenue to eliminate any hindrance encounter by employee in the change process. Managers must be empathetic during change process to reduce apprehension, be transparent and engage knowledge sharing among employees. Employees must be integrative, intuitive and participatory in making the change management process based on feedback. However, employees can experience issues of deficiencies, that impeded the change management but managers should focus on the change process for a formidable result.

Managers must model the behaviour, attitude, norms and values of themselves and impact it on the employees by leading with example. This ensure transparency and adaptability for change.

### **Change Resistance and Acceptance Initiatives**

Change resistance is the unwillingness to adapt to altered circumstance, it could be a mean refusal to accept a change that will upset employee's routine. This might likely happen when organizations have to deal with new perspective or practices. Change management drives transformation in the organizations; it involves making significant modifications in structure, strategies or operating systems. The goal is to ensure it remain competitive and dynamic. Though, change can be affected by erroneous factors, but it's needed to foster success. Change management diverse areas such as also requires meticulous planning from stakeholders. Been consistent with change helps organizations to navigate challenging opportunities for sustainable growth.

Resistance manifest in three distinct ways: acceptance, indifference, and resistance. These depends on how employees perceive the new agenda. Resistance is rooted in both employees and organization, some key factors are;

- ξ **Fear of economic loss:** Employers exhibit resistance when it's hazardous on their wellbeing e.g. job security, reduction in working hours, demotion from restructuring and a higher workload to reduce wages.
- ξ **Attachment to the status quo:** Employees find comfort and security in the familiarity always like their comfort zone any proposed change that disrupt their personal comfort can trigger resistance.
- ξ **Fear of the unknown:** Change is dynamic which can be unsettling for employees e.g. relocation of employees to remote branch, this becomes potential disruption to the new work dynamics.
- ξ **Organizational structure:** Involve re-arranging certain dynamics which can create resistance.

However, there are effective techniques that can be employed to address and overcome this resistance, these include;

- Open and transparent communication.
- Active participation and collaboration.
- Empowering education and skill development
- Addressing concerns and providing support.
- Cultivating a supportive culture.
- Exemplary leadership and role modelling.
- Phased implementation and piloting.
- Coercion.
- Group dynamics.

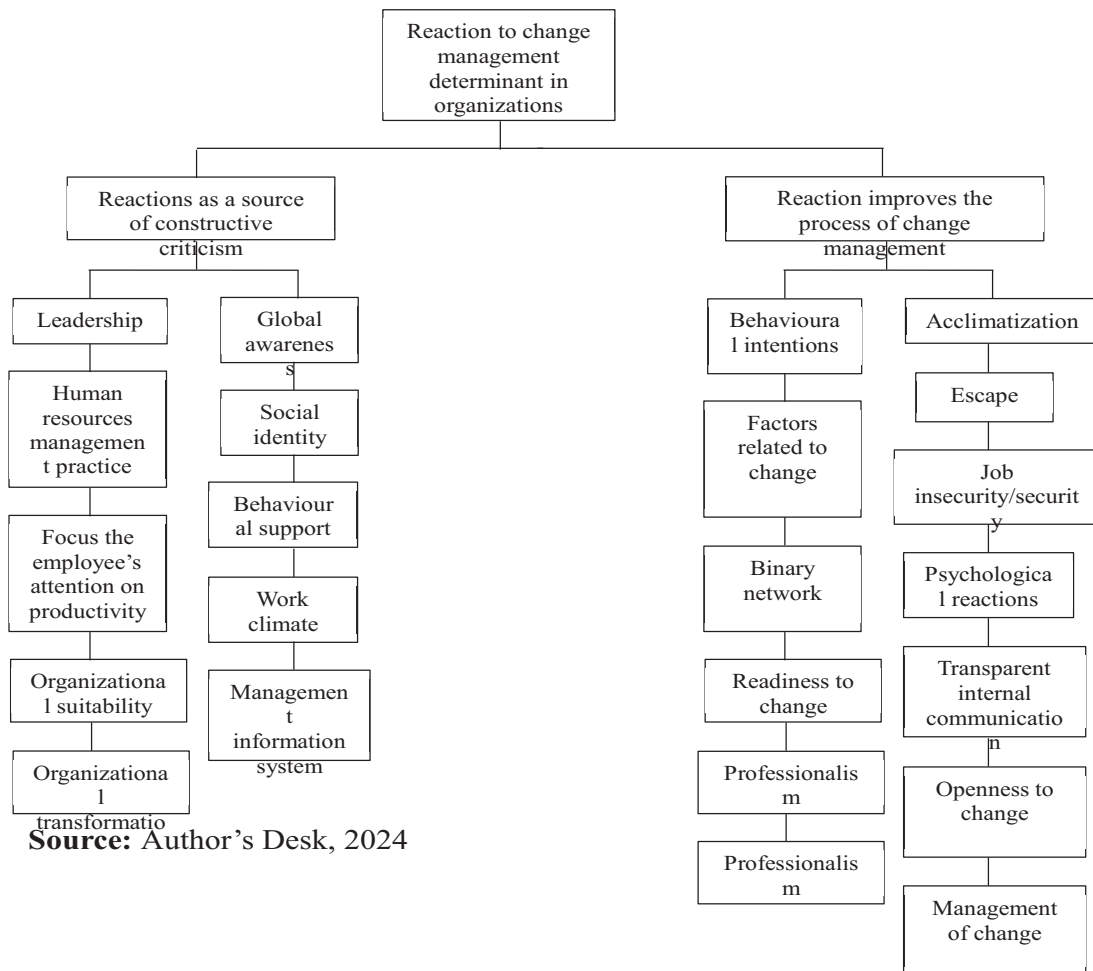
### **Organization Philosophy**

Organizational philosophy is the enduring core benefits that should rarely change, unless an organization cannot stay in business being who it has been in the past. Therefore, it's what employees believe in, examples of organizational philosophy includes providing exceptional customers services, giving back to the community, and protecting, promoting a healthy work life balance throughout the organization, any change

management process must take into cognizance these parameters. An outcome of philosophy must promote all wellbeing of employee especially in career ladder. The goal to climb upwards in the organization to described by Schein (1985) as career anchors. The change management process in organization are freedom and respect for work ethics.

Also flexibility in change management process to give employees leeway in certain aspect and not to be very dictatorial. The organizational culture affect change management. The organizational culture as the philosophy of the organizations are beliefs, values, and public image, all these are manifested in the philosophy of the organization. Changing this prevent returning to status quo. For example, Burnes (2000) thinks that managers should focus on employees who were resistant to the change, while Hiatt (2006) suggests that managers should replicate what strategies they used in the past to change the culture managers requires open support and commitment from employees to lead a culture change. In addition, Pless and Maak (2004) describe the importance of creating an inclusive culture where diverse viewpoints help managers reach its organizational objectives, managers should considered diversity, equity, inclusion and diversion viewpoints when implementing change management, especially for organization whose vision promotes a diverse and inclusive workforce.

### Determinant of Change Reactions to Change Management Process in Workplace





## Methodology

This paper is based on an integration literature review of empirical research guided, adapted by steps outlined by Torraco (2016). This method is appropriate for new or emerging research areas and is also suitable for empirical studies with both quantitative and qualitative methods (Rozas, and Klein, 2010). The first step was to establish overview of the study, next, criteria is to search and review process. Using inclusion and exclusion criteria based on factors driving change process, managers leadership qualities, meaning of change resistance and acceptance initiatives, and organizational operational philosophy in moment of change management. These studies must be peer-reviewed, written in English, and should either be qualitative or quantitative in context between 2000 to 2023.

The search were on Embase, PubMed/medline, isi/web of science (Wos) scopus and Iranion database, such as Mag Iran, SID and Irandoc from 2000 up to 2023. The search resulted in 1397 studies. Search items capturing factors driving change were, "Importance of change management" in "organizations". Examples of search on leadership were "leader" or "supervisor" or "manager", terms on change resistance and acceptance were "Resistance" or "Change Resistance" or "Change acceptance" or "Innovation" or "uphill task" or "New order", for operational philosophy in organization we used, "prospects" or "management goal", or "operational philosophy" or "career development" in "organizations". Three studies was added via citations in researchgate. Search were conducted in August, 2023.

The studies were review based on the inclusion criteria for the literature review, only 99 meet the criteria. After downloaded, 41 studies met the criteria. These 41 studies underwent a quality assessment based on recognized protocols for quantitative (Tomp et al, 2016) and qualitative studies (SBU, 2020). All studies were graded on three points quality assessment; low, medium, and high quality, 8 studies were of high quality in qualitative studies, 7 were of high quality in qualitative. Thus, a total of 15 studies were selected.

All authors read all included studies and information were compiled and tabulated for a narrative synthesis review (Booth et al, 2022). The tables contain information about the objectives of this study, moreover, result of each study was included in the narrative synthesis.

## Study Selection

Studies were included if they meet the following criteria;

1. **Study type:** Studies original on managers and change management.
2. **Study setting:** Previous studies dating from 2000 – 2023 that capture the relevance of change management concepts, resistance to change and modalities of acceptance were included.
3. Additionally, management philosophy with respect to employer loyalty, voice, and commitment to organizations were also included.
4. **Outcome:** The studies on managerial leadership, participatory management as defined in relations to the concept and factors driving change implementation.

## 5. Extant literature on English language.

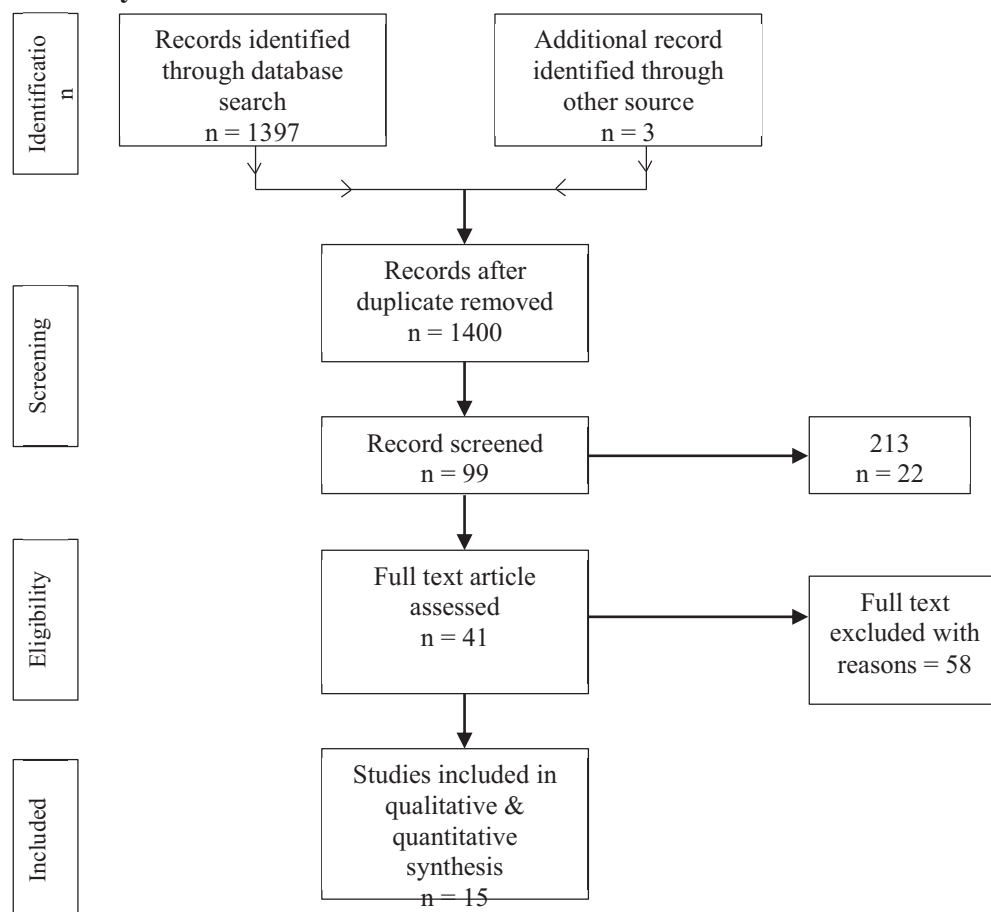
### Data Extraction

Authors will jointly extract the following information from selected studies;

1. Change management concepts
2. Factors driving change and its practicability
3. Leadership contribution, to change and negative reaction to change process from employees.
4. Operational philosophy, interpersonal consensus to change management e.g. employees voice, flexibility of work process, workflow and adoption of modern technology.

Any disagreement in complexity of concepts and explanation were resolved through consensus with adequate literature backing it. Information was entered with respect to the designed form. Bearing the objectives of the study. Studies selected were valid and reliable in content and the required data were extracted and summarized using the table designed. The quality evaluation was made possible by PRISMA checklist and the duplication found were removed.

### Data Analysis



Source: Author Desk, 2024

## **Conclusion**

Change management as a process alters significant structural component to address operational cost, performance evaluation results, productivity, service quality, managerial competence, in order to achieve organizational advancement. The literature presents challenges related to change management, conceptual drivers in change factors and its appropriate definition. Resistance and acceptance of change management, managerial roles and responsibilities in enhancing change and operational philosophy in moment of change that enhances productivity. Navigating challenges can assist in successful outcome of managers functions in accepting changes, creativity, and innovation in breaking frontier. There are also reasonable agreement on what constitute innovative practices that arises from change management, which are innovative nature leading credence that managerial competence and foresight are key variables for organizational improvisation yet scholars have only begun to understand the beneficial tendency of change management. Based on the status of current research what would change management agenda in workplace and managerial competence look like. First, emphasis on manager's concept of change management process is not novel, but a set of concepts, procedures, risks, adaptation to varying circumstances that must be adapted, and applied in specific situations if the presumed benefit are to be realized. Second, because change management process involves context, operations and philosophy of the organization, implementation by managers must be presented in a generic manner. Third, extant literature should present change management concepts, procedure by managers in functional dimensions, not to be blinded to the arrays of misconceptions about change management processes. Last, change acceptance means investing in total quality management, as a precursor to change management process that confers quality jobs in professionalism for personnel development which prepare managers, employees, and organizations for future acceptance amidst inevitable change management moments.

## **Theoretical and Practical Contributions**

The present study makes theoretical and practical contribution to the field through its identification, antecedence and consequences that change management might bring negative feelings toward job insecurity of employee's. Its application is highly resisted due to shock, negative consequence and uncertainty. There is also the issue of conflict which creates an unpleasant impression that leads to distortion of purpose thereby exposing organization to danger. Therefore, it's imperative for managers, practitioners to understand the chain on organization and employees rights. In addition, some contradicting reaction leads to deterioration due to resistance and ridiculing of the process, which generate internal conflicts that affect work processes, employees probably see it as unpleasant. Managers should step-up at addressing reaction earlier to prevent it from escalating, managers should interface with employees in the ongoing process in shaping engagement and turnover intention. Managers should monitors and manage change by ensuring participatory management, timely communication which helps to avoid loss in change momentum and cost.

This study contribute theoretically by showing the development and application of the context at individual, collective and on organizational leadership level towards change management. This study though qualitative in approach, attempted to unravel the cogent

reasons behind positive or negative trend in change management process which remain unclear. The study reveals how reaction toward change within the cognitive and behavioural level were independent affected in terms on factors in education, human resource, feedback, and performance evaluation. Employees attitude is based on perception of information while the impact on human resources depends on the depending on the systemic approach used to communicate the change. The effect of explicit reactions appears depending on the operational philosophy (i.e. rules, norms, beliefs) about change, accepting change through leadership behaviour as a role model and clarifying the impact. Final, employees self-assessment on change management is based on maintaining the status quo and unwillingness, which shows resistance behaviours.

### **Recommendations**

Following the findings discussed, we highlight important recommendation for various stakeholders identified;

First, change management process strategies should not be selective on highly competitive organization frameworks, but should be reviewed, refined, and readjusted to promote conversation between managers and employees before implemented, additionally, it should be tracked to improve innovation that would promote quality assurance in all aspect of operations.

Second, employees, managers and management should be involved, and be committed effectively to the change initiatives, this will a successful management the process that would deliver the expected outcome in a cinch.

### **Contribution to Knowledge**

First, the study contributes to knowledge by revealing the synergy between, managers, employees and management, in ensuring participatory decisions on change management process, this makes them to understand that due to globalization, constant change is the most critical element in the organization.

Second, the study contributes to extant literature by revealing a strong link between evaluating change management objectives, implementation, monitoring, role model in the organization structure that supports an enduring practices to foster organization performance in future.

### **Limitations of Study**

The present study used a qualitative approach in the study through systematic literature review, future studies can used a mixed approach, this would provide a better insight. Scholar can also use a longitudinal approach to provide an in-depth analysis. Despite these shortcomings above, the study contribute to the ongoing debate on change management process on manager's perspective in this new millennial era.

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