A QUANTITATIVE STUDY EXAMINING INDIVIDUAL EMPLOYEE

EXPERIENCES OF CHANGE INITIATIVES AND THE IMPACT ON

EMPLOYEE PERCEPTIONS OF CHANGE AND ATTITUDES

by

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ABSTRACT

Current organizational change management models focus on information sharing as the primary mechanism for involving employees in change initiatives, but most change initiatives fail due to limited attention given to organizational members impacted by change. The current study provides empirical evidence for more tangible methods of employee involvement by examining individual experiences of organizational change and the influence of involvement factors (leadership communication and work contribution) on employee perception of change and job attitudes (organizational commitment and turnover intentions). A causal-comparative design was implemented using a 39-item survey administered to 344 participants who have experienced an organizational change. The nonparametric Kruskal-Wallis H test was used to analyze the results because the survey data did not pass the assumptions for an analysis of variance. The study found more significant results for participants that experienced involvement through both communication and work contribution than for participants experiencing only communication about an organizational change, and participants experiencing no involvement had significantly lower perceptions of change, decreased organizational commitment, and increased turnover intentions. The findings provide empirical evidence indicating employee involvement through work contribution improves positive outcomes of change initiatives and should be considered a viable technique that is not included in current change management models.

Keywords: effective change management, communication, employee perception, employee involvement, organizational commitment, turnover intention, work contribution

Dedication

Never assume, and always be adaptable to change!

—Anjanelle Carter, *Mom*

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Introduction

Lewin (1951) identified unfreeze, move, and refreeze as the three phases of successful change within organizations and communities. Since that time, researchers and practitioners have contributed to the evolving concept of organizational change, developing best practices for planning, implementing, and evaluating change initiatives and ultimate outcomes. The need for employee engagement in a change initiative has been highlighted as a vital component of effective change and is accomplished through communication efforts from leadership throughout all stages of change. Biblical lessons expound on the influence leaders have on people, particularly those faced with the stress of uncertain situations. These truths underscore the importance of leadership's guidance needed to usher employees though change initiatives by whatever means are available. Although important, most applied change models appear to limit the focus of employee involvement to instances of information sharing and communication without considering other avenues for employees to engage with change initiatives. The current research extends support for the importance of communication as a mechanism for employee involvement and introduces the concept of work contribution (completion of a task, duty, or tangible product) as a viable and valuable form of involvement.

The potential benefit of both communication and work contributions were measured through employee perception of change as well as with resulting employee attitudes about organizational commitment and turnover intention. These measures revealed how employees perceive change with respect to their involvement with the change initiative and how employee attitudes (organizational commitment and turnover

intention) are impacted by the change management technique used (communication and/or work contribution). The findings add to the existing literature on best practices for organizational change management through inclusion of employee involvement through more tangible work contributions in addition to the use of communication throughout change initiatives.

Background

The process of change is usually not easy for or wholly accepted by all organizational members, but successful change often results in positive benefits for organizational growth and development (Kliewe et al., 2013). Organizational change can be episodic or discrete alterations that move an organization from a current to a future state (Albrecht et al., 2020) and may include changes as seemingly simple as integrating a new technology tool (Krogh, 2018) or as complex as completing a merger, acquisition, or organizational restructure (Bich Thuy & Yen Van, 2020). Lewin's (1951) model was the starting point for practitioners and researchers to refine and evolve practices to expand upon the unfreeze, move, and refreeze phases of organizational change. The fundamental shift in how organizational change is understood has to do with the components included across the discrete phases that define the change process, beginning with a need for change followed by transition, implementation, and arrival at a desired state (Kotter, 2011). Research has focused on these series of events and how affected employees are impacted in different ways at different stages in the change process. Gibson and Groom (2020) examined the temporal nature of change in a case study to understand individual employee experiences throughout the change process. Krogh (2018) conducted qualitative research to understand the initial or anticipation stage of change, identifying

coping strategies used by employees while awaiting implementation of a proposed change. Belschak et al. (2020) underscored the importance of treating distinct phases of the change process with different activities to improve change initiative outcomes. Research employs leadership to make efforts to facilitate change initiatives across an organization, and the Bible teaches that leaders are responsible for providing individuals with guidance and counsel, especially when facing extraordinary or challenging events, just as David shepherded his people: "With upright heart he shepherded them and guided them with his skillful hand" (English Standard Version Bible, 2001, Psalm 78:72).

The variation throughout change is likely due to the nature of change and of organizational structures. Angtyan (2019) acknowledged that change happens both to the organization and to the employees within the organization, so successful change only occurs if the change is successful on both dimensions. In their 60-year review of 700 published quantitative studies, Oreg et al. (2011) identified specific factors that influence successful change outcomes to address the needs of organizations and organizational members. Relevant to the present study, timely communication of relevant information about change and active support of leadership were factors commonly identified across this review that significantly impacted employee affect and behavior in the change context. Current and popular change management models stress the importance of these findings, identifying common recommendations to enable effective change management. "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope" (English Standard Version Bible, 2001, Jeremiah 29:11). It falls on leadership and other practitioners managing change to provide a level of reassurance to change recipients through transparent insight on potential outcomes that

may result from a change initiative. Change is more likely to be successful through clear communication about the intended outcomes for change, managerial and employee support for change, and adequate support and development to enable employee abilities for continuance following change implementation (Galli, 2018). One major flaw cited in research is failure for change leaders to build sufficient support for change, an error that often leads to unsuccessful change initiatives (Kotter, 2011).

Failed organizational change is often attributed to faults occurring at the hands of leadership and those managing change, discounting the role change recipients play in change initiative outcomes (Hay et al., 2021). Individual perceptions represent categories of antecedents that impact employee receptivity and resulting outcomes of organizational change initiatives. Piderit (2000) categorized employee reactions to change into three groups – affective, cognitive, and behavioral – which all impact employee attitudes toward the change initiative, the job itself, and the organization. These employee attitudes are contingent on variables inherent in how the change is conducted. Oreg et al. (2011) found that employee acceptance or resistance to change is largely influenced by the employee's perception of a change as either beneficial or harmful to each individual. Van den Heuvel et al. (2016) conducted a research study examining how information impacted employee attitudes toward change and behavioral outcomes and highlighted the need for further research in this area, as the body of literature for change management is limited on the relationship between these specific factors. Dubrin and Ireland (1993) found that fear of the unknown, identified flaws in the change and change outcomes, and perceived negative benefits of completed change were the major factors linked to employee non-acceptance of and resistance to change.

Employee reactions to change have been studied and shown to provide valuable insight to help leadership evaluate change implementation to mitigate potentially negative outcomes (Borges & Quintas, 2020). Organizational leaders must leverage management techniques that improve employee perception of change to mitigate potential resistance to change initiatives. Albrecht et al. (2020) introduced the construct of change engagement to explain employee reactions and acceptance of change, where positive work-related cognitions can be used to generate enthusiasm for change produced through work involvement. This theoretical concept lacks empirical support, but it creates a pathway in organizational change literature from employee work involvement to organizational change acceptance. Provision of opportunities for change involvement is a way organizational change leaders can support impacted employees. Smollan (2017) introduced support through change as a new component of change models to indicate the relationship between support and individual attitudes and outcomes. The findings revealed that negative perceptions of change processes were due to lack of inclusion and minimal provision of information, but emotional support provided from supervisors, although not commonly offered across study participants, mitigated the stress caused by the uncertainty of the change context. Heyden et al. (2017) showed that employee support is a critical tool for minimizing instances of change failure but highlighted the commonplace inability of management to foster support environments through change. Unfortunately, leadership and change research indicate a decline in ethical leadership approaches that promote empathetic support highlighted as instrumental in helping employees cope with change (Burnes et al., 2018).

To gain employee acceptance of change, Belschak et al. (2020) advocated for development of a shared understanding of the intended outcomes of change initiatives as related to organizational objectives so that individuals are more prepared to cope with the desired future state. Van den Heuvel et al. (2016) found that the timeliness and relevance of information about proposed change was related to employee attitudes and change initiative outcomes. Employee inclusion in change initiatives is a critical component to establish a feedback mechanism for monitoring the change process. Nielsen et al. (2021) studied employees designated as participatory change leaders responsible for driving change and found a significant positive link between the supportive change agent role and employee attitudes evidenced by well-being and job satisfaction. Employee attitudes, such as job satisfaction, commitment, and many other factors have been significantly linked to overall employee outcomes such as turnover intention and attrition, a relationship accentuated by the change context (Srivastava & Agrawal, 2020). Many studies have identified organizational commitment as an individual attribute that influences employee responses to change (Oreg et al., 2011). Olafsen et al. (2020) examined how readiness for change was related to commitment, showing that commitment may change as a factor of organizational culture. Straatmann et al. (2017) found that affective, or emotional, organizational commitment is significantly positively related to employee support of change initiatives. Lundmark et al. (2021) found a significant positive relationship between organizational change and turnover intentions. Organizational commitment is an antecedent that is moderately associated with turnover intentions (Boon et al., 2020). These findings are likely related to the stress caused in the organizational change context. However, reducing uncertainty inherent in change

initiatives through inclusion, communication, and support has been shown to reduce employee turnover intentions (Belschak et al., 2020). Jensen et al. (2018) also found that withdrawal behaviors such as absenteeism, turnover intentions, and voluntary termination increased following organizational change, but social relationships had a mediating effect on these negative employee outcomes. Leadership support of subordinates has a marked influence on employee attitudes and outcomes. Kim and Shin (2019) found that leaders who develop the shared vision of the organizational change initiative and guide employees with motivation and encouragement empower employees, resulting in positive identification with the change and effective change outcomes.

Problem Statement

The organizational change literature includes an extensive body of knowledge detailing factors commonly needed for successful change outcomes, yet most studies indicate two out of three change initiatives end in failure (Sirkin et al., 2011). Although there is debate on which factors are most influential in change initiatives, the most commonly cited cause for failure is limited attention given to organizational members impacted by change (Angtyan, 2019). Despite this finding, most studies on change focus on experiences at the organizational level rather than concentrating on individual change experiences (Ozawa, 2020). Moreover, only a few studies have examined the role of change involvement on employee and organizational outcomes (Albrecht et al., 2020). Across 700 quantitative studies published over 60 years, Oreg et al. (2011) discovered a dearth in research examining how employee attitudes are related to change initiative outcomes. This is shadowed by researchers identifying gaps for how employees perceive change (Borges & Quintas, 2020), subjective experiences of change on employee

attitudes (Rafferty & Jimmieson, 2017), and employee perception of change on behavior (Belschak et al., 2020). There is a lack of empirical evidence regarding employee change involvement and change initiatives (Albrecht et al., 2020), and there is little empirical evidence for the role of support in the context of change (Jensen et al., 2019; Smollan, 2017).

The current research examined employee involvement factors that engage employees in change initiatives (communication and work contributions), which were hypothesized to influence employee perception of change and employee attitudes including organizational commitment and turnover intention. This research extends current findings across best practices for change management and generates empirical support for existing gaps in the literature on the significance of employee involvement in change initiatives. By collecting data from participants having experience in real-world change events, this study examined individual change experiences and methods used for employee involvement in change (leadership communication and employee work contribution) and associated resulting employee perceptions and attitudes to the applied change management techniques. The results indicate specific involvement methods lead to specific employee outcomes.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this quantitative study was to examine individual employee experiences and job attitudes as a direct result of employee involvement evidenced through leadership communication and employee work contribution in the organizational change process. This study employed a causal-comparative design because the organizational change events had already occurred and used a survey instrument for data

collection. Participants included employed or previously employed people from all education levels, from companies of all sizes, from all job levels, and from all industries, and never employed persons were excluded as potential participants. The survey instrument was designed to measure employee involvement as evidenced by communication and work contribution (independent variable), employee perception of change (dependent variable), and employee attitudes as evidenced by organizational commitment and turnover intentions (dependent variable) regarding an identified organizational change.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

RQ1: Does perception of organizational change differ for involved employees and employees not involved in the organizational change?

Hypothesis 1_0: There is no observed differences in perception of the organizational change between involved employees and employees not involved in the organizational change (as evidenced through leadership communication and employee work contribution).

Hypothesis 1a: Employees who contributed work to the organizational change will have more positive perceptions of the change.

Hypothesis 1b: Employees who received communication from leadership about the organizational change will have more positive perceptions of the change.

RQ2: Do perceived employee attitudes differ for involved employees and employees not involved in the organizational change?

Hypothesis 2_0: There is no observed differences in perceived employee attitudes between involved employees and employees not involved in the organizational change.

Hypothesis 2a: Employees who contributed work to the organizational change will have higher organizational commitment.

Hypothesis 2b: Employees who received communication from leadership about the organizational change will have higher organizational commitment.

Hypothesis 2c: Employees who contributed work to the organizational change will have lower turnover intentions.

Hypothesis 2d: Employees who received communication from leadership about the organizational change will have lower turnover intentions.

Assumptions and Limitations of the Study

There were assumptions and limitations to the current research that should be noted. The survey responses relied on participants' memories of organizational change events and their actions and feelings at the time of the organizational change, and the research assumed memory bias would not interfere with how those memories were reported through the survey. The study was contingent upon differences in employee involvement across the various industries represented by the survey participants. All respondents indicating the same type of involvement would have precluded comparison across the independent variable, concluding the research study without finding support for any significant findings among the identified variables. Additionally, the way in which participants were individually affected by their identified organizational change could have biased responses to the survey items. Participants that experienced negative outcomes specific to implemented changes may have harbored strong emotions and opinions of the change initiative solely based on those personally negative outcomes. As a mitigation strategy, the survey captured extreme outcomes (such as a participant losing

his or her job). The proposed study attempted to limit participant focus to one instance of organizational change through the written instructions on each section of the survey instrument. The survey items focused on employee experiences immediately prior to change implementation, during change implementation, and immediately following change implementation. The study therefore assumed responses were reflective of one organizational change as participants responded to each survey item.

Theoretical Foundations of the Study

The current study proposed that employees involved in an organizational change initiative would have more positive perceptions of the change initiative. Employee involvement with organizational change has been shown to increase positive attitudes related to change and is directly related to the job demands-resource theory (Albrecht et al., 2020). Job demands-resource theory (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007) posits that provision of resources contributes to employee motivation by fulfilling essential employee needs to complete work, whereas job demands without resources can lead to workplace stress and employee burnout. This theory, reflected in Scripture, can be interpreted as a direct message to leadership in that "…your abundance at the present time should supply their need, so that their abundance may supply your need…" (English Standard Version Bible, 2001, 2 Corinthians 8:14). Active employee involvement in the change process creates change-related resources that energize and motivate employees, which is contrary with passive change management that generally elicits resistant behaviors and negative outcomes due to higher demands on employees through requiring them to navigate through change alone without these resources (Rafferty & Jimmieson, 2017).

This study hypothesized that involved employees would have higher organizational commitment and lower turnover intentions. These assertions are supported by the social exchange theory first identified by Homans (1958). In general, the social exchange theory proposes that people weigh the benefit of a relationship based on how much they put into it and what they receive from it. This can be translated to the organizational environment where employees, in relation to the organization to which they are members, weigh the benefit of their employment based on what they get back from their organization. Additionally, the Biblical perspective advises to "Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves" (English Standard Version Bible, 2001, Philippians 2:3). So, employees that dedicate time and effort into a change will perceive value and reciprocity from the organization resulting in higher commitment and lower turnover intention. Employees who perceive high value and reciprocity in this relationship are more committed to an organization, but employees who feel unsupported by the organizational relationship are more likely to experience negative outcomes and withdraw (Belschak et al., 2020).

Withdrawal from an organization often culminates in attrition, as described by Mobley et al.'s (1978) model of turnover, beginning with some level of dissatisfaction followed by intention to quit and eventual departure from an organization. Studies have supported the notion that organizational change presents a risk to retention when employees are dissatisfied with the proposed change (Bich Thuy & Yen Van, 2020; Judge et al., 2017) or employees do not perceive organizational support through a proposed change (Boulagouas et al., 2021; Chênevert et al., 2019). The direction of employee attitudes and outcomes as related to employee involvement in organizational

change is supported through the utilitarian consequentialist approach (Burnes et al., 2018) stemming from utilitarianism (Bentham, 1789; Mill, 1861). The utilitarianist view indicates a (morally) correct action is one that creates the most good, and a utilitarian consequentialist approach interprets what is right solely on the consequences of the act. Therefore, employees vested in an organizational change due to their involvement should perceive the change as the "correct" resolution, likely reporting positive perception of the change, higher organizational commitment, and less turnover intentions.

Definition of Terms

The following is a list of definitions of terms that are used in this study.

Change Management – Change management is defined as the application of a structured approach to transform an organization from a current state to a desired state (Galli, 2018; Rayanfar, 2015).

Coalition – Coalition is defined for the change context as a team of effective leaders from various organizational echelons (management through subordinate staff) that share an understanding of organizational problems and develop a shared vision for change that will resolve organizational shortcomings (Creasey & Hiatt, 2008; Kotter, 2011; Leavy, 2014).

Communication – Communication is defined for the change context as efforts made by leadership to share information frequently and in a timely and transparent manner using effective channels (face-to-face meetings, email, informal conversation, etc.), tailoring messages for the intended audience to provide clear and compelling reasons for change (Creasey & Taylor, 2014).

Effective Change – Effective change is defined as successfully completing the comprehensive process of moving from need identification through achievement of desired outcomes as identified by organizational objectives (Creasey & Taylor, 2014; Sghari, 2016).

Effective Change Management – Effective change management is defined as successful achievement of the intended organizational change following the application of structured change management processes that identify the need for change, manage the transition phase, implement the change, and result in desired organizational outcomes (Angtyan, 2019; Creasey & Hiatt, 2008; Kotter, 2011; Lewin, 1951; Rayanfar, 2015).

Employee Attitudes – Employee attitudes are defined for the change context as a positive or negative assessment of change expressed through affective (emotional), cognitive (appraisal-related), and behavioral reactions to change (Albrecht et al., 2020; Piderit, 2000; Oreg et al., 2011).

Employee Involvement – Employee involvement is defined for the change context as frequent and open engagement and participation in change initiatives through information sharing or direct contributions to planning and implementation (Angtyan, 2019).

Employee Perception – Employee perception is defined for the change context as an employee's psychological state that directly influences work involvement (e.g., enthusiasm or willingness to support a change, depleted energy for and resistance to a change; Albrecht et al., 2020).

Leadership – Leadership is defined for the change context as active support and participation in a change initiative through ongoing and transparent communication about

the intentions of the change and direction for moving organizational members from a current state to a future state (Creasey & Hiatt, 2008; Kotter, 2011).

Organizational Change – Organizational change is defined as a necessary and often unavoidable event through which organizational- and individual-level activities are altered to adapt to ever-changing environments, better assuring long-term organizational performance and continuance (Holmemo et al., 2018; Kump, 2019; Müller & Kunisch, 2018; Zhang, 2016)

Organizational Commitment – Organizational commitment is defined as the degree of attachment an employee has to an organization based on emotional attachments (affective commitment), lack of options outside of current organizations (continuance commitment), or obligatory attachment to an organization (normative commitment; Bich Thuy & Yen Van, 2020; Meyer & Allen, 1991).

Turnover Intention – Turnover intention is defined as the intention to voluntary quit a job, often resulting in actual turnover (Lin & Huang, 2020; Mobley & Fisk, 1982; Tett & Meyer, 1993).

Work Contribution – Work contribution is defined as individual efforts to complete a task or a duty that include behavioral involvement and tangible products completed (Hulshof et al., 2020; Sidorenkov et al., 2020).

Significance of the Study

The current research contributes to the literature on organizational change by responding to research gaps identified across recent empirical studies as well as those identified through the meta-analysis of over 700 published quantitative studies conducted by Oreg et al. (2011). Further, the current research focuses on methods used throughout

identified organizational changes across industries, juxtaposing current organizational change models to link key components of change management best practices with outcome variables. This alignment was used to reveal existing relationships between change management practices and employee attitudes and potential gaps in current models. These practices were further examined to identify how specific change management practices impacted outcome variables, including examination of the impact of a previously unsupported change management method (work contribution).

The outcomes of this study provide insights not seen in current literature or current change management best practices. The type and extent of employee involvement throughout the identified change initiative had unique impacts on the outcome variables. These relationships reveal potential practices that could extend upon current models for organizational change management, calling for inclusion of employees through tangible contributions to the change initiative in addition to ongoing communication about the intended change. Additionally, the current study examined how the involvement of employees throughout the change process impacted employee attitudes and perceptions of the change initiative. These findings provide a unique lens for examining factors that may exacerbate negative outcomes of change, highlighting vulnerabilities not currently considered in the organizational change context.

Summary

Organizational change is a natural and eventual occurrence that follows a general process, beginning with an identified need followed by transition, implementation, and arrival to a desired state. There is variation in how organizational change is implemented and managed, which leads to both positive and negative outcomes, and research findings

underscore the importance of prioritizing consideration of affected organizational members to improve the likelihood of effective change outcomes. Previous research has focused on the role of leadership, support provided to employees throughout the change process, establishment of a shared understanding of change through timely and relevant communication, and treatment of resistance behaviors, and there is a clear and empirically supported relationship between commitment and turnover intention. However, the impact of specific change management techniques as related to employee outcomes such as perception of change and resulting employee attitudes has not been directly investigated. Additionally, the role of employee involvement in the change process has very limited research-based support.

More evidence is needed to understand how information impacts employee attitudes and other methods through which leadership can involve organizational members in change processes to influence change perception and outcome attitudes. In the next section, current change management models are reviewed to identify recommended best practices that commonly lead to effective change outcomes. Common across these practices is a focus on communication, but there is a lack of other opportunities to involve employees in the change process. Additional opportunities for employee involvement is discussed along with identification and explanation of relevant concepts pertaining to the variables studied in the current research.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

The topic of organizational change has been broadly defined in research and includes various components and factors that impact change initiative outcomes. Contrary to the common practice of focusing on the technical requirements for change (Angtyan, 2019), the current study aimed to examine the roles of employees impacted by change initiatives. The following literature review identifies relevant concepts to help operationally define the variables under study. These variables can be identified as antecedents of change (communication and employee involvement) and outcomes of change (employee attitudes and change initiative results). First, organizational change (what it is, why it is necessary, how it contributes to organizational development, etc.) is reviewed followed by a discussion of the most well-known models in change management literature. Shared across these models are critical change management techniques deemed necessary to better ensure successful and effective change initiatives because these change methods directly influence how impacted employees are engaged and managed throughout the change process (identifying need for change, managing transition phase, implementing change, and achieving desired state). Employee involvement represents a potentially beneficial mechanism to improve the likelihood of effective change due to its relationship with positive employee outcomes, but it is a shared gap across these models due to limited research supporting its efficacy in the change context.

Although employee involvement through information sharing is a large focus of current best practice models, work contributions have not been included as a method for

employee involvement in change. Literature highlighting the effectiveness of this mechanism of involvement is reviewed and discussed through an organizational change lens, highlighting work contributions as a more tangible method for employee involvement that may compliment the commonly identified uses of communication and information sharing. The impact of change on employee attitudes is reviewed, with a focus on organizational commitment and turnover intentions, to explore the consequences of mismanaged change initiatives. Finally, the biblical perspective on change management underscores the vital role of leadership's actions throughout change to involve organizational members, reflecting it as a moral obligation rather than merely a role assigned within the organizational hierarchy.

Description of Search Strategy

Multiple databases were used to conduct a critical review of recent literature to develop the research focus and establish justification for this proposal. These databases included ProQuest Central, JSTOR, and EBSCO. Initially used were keywords and phrases including "organizational change," "effective organizational change," "radical organizational change," "change management," "leadership," "communication," "organizational communication," "work involvement," "work contribution," "employee contribution," "organizational development," "organizational learning," "turnover," "turnover intention," and "employee engagement" across each site. To identify articles specific to job characteristics and employee attitudes as related to organizational change, additional searches were conducted that included the following keywords and phrases: "job satisfaction AND organizational change," "organizational commitment AND organizational change," "job satisfaction AND change management," "organizational

commitment AND change management," "change management AND turnover," "organizational change AND turnover," "employee attitudes AND organizational change," "employee attitudes AND change management," "resistance AND employee behavior," "resistance AND organizational change," "resistance AND change management," "anticipation AND organizational change," "employee understanding AND organizational change," and "knowledge sharing AND organizational change." To identify articles refining my biblical perspective, follow-on searches were conducted that included the following keywords and phrases: "religion AND organizational change," "religion AND organizational leadership," and "morality AND organizational change."

These searches resulted in the identification of over 200 journal articles, book chapters, and unpublished works accessible through the database query. After reviewing the abstracts, items that were not relevant in theory or in concept to the variables related to this proposal were eliminated. The remaining 109 studies, reviews, and unpublished works were reviewed to determine if there was data or information needed to define the concepts within this proposal, to define underlying theoretical perspectives, to explain the current state of the literature in the organizational change management field, and to identify current limitations and research gaps. Additionally, several items were eliminated due to the date of publication, so this literature review is founded on recent literature or seminal works. In total, 60 works were included in the literature review.

Review of Literature

Organizational change is an event or series of events that moves an organization from a current state to a future state (Müller & Kunisch, 2018) and often occurs in response to some identified need for an organization to improve performance or to adapt

to changing environmental influences (Holmemo et al., 2018; Zhang, 2016). How organizations implement needed change will have long lasting impacts on organizational members, so change leadership must ensure certain management components are considered to mitigate potential tension between the organization and its employees (Rosenbaum et al., 2018). Change management frameworks or models, the use of structured processes to achieve identified organizational outcomes, should be implemented to increase successful outcomes through change initiatives (Galli, 2018; Kliewe et al., 2013). Organizations should align their management approach with strategies that mitigate potential employee harm and attrition that can result due to an attempted change initiative, whether it be successful or not (Kähkönen, 2020).

Review of Organizational Change Models

To identify the most appropriate approach to an organizational change, management should be familiar with best practices for implementing a change initiative as included in change management models and supported by decades of research and practice. Change models stem from various theories and integrate information from multiple disciplines but still share common themes for achieving successful change outcomes. These commonalities indicate all change initiatives can be susceptible to the same types of vulnerabilities that may lead to disastrous outcomes for both the intended change and the employees involved in the attempt. Effective change management models advocate for the same general practices such as initiating change with planning and communication (Sghari, 2016) and implementing change through a structured approach including opportunities for feedback and evaluation (Creasey & Taylor, 2014). In subsequent sections of this review, the management components shared across change

models are summarized, and the basis for actions constituting effective change management are defined and categorized as *identifying a need for change, managing the transition phase, implementing the change,* and *achieving the desired state*.

Identifying a Need for Change

Change may occur to convert an organization from some current state to a desired state (Galli, 2018), but change that is effective and lasting requires deliberate action and participation from leadership and organizational members (Creasey & Hiatt, 2008). The ADKAR model (Hiatt & Creasey, 2003), developed through a 900-organization study from 59 participating countries over 14 years, identifies awareness of the need for change as the critical first step in the change process. The first stage in Kurt Lewin's (1951) Three-Stage Theory, Unfreeze, identifies the need for an organization to analyze current processes and conduct planning for desired improvement. Kotter's 8 Step Change Model (1996) extended upon Lewin's (1951) theory to include direction on how people should be treated as part of the change management process, advocating for ongoing communication as an organization plans for change. The McKinsey 7s model, developed in the 1980s, begins with a Strategy dimension for managers to identify objectives of a forthcoming transformation (Ravanfar, 2015). This model also includes guidance for Structure, Systems, Skills, and Staff, through which managers develop the future state of an organization through roles and responsibilities, formal procedures and behavior expectations, abilities required to sustain change, and recruitment or training of employees to ingrain required skills for new roles created through change.

Managing the Transition Phase

Mere acknowledgement of the need for change is not enough to galvanize a change initiative. Kotter's (1996) model advises that a coalition or team of effective leaders is required to move a change from an idea to an undertaking. Piderit (2000) echoes this need, identifying that the first step in creating change includes widespread communication about an initiative rather than small group planning among management. This inclusive approach to change informs organizational members about the need for change, creates a sense of urgency to act, and increases broad employee support once the change process begins, which are all critical components of eventual successful change initiatives as echoed across many organizational change models (Angtyan, 2019; Creasey & Taylor, 2014; Galli, 2018; Kotter, 2011).

Employee Involvement. Research shows effective people management such as employee involvement in the change process increases the likelihood of successful change outcomes (Creasey & Hiatt, 2008). These findings are evidenced by Lewin's (1951) theory, the ADKAR model, and Kotter's 8-Step model, advocating the need to sufficiently address organizational members as critical elements in the change process through widespread inclusion that motivates cooperation with change initiatives. Simple awareness about why a change may be necessary does not create the same type of catalyst as building a desire for change among organizational members and stakeholders (Angtyan, 2019). Leadership must develop equities linked to the change initiative among organizational members that motivate those employees to want to see the change be successful. Employee involvement in change includes executing changes to the day-to-day operating environment, cooperating with new processes, or facilitating change through individual efforts or work products (Creasey & Taylor, 2014).

Change often requires individual sacrifice that will not be made unless there is a genuine belief of benefit in making such sacrifices (Kotter, 2011). This level of perseverance is best attained by involving employees in the change, where their individual actions are reflected in the change initiative and therefore tied to the ultimate outcome of the change effort. The 2013 Prosci study identified collaboration and regular communication beginning early in the change process as tactics that increase employee involvement in and support of proposed organizational change (Prosci Inc., 2014). Without such involvement, resistance to change is a most common result that can lead to failed initiatives and negative employee outcomes (Lewin, 1951). Resistance is heighted when employees are not involved in the change process because of increased uncertainty and fear surrounding the change (Vito & Sethi, 2020). Therefore, open communication leading to employee involvement in the change process empowers employees to embrace a change initiative rather than fear and resist it.

Role of Leadership. Leadership plays a critical role in beginning and managing organizational change. A good leader is likely to first recognize a need for change and then take action to build a coalition around the need, working collaboratively to assess organizational issues and plan objectives to improve upon identified shortcomings (Kotter, 2011). The head of an organization is inherently positioned to fulfill the role of champion and has the authority to develop managerial partnerships to support change initiatives. Research consistently attributes active and visible executive support as the most important element of successful organizational change (Creasey & Hiatt, 2008; Creasey & Taylor, 2014). Prosci's Best Practices study reports lack of interaction with key stakeholders as one of the top five mistakes made in failed change initiatives

(Creasey & Hiatt, 2008). The coalition exists to define desired results of a change initiative and to develop the strategy for implementing change across the organization. A comprehensive strategic vision is needed to outline the reason behind change and should be communicated to organizational members to enable participation in the initiative while mitigating resistance to the proposed change (Angtyan, 2019; Kotter, 2011). ADKAR, focusing on the people side of change management, and Kotter's 8 Step Change Model (1996) underscore the importance of buy-in to increase the likelihood of successful change. People are the starting and ending point for change (Galli, 2018). Employees must understand why change is necessary if they are to support it and must understand what the change means for their individual roles if they are to sustain it.

   Communication. Carefully managed change includes the use of effective communication. The 2013 Prosci benchmarking study identified multiple characteristics of effective communication in the change context including transparent and tailored change messages with timely and frequent delivery while including compelling reasons change is needed and the consequences of not attempting the change initiative (Prosci Inc., 2014, as cited in Creasey & Taylor, 2014). The ADKAR model reiterates the importance of leadership communication including the underlying need for the change (Angtyan, 2019), and Kotter's (1996) model further promotes the benefit of communicating the shared vision to obtain employee buy-in and support for a proposed change. Effective communication should provide adequate information to help employees cope with change by reducing doubt and uncertainty during this critical time of vulnerability (Borges & Quintas, 2020). Although this method is supported by research and makes logical sense in practice, the most common mistakes in change include

provision of insufficient information or avoidance of direct communication between leadership to organizational members (Creasey & Hiatt, 2008).

Studies have repeatedly identified the need for communication between leadership and employees in the context of organizational change. Belschak et al. (2020) found that communication activities were most important during the initial phases of change, as this provided needed momentum to start and sustain support throughout all change stages. Leavy (2014) identified that regular meetings should occur at least every two months or on a more frequent basis with an established forum of leadership to receive subordinate feedback on how the change process is evolving. This aligns with Kotter's (1996) finding that the top-down approach limits employee involvement in shaping the change and vision for the organization and mitigates another common mistake identified by Prosci of leadership being unreceptive to employee feedback (Creasey & Taylor, 2014). Open and frequent communication increases employee stake and involvement in change. When effectively applied, these leadership practices embody the Knowledge component of the ADKAR model (Angtyan, 2019) by developing employee abilities to prepare for and accept change.

Work Contributions. Employees become involved in organizational activities through communication as well as through their individual contributions to various work efforts. Employees can contribute to work through specific job duties quantified by the efforts made to conduct various activities at an individual or group level (Sidorenkov et al., 2020). Although manifested in many forms, work contributions generally refer to actions associated with completion of products or services in support of organizational goals and objectives (Babalola et al., 2021). Work contributions are comprised of both

the actions employees engage in as well as the underlying psychological states employees experience while working (Kosaka & Sato, 2020). Involvement in work activities creates a reciprocal relationship between an employee and the work environment, as identified by the theory of work adjustment (Rounds et al., 1987, as cited in Hulshof et al., 2020). This relationship manifests through an employee cognitively (use of mental energy), emotionally (willingness to invest emotions), and behaviorally (behaving in a specific manner), with the aim of achieving positive organizational outcomes (Kosaka & Sato, 2020).

Organizations label employees that express these outputs as productive because their investments (cognitive, emotional, and behavioral) equate to financial gains and organizational stability due to customer satisfaction, high production rates, and superior service levels (Babalola et al., 2021). An employee with a less than positive relationship with their work environment may not express such zeal for achieving positive organizational outcomes, leading to decreased job satisfaction and increased turnover intentions (Kosaka & Sato, 2020). Creating a sense of purposefulness in the work context establishes a balance between individuals and their work activities (Chalofsky, 2003). This belief that one's work is important impacts both work engagement and resulting employee attitudes regarding the organization to which an individual belongs. Purposeful effort can instill meaning and a sense of belonging for an employee in the context of work (Allan et al., 2018). Meaning is derived from the tasks employees perform, which accentuates the relationship between employee contributions and furtherance of work-related outcomes when employees are vested in achievement of organizational goals (Hulshof et al., 2020).

Implementing the Change

Personnel in leadership roles are responsible for communicating with employees about the details, benefits, and challenges regarding the change initiative to facilitate implementation when the proposed change "goes live" (Creasey & Taylor, 2014). Commonly identified mistakes in change management include managers who minimize their direct involvement in change implementation and managers who fail to support employees throughout change (Creasey & Hiatt, 2008). The McKinsey 7s model identifies this as Style or the way managers interact with and toward their employees (Ravanfar, 2015). The ADKAR model includes Knowledge and Ability as part of change implementation during which leadership must guide employees with information on how to change and help them develop needed skills to effectively maintain their new roles after change is implemented (Angtyan, 2019). During implementation, leadership relies on the established and Shared goals as identified in the McKinsey 7s model that demonstrate how the change is constructive through short-term wins, which is also identified in Kotter's (1996) 8 Step Change Model. Through focused communication, support, employee involvement, and direct engagement, leadership reinforces the change effort throughout the implementation phase to preclude reversion back to pre-change behaviors.

Employee Perception of Change. Research indicates employee perceptions of change have a critical impact on change outcomes in addition to influencing employee attitudes like organizational commitment (Ahman & Huvila, 2019). The inherent uncertainty accompanying change initiatives creates feelings of anxiety that employees attempt to address through discussion and interactions with other organizational members

(Stensaker et al., 2020). The positive or negative opinion about a change initiative is a direct result of the value and quantity of information received about a change (Borges & Quintas, 2020). Based on what is known or even presumed about a change, employees engage in an activity known as sensemaking, and sensemaking is primarily accomplished through communication with others (Stensaker et al., 2020). In the face of uncertainty, employees attempt to construct an understanding of change strategy and outcomes based on any information available. Effective communication of relevant information is a critical component to help employees adapt to a change initiative (Borges & Quintas, 2020) because, as research indicates, employees are more receptive to change initiatives when communication about the change occurs (Ahman & Huvila, 2019). Kotter's 8 Step Change Model (Kotter, 1996) underscores the importance of communication, identifying that the likelihood of resistance from organizational members increases when employees do not receive information about proposed changes, leaving them uninformed and feeling left out of the change process.

Although a change initiative may begin with promise, many initiatives lead to limited measurable benefits or fail altogether, resulting in innate apprehension among employees about the idea of organizational change (Boon et al., 2020). Organizational change requires personnel to transition toward a new situation, and without being armed with adequate information of what the change outcome will be, employees may foresee benefits or harm due to a proposed change and the unoptimistic foundation from which change begins (Borges & Quintas, 2020). Dubrin and Ireland (1993) identified three factors that influence employees' positive or negative perceptions of change including fear of the unknown, identification of flaws in the change, and fear of personally adverse

outcomes due to implementing a change. Employees generate progressive narratives identifying potential benefits of change or regressive narratives focused on the consequences of change based on both their understanding of the change and their role in the change process (Stensaker et al., 2020). These factors and related outcomes can be mitigated by leadership through communication and employee involvement in the change process. This authoritative interposition will better ensure the sensemaking process will lead to positive perceptions of the change and more effective outcomes (Krogh, 2018).

When employees engage in sensemaking independent of leadership input, confusion often prevails. Sensemaking becomes a mandatory requirement for coping with change because employees must adapt to changes in known patterns of behavior while accommodating new practices and environmental structures (Hay et al., 2021). Sharing the intent of change initiatives decreases negative perception of change because it quells misinformation and misinterpretation of change through sharing relevant and accurate information (Borges & Quintas, 2020). Organizations can cultivate positive perception to change among personnel through engagement activities that encourage personnel to invest in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of change initiatives (Albrecht et al., 2020). This framing begins with a firm and comprehensive understanding of how the proposed change will impact personal experiences of organizational members (Mathews & Linski, 2016). Avoiding a top-down approach that precludes employee perceptions of change, conducive change leaders will reassure employees and allay the uncertainties associated with change (Borges & Quintas, 2020). This type of leadership ensures focus remains on employees affected by change rather than the commonplace focus only on the technical components required in implementing a change initiative (Angtyan, 2019).

Achieving the Desired State

The final stage in change is still vulnerable to negative outcomes if not as meticulously planned as the other phases when managing change (Lewin, 1951). New processes are sensitive and may falter due to employee inability to sustain change or from lack of support of top-level leadership. This is likely because many organizations do not have a history of collaborative relationships among top-level stakeholders, or because leadership failed to establish a strong coalition in support of change, thereby allowing the initiative to be stopped by members that opposed the change (Kotter, 2011). To achieve the ultimate goal in Kotter's (1996) change model, organizational goals should reflect institutionalizing the change by ratifying it as part of the organizational culture. The McKinsey 7s model identifies the need to embed the change within the organization's Structure (roles and responsibilities) and Systems (mechanisms or formal procedures; Ravanfar, 2015). Additionally, the final step in the ADKAR model identifies Reinforcement as a way to sustain and maintain a change long-term (Angtyan, 2019). Incorporating and reinforcing change requires ongoing support, information sharing, and active participation from every echelon of the organization to make it possible for all members to have a sense of meaning associated with the change initiative and accountability for the long-term outcomes of the change.

Employee Attitudes as Related to Organizational Change

Concepts such as job satisfaction, commitment, involvement, morale, engagement, and well-being have been studied to help psychologists and practitioners understand employee attitudes or how people think about and relate to work (Judge et al., 2017). Findings have consistently identified potential consequences regarding employee

well-being (Jensen et al., 2019) and employee attitudes and behaviors (Boon et al., 2020) amidst the context of organizational change. Due to the wide variation in outcomes, research has endeavored to better align what experiences or antecedents throughout the change process led to which attitudinal, behavioral, and performance outcomes (Albrecht et al., 2020). With respect to change, large scale changes such as mergers or acquisitions tend to be highly corrosive to employee well-being and attitudes (Bich Thuy & Yen Van, 2020). Specifically, the psychological distress caused by role ambiguity and uncertainty around these types of changes leads to increased job dissatisfaction, decreased organizational commitment, and higher likelihood of turnover. How employees are impacted by the change context is directly linked to subjective experiences and individual perceptions about the change process itself (Belschak et al., 2020), including how employees were treated by leadership following the introduction of a change initiative (Boulagouas et al., 2021).

Employee Attitudes

Albrecht et al. (2020) defined employee attitudes within a change context as the overall positive or negative feelings employees hold with respect to change initiatives, and these attitudes have significant impact on the outcome of proposed or implemented change. Borges and Quintas (2020) identified three dimensions to how employees may react to change including emotional, cognitive, and behavioral facets. Negative attitudes result in resistance to and cynicism for organizational change and positive attitudes lead to readiness for, commitment to, and acceptance of change (Albrecht et al., 2020; Borges & Quintas, 2020). Job satisfaction is the most studied construct and is defined as overall like or dislike for one's job (Bich Thuy & Yen Van, 2020; Judge et al., 2017). Research

has confirmed the link between job satisfaction and negative outcomes such as decreased organizational commitment and increased turnover intentions (Boon et al., 2020; Boulagous et al., 2021). The more satisfied a worker is, the more committed the employee is to the organization and therefore the less likely the employee will engage in actual turnover (Bich Thuy & Yen Van, 2020). Other constructs, although correlated with job satisfaction, do not have robust empirical support linking them to organizational change outcomes.

Organizational Commitment. Organizational commitment is similar to job satisfaction in that it captures an employee's positive or negative opinion, but it differs because commitment considers individual values in relation to some aspect of the object being appraised (Judge et al., 2017). Organizational commitment, then, can be defined as the degree of attachment and identification an employee has with an organization (Porter et al., 1976) based on acceptance of organizational goals, willingness to expend effort for achieving organizational objectives, and desire to remain a member within an organization (Bich Thuy & Yen Van, 2020). The degree of organizational commitment influences an employee's decision to remain within an organization or to leave it, where Meyer and Allen (1991) have identified three components of organizational commitment that factor into this appraisal. Affective commitment means an employee desires to maintain organizational membership because of emotional attachments. Continuance commitment means an employee wants to stay for fear of being unable to find another job. Normative commitment means an employee remains with an organization because they feel personally or ethically obligated to stay.

Each dimension of commitment is related to both desirable outcomes such as attendance and well-being while also related to undesirable outcomes such as increased stress and attrition (Bich Thuy & Yen Van, 2020). Attitude researchers indicate attention and motivation are related to positive employee attitudes and withdrawal is related to negative attitudes (Mowday et al., 1982, as cited in Judge et al., 2017). Employees with high organizational commitment have a strong attachment to their organization expressed through high-energy output and motivation to achieve organizational outcomes (Kim & Shin, 2019). The social component of the organizational environment is generally a desirable quality and has a large influence on perceived employee commitment. When these social connections are interrupted or strained, such as in periods of organizational change, employees may feel less connected to their social support thereby diminishing organizational commitment (Jensen et al., 2019). This discord among social relationships can also lead to decreased information sharing, further impeding organizational change efforts (Ahman & Huvila, 2019). Involving employees in planning and implementing the change process has been shown to mitigate the strain associated with change, resulting in more positive attitudes from affected employees (Straatmann et al., 2017).

Turnover Intention. Turnover intention is an employee's desire to quit his or her job or to leave an organization (Lin & Huang, 2020; Mobley & Fisk, 1982). Turnover intention is influenced by many factors such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Srivastava & Agrawal, 2020), and organizational change has been significantly and positively linked with turnover intention (Lundmark et al., 2021). Organizational commitment is directly related to turnover intention, where lower levels of organizational commitment are a hallmark pattern among employees that ultimately

leave their jobs (Judge et al., 2017). This is an outcome supported by multiple studies on turnover that have identified a significant and positive association between turnover intention and actual turnover (Belschak et al., 2020; Srivastava & Agrawal, 2020; Tett & Meyer, 1993). In the context of change, there are multiple stressors that are less common during periods of non-transition. Employees experience a state of shock when assessing new conditions during which they struggle to keep pace with the work environment and their personal responsibilities within an organization now made unstable due to change (Belschak et al., 2020). Role stressors, such as role ambiguity, role conflict, and role overload, have a well-documented negative relationship with both organizational commitment and turnover intentions (Chênevert et al., 2019).

Role ambiguity along with the uncertainty inherent in the context of change act as barriers to employees attempting to adapt to change, leading to withdrawal behaviors like decreased commitment and absenteeism. The ambiguity associated with the unknown outcomes of a change effort causes employees to perceive the change as a negative and undesirable occurrence. As employees cognitively and emotionally assess their new circumstances, they may find their expectations do not align with the change outcomes and decide to leave (Boulagouas et al., 2021). Without creating understanding about the change and intended outcomes, employees' negative evaluations of the work environment will lead to disengagement and eventual turnover (Judge et al., 2017). Employee involvement and communication early in the change process and throughout implementation have been shown to foster realistic expectations for change outcomes (Belschak et al., 2020). Generating this type of understanding about the intent and

benefits of change will bolster positive perceptions around the initiative, thereby reducing turnover intentions among employees impacted by change (Srivastava & Agrawal, 2020).

Biblical Foundations of the Study

Most textbooks identify the birth of psychology occurring in the late-1800s (Johnson, 2010). Since that time, the need to establish psychology as a science without the influence of other factors such as religion has caused conflict in the field (McPetres & Zuckerman, 2018). Despite the ongoing debate to keep the field solely based on scientific foundations, many practitioners, particularly practitioners of faith, believe that both scientific and religious perspectives are essential to establishing a whole person understanding of human behavior. There are centuries of scientific backing for secular perspectives in psychology, and the Bible represents the seminal work identifying spiritual truths and potential areas for further investigation in modern psychological endeavors (Roberts & Watson, 2010).

People were created from two parts: physical, tangible components that can be explained through science and spiritual characteristics that remain hidden but can be understood through Scripture (Modise & Johannes, 2016). "…and the dust returns to the earth as it was, and the spirit returns to God who gave it" (English Standard Version Bible, 2001, Ecclesiastes 12:7). This dualistic nature reveals that people have needs beyond those that serve the physical body, where external nourishment must also target the soul for the well-being of the whole body. "Gracious words are like a honeycomb, sweetness to the soul and health to the body" (English Standard Version Bible, 2001, Proverbs 16:24). Positive experiences also allow people to create positive relationships with their surroundings, providing support and adaptability to change when needed

(Plotkin, 2008). The current research identifies the essential contribution leadership has in fostering positive experiences through guidance and inclusion, especially in the context of change. Further, as underscored by Scripture, the current study focuses on leadership actions understood as moral obligations rather than just responsibilities of an organizational position. Effective leadership through change begins with a coalition of support that guides organizational members through the difficulty and challenge that accompany change initiatives. "…that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together" (English Standard Version Bible, 2001, 1 Corinthians 12:25-26).

Role of Social Support in Organizational Change

The organizational setting is unique because it houses social situations in a framework constrained by pre-established organizational culture, rules, and norms. The social aspect of the organization has great influence on how people behave and perceive environmental stimuli, swaying situations to positive or negative outcomes (Myers, 2010). People react through their feelings and behaviors when faced with change, and meaningful social support that provides a sense of belonging can be provided from colleagues as well as supervisors to help employees cope positively to proposed change (Smollan, 2017). "Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up!" (English Standard Version Bible, 2001, Ecclesiastes 4:9-10). This Biblical truth is supported by the social exchange theory, where psychological and emotional needs are satisfied through reciprocal relationships (Kim &

Shin, 2019). The position of leaders within the organizational structure enables their ability to connect people not only to each other but also to organizational objectives in a relevant and meaningful way (Addai-Duah et al., 2020).

Support from Leadership. Organizational change intensifies normal workplace stress, so support during events such as this help to mitigate the negative outcomes of these new and magnified stressors (Smollan, 2017). Many research studies have called for a more holistic approach on the part of leadership when conducting change to comprehensively address the multi-faceted needs of organizational members thereby reducing individual harm posed by the change context (Boulagouas et al., 2021). From the Biblical perspective, leading through change requires guidance and direction through times of vulnerability for affected employees. "I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my loving eye on you" (English Standard Version Bible, 2001, Psalm 32:8). Leaders who are sincere in action are able to aid employees in learning new responsibilities and roles as well as to build trust among organizational members, providing much needed emotional support through times of vulnerability (Pratt et al., 2019).

Developing a Change Coalition. Employee reactions to and support for change initiatives are the main determinants of successful change outcomes (Rafferty et al., 2013; Straatmann et al., 2017). Employees actively involved in the change process use social avenues and relationships to share their knowledge and understanding with peers to counter resistance and to extend change efforts across the organization (Leith & Yerbury, 2019). Employees must be empowered with change-related knowledge from leadership in order to engage in information sharing with other organizational members. Change

leaders have the critical duty of navigating change on behalf of their employees and translating that path in ways that carry each member successfully through the change. "Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert" (English Standard Version Bible, 2001, Isaiah 43:19). Leadership holds the knowledge and plan for the future state following organizational change, so are obligated to foster employees through those uncharted waters. Communication is essential for leaders to create an understanding of change across an organization, and it is a proven tool for reducing uncertainty to prepare employees for change (Tsai & Compeau, 2017).

Summary

Poor leadership through organizational change is an often-cited reason for failed change initiatives, which lead to detrimental impacts to organizations and organizational members. "Where there is not guidance, a people falls, but in an abundance of counselors there is safety" (English Standard Version Bible, 2001, Proverbs 11:14). Moving employees to accept change requires leadership practices that foster change. Practitioners and researchers continue to search for methods that improve change outcomes thereby improving the likelihood of effective change, and recent research indicates the key to successful change is the treatment of personnel affected by change initiatives. Leadership is poised to combat resistance to change by enhancing employee involvement in change initiatives through communication, information sharing, and opportunities for employees to offer meaningful work contributions to change efforts. Within the change context, communication has been positively linked to improved change outcomes. Outside of the change context, communication and employee involvement through meaningful work has

been linked to positive employee attitudes including higher organizational commitment and decreased turnover intention. The current research shows empirical support for the important role of communication within the change context and for more tangible change involvement, namely work contributions, as another potential mechanism for positive employee outcomes (positive perception of change, increased organizational commitment, and decreased turnover intention). The findings of this study provide research-based evidence that may indicate the need for updates to existing change management models, which currently focus only on communication and other leadership activities at the organizational level. The next section reviews the research objectives for the current study, identifies how the hypotheses were evaluated, and explains why the stated research methodology was the most appropriate for this investigation.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHOD

Overview

This section provides a comprehensive overview of the aim and procedures employed for the current study, which examined individual employee experiences and job attitudes as a direct result of employee involvement as evidenced through leadership communication and employee work contribution in the context of organizational change. It begins with a review of the research questions and hypotheses followed by a description of the specific design that was used to investigate the impact of employee involvement on employee perceptions and attitudes during instances of organizational change. This section continues with a description of the characteristics of the study participants including relevant inclusion and exclusion criteria, and it also provides a detailed description of the *a priori* power analyses conducted to determine the minimal sample size ($N \geq 180$) required for the statistical tests used to evaluate the hypotheses. Next, this section provides a description of the study procedures used including recruitment and survey distribution strategies, and it details the measures applied in this study to include details of the various survey instruments compiled to capture data relevant to the variables under study. It includes the operational definitions for all variables and identifies the procedures that were employed to analyze the survey results. Finally, this section reviews the delimitations on the study population, assumptions for data collection, and identified limitations due to study design.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

RQ1: Does perception of organizational change differ for involved employees and employees not involved in the organizational change?

Hypothesis 1_0: There are no observed differences in perception of the organizational change between involved employees and employees not involved in the organizational change (as evidenced through leadership communication and employee work contribution).

Hypothesis 1a: Employees who contributed work to the organizational change will have more positive perceptions of the change.

Hypothesis 1b: Employees who received communication from leadership about the organizational change will have more positive perceptions of the change.

RQ2: Do perceived employee attitudes differ for involved employees and employees not involved in the organizational change?

Hypothesis 2_0: There are no observed differences in perceived employee attitudes between involved employees and employees not involved in the organizational change.

Hypothesis 2a: Employees who contributed work to the organizational change will have higher organizational commitment.

Hypothesis 2b: Employees who received communication from leadership about the organizational change will have higher organizational commitment.

Hypothesis 2c: Employees who contributed work to the organizational change will have lower turnover intentions.

Hypothesis 2d: Employees who received communication from leadership about the organizational change will have lower turnover intentions.

Research Design

The primary aim of this research was to investigate the impact of employee involvement on employee perceptions and attitudes during instances of organizational change. A causal-comparative design investigated with a survey was used in the current study because the change events have already occurred. The causal-comparative design was used to determine whether the independent variable (employee involvement) had any effect on outcomes (employee perception of change and employee attitudes). It was hypothesized that employee involvement would have a positive impact on perception of change and on one measure of employee attitudes (organizational commitment), and a negative impact on the other measure of employee attitudes (turnover intentions). Although definitive statements regarding causality cannot be made due to the non-experimental research design, the significant findings of this research suggest potentially causal relationships between the independent variable and outcome variables.

Participants

The questionnaire for this study was administered via SurveyMonkey Audience, an online survey tool that allows a researcher to define the target study participants based on demographic information, thereby establishing relevant inclusion and exclusion criteria (SurveyMonkey, 2021). The researcher was fully responsible for uploading required survey items, and SurveyMonkey sent an email invitation to qualified survey participants based on pre-established criteria. SurveyMonkey Audience has millions of volunteer survey participants from which the application recruits. The direct benefit to respondents for participating in this study was that SurveyMonkey donates 50 cents per survey completed to a charity the participant chose. SurveyMonkey asserts that this

charitable contribution encourages selflessness among survey participants leading to more thoughtful participation when responding to surveys.

Selection Criteria

Research indicates that organizational change is considered an unavoidable occurrence (Zhang, 2016) needed to implement innovative changes (Holmemo et al., 2018) to help ensure long-term organizational survival (Müller & Kunisch, 2018). Organizational change can occur in any discipline and may result in lasting effects that may impact any organizational member that experiences a change initiative (Kähkönen, 2020). The participants for this research were 18 years of age or older and must have been employed, currently or in the past. Additionally, participants must have experienced an organizational change in the workplace. If a participant was under 18 years of age, had never been employed, or had not experienced an organizational change, they were excluded from participating in this study. This selection criteria enabled participants from all education levels, companies of all sizes, varied job levels, and all industries to have had the opportunity for participation in this study.

Power Analyses

An *a priori* power analysis was conducted to ensure the established study parameters would avoid a Type II error by identifying the probability of correctly rejecting the null hypothesis when it was false (Martin & Bridgmon, 2012). The effect size was used in an *a priori* power analysis and was estimated based on what size effect was important for the current study (Howell, 2010). Eta squared (η^2) is commonly used as an effect size when conducting analysis of variance, where .01, .06, and .14 are identified as small, medium, and large effects, respectively (Green & Salkind, 2017). Cohen (1988)

recommends study designs should aim for an 80% chance of detecting an effect, or power = .80, which is a commonly used power value criterion. These factors can be used to determine the final component that influences power – sample size. Larger sample sizes increase power, and researchers must be mindful to have an adequate sample size while not wasting resources (Green & Salkind, 2017).

The power analysis program, G*Power 3.1 (Faul et al., 2007) was used to determine the appropriate sample size for this study. *H1* and *H2*, planned for evaluation using analysis of variance (ANOVA), were assessed with G*Power using the following parameters:

- Four groups (no involvement, communication only, work contribution only, both communication and work contribution)
- Partial η^2 (.06), medium effect size is appropriate for proposed study, which converts to Cohen's (1998) effect size of .25 for use in G*Power 3.1

Based on this *a priori* power analysis, there was an 80% chance of correctly rejecting the null hypothesis and detecting an effect of the main predictor variable (employee involvement) on the outcome variable (employee attitude) with 180 participants across all four groups (45 participants per group). Hypotheses would be evaluated using one survey instrument, so the 180 participants required for the ANOVA represented the minimum sample size appropriate for this study.

Study Procedures

SurveyMonkey Audience sent an invitation to complete the survey for this research study to each participant that met the inclusion criteria. Although the power analysis indicates only 180 participants were required, 360 was identified as the target

sample size to account for defective surveys, lost participants that responded they had never experienced an organizational change, or any updates to proposed analysis procedures based on limitations or unmet assumptions identified after data was collected. SurveyMonkey Audience recruited survey participants based on their demographic information and the pre-established parameters of the desired survey participant type; SurveyMonkey Audience participants complete self-profiling surveys on a recurring basis to ensure demographic data are up to date (SurveyMonkey, 2021). The survey instrument (see Appendix A) consisted of 39 survey items created or compiled by the researcher from validated survey instruments specifically for the purposes of the present study. The survey provides an option for the respondent to submit a non-response (e.g., "no response" or "prefer not to respond") to enable the participant's right to withhold information in protection of human subjects. Participant privacy was protected first by disabling the internet protocol (IP) address tracking in the SurveyMonkey Audience application as well as by establishing the survey as private, so the survey results were only accessible to the researcher. Additionally, individual names and/or identities were not required responses in the survey. Finally, the survey solution only delivered the researcher the raw data from the survey responses with all identifying information removed, precluding the ability to deduce the identity of individual participants.

The survey began with a disclosure statement and request for consent (see Appendix B). The disclosure statement explained the purpose of the study (i.e., examining employee experiences of organizational change) without identifying key constructs being examined, specifically communication and employee involvement. Revealing all components of the study may have introduced bias in participant responses,

potentially invalidating responses. The SurveyMonkey Audience platform allowed the consent form to be included on the first page of the survey. The system recorded the participants' responses to the consent request including a time stamp to document informed consent for each participant. Participants willing to consent then completed the survey items using SurveyMonkey Audience, and all responses were collected in the application. This platform fully automates the survey instrument, so there was no need for any other media documentation (audio recording, video, etc.). The study carried minimal to no risk for potential candidates including no risk physically, economically, socially, legally, or to breach in confidentiality, and minimal risk psychologically. Reliving experiences that may have had adverse or unpleasant impacts caused by responding to the study's questionnaire may introduce minimal risk to study participants.

Instrumentation and Measurement

SurveyMonkey Audience only recruited participants that were currently employed or had been employed in the past (i.e., excluded potential respondents that did not have work experience). The survey instrument employed a secondary exclusionary measure by identifying if the respondent had experienced an organizational change. This item ensured the participant was qualified to provide responses for this study by identifying that the participant had experienced an organizational change. If the participant was included in the survey, the instrument provided instructions for the respondent to think of one organizational change as the remainder of the survey was completed, remembering the feelings they had during that time. Of the 39 survey items, eight items were intended to document various background characteristics and work experiences including gender (female, male, transgender, non-binary/non-conforming), age (text for inputting exact

age), educational attainment (high school graduate, some post-secondary education/college graduate, post graduate or higher), impact due to organizational change (substantial increase in workload, lost position/job, voluntarily left my position/job because of change, still employed in same organization, positive impact, other), and length of time since the organizational change occurred (within the year, 1-3 years ago, more than 3 years ago).

Communication

The survey incorporated the four-item change information scale to measure employee involvement based on communication received regarding the change. The instructions for this section framed these items around communication the respondent received from leadership to meet the purpose of this study. As written, the items assumed information was shared (e.g., "The information I have received about the change was timely."), so the structure of each item was tailored to remove the assumption that information was received and instead directly tied conferral of information to leadership. The work of Wanberg and Banas (2000) led to the creation of the change information scale, and the reliability coefficient (Cronbach's α) in the original study was 0.93. The four items of the change information scale included in the survey for the present study were rated as "yes" or "no" to determine participants' experiences with communication during their identified organizational change. This is the first component of the independent variable (employee involvement), and the provided responses were used to categorize each respondent into groups based on experienced communication. The items included in the survey instrument were:

- I received information from my leadership/management about the change that was
  timely.

- I received information from my leadership/management about the change that was
  useful.

- I received information from my leadership/management that adequately answered
  my questions about the change.

- I received adequate information from my leadership/management about the
  change.

Work Contributions

To measure employee involvement based on employee work contributions, the
survey included items from the Group Work Contribution Scale (GWCS; Joo & Dennen,
2017). The GWCS is a self-assessment used to determine individual work contributions
to group efforts. The self-assessment methodology is preferred, as only the individual
making contributions can accurately assess their level of effort. The reliability
coefficient, $\alpha = .913$, indicates the scale is reliable and includes items with high internal
consistency. The reliability coefficients for each of the four dimensions underscore the
robustness of the internal consistency for the 12-item GWCS scale (Effort $\alpha = .861$,
Initiative $\alpha = .816$, Responsibility $\alpha = .869$, and Backing-Up Behavior $\alpha = .830$). The
instructions for this section framed these items around the work effort respondents
contributed to the change initiative to meet the purpose of this study. The Backing-Up
Behavior subscale is used to gauge how team members collaborated with one another on
a group effort. This subscale was not included in this study, as the primary purpose of the
current study's measure was to ascertain employee work contribution to the change

initiative and not whether or not they worked with others while contributing. The remaining subscale questions were modified to capture individual contributions in the context of a change effort (e.g., "Made the best use of my ability to accomplish a group project" modified to "My abilities were used to facilitate the change effort"). The eight items based on the GWCS scale included in the survey for the present study were rated as "Yes" or "No" to determine participants' experiences with work contributions during their identified organizational change. This is the second component of the independent variable (employee involvement), and the provided responses were used to categorize each respondent into groups based on work contributed. The items included in the survey instrument were:

- My abilities were used to facilitate the change effort.

- I shared responsibility for work on the change effort.

- I was asked to undertake tasks based on my abilities for the change effort.

- I was actively involved in group discussions (e.g., brainstorming and idea sharing) regarding the change initiative.

- I actively expressed my opinion in ways that could improve the outcome of the change initiative.

- I never missed a scheduled meeting about the change initiative when I was invited.

- I provided input in a timely manner whenever it was needed for tasks related to the change initiative.

- I completed all tasks assigned to me for the change effort.

Perception of Organizational Change

To measure employee perception of change, items from Oreg's (2006) change attitude scale were used. The resistance to change scale consists of 18 items measuring three dimensions of an individual's attitude toward change (behavioral, affective, and cognitive). Confirmatory factor analyses confirmed satisfactory fit of the three-factor structure (CFI: .93), and the reliability scores for each dimension of the scale are .77, .78, and .86, respectively. The intent of this measure was to determine employee perception of change, so only the items for the affective and cognitive subscales were included in the survey for the present study. The affective subscale items are intended to measure positive and negative feelings an individual has toward a change, and the cognitive subscale items measure an individual's valuation of worth regarding a change (Oreg, 2006). The behavioral items address intentions to act out against change, which is not the intended purpose of the current study. Each item was rated on a 7-point Likert scale (1=strongly disagree; 7=strongly agree), and the composite score on the included survey items was used to analyze this variable as a scale variable. The following nine items were included in the survey instrument:

- I was afraid of the change.

- I had a bad feeling about the change.

- I was quite excited about the change.

- The change made me upset.

- I was stressed by the change.

- I believed that the change would harm the way things are done in the organization.

- I thought that it's a negative thing that we were going through this change.

- I believed that the change would benefit the organization.

- I believed that I could personally benefit from the change.

Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment was measured with items from Allen and Meyer's (1990) organizational commitment scale. The organizational commitment scale includes 24 items with eight in each of the three subscales (Affective Commitment Scale, Continuance Commitment Scale, and Normative Commitment Scale). The reliability coefficient for each scale is .87, .75, and .79, respectively. The overarching survey instructions requested participants to consider their feelings about an organizational change that occurred in the past, so the included survey items were rephrased to be in past tense. Additionally, the instructions asked the participants to consider each item prompt in reference to how they felt about the organization in which they worked when the organizational change occurred. The survey instrument for the present study included three items loaded highest from each scale, all rated on a 7-point Likert scale (1=strongly disagree; 7=strongly agree). This measure was for the first component of the dependent variable, employee attitudes, and the composite score on these survey items was used to analyze organizational commitment as a scale variable. The items included in the survey instrument were:

- I did not feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization.

- I did not feel "emotionally attached" to my organization.

- My organization had a great deal of personal meaning for me.

- I felt that I had too few options to consider leaving that organization.

- One of the few serious consequences I considered when thinking about leaving my organization was the scarcity of available alternatives.

- At the time, staying with my organization was a matter of necessity as much as desire.

- I thought at the time people move from company to company too often.

- Jumping from organization to organization did not seem at all unethical to me.

- One of the major reasons I continued working for my organization was that I believed loyalty is important and therefore felt a sense of moral obligation to remain.

Turnover Intentions

Turnover intention was measured using the Tekleab et al. (2005) two-item measure based on the work of Cammann et al. (1979), with a reliability of $\alpha = .85$. To meet the purposes of the current study, the phrase "organizational change" was added to the items from the Tekleab et al. (2005) measure to identify potential turnover intentions due to organizational change. As with the measure for organizational commitment, the instructions for this section asked participants to consider their feelings at the time of the organizational change to measure any intention for turnover experienced at the time of the organizational change. The Tekleab et al. (2005) items were rated on a 7-point Likert scale (1=completely disagree; 7=completely agree). This measure made up the second component of the dependent variable, employee attitudes, and the composite score on these survey items was used to analyze turnover intentions as a scale variable. The items included in the survey instrument were:

- At the time, I considered leaving my organization within a year of the organizational change.

- At the time, I planned on continuing my employment with my organization for at least three years following the organizational change.

Operationalization of Variables

Employee Involvement – this independent variable is a nominal variable determined by ratings on the change information scale (Wanberg & Banas, 2000) and on the modified GWCS (Joo & Dennen, 2017) used to segment the sample into four defined groups with respect to the organizational change (1 = respondents with no involvement; 2 = respondents who experienced communication; 3 = respondents that contributed work; 4 = respondents who experienced both communication and work contributions).

Employee Perception of Change – this dependent variable was determined by composite score on the items included from the change attitude scale (Oreg, 2006) and was analyzed as a ratio variable.

Employee Attitudes, Organizational Commitment – this dependent variable was determined by composite score on the items included from the organizational commitment scale (Allen & Meyer, 1990) and was analyzed as a ratio variable.

Employee Attitudes, Turnover Intention – this dependent variable was determined by composite score on the Tekleab et al.'s (2005) two-item measure for turnover intention and was analyzed as a ratio variable.

Data Analysis

Quantitative analyses were conducted to identify group differences in the variables under study using IBM SPSS Statistics software. All hypotheses were intended

to be tested using ANOVA, and the analysis plan for this study initially included three ANOVAs. The independent variable was analyzed as a nominal variable (four groups for comparison), and all dependent variables were analyzed as scale data. ANOVA was intended to be used to test whether the means on the dependent variables were significantly different among the participant groups (Green & Salkind, 2016). Employee involvement (the predictor variable) was quantified as involvement through both communication and work contribution (*Both*), involvement through communication only (*Communication*), involvement through work contribution only (*Work Contribution*), or no involvement (*Neither*). The intent of the analysis for *H1a* and *H1b* was to test whether employee involvement in organizational change resulted in significant differences in perception of organizational change. The intent of the analysis for *H2a, H2b, H2c,* and *H2d* was to test whether employee involvement in organizational change resulted in significant differences in employee attitudes (organizational commitment and turnover intention).

The ANOVA was considered the most appropriate test for this data because each individual case had scores on the independent/grouping variable (employee involvement including four factors) and the dependent variable (employee attitudes including two factors). The assumption of normality was checked visually using the Shapiro-Wilk Test for normality. The assumption of homogeneity of variance was evaluated using the Levene statistic. The assumption of independence was satisfied by the study design, where observations were obtained by random sampling (Bobbitt, 2021). However, after data collection had been completed, it became apparent that the assumptions for ANOVA were not met across all data sets. As a result, the nonparametric Kruskal Wallis H Test –

which functions similarly to ANOVA but can be used for ranked data – was used to test the hypotheses instead. Where significant findings were found, post hoc multiple comparisons were conducted to determine which group(s)' outcomes differed from the others.

Delimitations, Assumptions, and Limitations

The only delimiting factor on the study participants is employment status. Only persons that were currently employed or that have been employed in the past were considered for participation in this study. This factor is justified because persons without relevant work experience cannot meaningfully contribute to a survey on organizational change, as people who have not worked within an organization will never have had organizational change experiences. The use of an ANOVA relied on several assumptions about the survey data that could not be verified until the data was collected, and the use of this test relied on treating the Likert scale data as scale data. First, it was assumed that the dependent variables would be normally distributed across each of the factors of the independent variable. Second, it was assumed that the variances and covariances for the dependent variables were equal across all levels of the factor. Third, it was assumed that the cases represented random samples and that the survey results are independent of each other (Green & Salkind, 2017). All assumptions were evaluated after the data was compiled.

The main limitation of this study is due to the organizational change events having occurred at some point in the past. The survey instrument required participants to rely on their memories of feelings, behaviors, and events that occurred in the past, and memories may not always provide accurate information when recounted (Smollan, 2017).

Additionally, although examples of organizational change were included in the survey instrument, participants still may have had varying ideas of what constitutes as organizational change. This could have impacted how individuals responded to the survey and could have precluded or included participants that should have been included or excluded, respectively, because their individual understanding of the concept interfered with the accuracy of their responses.

Summary

This study included two research questions with eight hypotheses (two null and six alternative). A causal-comparative design was employed to investigate change events that have already occurred, assessing the impact of employee involvement on employee perceptions and attitudes. Participants must have been actively employed or have previously been employed across any industry at the time of the survey to meet the minimum sample size of 180, but the target for the sample size of this survey was set at 360 participants to account for defective surveys and to increase power. An online survey application, SurveyMonkey Audience, was used to recruit and distribute surveys to a random sample of participants and included a consent request and the survey instrument. The survey instrument was composed of demographic items created by the researcher and measurement items compiled by the researcher based on relevant and validated measures.

The delimitations, assumptions, and limitations were assessed and tailored as needed after these identified methods were employed and data for this study was collected for analysis. Each hypothesis was planned to be evaluated using the quantitative statistical method ANOVA, but the nonparametric Kruskal-Wallis H Test was applied instead because ANOVA assumptions were not met. The outcome of this research was

contingent on finding differences across the sample group on the independent variable (employee involvement) to create comparative groups for analyzing the impact of the predictor variable on the outcome variables (employee perception of change and employee attitudes). The researcher hypothesized that employee involvement would increase the likelihood of positive employee perception of the organizational change and would positively impact employee attitudes (higher organizational commitment and lower turnover intentions).

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

Overview

The purpose of this study is to examine individual employee perceptions and attitudes of organizational change as a result of employee involvement in a change. Survey Monkey Audience distributed the survey instrument to participants electronically. The administered survey categorized participants by the type of employee involvement (independent variable) they experienced during their organizational change as measured by perceived leadership communication and employee work contribution. The survey evaluated participant perception of the change (dependent variable) and resulting employee attitudes (dependent variable) due to the change as measured through organizational commitment and turnover intentions.

This section provides the descriptive results for the study participants based on survey respondents. Subsequent sections provide the analysis results based on the survey responses. There are two research questions guiding this study with eight hypotheses being tested.

RQ1: Does perception of organizational change differ for involved employees and employees not involved in the organizational change?

Hypothesis 1_0: There is no observed differences in perception of the organizational change between involved employees and employees not involved in the organizational change (as evidenced through leadership communication and employee work contribution).

Hypothesis 1a: Employees who contributed work to the organizational change will have more positive perceptions of the change.

Hypothesis 1b: Employees who received communication from leadership about the organizational change will have more positive perceptions of the change.

RQ2: Do perceived employee attitudes differ for involved employees and employees not involved in the organizational change?

Hypothesis 2_0: There is no observed differences in perceived employee attitudes between involved employees and employees not involved in the organizational change.

Hypothesis 2a: Employees who contributed work to the organizational change will have higher organizational commitment.

Hypothesis 2b: Employees who received communication from leadership about the organizational change will have higher organizational commitment.

Hypothesis 2c: Employees who contributed work to the organizational change will have lower turnover intentions.

Hypothesis 2d: Employees who received communication from leadership about the organizational change will have lower turnover intentions.

Descriptive Results

The *a priori* power analysis indicated a minimum of 180 participants (45 participants per group) were needed to for this study, so 360 responses was the target to account for defective surveys and to increase power. A total of 433 people responded to the survey, but 89 respondents were disqualified due to the screening question that eliminated people who have never experienced an organizational change. Therefore, 344 participants made up the sample size for this study.

Independent Variable Distribution

The independent variable (IV), employee involvement, was comprised of two components measured using twelve survey items. The survey included the four-item change information scale (Wanberg & Banas, 2000) to assess participants' perception of leadership communication during their identified organizational change. The survey also included eight items from the Group Work Contribution Scale (GWCS; Joo & Dennen, 2017) to provide a self-report of participants' work contributions during the organizational change. Participant responses to these items categorized each respondent into one of four groups, where people experienced *Neither* leadership communication nor work contribution, only leadership *Communication*, only *Work Contribution*, or *Both* leadership communication and work contribution. *Both* represented the largest category having 143 (41.57%) of the total respondents, followed by *Neither* having 95 (27.62%) respondents, then *Work Contribution* having 58 (16.86%) respondents, and *Communication* having 48 (13.95%) respondents (see Table 1).

Table 1

Sample Distribution Across Employee Involvement (IV)

Type of Involvement	N	%
Neither	95	27.62
Communication (only)	48	13.95
Work Contribution (only)	58	16.86
Both	143	41.57
Total (*N*)	344	100

Participant Demographics

Eight of the 39 survey items targeted various background characteristics and work experiences of participants. Table 2 displays the data on all characteristics by type of employee involvement (*Neither*, *Communication*, *Work Contribution*, *Both*). The majority of participants identified as either female or male with a fairly even distribution

(47.4% female, 52% male), with most participants falling between the ages of 25-64

(78.1%). Most participants had some post-graduate/college (50.3%) or postgraduate or

higher (37.2%) for their education background. Most participants had experienced their

organizational change within the last three years (70.1%), and most experienced a

negative impact due to the change (60.2%).

Table 2

Sociodemographic Characteristics of Survey Participants by Employee Involvement

Characteristic	Neither		Comm.		Work Con.		Both		Total	
	n	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*
Gender										
Female	49	51.6	22	45.8	31	53.4	61	42.7	163	47.4
Male	46	48.4	26	54.2	27	46.6	80	55.9	179	52
Transgender	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.7	1	0.3
Non-binary/non-conforming	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.7	1	0.3
Age										
18-24	6	6.3	12	25.0	5	8.6	10	7.0	33	9.6
25-34	14	14.7	11	22.9	13	22.4	37	25.9	75	21.8
35-44	19	20	5	10.4	9	15.5	29	20.3	62	18
45-54	17	17.9	7	14.6	19	32.8	27	18.9	70	20.3
55-64	26	27.4	4	8.3	9	15.5	23	16.1	62	18
65 +	13	13.7	9	18.8	4	6.9	16	11.2	42	12.2
Education										
High school graduate	6	6.3	6	12.5	8	13.8	22	15.4	42	12.2
Some post-secondary/college graduate	57	60.0	31	64.6	26	44.8	59	41.3	173	50.3
Postgraduate or higher	31	32.6	11	22.9	24	41.4	62	43.4	128	37.2
No response	1	1.1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.3
Time since change										
More than three years	36	37.9	17	35.4	21	36.2	29	20.3	103	29.9
One to three years	32	33.7	22	45.8	20	34.5	57	39.9	131	38.1
Less than one year	27	28.4	9	18.8	17	29.3	57	39.9	110	32
Impact of change[a]										
Negative	76	80	21	43.8	42	72.4	68	47.6	207	60.2
Non-Negative	19	20	27	56.3	16	27.6	75	52.4	137	39.8
Sample Total	95	27.6	48	14.0	58	16.9	143	41.6	344	100

Note. $N = 344$ (*n* for each condition identified by Sample Total).

ᵃ Impact of change: Negative impact includes the following survey responses: substantial increase in workload, lost my position/job, voluntarily left position. Non-negative impact includes the following survey responses: pay raise, improved work conditions, new position/job.

Study Findings

Perception of Change (*RQ1*)

A one-way ANOVA was planned to examine whether there was a difference in perception of organizational change between involved employees and employees not involved in the organizational change (*RQ1*). Nine survey items from Oreg's (2006) change attitude scale measured employee perception of change on a 7-point Likert scale, allowing analysis of this dependent variable (DV) as a scale variable. Higher aggregate scores on these items indicate more negative perceptions of change. *Neither, Communication, Work Contribution,* or *Both* identify the types of employee involvement.

ANOVA is a common method used to analyze differences of averages across two or more groups, and this research study included four groups (Tomczak, 2021). Use of ANOVA requires satisfaction of several assumptions including a normal distribution in each group, equal variance, and independent samples (Green & Salkind, 2017). The normality of the distribution was checked using the Shapiro-Wilk test, and the results displayed in Table 3 indicate the assumption of normality was not met ($p = .005$).

Table 3

Test of Normality for Perception (DV)

	Statistic	**df**	***p*-Value**
Perception	.988	344	.005

Since the data did not meet the first assumption of ANOVA, a nonparametric test was selected to test the hypotheses for *RQ1*. The Kruskal-Wallis H test does not require a

normal distribution and can be used when the assumptions of ANOVA are violated (Tomczak, 2021). Additionally, the assumptions of the Kruskal-Wallis H test have been met with this data set. The dependent variable is a scale variable, the IV includes four random categorical groups, and there is independence of observations (each participant belongs to only one IV group; Tomczak, 2021). The fourth assumption determines how the results of the Kruskal-Wallis H test should be interpreted based on the shape of the distribution of scores in each group (Tomczak, 2021). Figure 1 presents the distributions for each test group on the DV perception. The shapes are not similar, so the Kruskal-Wallis H test was used to compare mean ranks (similar shapes allow for comparison of medians; Tomczak, 2021).

Figure 1

Distribution of Perception Ratings by Employee Involvement
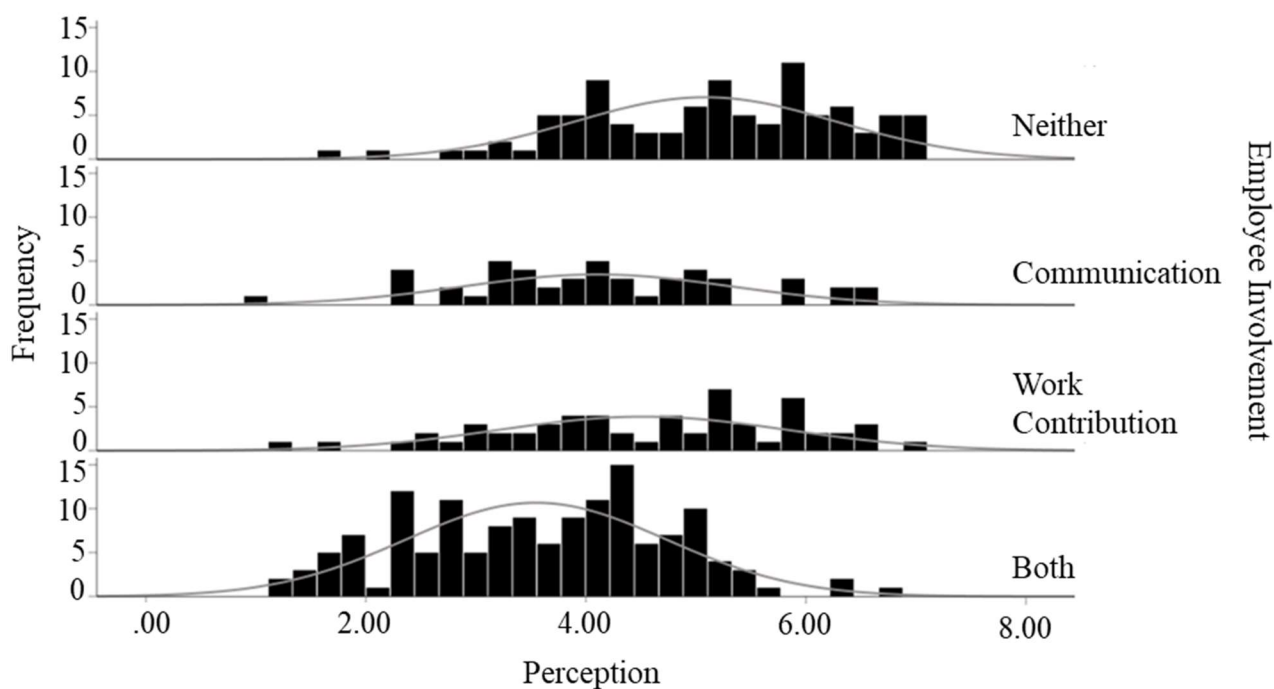
A Kruskal-Wallis H test showed that there is a statistically significant differences in the mean ranks of perception between involved employees and employees not involved

in the organizational change. There were significant differences in ratings of perception across the different types of employee involvement, $\chi^2(3) = 74.290$, $p < .001$. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected. The test results are displayed in Table 4 and Table 5.

Table 4

Test Statistics for Perception (DV)

	Perception
Kruskal-Wallis H	74.290
df	3
Asymp. Sig.	<.001

Note: The grouping variable is Employee Involvement (*Neither*, *Communication*, *Work Contribution*, *Both*)

Table 5

Mean Ranks for Perception (DV)

Employee Involvement	N	Mean Rank
Neither	95	235.21
Communication	48	162.21
Work Contribution	58	195.71
Both	143	124.88

Dunn's pairwise multiple comparison procedure was carried out to determine which groups differed from one another since the Kruskal-Wallis H test only indicates the presence of a significant difference between groups. The results are included in Table 6. The findings indicate the *Neither* group (235.21 mean rank score) had significantly more negative perceptions of change ($p < .001$) than the *Both* group (124.88 mean rank score). The *Work Contribution* group (195.71 mean rank score) had significantly more negative perceptions of change ($p < .001$) than the *Both* group. Finally, the *Neither* group had significantly more negative perceptions of change ($p < .001$) than the *Communication*

group (162.21 mean rank score). These findings support $H1_a$ and $H1_b$. There was no

evidence of a significant difference between the other pairs.

Table 6

Dunn's Pairwise Tests for Perception (DV) Across Employee Involvement (IV)

Sample 1-Sample 2	Test Statistic	Std. Error	Std. Test Statistic	Sig.	Adj. Sig.[a]
Both-Communication	37.324	16.582	2.251	.024	.146
Both-Work Contribution	70.822	15.475	4.577	<.001	.000
Both-Neither	110.321	13.157	8.385	.000	.000
Communication-Work Contribution	-33.499	19.396	-1.727	.084	.505
Communication-Neither	72.997	17.603	4.147	<.001	.000
Work Contribution-Neither	39.498	16.564	2.385	.017	.103

Note: Asymptotic significances (2-sided tests) are displayed. The significance level is .050.
[a] SPSS provides post hoc significance values adjusted using the Bonferroni correction for multiple tests (multiplies each Dunn's *p*-value by the total number of tests being carried out; IBM SPSS Statistics, 2020).

Employee Attitudes (*RQ2*)

A one-way ANOVA was planned to examine whether there was a difference in

employee attitudes between involved employees and employees not involved in the

organizational change (*RQ2*). There were two factors of employee attitudes examined.

Organizational commitment was measured with nine items from Allen and Meyer's

(1990) organizational commitment scale. Use of a 7-point Likert scale enabled analysis

of this DV as a scale variable. Higher aggregate scores on these items indicate higher

organizational commitment. *Neither, Communication, Work Contribution,* or *Both*

identify the types of employee involvement. The Tekleab et al. (2005) two-item turnover

intention scale based on the work of Cammann et al. (1979) measured turnover intention.

Use of a 7-point Likert scale enabled analysis of this DV as a scale variable. Higher

aggregate scores on these items indicate a higher likelihood of actual turnover. Normality

of the distribution was checked using the Shapiro-Wilk test. As presented in Table 7, the

assumption of normality was met for the DV organizational commitment (p = .082) and was not met for the DV turnover intention (p = <.001).

Table 7

Test of Normality for Commitment (DV) and Turnover Intention (DV)

	Statistic	df	*p*-Value
Commitment	.993	344	.082
Turnover Intention	.956	344	<.001

The second assumption of ANOVA, homogeneity of variance, was tested for the organizational commitment DV and was not met based on the Levene statistic *p* = .050 (see Table 8).

Table 8

Test of Homogeneity of Variances for Commitment (DV)

	Levene Statistic	df	df2	*p*-Value
Commitment	2.635	3	340	.050

The Kruskal-Wallis H test was used since neither data set met the assumptions of ANOVA, and the first three assumptions of the Kruskal-Wallis H test were met with both data sets. As displayed in Figure 2 and Figure 3, respectively, the shapes for the distributions of each test group on the DV organizational commitment and on the DV turnover intent are not similar, so the Kruskal-Wallis H test was used to compare mean ranks (Tomczak, 2021).

Figure 2

Distribution of Organizational Commitment Ratings by Employee Involvement
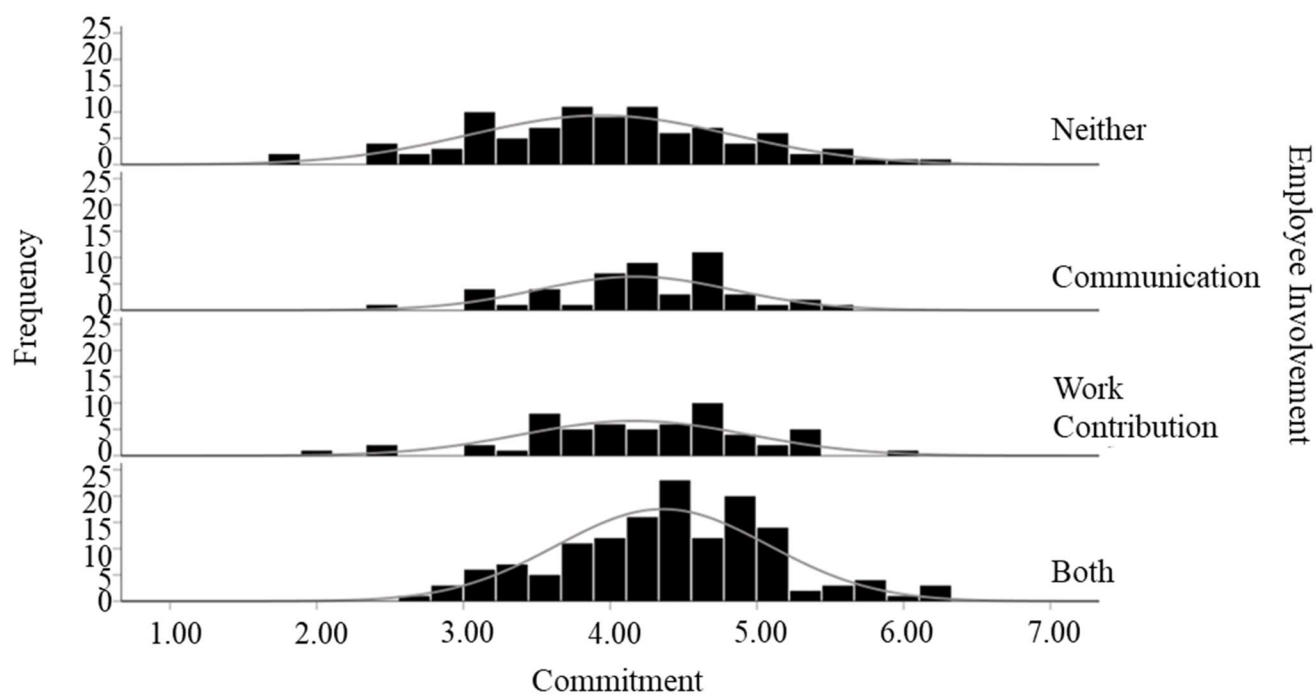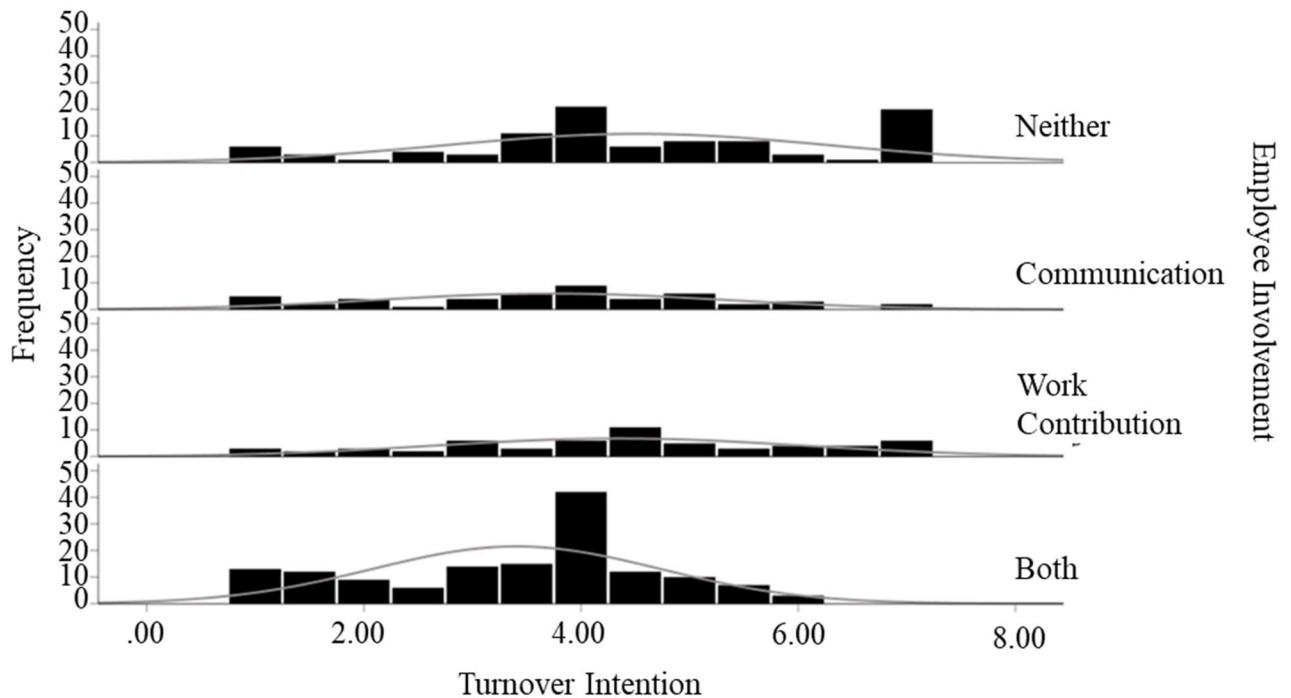
Figure 3

Distribution of Turnover Intention Ratings by Employee Involvement

A Kruskal-Wallis H test showed that there were significant differences in the mean ranks of perceived employee attitudes between involved employees and employees not involved in the organizational change. There were significant differences in ratings of organizational commitment across the different types of employee involvement, $\chi^2(3) =$ 15.154, $p = .002$. There were also significant differences in ratings of turnover intention across the different types of employee involvement, $\chi^2(3) = 28.433$, $p < .001$. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected. The test statistics and mean ranks for both DVs across employee involvement types are displayed in Tables 9 and 10.

Table 9

Test Statistics for Commitment (DV) and Turnover Intention (DV)

	Commitment	Turnover Intention
Kruskal-Wallis H	15.154	28.433
df	3	3
Asymp. Sig.	.002	<.001

Note: The grouping variable is Employee Involvement (*Neither*, C*ommunication*, *Work Contribution*, *Both*)

Table 10

Mean Ranks for Employee Attitudes

	Employee Involvement	N	Mean Rank
Commitment	Neither	95	142.35
	Communication	48	170.17
	Work Contribution	58	172.10
	Both	143	193.48
Turnover Intention	Neither	95	205.43
	Communication	48	162.22
	Work Contribution	58	199.94
	Both	143	142.95

Dunn's pairwise multiple comparison procedure was carried out to determine where the significance exists since the Kruskal-Wallis H test only indicates the presence of a significant difference between groups. The results for the DV organizational commitment are included in Table 11. The *Both* group (193.48 mean rank score) reported significantly higher organizational commitment ($p = .001$) than the *Neither* group (142.35 mean rank score). These findings support $H2_a$ and $H2_b$. There was no evidence of a significant difference between the other pairs.

Table 11

Dunn's Pairwise Tests for Organizational Commitment (DV) Across Employee

Involvement (IV)

Sample 1-Sample 2	Test Statistic	Std. Error	Std. Test Statistic	Sig.	Adj. Sig.[a]
Neither-Communication	-27.819	17.593	-1.581	.114	.683
Neither-Work Contribution	-29.756	16.554	-1.797	.072	.434
Neither-Both	-51.128	13.149	-3.888	<.001	.001
Communication-Work Contribution	-1.937	19.385	-.100	.920	1.000
Communication-Both	-23.309	16.572	-1.407	.160	.957
Work Contribution-Both	-21.372	15.465	-1.382	.167	1.000

Note: Asymptotic significances (2-sided tests) are displayed. The significance level is .050.
[a] SPSS provides post hoc significance values adjusted using the Bonferroni correction for multiple tests (multiplies each Dunn's *p*-value by the total number of tests being carried out; IBM SPSS Statistics, 2020).

The results for the DV turnover intention are included in Table 12. The

Communication group (162.22 mean rank score) reported significantly higher turnover

intention (p = .001) than the *Both* group (142.95 mean rank score). The *Neither* group

(205.43 mean rank score) reported significantly higher turnover intention (p < .001) than

the *Both* group. These findings support *H2$_c$* and *H2$_d$*. There was no evidence of a

significant difference between the other pairs.

Table 12

Dunn's Pairwise Tests for Turnover Intention (DV) Across Employee Involvement (IV)

Sample 1-Sample 2	Test Statistic	Std. Error	Std. Test Statistic	Sig.	Adj. Sig.[a]
Both-Communication	19.271	16.454	1.171	.241	1.000
Both-Work Contribution	56.992	15.355	3.712	<.001	.001
Both-Neither	62.479	13.055	4.786	<.001	.000
Communication-Work Contribution	-37.721	19.246	-1.960	.050	.300
Communication-Neither	43.208	17.467	2.474	.013	.080
Work Contribution-Neither	5.487	16.436	.334	.739	1.000

Note: Asymptotic significances (2-sided tests) are displayed. The significance level is .050.

[a] SPSS provides post hoc significance values adjusted using the Bonferroni correction for multiple tests (multiplies each Dunn's *p*-value by the total number of tests being carried out; IBM SPSS Statistics, 2020).

Summary

The nonparametric Kruskal-Wallis H test was used to evaluate the relationship between perception of change and employee involvement in change (*RQ1*) and employee attitudes and employee involvement in change (*RQ2*). The results indicated support for rejecting both null hypotheses, where there were significant differences for each DV across the IV groups. Participants that experienced neither leadership communication nor work contribution had a significantly more negative perception of the organizational change than participants that experienced both types of employee involvement as well as participants that only experienced leadership communication. Participants that only experienced work contribution had a significantly more negative perception of organizational change than participants that experienced both types of employee involvement. Participants that experienced both leadership communication and work contribution had significantly higher organizational commitment and had significantly lower turnover intention than those that experienced neither type of employee involvement. Additionally, those that experienced both types of employee involvement had significantly lower turnover intention than those that experienced neither type of employee involvement.

In the next section, the implications of these findings is discussed along with a review of this study's limitations and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

Overview

This study examined individual employee experiences of organizational change based on employee involvement in a change initiative as evidenced through leadership communication and employee work contribution. This section summarizes the findings of this study, identifying significant results across participant groups regarding employees' perception of and attitudes toward organizational change. The discussion section relates the findings of the study to the theoretical foundations upon which this study was developed. The implications for practitioners and the academic community are reviewed followed by limitations and future research opportunities based on this research.

Summary of Findings

This study found statistically significant results supporting hypotheses for both research questions on the basis of respondent involvement in an organizational change (*Neither*, *Communication*, *Work Contribution*, or *Both*). The first research question examined perception of organizational change, and the hypotheses suggested respondents involved in the change would have more positive perceptions about the change. The null hypothesis was rejected because there were significant differences found among the involvement groups. Participants experiencing both leadership communication and work contribution (*Both*) had significantly more positive perceptions of the organizational change than participants experiencing neither form of involvement (*Neither*) as well as than participants experiencing only work contribution (*Work Contribution*). Additionally, participants experiencing only leadership communication (*Communication*) had

significantly more positive perceptions of the organizational change than participants experiencing neither form of involvement (*Neither*).

The second research question examined how involvement impacted employee attitudes in the context of organizational change. The hypotheses suggested participants involved in the organizational change would have more positive employee attitudes (i.e., higher organizational commitment and lower turnover intention). The null hypothesis was rejected because there were significant differences found among the involvement groups. Participants experiencing both leadership communication and work contribution (*Both*) had significantly higher levels of organizational commitment than participants experiencing neither form of involvement (*Neither*). Additionally, participants experiencing both leadership communication and work contribution (*Both*) had significantly lower turnover intentions than participants experiencing only leadership communication (*Communication*) and participants experiencing neither form of involvement (*Neither*).

Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study generally support current theories of change management that emphasize the importance of communication throughout the organizational change process (Galli, 2018; Kotter, 2011). The findings extend upon this research by adding empirical evidence supporting how perception and employee attitudes were impacted due to specific conditions of employee involvement. Additionally, the findings indicate employee involvement through tangible work contributions is another factor that influences overall perceptions of an organizational change and employee attitudes about the organization in which the change occurs, a concept that was theorized

in the literature but previously lacked empirical support (Albrecht et al., 2020; Creasey & Hiatt, 2008).

Perception and Organizational Change

Findings based on the first research question indicate that all conditions of involvement (*Communication*, *Work Contribution*, and *Both*) resulted in a significantly more positive perception of the change than no employee involvement in the change (*Neither*). The positive outcomes that result from including respondents in instances of organizational change indicate that leadership in the associated organizations are fulfilling the shepherding role identified in the Biblical foundations of this study. Scripture distinguishes the supporting role of leadership as a moral obligation that requires leaders to provide organizational members adequate guidance and support in the context of change. Opportunities for involvement through communication and work contributions allow employees to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to adapt to the changing conditions caused by the organizational change (Plotkin, 2008). These coping skills allow employees to mitigate the ambiguity inherent in change (Hay et al., 2021) thereby improving overall receptivity to and perception of change (Ahman & Huvila, 2019; Borges & Quintas, 2020).

The positive impact of communication throughout change implementation is well documented in the literature, and the findings from this study further support this concept. Participants that did not experience either form of involvement (*Neither*) had significantly more negative perceptions of change than participants that received communication about and contributed work to the change (*Both*) as well as participants that only received communication about the change (*Communication*). Interestingly,

participants that only contributed work (*Work Contribution*) had significantly more negative perceptions of change than those that experienced both forms of involvement (*Both*). This finding indicates that withholding information about a change initiative has direct and negative impacts on employee outcomes despite employee involvement through work contribution.

This finding could be interpreted as aligning with the social exchange theory, where participants experienced a lack of equity between their contributions and the results of their work because those results remained unknown to them due to the lack of communication about the change. Further, research indicates cynicism is often used as a coping strategy for this type of stress (Edu-Valsania et al., 2022), which may have led to more negative perceptions of the change for these participants. This finding is also in alignment with the job demands-resources theory. Involved employees are given the opportunity to develop work-related resources (Galli, 2018), are better prepared to fulfill new or altered roles following a change, and generally have more positive attitudes about the change (Rafferty & Jimmieson, 2017). Job demands like role ambiguity can have a direct impact on employees, possibly leading to negative outcomes (Albrecht et al., 2020) and resistance to and non-acceptance of change (Dubrin & Ireland, 1993).

Employee Attitudes and Organizational Change

This study hypothesized that employee involvement in an identified change initiative would result in increased organizational commitment and decreased turnover intentions. The findings indicate that inclusion in the change initiative using both communication and work contribution resulted in increased organizational commitment and decreased turnover intentions. Participants that received communication about and

contributed work to the change (*Both*) had significantly more positive employee attitudes (increased organizational commitment and decreased turnover intentions) than participants who experienced no involvement with the change (*Neither*). Further, the findings indicate the inclusionary tactic of work contribution in tandem with communication (*Both*) resulted in significantly lower turnover intentions compared with participants only receiving communication about the change initiative (*Communication*).

The findings on increased organizational commitment align with the social exchange theory, which was first identified by Homans (1958). Translating this theory to the organizational environment, employees will measure the strength of their "relationship" with an organization based on the benefits of what they receive back from the organization. Furthermore, the findings support the Biblical foundations of this study in that the efforts of organizational leadership to include employees suggest a reciprocal relationship that employees value and respond to with unselfish efforts of their own. Within this study, participants likely saw value in the resources provided through leadership communication and the opportunity to contribute work to a change initiative, thereby increasing the perceived value of the organization and the commitment felt toward that organization.

The theory of work adjustment (Rounds et al., 1987) explains how a reciprocal relationship is formed through work activities due to employees investing mental, emotional, and behavioral energy to achieve organizational goals. Involved employees become vested through these efforts within an organization and with the success of organizational interests. In the change context, the utilitarian consequentialist approach (Bentham, 1789; Mill, 1861) suggests that employee outcomes are related to

consequences of action. Participants that experienced inclusionary actions (communication and work contribution) had more positive employee outcomes (increased organizational commitment and decreased turnover intentions) and participants who perceived lack of support from an organization due to receiving neither form of involvement in the organizational change were less committed and more likely to withdraw. These theories combined identify the importance of the reciprocal relationship that is formed between employees and the organization, specifically based on the experiences of employee investment (mental, emotional, and behavioral efforts) and organizational returns (resources to cope with change). The study findings are in alignment with this given that involved participants had significantly more positive perceptions and employee attitudes regarding the change.

Implications

Current organizational change literature provides guidance to improve change outcomes, yet many initiatives fail because organizational members are generally neglected throughout initiation and implementation of change (Angtyan, 2019; Sirkin et al., 2011). Compounding the common occurrence of failure is the pervasive focus on organizational-level concerns rather than on individual change experiences throughout current research (Ozawa, 2020). The findings of this study emphasize the critical role change leaders play in influencing change outcomes due to their direct influence on individual organizational members. This support is exhibited through inclusionary methods such as communication and opportunities for work contribution and improves the reciprocity between employees and the organization to improve employee perceptions and attitudes. Employees are able to recognize the value of their relationship with an

organization due to the resources provided that enable successful transition from a current state to a future state via an implemented change initiative.

The findings support current best practices to have open and frequent communication regarding organizational change and further validate these practices by documenting their impact based on individual change experiences rather than organizational-level research. The findings of this study also provide empirical support for a new method of employee inclusion in organizational change initiatives, which is provision of opportunities for work contribution to the change. Employees that both received communication about the change and that were allowed to contribute work to a change were significantly less likely to turnover. The additional mechanism of employee involvement, work contribution, appears to have created a more tangible role in the organizational change for participants, perhaps leading to more investment in the organization and more reason to not want to leave that role. Interestingly, there were more instances of significance when participants experienced communication and work contribution jointly (i.e., significantly more positive perceptions and employee attitudes) compared to when participants experienced only communication or only work contribution, advocating for the use of both methods for enhanced change outcomes. Conversely, the use of work contribution for making a positive impact shows limited increases in positive outcomes when used alone.

Participants that only experienced work contribution without receiving communication about the organizational change had significantly more negative perceptions of change than participants that both contributed work and received communication from leadership about the change. Communication is a key component of

the best practices presented across current organizational change models, so this finding is not surprising. If an employee is asked to contribute work for an unknown end, then this would likely exasperate an already unsettling situation inherent in the change context. Employees need access to change-related knowledge to counter resistance to change (Leith & Yerbury, 2019). Without this information, employees are susceptible to role ambiguity and increased levels of workplace stress, leading to negative employee outcomes and eventual turnover (Edu-Valsania et al., 2022).

The responsibility falls to organizational leadership to ensure that organizational members are appropriately included in change initiatives. Change leaders have previously been identified as significant influencers in employee attitudes (Nielsen et al., 2021). Scripture also contains multiple accounts describing the vital role of leadership that should be highlighted in the organizational change context due to the vulnerability of organizational members (the shepherd's flock). People will react to organizational change through feelings and behaviors, and leadership should be equipped to provide appropriate support as needed. A major mitigating factor is including organizational members in the change initiative to alleviate the negative fallout change generally incites. Although communication alone yields some positive outcomes, the findings from this study indicate both communication and opportunities for work contribution will lead to significantly more positive outcomes then opting for sole implementation of one method over the other. Work contribution provides a tangible link to an organizational change beyond the conceptual understanding gained through communication alone. Applied together, organizational members are provided much desired information regarding the change and invest in the success of that change through work contributions, thereby

increasing the likelihood of positive outcomes due to more positive perceptions of change, increased organizational commitment, and decreased turnover intentions.

Limitations

The current research examined individual experiences of employee involvement in the change context to understand the impact of involvement on perception of change and employee attitudes. The research study was contingent on respondents falling into four distinct groups (*Both*, *Communication*, *Work Contribution*, *Neither*) while still meeting minimum sample size requirements. The *a priori* power analysis indicated a minimum of 45 participants per group were needed for this study. The sample groups classified as *Communication* and *Work Contribution* included only 48 and 58 participants, respectively, whereas the other two groups included 95 (*Neither*) and 143 (*Both*) respondents. These sample sizes are supported by the power analysis, but larger sample sizes, particularly in the *Communication* and *Work Contribution* groups, would have enabled more generalizable samples of respondents within these employee involvement groups.

The survey was administered through the SurveyMonkey Audience online application, which has millions of volunteer survey participants from which the application recruits. However, using only one platform to recruit survey participants may have limited the sample by unintentionally excluding qualified participants because they are not members of this online platform. The survey used in this study relies on participant memories of organizational change initiatives. Recounting individual actions and feelings of an organizational change that occurred in the past introduces risk of memory bias and responses not reflecting exact details of what occurred at the time of the

change. Additionally, participants may be holding on to negative feelings about a change due to adverse consequences of an implemented change. The study was limited to only one question about consequences of the change initiative, so there was no true mitigation strategy to account for instances of extreme ratings due to negative outcomes directly related to a change initiative.

The study instructs participants to consider one organizational change while responding to all survey items. These instructions were placed throughout the survey in an attempt to keep participants focused on the same change event. However, there is no way to ensure participants did not consider organizational change as a general concept rather than focusing on one particular event they experienced. The study assumes participants adhered to the instructions and responded to each survey item based on one experienced organizational initiative.

Recommendations for Future Research

The findings of this study provide empirical support for the benefits of employee involvement through work contributions in the change context. Future research could practically apply this method along with current best practices (i.e., communication and information sharing) with the aim to document outcomes of change events using this new technique. Real world data could reveal increased success of change initiatives that may correlate with the use of work contributions intended to enhance employee involvement. Post-change data collection could focus on the use of work contribution to assess how employees perceived this method of inclusion and any perceptible impact on their change experiences to potentially infer causality to any correlations found.

A primary foundation of this study is the job demands-resources theory, and the findings of this study are in alignment with the assertions of this model. A major component not considered here is the theory of burnout. The ideal experience in the organizational context is when an employee is challenged in their work role and has the capacity to face those workplace challenges (Baugh et al., 2020). However, workplace stressors, like those experienced through the implementation of an organizational change, may elicit exhaustion, fatigue, and frustration, which is referred to as employee burnout (Freudenberger, 1974). A common component of burnout is negative and cynical attitudes in the workplace (Maslach & Jackson, 1981) caused by the imbalance of demands and resources experienced by employees (Edu-Valsania et al., 2022).

The change context is wrought with this imbalance, where employees are bombarded with role ambiguity, overload, and conflict (Chênevert et al., 2019). Future research should consider burnout as an influential factor on employee experiences of change as well as the impact of burnout as employees become more involved in implementing change initiatives. Burnout could be assessed using an instrument such as the Maslach Burnout Inventory (Maslach & Jackson, 1981) to uncover any significance when implementing change management strategies. Additionally, this study examined individual employee experiences through organizational change but was limited in its approach to account for extreme consequences of change initiatives. Future research should enable analyses to better assess and mitigate the influence of these extreme cases to ensure validity of findings.

Summary

The present study supports the current best practices in organizational change management, confirming the importance of communication through change initiatives. Current organizational change literature advocates communication as one of the best practices for organizational change. This study indicates that participants experiencing communication about an organizational change had significantly more positive perceptions of change than participants with no involvement in a change. However, participants experiencing only work contribution had significantly more negative perceptions of change than participants experiencing both communication and work contributions. When considering employee attitude outcomes, the combination of communication and work contribution resulted in significantly decreased turnover intentions compared with experiences of communication about an organizational change alone.

The findings of this study imply the current organizational change models could be improved by considering inclusion factors beyond communication. Tangible work contributions were shown to improve organizational outcomes including employee perception of change and attitudes regarding change (organizational commitment and turnover intention). The findings convey significance when both communication and work contributions were experienced, but do not reflect many instances where communication alone resulted in significant differences in perception of change or employee attitudes. The findings of this study indicate incorporating methods for tangible work contributions is a viable technique for improving organizational outcomes in the context of change, which is something not currently considered across organizational change management models.

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APPENDIX A: DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT

Title of the Project: *The Organizational Change Experience*

Principal Investigator: Adrienne Read, Liberty University

Organizational change generally disrupts familiar routines and business processes often with the intent of improving organizational effectiveness. Examples may include:

- Change to how you and other employees are aligned within the organization (e.g., a structural realignment, addition of a new service line requiring creation of a new unit).
- Significant shift to the core identity of the organization changing the environment within which employees engage and communicate (e.g., culture change caused by new priorities identified by leadership or required due to external factors).
- Implementation of new technologies or business processes that significantly impact normal organizational practices, interaction with co-workers, or operational activities of multiple units within the organization (e.g., implementing an automated scale system for inventory replenishment previously done manually, change from a legacy financial management software solution to a new system).

1. Considering these examples, have you ever experienced organizational change in your current place of employment or with a previous employer?

    a. I have experienced an organizational change.

    b. I have never experienced an organizational change.

As you respond to the remaining survey questions, think of _one_ organizational change you have experienced. Consider how you felt _prior to_, _during_, and _following_ that _one_ organizational change.

2. How were you impacted by the organizational change?

    a. Substantial increase in workload

    b. Lost my position/job

    c. Voluntarily left my position/job because of the change

    d. Still employed in the same organization

    e. Positive impact (e.g., pay raise, promotion, new position/job)

    f. Other (please specify)

3. How long ago did the organizational change occur?

    a. Within the past year

    b. 1-3 years ago

c. More than 3 years ago

Consider communication you received about the change from your manager or other personnel in leadership. Respond "Yes" or "No" to the next items.

4. I received information from my leadership/management about the change that was timely.

    a. Yes

    b. No

5. I received information from my leadership/management about the change that was useful.

    a. Yes

    b. No

6. I received information from my leadership/management that adequately answered my questions about the change.

    a. Yes

    b. No

7. I received adequate information from my leadership/management about the change.

    a. Yes

    b. No

Consider any work you completed to support the change effort. Respond "Yes" or "No" to the next items.

8. My abilities were used to facilitate the change effort.

    a. Yes

    b. No

9. I shared responsibility for work on the change effort.

    a. Yes

    b. No

10. I was asked to undertake tasks based on my abilities for the change effort.

    a. Yes

    b. No

11. I was actively involved in group discussions (e.g., brainstorming and idea sharing) regarding the change initiative.

    a. Yes

    b. No

12. I was able to actively express my opinion in ways that could improve the outcome of the change initiative.

    a. Yes

    b. No

13. I participated in scheduled meeting(s) about the change initiative.

    a. Yes

    b. No

14. I provided input in a timely manner whenever it was needed for tasks related to the change initiative.

    a. Yes

    b. No

15. I completed all tasks assigned to me for the change effort.

    a. Yes

    b. No

Consider your feelings about the change and your expectations for the potential results of the change, especially thinking about how you felt _prior_ to the change being implemented. Rate the next items using the following 7-point scale.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Completely disagree	Mostly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Somewhat agree	Mostly agree	Completely agree

16. I was afraid of the change.

17. I had a bad feeling about the change.

18. I was quite excited about the change.

19. The change made me upset.

20. I was stressed by the change.

21. I believed that the change would harm the way things are done in the organization.

22. I thought that it's a negative thing that we were going through this change.

23. I believed that the change would benefit the organization.

24. I believed that I could personally benefit from the change.

Consider your feelings about the organization, especially thinking about how you felt _just prior_ to the change being implemented and _shortly after_ its implementation. Rate the next items using the following 7-point scale.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Completely disagree	Mostly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Somewhat agree	Mostly agree	Completely agree

25. I did not feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization.

26. I did not feel "emotionally attached" to my organization.

27. My organization had a great deal of personal meaning for me.

28. I felt that I had too few options to consider leaving that organization.

29. One of the few serious consequences I considered when thinking about leaving my organization was the scarcity of available alternatives.

30. At the time, staying with my organization was a matter of necessity as much as desire.

31. I thought at the time people move from company to company too often.

32. Jumping from organization to organization did not seem at all unethical to me.

33. One of the major reasons I continued working for my organization was that I believed loyalty is important and therefore felt a sense of moral obligation to remain.

Consider your feelings _after_ the organizational change occurred (or was attempted). Rate the next items using the following 7-point scale.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Completely disagree	Mostly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Somewhat agree	Mostly agree	Completely agree

34. At the time, I considered leaving my organization within a year of the organizational change.

35. At the time, I planned on continuing my employment with my organization for at least three years following the organizational change.

36. What is your age?

37. What is your gender?

a. Female

b. Male

c. Transgender

d. Non-binary/non-conforming

e. Other

38. What is your current education level?

a. High school graduate

b. Some post-secondary education/college graduate

c. Postgraduate or higher

APPENDIX B: DISCLOSURE STATEMENT AND CONSENT

Consent

Title of the Project: A Quantitative Study Examining Individual Employee Experiences of Change Initiatives and the Impact on Employee Perceptions of Change and Attitudes
Principal Investigator: Adrienne Read, Doctoral Candidate, Liberty University

Invitation to be Part of a Research Study

You are invited to participate in a research study. To participate, you must be 18 years of age or older, be currently employed or employed in the past, and have experienced an organizational change. Taking part in this research project is voluntary.

Please take time to read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to take part in this research.

What is the study about and why is it being done?

The purpose of the study is to examine individual employee experiences dealing with organizational change. Organizational change includes many types of activities and generally leads to modifications on normally routine processes (introduction of new technology, changes to policy or strategic objectives, etc.) or alterations in organizational structure (new leadership, new service lines, new departments, etc.).

What will happen if you take part in this study?

If you agree to be in this study, I will ask you to do the following things:
1. Complete a survey related to your experiences with organizational change that will take approximately 35 minutes to complete. The survey items are taken from or based on published measurement instruments. The survey is completed online through SurveyMonkey Audience.

How could you or others benefit from this study?

Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from taking part in this study.

Benefits to society include identifying gaps in current organizational change models to improve recommended change management practices. Given the high rate of organizational change failure, improvement to organizational change strategies will benefit organizational effectiveness as well as improve employee experiences across all industries and job types.

What risks might you experience from being in this study?

The risk involved in this study are minimal which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life.

How will personal information be protected?

The records of this study will be kept private. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records.

- Participant responses will be anonymous, so names and specific, personal, identifiable information is not requested as part of the survey. When SurveyMonkey delivers the survey results to the researcher, it includes only the raw data with all identifying information removed, eliminating the researcher's ability to deduce individual identities.
- The data will be stored by SurveyMonkey until the target number of surveys is achieved. Once released to the researcher, the data will be stored on a password-protected computer to which only the researcher has access. The data will be retained for three years upon completion of the study and then deleted from the computer once no longer needed in fulfillment of doctoral requirements.

How will you be compensated for being part of the study?

Participants will not be directly compensated for participating in the study. However, SurveyMonkey will donate 50 cents to a charity chosen by the survey respondent.

Is study participation voluntary?

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time prior to submitting the survey without affecting those relationships.

What should you do if you decide to withdraw from the study?

If you choose to withdraw from the study, please exit the survey and close your internet browser. Your responses will not be recorded or included in this study.

Whom do you contact if you have questions or concerns about the study?

The researcher conducting this study is Adrienne Read. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact her at ▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓. You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, Dr. Jerry Green, at ▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓.

Whom do you contact if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA 24515 or email at irb@liberty.edu.

Disclaimer: The Institutional Review Board (IRB) is tasked with ensuring that human subjects research will be conducted in an ethical manner as defined and required by federal regulations. The topics covered and viewpoints expressed or alluded to by student and faculty researchers are those of the researchers and do not necessarily reflect the official policies or positions of Liberty University.

Your Consent

Before agreeing to be part of the research, please be sure that you understand what the study is about. You can print a copy of this document for your records. If you have any questions about the study later, you can contact the researcher using the information provided above.