# The Mediating Path of Transformational Leadership: A Cross-Sectional Study in Chinese Context

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**Abstract:** Organisations that are going through transformative processes need to make sure that they have effective change management and employee engagement. Considering the function that transformational leadership plays as a mediator, this study aims to investigate the connection between employee engagement and the change management process. This research uses a cross-sectional methodology and gathers information from a wide range of people working for various companies. Employee engagement, opinions of the change management process, and transformational leadership are all measured using a standard questionnaire. Statistically, statisticians use tools like mediation analysis and correlational testing to look into the purported links. Findings indicate a strong positive correlation between change management and the variables that inspire employee engagement. The research findings have also demonstrated that transformational leadership is an important mediator between organisational change management and employee engagement. This research suggests that transformational leaders can make employee engagement an even more powerful tool for effective change management. This study shed light on the need to develop transformational leadership skills and encourage employee participation in initiatives to bring about organisational change. Organisations should prioritise strategies that enhance employee engagement, such as communication, competition, environment, management support, innovation, job characteristics, organisational system, organisational structure, reward, and workplace well-being. Moreover, the success of change management activities can be improved by investing in leadership development programmes that aim to create transformational leadership behaviours. An empirical investigation of the function that transformational leadership plays as a mediator in the connection between the process of change management and employee engagement is the contribution that this study makes to the current body of research. Businesses can improve employee engagement and leadership practices during times of transformation if they shed light on this complex interplay and gain a more profound comprehension of the factors that drive successful change implementation.

**1. Introduction.** This research explores the nexus between employee engagement, organizational change, and transformational leadership, aiming to bridge existing knowledge gaps. Globally, 47% of organizations plan changes that significantly influence employee engagement and organizational culture (Bagga et al., 2023). Rapid technological advances and evolving business spheres make changes in practices, structures, and processes inevitable. The study posits that engaged employees foster organizational change. However, organizational change can lead to decreased employee engagement, negatively impacting job performance and outcomes (Cao & Le, 2022; Islam et al., 2021). Transformational leadership has been identified as a potential solution to enhance employee engagement during times of change (Cao & Le, 2022). This study examines how transformational leadership can positively influence employee engagement and mitigate the adverse effects of organizational change (Jiatong et al., 2022). Focusing on tourism-related organizations in China (Yunnan) and Pakistan (GB), this research aims to comprehensively understand organizational change implementation by considering unique cultural contexts. The primary objective is to examine the role of employee engagement as an independent variable and transformational leadership as a mediating variable in shaping change management outcomes. This research explores organisational change implementation in tourism-related organisations in China and Pakistan, focusing on the role of employee engagement and transformational leadership. The study also explores transformational leadership's influence on change management, considering factors like motivation, intellectual stimulation, and personalised consideration. The mediating role of transformational leadership in the relationship between employee engagement and positive change outcomes is assessed. Cross-cultural variations are investigated, identifying and justifying cultural characteristics and contextual differences. The research provides insights into best practices for tourism organisations in China and Pakistan, offering strategies and factors to support successful change implementation. The study emphasises the importance of considering the interaction between employee engagement, communication, individual characteristics, management support, rewards, competition, innovation, organisational system, environment, job characteristics, and workplace well-being.

By connecting the theoretical substructures on the subject, this study investigates the relational association between employee engagement, which refers to a positive work-related psychological state characterised by enthusiasm and willingness to contribute (Albrecht et al., 2023), and organisational change, which involves the implementation of new strategies, alteration of existing processes or structures within an organisation (Albrecht et al., 2020). As engaged employees are well aware of the organisation's situational contexts and actively participate in organisational activities for performance improvement and productivity (Zacher et al., 2018); their engagement in the organisation may positively impact organisational change and augment the change process through employee commitment, motivation, and adaptability (Jones, 2018; Tarmizi & Anggian, 2022). By synthesising these theoretical foundations, the study aims to elucidate how the engagement of employees contributes to the facilitation of organisational change processes. Figure 1 illustrates the relationship between Employee Engagement and Organizational Change. Engaged employees are more likely to embrace and support organisational change initiatives, instigating smoother transitions, increased success (Albrecht et al., 2020), and enhanced learning and unlearning processes (Matsuo, 2019; Yin, 2023). Similarly, a reciprocal relationship has also been validated in previous research studies where the impact of organisational change on employee engagement has been evidenced. This is because employees may experience varying levels of resistance, uncertainty, or empowerment during the change process, which may influence their engagement (Albrecht et al., 2020).

Previous literature supports the theoretical basis of this research, emphasising that employee engagement substantiates the change process, creating a cyclic effect on organisational processes and outcomes. This study contributes to the existing literature by providing insights into how transformational leadership can positively impact employee engagement and mitigate the adverse effects of organisational change. Additionally, it highlights the importance of fostering a supportive and empowering leadership style to navigate complex change initiatives successfully. The findings hold significant implications for organisational management by identifying best practices and strategies to enhance performance, productivity, and employee retention. By providing actionable insights, organisations in the tourism sectors of both countries can devise proactive strategies for more effective human resource and change management processes. Well-engaged employees are valuable assets to the organisation, as they are likelier to apply creativity in their work (Derue et al., 2011) and work diligently with devotion and enthusiasm (Liu et al., 2022). Employees working in a conducive environment with a supportive supervisor and progressive atmosphere are more likely to engage in organisational development plans than those who face challenges and disengage from organisational goals (Afrahi et al., 2022). The tourism industry is undergoing significant organisational change due to evolving

market conditions, technological advancements, and customer preferences. Employee engagement is crucial for successful change initiatives, and transformational leadership can enhance this process. However, there is a lack of research on the impact of employee engagement on organisational change management in China (Yunnan) and Pakistan (GB). Existing literature has shown the positive influence of transformational leadership on employee engagement in various industries, such as hospitality and tourism. This study aims to address this gap by investigating the direct connection between employee engagement and organisational change management in China and Pakistan and exploring the mediating role of transformational leadership. The research will provide valuable insights into tailored strategies for enhancing employee engagement in HRM studies.

The concept of change management through transformational leadership and employee engagement is emerging in China (Yunnan) and Pakistan (GB) and is particularly relevant to the evolving tourism industry. This study will advance understanding related to change management system implementation in the tourism industry, addressing the challenges of maintaining competitiveness, sustainability, and overall growth in the ever-changing global marketplace. Focusing on transformational leadership, this study investigates the relationship between employee engagement and organisational change management in China (Yunnan) and Pakistan (GB) tourism industries. The findings offer insights for organisations to enhance performance, productivity, and employee retention. Engaged employees are valuable assets as they apply creativity and work diligently. A supportive and progressive work environment encourages employees to work harder and engage in organisational development plans. The study highlights the importance of transformational leadership and employee engagement in the tourism industry, which is evolving due to inevitable changes. This research will advance understanding of change management system implementation in the tourism industry and help address challenges in maintaining competitiveness, sustainability, and growth in the global marketplace. It provides practical insights for policymakers and organisational leaders, contributing to competitiveness and economic development in the sector.

Although change is constant, the pace of modern history has increased the significance of those shifts. Organisations can regain lost productivity, revenues, and competitive advantage through effective change management, becoming more widely acknowledged as essential to contemporary business. According to (Al-Ali et al., 2017), British Airways laid off many workers as part of a comprehensive reorganisation that aimed to increase efficiency and decrease waste. The business thoroughly explained the reason behind the layoffs and worked closely with employees to ensure a smooth transition. Considering that poor leadership can ruin a change procedure. However, that is less likely to happen when dealing with organisational change, which usually involves institutional culture, a change leader or facilitator, and the dedication of individuals participating in the change process. Concurrently, they assert that change management procedures are frequently slowed down by people's inability or unwillingness to understand the seriousness of change. (Kipesha & Koech, 2020) organisational supporters' emotional reactions to change initiatives determine their commitment. Employee engagement is anticipated because engaged workers are more likely to be inventive, show better organisational citizenship behaviour, and perform better when assigned specific tasks. This, in turn, leads to happier customers and more money in the bank (Xanthopoulou et al, 2009; Lindenmeier et al., 2021; Graham, 1991).

Furthermore, teams have a wrinkle effect when employees are engaged because they are more inclined to assist their colleagues (Huml et al., 2021). According to (Huml et al., 2021), workers who are completely devoted to their projects and tasks are quick to speak out, passionate about what they do, and completely devoted to their jobs. Transformational leadership (TFL) is unique for the most lengthily studied topics of the past few periods, showed by the additional common quote of studies of TFL than other leadership themes. According to (Bass & Avolio, 1993), a shift in leadership style can transform followers into leaders, and, in turn, leaders become moral actors through a dynamic of mutual inspiration and advancement. Deep-toned, clear, a transformational leader inspires supporters to do more than they initially expected to do. Employees are motivated to perform at levels beyond their ability, thanks to transformational leadership, which alters the employees' expectations and values. This style of management emphasizes the importance of managers' inspiring visions. Transformational leadership, transactional leadership, and non-transformational leadership were defined as the three primary types of leadership by laissez-faire style (Amini & Jahanbakhsh Javid, 2023; Ramirez, 2019). This research work is the examination of Social Exchange Theory (SET) to revive human acceptability of innovation, the tree of change management is being created within the context of the Chinese tourism business.

Transformational leaders empower their followers by nurturing self-confidence, independence, capability, self-efficacy, and self-esteem. They create a safe and challenging environment, identify zones of proximal development, and employ flexible strategies to foster organizational ownership behaviour (Al-Ali et al., 2017). Furthermore, transformational leadership works as a catalyst in the organizational change management process (Islam et al., 2021). Although study evidence can be found to associate the link between employee engagement and the change process, transformational leadership and change prove that no previous study has attempted to find the mediation effect of transformational leadership, in particular, in the engagement and change process. In past research studies, employee engagement has been taken as an independent variable and transformational leadership as a dependent variable (Lacap, 2019), employee engagement and organization change with the moderating effect of transformational leadership (Potnuru et al., 2021), transformational leadership and employee championing behaviour with the mediating role of the employee engagement (Ahmad et al., 2023). Scholars and HR experts accentuate the role of transformational leaders in identifying the underlying causes of low employee engagement or disengagement and formulating strategies to improve it. Transformational leaders inspire and motivate employees, provide clear direction, foster a positive work culture, and provide individualized consideration that encourages engagement (Kwarteng et al., 2023). These elements play a vital role in restoring and maintaining employee engagement through effective communication, recognition, and support (Albrecht et al., 2015).

**2. Literature Review.** The conceptual side of change management involves managing people in a changing environment so that business or organisational goals are recognised, and changes are successful for the industry and organisation. The success of any change process often depends on effectively managing the human resources involved. Appropriate people management during a change process can determine whether the change succeeds or fails (Pratt & Cakula, 2021). While evolution is inevitable, the rate of progress in the modern era is unprecedented (Pugh, 2016). Organisations can regain lost productivity, revenues, and competitive advantage through effective change management, which is becoming recognised as an inevitable aspect of modern business (Betancourt et al., 2017). What this means is that firms are either actively pursuing change or are being compelled to adapt. British Airways underwent a complete reorganisation under a new president to reduce waste and boost efficiency. This required cutting the company's staff, providing reasons for the layoffs, and maintaining open lines of communication with employees (Ufua et al., 2020). As the initial step in a change decision, it is crucial to identify what needs to be changed, what new product should be introduced, or what special innovation could give a competitive edge. Creative pressure can build a framework for planning improvements. Creative pressure comes from perceiving where we want to go, our dream, and stating the truth about where we are and our representativeness. As (Koehn, 2020) says, leaders must be realistic. For managers, problem-solving in current circumstances and leadership to bring change are two distinct concepts. Problem-solving involves finding solutions to existing issues or challenges, whereas leading a change entail driving and implementing innovative ideas to bring about transformation within an organisation or a specific context (Koehn, 2020).

Moreover, to bring change, leaving an unpleasant status quo can catalyse change. It creates a sense of urgency and drives the motivation to take up new directions, policies, or procedures (Furusten, 2023). In contrast with the existing situations, the desire for what one needs to create generates creative pressure in individuals and employees (West & Sacramento, 2023). This pressure acts as a driving force for change by pushing individuals or organisations to strive for new and innovative approaches. As problems are resolved and conditions improve, the energy behind change naturally decreases. This highlights the importance of maintaining creative pressure to sustain the momentum and drive continuous improvement; hence, this study suggests that a manager's role as a transformational leader persists in such situations. To sustain change and bring positive outcomes, a manager must act in line with employees' values to impact their behaviours and attitudes to accept change (Barrett, 2002).

*2.1. Change Management Process and Communication*

It is essential to communicate effectively to facilitate the transition of individuals from their current condition to the "future state" that they have envisioned for themselves. This is true whether you are modifying technology, digital leadership, business procedures, leadership, or a combination of these factors (Tang, 2019; Williams-Ghosh, 2019; Ratajczak et al., 2022). Change management communication plans begin with a comprehensive knowledge of the organisation, its stakeholders, and the effects of the change (Domingues et al., 2017). Stakeholders need to know what is expected of them and how they might adjust their day-to-day tasks to support the business aim. Employees can more easily transition to the future state and accept new ways of functioning when there is a constant flow of information, involvement of stakeholders, and

management of feedback. Overall, effective and open communication is essential for successful change management. It helps to create understanding, build support and engagement, and facilitate a smooth transition during the change process (Potosky & Azan, 2023). Based on the above-cited literature and research validations, we propose our third hypothesis as follows:

$H_1$: Communication positively influences the organizational Change Management Process.

*2.2. Individual Characteristics and Change Management Process*

An individual has the creativity to change the organizational performance. Individual attributes have significance for the prosperity and change in the organization in a positive way (Alderottiet al., 2023; Clarke, 2018). So, according to the researcher, this factor can bring change in the organization system. So, there is a strong need to work on individual characteristics for the organizational change management process (Siregar & Studies, 2022). It means that individual characteristics have a role in the OCMP. According to Holt, employees' readiness and support play a crucial role in implementing organizational change and improving themselves (Puspasari et al., 2017). In order to effectively embrace organizational change, it is important to understand how individual characteristics impact the change management process. Employee characteristics can significantly influence the change management process. For example, employees' level of acceptance and readiness for change can be influenced by various factors such as their communication skills, preferences for participation in decision-making, and overall attitude towards change (Puspasari et al., 2017). Moreover, employee characteristics such as gender, age, race/ethnicity, years of experience, and position within the organization can also impact their readiness for change and their ability to cope with it. Research conducted by Devos et al. demonstrates that employee participation and organizational communication are crucial factors that influence employee readiness for change.

Furthermore, the study by (Kumar and Kamalanabhan, 2005) on the influence of personality factors on employees' abilities towards organizational change found that certain personality traits such as perceived control, optimism, and change self-efficacy are positively related to an individual's coping abilities during organizational change (Yousef, 2017). Hence, according to the research studies individual characteristics have a strong ability to bring change in the organization system. So, there is a dire need to work on the individual characteristics of the organizational change management process (Siregar & Studies, 2022). Individual characteristics play a primary role in the organizational change management process. Based on the above arguments, we proposed the following hypothesis.

$H_2$: Individual characteristics have a positive influence on the organizational change management process.

*2.3. Management Support and Change Management Process*

It is the responsibility of management to provide support for change and to manage change within the organisation (Hornstein, 2015). Those show that management support has a role in the organisational CMP. Change can be brought about by a variety of reasons, including those that are internal and those that are external; the various types of change and organisational change, as well as the advantages and disadvantages of change, are discussed in detail by different researchers (Van der Voet, 2014). Change management is difficult, yet there has yet to has yet to be a consensus on which factors impact the most (Kuipers et al., 2014; McAllister-Williams et al., 2020). If you ask five senior executives to name the single most crucial factor in these programs' success, you are likely to get five different answers. This is because each manager tackles a project from a different perspective and specialises in things that have previously proven successful (Snowden & Boone, 2007). Professionals offer a variety of perspectives as well. These concepts have a lot to offer, but when applied collectively, they put firms under the burden of juggling multiple competing demands, resulting in a dilution of resources and personnel (Malo et al., 2020). Internal and external factors can trigger change; the different types of change and organisational change, as well as the advantages and disadvantages of change, are discussed in detail by different researchers (Van der Voet, 2014). Change management is difficult, yet no consensus exists on which factors impact most (McAllister-Williams et al., 2020). If you ask five senior executives to name the most crucial factor in a change program, you will likely get five different answers. This is because each manager tackles a project from a different perspective and specialises in previously proven successful things (Snowden & Boone, 2007). Professionals offer a variety of perspectives as well. These concepts have much to offer, but when applied collectively, they put firms under the burden of juggling multiple competing demands, diluting resources and personnel (Malo et al., 2020). Based on the previous researcher's arguments, we conclude that managers must communicate the need for change, provide clear direction, allocate necessary resources, and address employee concerns or resistance. Management support is an essential component of the change management process. So, we propose the following hypothesis:

$H_3$: Management support has a positive influence on the CMP.

### 2.4. Rewards and Change Management Process

A reward system can change organisational culture (Qatawneh & Finance, 2023). Changes in organisational culture that may be traced back to the remuneration structure are rare (Patterson & Benuyenah, 2021). How much and for how long can a pay-for-performance incentive structure be used to facilitate cultural shifts? If a reward system is complemented by other HR rules and regular communication of desired values to employees, it has a big impact (Petrescu & Simmons, 2008). Previous studies have also concentrated on developing incentives that promote desired behaviour (Conrad et al., 2018). When incentives are present, it is easier to tell how they affect organisational culture and how it changes (Kondo et al., 2016). That is why the reward system appears to send information about desirable and unvalued characteristics (Chen et al., 2015). This must be taken into account while creating a compensation plan. However, this document must include a few important disclaimers. To top it all off, we began our research when the firm underwent major strategic and organisational changes, making it difficult to foresee how these shifts may influence the company's culture (Zhou et al., 2005). According to the literature (Sung & Kim, 2021; Weiner, 2009), the culture of the organisation's reward system has a role in the company's approach to change management. It makes the most sense that the higher-level cultural practices of an organisation are inculcated in its members through socialisation (Srivastava & Agrawal, 2020).

Furthermore, if only employed in this way, the pay system's ability to influence the organisation's culture could be improved; whether incentives for desired behaviour strengthen or weaken the behaviour that is stimulated is important for learning whether the reward system is more effective at managing changes in corporate culture (Campos-Blázquez et al., 2023; Taba, 2018). The effectiveness of a company's ability to introduce new procedures is greatly influenced by the management's use of reward systems (Amini et al., 2023; San Ong & Teh, 2012). Based on the preceding, it can be concluded that a company's rewards system has a favourable association with its change management process.

H$_4$: Rewards positively influence the change management process.

### 2.5. Change Management Process and Competition

The reasoning behind the change and its objectives must be established to prepare and adapt to changes, and the change agents must be identified in the competition. Reaching out to all relevant parties and identifying potential change agents are essential steps in the process (Meyers et al., 2012; Zhang et al., 2023). According to (Cardon & Stevens, 2004) and (Polii et al., 2023), it is impossible for corporations and their people to benefit from the synergy produced by these conventional methods. According to (Uppathampracha & Liu, 2022), the private sector shares the belief that change is essential to staying ahead of the competition. They believe this because, like the public sector, they use a flexible structure to involve employees and continuously reform the change management process. Due to intense competition worldwide, the Pakistani branch of a multinational company places a premium on effective leadership and enthusiastic employee participation to effect positive change inside the company (Chey, 2023; Kazimoto, 2016). Organisations can enhance their competitive advantage by effectively managing change in response to competition and positioning themselves for success in a dynamic business environment (Tipu, 2022). It is inferred that competition can drive the need for change within organisations. The change management process provides a structured approach to navigate these changes and ensure that organisations can adapt and innovate to maintain a competitive advantage. We therefore propose our eighth hypothesis based on the comprehensions provided above:

H$_5$: Competition positively influence the Change Management Process.

### 2.6. Innovation and Organizational Change Management Process

Organisational innovation and organisational change management are two interconnected processes organisations use to drive growth, adapt to new circumstances, e-leadership, and stay competitive in the market. Organisational innovation refers to transforming ideas or inventions into goods or services that generate value for the organisation (McDonald et al., 2021; Rybnikova et al., 2022). It involves implementing new or improved processes, products, services, or business models within the organisation (Sung & Kim, 2021). Innovation can come from various sources, including employees, customers, competitors, or external partners. To foster organisational innovation, it is important to ensure that managers truly adhere to the idea of innovation and to define what innovation means for the organisation (Kelley et al., 2021). Change management includes three stages: preparing for change, managing change, and reinforcing change. It requires effective communication, employee engagement, and addressing resistance to change. While organisational innovation focuses on introducing new ideas and practices, organisational change management focuses on effectively implementing and managing those organisational changes. Both processes are crucial for organisational success, as innovation without effective change management can lead to implementation

failures. Individuals can be convinced to change despite the various dangers when strong leadership is in place. These days, innovation and managing change are inextricably connected (Vlados, 2019). In order to maintain a competitive advantage, businesses must constantly innovate (Amini & Jahanbakhsh Javid, 2023; Euchner, 2013). As a result, scholars feel that innovation and change, two things that are unavoidable in today's world, are interconnected (Olsson et al., 2017). Consequently, these traits are critical to an organisation's success; doing so gives an organisation a leg up in a competitive environment, both domestically and internationally. Results show that the innovation is important to the success of OCM. During the change process, leadership is strongly correlated with innovation, according to earlier research:

$H_6$: Innovation positively influences the change management process.

### 2.7. Organization System and Change Management Process

A well-established and efficient organisational system can facilitate the change management process. It provides a structured framework for planning, implementing, and monitoring changes (Kuipers et al., 2014). This system may include clear communication channels, established roles and responsibilities, and effective decision-making processes (Al-Sharari, 2022). These elements can streamline the change management process and enhance its effectiveness. Organisations are constantly changing because of reorganisation, process improvement, new technological developments being put into practice, the initiation of compliance, and improved customer service (Brown & Harvey, 2021). Change is unavoidable and necessary for impact, profitability, and growth (Ancillai et al., 2023; Gerbec, 2017). Therefore, for organisational system improvements to be effective, successful, and growth-promoting, it is essential to include people early in the planning and implementation process and continuously modify for improvement (Rosenbaum et al. 2018). To devise practical, feasible, and quantifiable modifications that foster change and influence, institutions employ various frameworks and instruments to execute systemic modifications (Doppelt & McDonough, 2017; Lin et al., 2023).

$H_7$: Organizational systems have a positive association with the organizational change management process.

### 2.8. Environment and Change Management Process

The organisational environment is key and integral to the organisation's management process (Albrecht et al., 2015). If the organisation's environment is suitable for the organisation's employees, it will ultimately affect the performance of the individual, and the organisation's performance will also be enhanced (Park & Kim, 2018). *Environmental concern* is a major issue that must be addressed to bring change to the organisation and further enhance employee productivity. The environment of an organisation is made up of culture, which is composed of the beliefs and values of the organisation, which are attached to the organisational change process (Hamidi et al., 2023). Managers must align the change strategy with the organisation's culture and values; when these complement each other, the change process becomes smooth (Yamoah et al., 2022). When a company or organisation changes significantly a key component, such as its culture, the underlying technology or infrastructure on which it operates, or its internal processes, this is called organisational change. Organisations make significant changes to a key component of their organisation, such as its culture (Barjak et al., 2023; Gwartney et al., 2021). This is known as organisational change, and it can refer to either the underlying technology or infrastructure on which it functions or its internal processes (Masser, 2019). Designing the change, implementing it, communicating it, and assessing its impact on the organisation's operations system are all steps in a successful change management process (Hornstein, 2015). Internally, evaluations, plans, resource allocation, and communication are used to manage and develop tools and support activities for change management (Darwin, 2017; Kerzner, 2019). The identified future research areas may serve as a guide in addressing research gaps. Based on the above arguments, researchers can analyse the environmental and cultural aspects as key factors in the OCMP.

$H_8$: The environment has a positive affect the organizational change management.

### 2.9. Job Characteristics and Change Management Process

Organisational job characteristics are crucial in organisational change management (Nguyen et al., 2023). It is important to prioritise the essential factors to manage organisational change effectively (Saetren & Laumann, 2017). Among these factors, job characteristics are particularly significant and should be carefully considered in the organisational change management process (Srivastava & Agrawal, 2020). Job satisfaction is an important factor that indirectly affects the organisational change management process (Sung & Kim, 2021). Therefore, in an organisation, job characteristics bring an organisational change management process (Nghiem et al., 2023; Srivastava & Agrawal, 2020). Therefore, an essential factor needs to focus on the priorities for organisational change (Saetren & Laumann, 2017). Job characteristics are the most important

factor that needs to be considered for the organisational change management process (Imran et al., 2016; Srivastava & Agrawal, 2020). Based on the above judgement, the following hypothesis can be proposed:

$H_9$: Job characteristics positively influence the organizational change management process (OCMP).

### 2.10. Organizational Structure and Change Management Process

The organisational structure of an organisation has a significant impact on the change management process. The structure of an organisation is designed around communication, decision-making, resistance to change, flexibility, and adaptability. In communication, the structure determines how information flows within the organisation. A hierarchical structure with multiple layers can slow communication and make it difficult to disseminate change-related information effectively. On the other hand, a flatter structure with open communication channels can facilitate the flow of information and make it easier to communicate and implement change (Errida & Lotfi, 2021; Kokt & Makumbe, 2020). Similarly, a structure that advocates resistance, flexibility, and adaptability is conducive to change practices being immersed and accepted effectively rather than a closed system (Errida & Lotfi, 2021). The fundamental cornerstone of any organisation's success worldwide is its organisational structure. The management processes of modern firms are significantly impacted by organisational structure, which is one of the essential factors (Corvello et al., 2023). Therefore, the change management process is important at the inter-organisational level (Pugh, 2016; Weiner, 2009). The previous research provides a pitch that organisational structure is important for the organisational change management process (Aldhaheri & Ahmad, 2023). All these findings provide a basis for the following hypothesis based on the previous research.

$H_{10}$: Organizational Structure is positively associated with the Change Management Process.

### 2.11. Work Place Well-being and Change Management Process

In the long run, it is an unexpected but inherent part of business life. In many different ways, change management has been institutionalized haphazardly. This includes having a specific change management aim (often within HR), strategy, and implementation tools. (Antonelli & Feder, 2022; Sepashvili, 2020) Dedication and commitment to growth, communication commitment entrenched in facility change, renovation of business concepts surrounding change, and institutionalization of change management training programs are all important aspects of change management. According to research, the well-being of employees in the workplace plays an important role in the CMP. All these arguments provide a basis for the idea that workplace well-being is an important factor for change. We offered the following hypothesis based on these arguments:

$H_{11}$:Workplace Well-being is positively associated with the Change Management Process (CMP).

### 2.12. Transformational Leadership and its Mediating role

Based on prior studies conducted in China and globally, this research indicates that there needs to be more research in the body of literature currently available regarding the relationship between transformational leadership, employee engagement, and the change management process. The relationships between knowledge sharing and organisational performance (Ahmed et al., 2020), talent management, and transformational leadership, as well as employee engagement and the (CMP) (Potnuru et al., 2021; Bashira et al., 2019; Yap, 2016), but transformation leadership's mediating role with these variables has been ignored (Dom & Ahmad, 2019; Yue et al., 2019). According to several authors, leadership fosters innovative environments to improve organisational, human, social, and structural capacities (Anjum et al., 2021). Today, the researchers identify a transformational leadership paradigm that posits four human needs that cannot be negotiated and must be satisfied to be healthy, joyful, and fully functional. Transformational leadership promotes ongoing individual learning, training, and leadership experiences (Adnjani & Prianti, 2023). This is relevant to leadership values, at the heart of attempts to build values that drive the organisation to deal with internal and external difficulties. If a leader's idea works, it can become a shared assumption (Wang et al., 2020). Mumford compared charismatic, ideological, and pragmatic outstanding leaders. The three lead transformational. According to the research, transformational leadership is linked to follower effort, leader-member satisfaction, employee performance, individual effectiveness, and organisational growth (Mansaray, 2019). The empirical investigation reveals that job factors mediate transformational leadership's impact. However, a leader's behaviour and followers' traits impact how followers view and accept transformative leadership (Virgiawan et al., 2021).

$H_{12}$: Transformational leadership is mediating between the EE and the CMP.

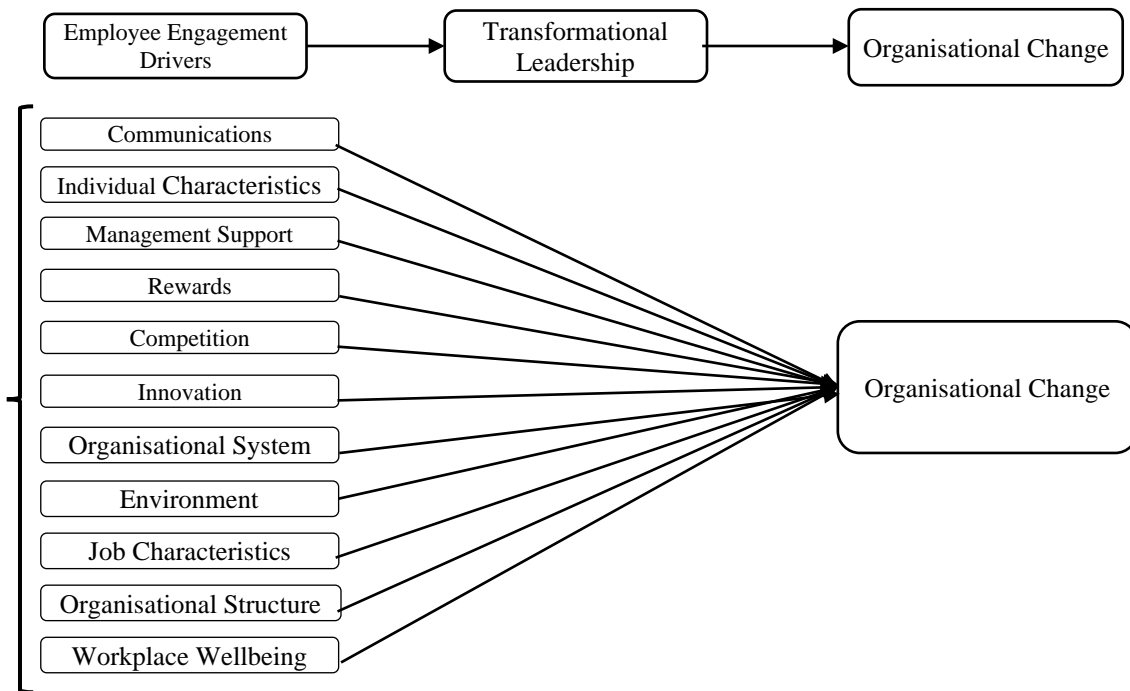The theoretical model of the study is shown in Fig. 1.

**Figure 1.** Theoretical Model
Sources: developed by the authors.

**3. Methodology and research methods.** In the context of quantitative research, the focus is on describing the characteristics of variables. Quantitative research uses statistical tools and measurable approaches to investigate data through surveys or experiments. The data is collected using regulated instruments to generate statistical results. In quantitative analysis, extensive theories confirm and support the research survey plans. For this reason, a survey methodology was utilized for this study, and a five-point Likert scale ranging from "Strongly disagree" to "Strongly agree" was used to gather information. These questions help further the research process and provide insights into the studied variables. The main focus of this research study is to examine the influence of transformational leadership on employee engagement and its impact on the organizational change management process. This research explored the influence of employee engagement through transformational leadership on the organisational change management process using an explanatory research framework centred on primary quantitative research. This study utilised an evidence-based approach, emphasising the importance of rigorous quantitative research in developing social interventions. The research areas of the study are the Yunnan province of the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the Gilgit Baltistan (GB) area of Pakistan. The study's data has been obtained through a standard questionnaire from the Top, Middle, and Lower-level managers from the offices of the tourism departments of both countries. Quantitative research intends to collect and evaluate numerical data to describe characteristics, find correlations, or test hypotheses. In a quantitative study, researchers typically start by identifying a few variables they want to study and collecting data related to those variables (Franklin, 2008). Then, the study proceeds with data collection via surveys or observations, and descriptive or inferential statistics are applied to analyse the data. The ultimate goal is to confirm or disconfirm the hypothesis that was tested (Osborne, 2008). This process allows researchers to recognise, understand and isolate specific variables within the study framework and seek correlations, relationships, and causality. The quantitative method of study has been applied in this research. Quantitative research methods involve the methodical measurement of statistics and other variables in order to investigate phenomena and their relationships. It explains, predicts, and controls a phenomenon by answering questions about relationships between measurable variables (Williams, 2007). Primary data was collected from Pakistan and China (Yunnan) and obtained from tourism departments. A fair list of questions is achieved based on the literature review and problem statement. The study then utilises deductive epistemology, which starts with theory and then gathers observations. This conforms to the positivist research method. The research employed quantitative and descriptive methods, collecting data through a self-administrative questionnaire. The respondents were individuals from within the tourism sector in both China and Pakistan. Purposive sampling was used, and participants were selected based on non-probability, judgmental, and selective criteria. In order to save time, online data collection was preferred in China

(Yunnan), while the self-administrative technique was used in Pakistan. Data was collected from a sample of 478 managers of the tourism department from China, Yunnan, and Pakistan (Landreneau & Creek, 2009); the sampling technique was used for the sample size. The sampling formula, S = z2 (p)(q) / e2, also known as Finite Population Correction Facto, was proposed by (Cochran, 1977) for selecting sample size and was utilised in this study. Because the number of the population was unknown in this study, a technique called purposive sampling was utilised to collect data because there was a shortage of both time and resources, and the data were to be collected from a specific population. The process of collecting data is a laborious one. Because of this, it was impossible to compile the data methodically. As a result, non-probability purposive sampling was employed for this investigation. Within the framework of this research, the tourism department from Yunnan in China is included among the population that is being targeted. The tourism department's managers at the top, in the middle, and at the bottom all contributed to data collection. The researchers utilised a non-probabilistic method of sampling known as convenience sampling. It was unable to conduct a probability sample. The probability sample requires additional work and careful planning. The scale for employee engagement was adapted from the (Thomas, 2007) research work. The employee engagement drivers were chosen from a pool of 39 elements, and an eight-item organisational change management process was adapted from the study (Dunphy & Stace, 1993; Nelson, 2003). The transformational leadership 7-item scale Carless et al. (2000) is adopted. The questionnaire has five points on a Likert scale, from one for Strongly Disagree to five for Strongly Agree. The study employed the survey approach to gather data about EE, TL, and the CMP.

## 4. Results

The study's findings are based on data from two countries, China and Pakistan, given here. Researchers used different analyses to showcase the following areas of this research for the Chinese and Pakistani Data sets. This analysis portrayed the profile of the respondents who participated in this research work from both countries. Next, the analysis showcases the normality that is compulsory for the data to have normal distribution to fulfil one of the assumptions of the inferential analysis. Next, the researcher used Structured Equation Modeling (Lin et al., 2010) to verify the validity of the study questionnaire using convergent and discriminant validity. Next, SEM test the study hypotheses to be verified and lead towards the study's conclusion. Table 1 represented the gender of the respondents. 146 participants belong to the male category with 91.8 %, on the other side 13 participants with 8.2% to the female category in this study. This represents the position of gender in this study from the data taken from China.

**Table 1.** Demographics (Gander)

|  |  | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Valid | Male | 146 | 91.8 | 91.8 | 91.8 |
|  | Female | 13 | 8.2 | 8.2 | 100.0 |
|  | Total | 159 | 100.0 | 100.0 |  |

Sources: developed by the authors.

Table 2 represented the designation of the respondents. 22 participants belong to top-level management category with 13.8 %, on the other side 97 participants with 61% to the middle-management category in this study. The 40 participants belong to lower management with 25.2% participated. This represents the designation of participants in this study from the data taken from China.

**Table 2.** Demographic (Employment Level)

|  |  | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Valid | Top Managers | 22 | 13.8 | 13.8 | 13.8 |
|  | Middle Managers | 97 | 61.0 | 61.0 | 74.8 |
|  | Lower Managers | 40 | 25.2 | 25.2 | 100.0 |
|  | Total | 159 | 100.0 | 100.0 |  |

Sources: developed by the authors.

Table 3 represents the education of the respondents. The 5 participants belong to the Intermediate category with 3.1 %, on the other side 39 participants with 24.5% to the Bachelors' category in this study. The 115 participants belong to Masters with 72.3% participating. This represents the education of participants in this study from the data taken from China.

**Table 3.** Demographic (Education)

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Valid | Intermediate | 5 | 3.1 | 3.1 | 3.1 |
| | Bachelors | 39 | 24.5 | 24.5 | 27.7 |
| | Masters | 115 | 72.3 | 72.3 | 100.0 |
| | **Total** | **159** | **100.0** | **100.0** | |

Sources: developed by the authors.

Table 4 represents the tenure of the respondents. The 48 participants belong to the 0-3 year work duration category with 30.2%; on the other side, 38 participants with 23.9% to the 4-6 years' work duration category in this study. Of the 20 participants with 7-9 years of work duration, 12.6% and 53 participants with 33.3% who had more than nine years of working duration in the organization participated. This represents the work tenure of participants in this study based on data from China.

**Table 4.** Demographics (Job Duration)

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Valid | 0-3 years | 48 | 30.2 | 30.2 | 30.2 |
| | 4-6 years | 38 | 23.9 | 23.9 | 54.1 |
| | 7-9 years | 20 | 12.6 | 12.6 | 66.7 |
| | 9-above years | 53 | 33.3 | 33.3 | 100.0 |
| | **Total** | **159** | **100.0** | **100.0** | |

Sources: developed by the authors.

To start, the dependability of the data is shown by the study's results, which show that the items used in the study were consistent. The reliability score was calculated using Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability, respectively. Study's independent variable that is the drivers of EE; Communication (Cronbach's Alpha=0.747,CR=0.810); Competition (Cronbach's Alpha=0.808, CR=0.849); Environment (Cronbach's Alpha=0.737, CR=0.800); Individual characteristics (Cronbach's Alpha=0.751, CR=0.799); Innovation (Cronbach's Alpha=0.781, CR=0.796); Job Characteristic (Cronbach's Alpha=0722., CR=0.717); Management Support (Cronbach's Alpha=0.738, CR=0.801); Organisational Structure (Cronbach's Alpha=0.785, CR=0.804); Organisational System (Cronbach's Alpha=0.802, CR=0.723); Reward (Cronbach's Alpha=0.849, CR=0.909); Work Place well- being (Cronbach's Alpha=0.751, CR=0.840). The independent variable is change management (Cronbach's Alpha=0.850, CR=0.884), and the dependent variable is transformational leadership (Cronbach's Alpha=0.851, CR=0.887). Table 5, all dependability scores are significantly higher than the 0.7 threshold suggested by (Hinton et al., 2004).

**Table 5.** Measurement Model (China Data) – CFA

| S.NO. | Variables | Cronbach's Alpha | Composite Reliability (CR) | Average Variance Extracted (AVE) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | CHM | 0.85 | 0.884 | 0.559 |
| 2 | COM | 0.747 | 0.810 | 0.588 |
| 3 | COMPT | 0.808 | 0.849 | 0.538 |
| 4 | EN | 0.737 | 0.800 | 0.577 |
| 5 | IC | 0.751 | 0.799 | 0.576 |
| 6 | INN | 0.781 | 0.796 | 0.577 |
| 7 | JC | 0.722 | 0.717 | 0.563 |
| 8 | LDS | 0.851 | 0.887 | 0.530 |
| 9 | MS | 0.738 | 0.801 | 0.574 |
| 10 | ORST | 0.785 | 0.804 | 0.509 |
| 11 | ORSY | 0.802 | 0.723 | 0.528 |
| 12 | RR | 0.849 | 0.909 | 0.769 |
| 13 | WPL | 0.751 | 0.840 | 0.639 |

Sources: developed by the authors.

The second step is to check whether Table 5 is valid using the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) metric. There is a cut-off value of 0.5 for AVE, as stated by (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The study's independent variable, which represents the factors that motivate employees to invest: Analysis was done on the following variables: reward (AVE=0.669), workplace well-being (AVE=0.639), transformed leadership (AVE=0.530), communication (AVE=0.588), competition (AVE=0.538), environment (AVE=0.577), individual

characteristics (AVE=0.576), innovation (AVE=0.577), job characteristics (AVE=0.563), management support (AVE=0.574), organizational structure (AVE=0.509), organizational system (AVE=0.528), reward (AVE=0.569), and change management (AVE=0.559). Discriminant validity allows one to separate the factors influencing employee engagement from one another and another research variable. When the HTMT for heterogeneity in traits is applied, it is discovered that all values are significantly lower than the 0.9 cut-off number the scholar provided (Henseler et al., 2015). All the measurement models in the tables agree well with the structural equation modelling. The study's elements contribute to the measurement model being suitable for Chinese total data sets, as shown in Table 6.

**Table 6.** Heterogeneity Discriminant Validity

|  | CHM | COM | COMPT | EN | IC | INN | JC | LDS | MS | ORST | ORSY | RR | WPL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **COM** | 0.827 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **COMPT** | 0.185 | 0.214 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **EN** | 0.824 | 0.565 | 0.174 | | | | | | | | | | |
| **IC** | 0.454 | 0.768 | 0.224 | 0.781 | | | | | | | | | |
| **INN** | 0.122 | 0.122 | 0.89 | 0.091 | 0.077 | | | | | | | | |
| **JC** | 0.526 | 0.775 | 0.271 | 0.714 | 0.781 | 0.168 | | | | | | | |
| **LDS** | 0.729 | 0.673 | 0.171 | 0.846 | 0.532 | 0.115 | 0.785 | | | | | | |
| **MS** | 0.637 | 0.885 | 0.171 | 0.608 | 0.611 | 0.066 | 0.559 | 0.697 | | | | | |
| **ORST** | 0.135 | 0.268 | 0.835 | 0.219 | 0.117 | 0.732 | 0.390 | 0.156 | 0.175 | | | | |
| **ORSY** | 0.143 | 0.098 | 0.604 | 0.122 | 0.149 | 0.792 | 0.179 | 0.118 | 0.139 | 0.896 | | | |
| **RR** | 0.543 | 0.655 | 0.095 | 0.693 | 0.408 | 0.068 | 0.631 | 0.509 | 0.539 | 0.153 | 0.084 | | |
| **WPL** | 0.198 | 0.173 | 0.776 | 0.238 | 0.177 | 0.683 | 0.143 | 0.124 | 0.147 | 0.866 | 0.865 | 0.062 | |

Sources: developed by the authors.

In the Chinese study, the correlation results in Table 5 indicate a significant relationship (COM; r=0.827; COMPT: r=0.185; EN: r=0.824; IC: r=0.454; INN: r=0.122; JC: r=0.526; LDS: r=0.729; MS: r=0.637; ORST: r=0.135; ORSY: r=0.143; RR: r=0.543; WPL: r=0.198) of the drivers of employee engagement and also transformational leadership with change management (Table 6).

Table 7 presents the correlation coefficients (r) and significance levels (Sig) for the relationship between various drivers of employee engagement and transformational leadership with change management (CHM) in a Chinese study. The results indicate that all the listed drivers have a statistically significant relationship with change management, as evidenced by the p-values (Sig) being 0.000, which is below the 0.05 threshold for significance at the 95% confidence level.

**Table 7.** Structural Model (China Data) - Correlation Coefficients

|  |  | COM | COMPT | EN | IC | INN | JC | LDS | MS | ORST | ORSY | RR | WPL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **CHM** | *r* | 0.827 | 0.185 | 0.824 | 0.454 | 0.122 | 0.526 | 0.729 | 0.637 | 0.135 | 0.143 | 0.543 | 0.198 |
|  | *Sig* | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 |

Sources: developed by the authors.

To assess the hypotheses of the study on the influence of different aspects of employee engagement on the dependent variable change management, the regression analysis is the primary method. The variables employee engagement, i.e. Communication with 26.5% ($\beta$=0.265, $p<0.05$) effect supporting $H_1$; Individual characteristics with 14.1% ($\beta$=0.141, $p<0.05$) effect supporting $H_2$; Management Support with 17.7% ($\beta$=0.177, $p<0.05$) effect supporting $H_3$; Reward with 11.8% ($\beta$= 0.118, $p<0.05$) effect supporting $H_4$; Competition with 36.3% ($\beta$=0.363, $p<0.05$) effect supporting $H_5$; Innovation with 17.1% ($\beta$=0.171, $p<0.05$) effect supporting $H_6$; Organizational System with 54.1% ($\beta$=0.541, $p<0.05$) effect supporting $H_7$; Environment with 26.1% ($\beta$=0.261, $p<0.05$) effect supporting $H_8$; Job Characteristic with 15.2% ($\beta$=0.152, $p<0.05$) effect supporting $H_9$; Organizational Structure with 22.1% ($\beta$=0.221, $p<0.05$) effect supporting $H_{10}$; Work Place well- being with 6.5% ($\beta$=0.065, $p>0.05$) effect rejecting $H_{11}$ (Table 8).

**Table 8.** Regression Coefficients

| Paths | C | SD | t-value | p-value | Paths | C | SD | t-value | p-value |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| COM -> CHM | 0.265 | 0.076 | 3.488 | 0.001 | ORSY -> CHM | 0.541 | 0.113 | 0.746 | 0.000 |
| IC -> CHM | 0.141 | 0.068 | 1.022 | 0.007 | EN -> CHM | 0.261 | 0.088 | 2.965 | 0.003 |
| MS -> CHM | 0.177 | 0.079 | 0.092 | 0.004 | JC -> CHM | 0.152 | 0.073 | 0.713 | 0.006 |
| RR -> CHM | 0.118 | 0.078 | 1.242 | 0.010 | ORST -> CHM | 0.221 | 0.101 | 0.208 | 0.001 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| COMPT -> CHM | 0.363 | 0.094 | 0.67 | 0.503 | WPL -> CHM | 0.065 | 0.074 0.879 | 0.38 |
| INN -> CHM | 0.171 | 0.149 | 1.147 | 0.042 | | | | |

Note: C – Coefficients.

Sources: developed by the authors.

This research aims to examine the impact of transformational leadership on the relationship between employee engagement and the change management process within the framework of the Chinese study region. Using structural equation modelling (SEM) (Figure 2), the researcher conducts mediation analysis. Using the framework laid down by (Baron and Kenny, 1986) provides a concise summary of the relevance of the paths taken to investigate the mediation effect. Upon analysis of the results obtained from this study, it is evident that EE has a noteworthy impact on CMP ($\beta$=0.375, p<0.05). Moreover, it is important to highlight that EE has a significant effect on transformational leadership ($\beta$=0.450, p<0.05), with an influence of 20.3% demonstrated by $R^2$=0.203. Furthermore, the impact of transformational leadership on change management is noteworthy ($\beta$ = 0.353, p<0.05), with $R^2$ = 0.385 showing a 38.5% influence.
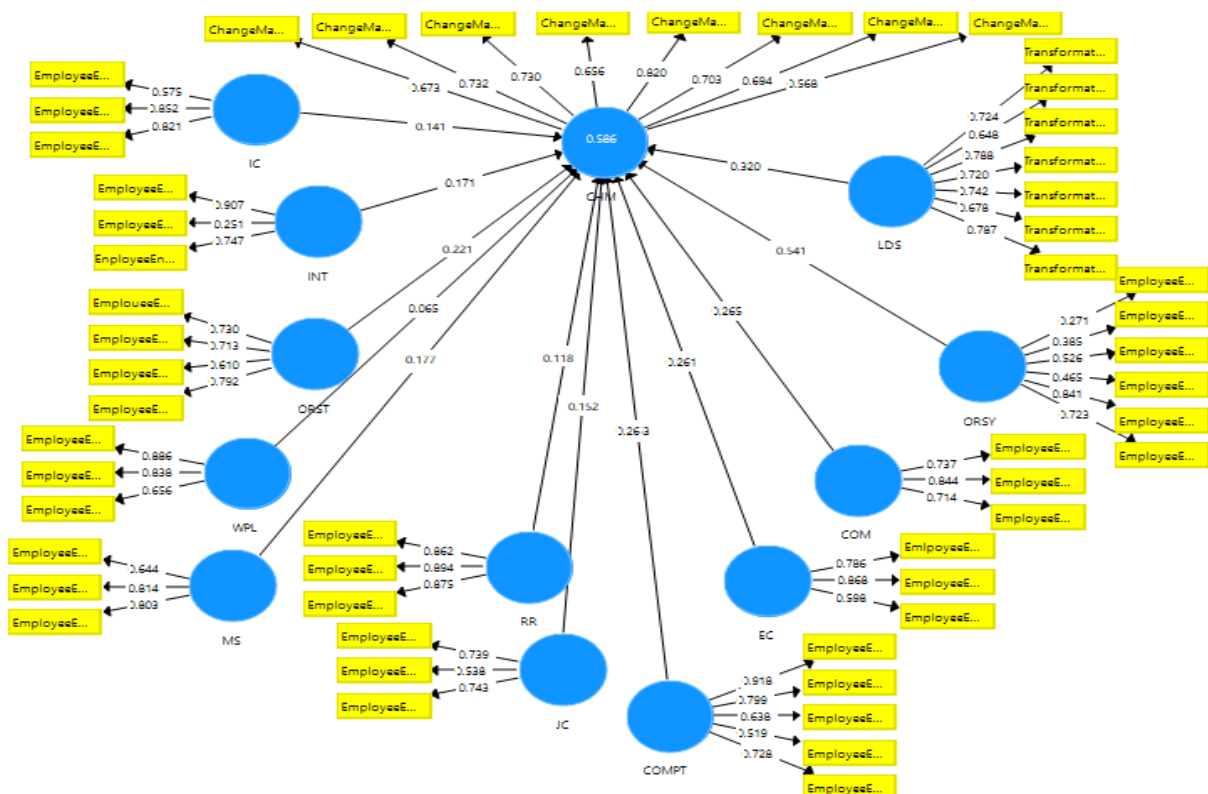


**Figure 2.** SEM Model

Sources: developed by the authors.

To investigate the influence of mediation, (Hayes, 2018) model of mediation considers the significance of an indirect channel that connects the independent variable to the dependent variable through the mediating variable. The study's conclusions demonstrate that transformational leadership and employee engagement significantly influence change management ($\beta$ = 0.159, p<0.05). Based on the earlier findings, Table 9 indicates that the H15 has been approved in the Chinese research sector.

**Table 9.** Study Mediation Analysis (Chinese Data) - Path Coefficients

| Direct Path | Coefficient | SD | t-value | p-value |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Employee Engagement -> Change Management | 0.375 | 0.066 | 5.731 | 0.000 |
| Employee Engagement -> Transformational leadership | 0.450 | 0.066 | 6.817 | 0.000 |
| Transformational leadership -> Change Management | 0.353 | 0.070 | 5.008 | 0.000 |
| **Indirect path** | | | | |
| Employee Engagement -> Transformational leadership -> Change Management | 0.159 | 0.035 | 4.513 | 0.000 |

Sources: developed by the authors.

Figure 3 shows how leadership, employee engagement, and change management are related. Greater employee engagement is correlated with more effective leadership, as shown by a positive path coefficient of 0.450 between the two variables. In turn, leadership has a favourable effect on change management (r = 0.353), indicating that strong leadership improves these methods. Better change management results are directly attributable to engaged employees, as shown by the positive correlation between employee engagement and change management (0.375). The percentage of variation described by the leadership predictor (0.203) and the change management predictor (0.385) is shown by the explained variances.
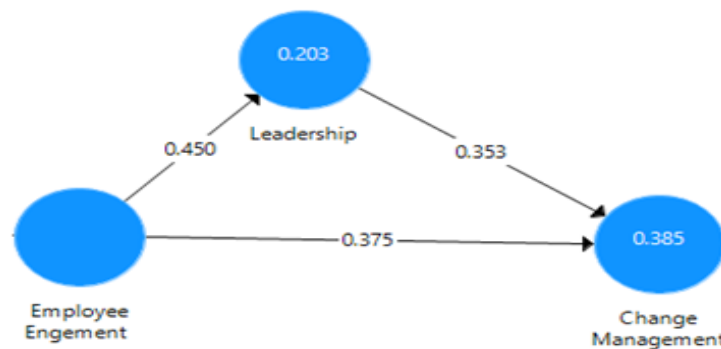


**Figure 3.** Mediation Model
Sources: developed by the authors.

**5. Discussion.** Regarding the independent variables EE, CMP, and TL, the research observations indicate a highly considerable link between these three factors. Based on the research conducted, these conclusions are connected to the research of (Banfield & Wilson, 2017; Kovjanic et al., 2013). According to empirical research, organisational change management positively correlates with employee engagement. As (Liu et al., 2023) found similar results. Previous research has found that TL has a favourable and significant association with the organisational change management process. The results of this research offer empirical evidence that supports the earlier studies. Concurrent with these results are those of (Tomlinson, 2010). In addition, teamwork, resistance to change, backing of change, and leader-member exchange are all areas where a transformational leader may inspire and drive their team (Kock, 2016). This gives team members consciousness, and without holding back, they confidently approach the team leader to continue to debate any issue they encounter, allowing the individual to improve their characteristics (Jafari-Sadeghi et al., 2023; Ramsey et al., 2017). The current research concluded that the CMP is positively and significantly related to the support that management provides. According to (Chatterjee et al., 2023), these findings are consistent with their findings.

Specifically, the outcomes of the current study indicate that rewards affect the process of managing organisational transformation. This set of findings demonstrates the significance of the rewards to change about CMP. These results favour the results of (Duru et al., 2023; San Ong & Teh, 2012). People and organisational competition are very important for every company's prosperity in the world. The study findings demonstrate that competition statistically correlates with the organisational change management process. Results demonstrate this relationship with study findings of (Ahmed, 2023; Ebrahim, 2005). As a result, the study's findings indicate that innovation is critical to the CMP. These outcomes corroborate the insights from the research (Patmawati et al., 2023). The outcomes are consistent with what the study found to be the situation (Esfahani et al., 2018; Supriharyanti & Sukoco, 2023). The results showed a positive and substantial environmental impact on the organisational change management process. The results are systematically identical to previous researchers' work (Mohammad & Husted, 2023).

Job characteristics are essential for the organisational change process. The findings elaborated that job characteristics are the most critical consideration for the organisational change management process. All these findings align with the previous investigation and provide a pitch that organisational structure is important for the organisational change management process (Fu et al., 2022; Lin et al., 2023). The findings of this study show that workplace well-being has a positive and significant relationship with the change management process. So, the results align with the previous research (Karaca et al., 2023; Paul et al., 2022). This study also

executed a fundamental mediation analysis to ascertain the link between employee engagement and transformative leadership as a mediator and the CMP (Juyumaya & Torres, 2023; Preacher, 2015).

**6. Conclusions.** This research aimed to test a model based on Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) and social exchange theory to examine the relationship between employee engagement and organisational change management processes. The study used the Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) theory, emphasising the importance of high-quality relationships between managers and employees. Employee engagement is crucial in the change management process, as it promotes commitment, enthusiasm, and involvement in the work and organisation. The social exchange theory (SET) was used as a theoretical framework to understand employee engagement. Employees who receive leadership and management support are more likely to reciprocate with increased job engagement and organisational change management. Employees who receive adequate development (training, skills, and learning) are more likely to be more engaged in their job roles and organisational roles and would repay with increased organisational change management. The findings of this study demonstrated that transformational leadership acts as a bridge between employee engagement and the organisational change management process. This has both theoretical and practical implications for tourism development. The study supported employee engagement by determining any employee's role in the organisational change management process and improved transformational leadership to improve the process. The study used set-pair analysis to construct a model for evaluating the degree of influence of employee engagement on the organisational change management process. It also analysed the positive influence of various employee engagement drivers on organisational change management under the role of transformational leaders. Specific influencing factors can effectively enhance employee engagement, helping transformational leaders develop targeted management solutions and better utilise the important role of employees in organisational change management. This research provides a more generalised model and related theories with practical implications for tourism development. Organisational change management was facilitated by transformational leadership, leading to new employee engagements. Future studies could explore how transactional and laissez-faire leadership styles affect change management and compare and contrast transformational leadership roles in China and Pakistan. By understanding why employees participate in the change management process independently, this research highlights the significant role of transformational leadership in managing organisational change.

In Pakistan and China's tourism industries, the research that is conducted ads to the current knowledge regarding social exchange theory. This study demonstrates two points: first, a relationship exists between EE and CMP, and second, there is a strong and positive correlation between this variable and organisational change management. This study's results illuminate the function of transformational leadership as a mediator in the connection between CMP and EE. The literature has yet to investigate the relationships between these variables comprehensively; this study fills that gap in the research. This research aims to determine the relationship between organisational change management, employee engagement, and transformational leadership. Given the significant mediatory role of transformational leadership in employee engagement and the organisational change process, it is recommended to invest in training programs for leaders in the tourism industry of China and Pakistan. These programs should focus on developing transformational leadership skills, such as inspiring and motivating employees, fostering open communication, and promoting a positive work environment. As the study compares the tourism industry in China and Pakistan, fostering cross-cultural collaboration between the two countries is crucial. This can be achieved through exchange programs, joint research initiatives, and sharing best practices. By learning from each other's experiences, both countries can enhance their approaches to employee engagement and organisational change in tourism.

The study examines the intermediary role of transformational leadership between employee engagement and organisational change management processes in the tourism industry. However, it faces limitations. Firstly, its cross-sectional design limits conclusions, suggesting the need for longitudinal studies. Secondly, convenience sampling in Pakistan and China may introduce bias, advocating for diverse sampling techniques. Thirdly, the small sample size in China's Yunnan province warrants expansion for deeper analysis, which is feasible with this model. Additionally, reliance solely on survey data may hinder validation, suggesting the incorporation of interviews and discourse analysis for future studies. Lastly, exploring moderating variables like psychological safety and absorptive capacity could further enhance the study's relationships.

To the best of the researcher's knowledge, this is the first research to link employee engagement with the success of an organisation's change management process. Furthermore, the study findings show that transformational leadership strengthens the relationship between employee engagement and the organisational change management process. Furthermore, the independent variable can be altered with the other variables to

examine their impact on the organisational change management process. This research is being carried out in China's tourism industry (Yunnan) and Pakistan (GB). As a result, this model can be evaluated in other sectors, such as health, the private sector, information technology, and agriculture. Moderation and mediation analysis (transformational leadership and psychological safety) can be used. Similarly, mixed method approaches like interviews, surveys, and discourse analysis can be used to analyse the variables in future research.

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**Посередницька роль трансформаційного лідерства: на прикладі Китаю**

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Організації, які проходять через трансформаційні процеси, повинні забезпечити ефективне управління змінами та залучення своїх працівників у прийняття рішень під час цих трансформацій. Враховуючи роль трансформаційного лідерства як посередника, це дослідження має на меті вивчити зв'язок між рівнем залучення працівників у прийняття рішень під час цих змін та процесом управління ними. Вибірку для дослідження сформовано на основі даних опитування. Отримані результати засвідчили наявність статистично значущої позитивної кореляції між управлінням змінами та факторами, що сприяють підвищенню рівня залученості працівників до прийняття рішень. Дослідження також показало, що трансформаційне лідерство є посередником між управлінням організаційними змінами та рівнем залучення працівників у прийняття рішень щодо діяльності компанії під час цих змін. На основі отриманих даних авторами наголошено, що трансформаційні лідери можуть зробити залучення працівників ще потужнішим інструментом для ефективного управління організаційними змінами. Дослідження висвітлює необхідність розвитку навичок трансформаційного лідерства та заохочення участі працівників у ініціативах щодо впровадження організаційних змін. Компанії повинні віддавати пріоритет стратегіям, які підвищують рівень залученості працівників, таким як комунікація, конкуренція, робоче середовище, підтримка керівництва, інновації, характеристики роботи, організаційна система та структура, винагороди та оплата праці. Крім того, ефективність заходів щодо управління змінами можна покращити шляхом інвестування в програми розвитку лідерства, спрямовані на створення трансформаційних лідерських компетенцій. Отримані результати дослідження щодо ролі трансформаційного лідерства як посередника у зв'язку між процесом управління змінами та рівнем залучення працівників у ці зміни можуть бути використані компаніям для формування та імплементації інструментів активізації участі працівників до прийняття рішень під час трансформаційних процесів.

**Ключові слова:** трансформаційне лідерство; стилі лідерства; залучення працівників; перехресне дослідження; організаційні зміни; процес управління змінами.