



Effect of Management support for change and Employee Engagement on Employee Performance in Selected Hospitals in Abuja - Nigeria

Kadri Aliu Mukaila¹, Ladan Sahnun², & Thomas O. Oladele^{3*}

¹ & ²Department of Business Administration, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria - Nigeria

³Department of Management Sciences, Nigerian Army University Bui, Borno State - Nigeria

Corresponding Author's E-mail: tomie4real@yahoo.com

Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to examine the mediating role of employee engagement in the relationship between management support and employee performance. The data were collected from a sample of 207 clinical staff from the selected hospital in Abuja by using the survey method. The data were analysed using the structural equation modelling technique. The results indicate that the effect of management support for change on employee performance was positive and statistically significant. In addition, management support for change affects employee performance through its influence on employee engagement. The findings of this study will help policymakers, stakeholders and management of hospitals in adopting proper management support in building employee engagement that stimulates the necessary behaviours that lead to enhanced employee performance. Managers could train their employees in these core values of resilience and personal responsibility necessary for high engagement. Doing so will ensure employees understand the significance of organisational change and work engagement on employee performance.

Keywords: Management Support for Change, Employee Engagement, Employee Performance

JEL Classification: M10, M12, M19

Contribution to/Originality Knowledge

Management support for change is an important thing that must be considered in any change process. From the findings of this study the employees and policymakers could consequently be enlightened on the effect of Management support for change on employee engagement which turn influences employee performance.

1.0 Introduction

Even after the ease of lockdown, the current global health pandemic has continued to affect businesses globally with Nigeria included. In Nigeria, Ishola *et al* (2021) provided evidence of businesses experiencing failure, low patronage, lack of funds and loan default and so on, due to the negative impact of the coronavirus pandemic. As a result of this pandemic and its attendant effects, organizations are faced with problems in supporting their employees for better performance. Specifically, employees coping with the new COVID-19 pandemic must learn to adapt to and cope with radical changes in the workplace and social environment to survive (Atthahira *et al*, 2021). Psychological stress further adds to the challenges of employees during the COVID-19 epidemic (Sasaki *et al.*, 2020). The unforeseen challenges due to the Covid-19 Pandemic situation have inhibited the performance of employees in most organizations in Nigeria. Consequently, one of the greatest challenges for human resource



management is implementing new workplace policies that would accommodate the new normal for better employee performance.

Despite the importance of adopting new change initiatives, the success of change initiatives may face a barrier in the response of employees, especially when they lack readiness to change (Metwally *et al.*, 2019). Today's global competition requires management support without interruption from every individual in the industry. Readiness to change relates to beliefs, attitudes and intentions about what changes are needed to support the success of the organization in making change (Siswanto & Haryati, 2020).

Considerable empirical work has suggested that management support for change is positively related to employee performance (Bello *et al.*, 2018; Egboka, 2018; Rahmi, 2019; Sirma *et al.*, 2019; Haffar *et al.*, 2019; Ismail *et al.*, 2021). Recent studies have examined the mediating effect of competency on the relationship between management support and employee performance. However, the mediating role of employee engagement in the relationship between management support and employee performance has not been sufficiently explored by extant research. In this context, when organizations initiate change and when employees perceive the existence of management support in the change programme, they will respond by showing vigour, absorption and dedication (employee engagement) to their job and organization (Kassa & Raju, 2015). Therefore, this study examines the mediating role of employee engagement in the relationship between management support and employee performance in selected hospitals in Abuja.

1.1 Concept of employee performance:

It is a central concept of management research and practice. In terms of practice, performance lies at the core of every management, as there remains no purpose of existence for a business entity if, it is not performing as per the established goals and objectives. However, the most important resource for organizational survival is its human resource. If all other resources are assembled in large numbers without human resource input, the effort is futile. Employees play significant roles in the attainment of corporate survival. Therefore, their performance should be of great concern to the managers.

Different managerial experts defined performance as the record of outcomes produced on a specified job function or activity during a specified time. According to Hadiana (2019), performance is the ability to accomplish a mission based on the expectations of an organization. Employee performance, which is the central focus of this study is the degree of achievement of the mission at the workplace that builds up an employee's job (Kidagisa *et al.*, 2020). Haziroh *et al* (2020) defined employee performance as one thing that can determine the success of a company. Employee performance may depend on the level of engagement they get from the management of an organization. In recent years, it has been discovered that the performances of employees have continued to drop sharply occasioned by the absence of adequate support and engagement by the management. The situation was further worsened with the advent of the noble coronavirus pandemic in 2019, thereby making the performance of employees greatly affected. The COVID-19 outbreak caused the worst global recession since

1930 when the economy got creamed (Shen *et al.*, 2020). Unexpected changes like customers' demand for health and safety are more urgent than that for social contact during the pandemic, resulting in a shrinking demand (Hagerty & Williams, 2020). In Nigeria, Ishola *et al* (2021) provided evidence of businesses experiencing failure, low patronage, lack of funds and loan default and so on, due to the negative impact of the coronavirus pandemic. As a result of this pandemic and its attendant effects, organizations are faced with problems in supporting their employees for better performance. Specifically, employees coping with the new COVID-19 pandemic must learn to adapt to and cope with radical changes in the workplace and social environment to survive (Atthahira *et al.*, 2021). Employees who spend a significant part of their day in the physical work environment, for example, had to rapidly adapt to remote work environments (Carnevale & Hatak, 2020). Psychological stress further adds to the challenges of employees during the COVID-19 epidemic (Sasaki *et al.*, 2020).

The Covid-19 pandemic has forced healthcare providers to adapt to new ways of delivery of medical services to avoid the contraction of the disease by medical personnel. This change in practice will have the greatest impact on frontline workers, many of whom are sceptical of change or lack confidence in their ability to adapt to new technology, therefore, careful implementation of this new normal is imperative. The unforeseen challenges due to the Covid-19 Pandemic situation have inhibited the performance of employees in most organizations across the world. Consequently, one of the greatest challenges for human resource management is implementing new workplace policies that would accommodate the new normal for better employee performance.

1.2 Management support

Management support refers to an individual's beliefs that key organizational members, such as top decision-makers and senior leaders, are fully supportive of the particular change and committed to the proposed change and its success by, for example, emphasizing its importance and encouraging employees to adopt it (Arnéguy *et al.*, 2018). It also refers to the provision of the instruments and resources by the top management for the workers to implement a change initiative (Ismail *et al.*, 2021). Top management members are the senior executives who are responsible for one or more functional areas in organizations. Top management's philosophy regarding change programs could strongly influence employee readiness for change.

Management support for change is a strong reason for employee readiness for change (Holt *et al.*, 2007), while change needs resources and commitment (Armenakis *et al.*, 2012). Employees could then see the change throughout the entire institution. In improving employee readiness to change, managers play an important role (Siregar *et al.*, 2021). Furthermore, management support for change and some other factors are important; such as the encouragement from senior leaders to adopt the change, the support from a decision maker or the top management to strongly stress how crucial the change is, the commitment from the senior leaders to adapt and to clarify the hint from the management that organization is going to have the change (Holt *et al.*, 2007). This implies that support from top managers can also encourage other organizational members to move positively and act accordingly.

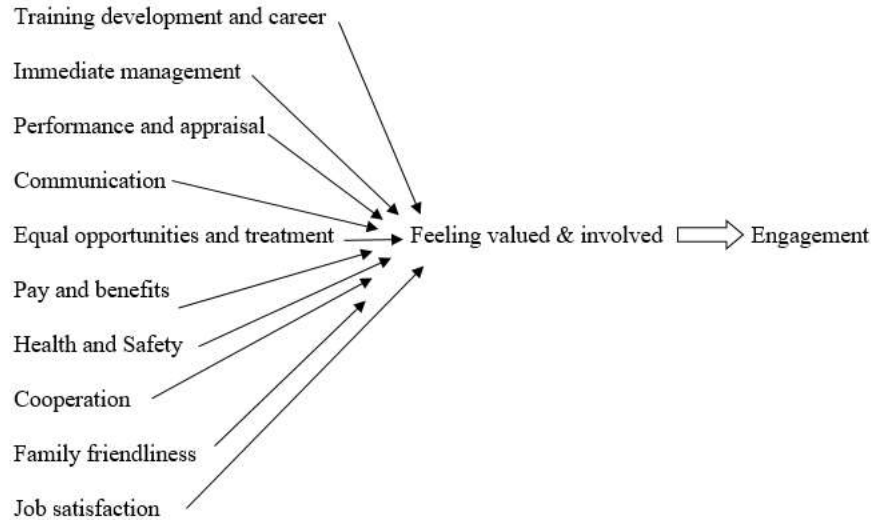


Management plays a vital role in planning for change. Management sets goals and objectives for change programs. The management makes short- and long-term plans for change to be implemented. Management communicates all action plans for change (Kirrane *et al.*, 2017). Management offers support by organizing the employees to carry out the organizational change plans. In case of any organizational change, management support for change helps employees to absorb and understand the changes. Management support for change also involves directing employees in the right direction (Mardhatillah *et al.*, 2017). Although a work plan is laid down employees need to be pushed in the right direction for the goals to be achieved. Management support for change also involves controlling where management does evaluation and checks if change objectives are being achieved or not. Furthermore, management support for change in the workplace increases emotions of involvement and contribution among employees. Management support for change can make employees get involved and encouraged to employ their know-how and skills to propose ways for improvements in some aspects of the job which need the improvements (Ismail *et al.*, 2021). In essence, in this study, top management support for change refers to top management's participation in or commitment to change efforts to increase employee readiness for change.

1.3 Employee engagement:

Many organizations use employee engagement as a model for making the organization more effective and efficient (Mangundjava, 2012). Employee engagement is a good tool to help every organization to strive to gain competitive advantages over others (Anitha, 2014). Markos and Sridevi (2010), employee engagement is based on knowledge relating to constructs like job satisfaction, commitment and organizational citizenship behaviour. They also regarded engaged employees as those who demonstrate an intense feeling of attachment to their organization, full readiness/ availability to complete job responsibilities and enthusiastically bestow their employees. Shaufeli (2012) described employee engagement as having to do with a positive and fulfilling mindset which typifies vigour, dedication and absorption and is work-related. They used the definition of burnout, to describe and/or shed light on employee engagement, and that employee engagement is an antipode of burnout.

Researches show that numerous favourable outcomes found in organizations proceed from employee engagement: employee retention (Shamila, 2013), customer loyalty (Kumar & Swetha, 2011), organizational performance (Markos & Sridevi, 2010), job satisfaction (Saks, 2006). However, the empirical studies testing how such factors exert influence on employee engagement remain sparse (Sihag, 2021). According to Alagaraja and Shuck (2015) organizational alignment, together with employee engagement improves individual performance. This study provides knowledge about the importance of engagement in an organization and the means of achieving engagement and subsequently employee performance. Robinson *et al* (2004), identified the drivers of employee engagement, as shown in the figure below:



2.0 Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

In terms of empirical studies, Gigliotti *et al* (2019) embarked on a study on perceived organizational support and its effects on individual change readiness. The data were collected by questionnaires method and further analyzed using regression equations and posthoc analyses. The results of this analysis confirmed that perceived organizational support has a positive and significant effect on individual change readiness. In addition, the trust did function as a mediating variable. Haffar *et al* (2019) examined how individual readiness for change in terms of personally beneficial, management support, change appropriateness and change self-efficacy affects total quality management with the mediating role of employee affective commitment to change. The results of this analysis showed that individual readiness for change in terms of personally beneficial, management support, change appropriateness and change self-efficacy has a positive and significant impact on total quality management.

Ismail *et al* (2021) evaluated how management support influences employee performance. The study was conducted in Nigeria with a sample size of 450 lecturers. The results of this analysis showed that management support has a positive and significant effect on employee performance. Bello *et al* (2018) undertook a study on management support and its effects on organizational performance. Top management support in the relationship between management support and organizational performance. The results of this analysis confirmed that management support has a positive and significant impact on organizational performance. Also, top management support did function as a moderating variable.

Rahmi (2019) embarked on a study on top management support and its effects on supply chain performance. The results of this analysis established that top management support has a positive and significant influence on supply chain performance. Egboka (2018) studied the effects of management support practices on job performance. The results of this analysis revealed that management support practices have a negative and insignificant effect on job performance. Sirma *et al* (2019) examined the effects of top management commitment and support on operational performance. The data were assembled by the ex-post facto research



approach method and further analyzed using Pearson correlation and regression analysis. The results of this analysis showed that top management commitment and support have a positive and significant impact on operational performance.

García-Sánchez *et al* (2017) conducted a study on top management support and its effects on knowledge management processes. The results of this analysis confirmed that top management support has a positive and significant influence on knowledge management processes. The study only examined the direct relationship between top management support and knowledge management processes. However, more research is needed on the mechanism through which top management support can influence knowledge management processes. De Valle (2021) studied how to change appropriateness, management support and change efficacy impact organizational resilience. The results of this analysis revealed that change appropriateness, management support and change efficacy have a positive and significant impact on organizational resilience. The study only examined the direct relationship between management support and organizational resilience. However, more research is needed on the mechanism through which management support can influence organizational resilience. By considering the above evidence from the literature, it is proposed that;

H₁: Management support has a significant effect on employee performance at selected hospitals in Abuja.

2.1 Mediating effect of employee engagement.

When an organization makes fundamental changes, it becomes the most important element for the success of the organizational change. Employee engagement is defined as “a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind characterized by vigour, dedication and absorption” (Schaufeli *et al.*, 2002, p. 74). Vigour is characterized by a high level of energy and mental resilience while working, the willingness to invest effort in one’s work and persistence even in the face of difficulties (Mitonga-Monga & Cilliers, 2015). Dedication involves being strongly involved in one’s work with a sense of pride and enthusiasm (Ferreira & Rodrigues, 2018).

Kahn (1990, p. 694) introduced the concept of employee engagement, giving his now famous definition quoted in the introduction, namely, “the harnessing of organization members’ selves to their work roles; in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances”. The first component of this definition is the physical dimension similar to vigour, which is regarded as a trait showing high levels of energy and mental resilience, having the will to invest effort at work and persistence in challenging times (Sendawula *et al.*, 2018). The second component is the emotional dimension (dedication), which is regarded as a trait indicating a sense of significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride and challenge (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Mayo, 2016). Finally, cognitive (absorption dimension) is described as being fully and happily involved and concentrated in one’s work, not being aware of the time passing by and where one experiences difficulties with detaching oneself from work (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004).

Employees believe that their supervisor will provide all the necessary support to continue their activities and to make them more engaged with the organization (Rubel & Kee, 2013). This may be the feeling of the employee that management can play a vital role to engage the employee which may enhance their belongingness to the organization. Thus, when organizations initiate change and when employees perceive the existence of management support for change in doing their job, time availability as well as flexible intra-organizational boundaries, they will respond by showing vigour, absorption and dedication to their job and organization (Boikanyo, 2012; Kassa & Raju, 2015). Furthermore, change appropriateness is an issue that could also be associated with the employee engagement construct. Özer *et al* (2017) observed that procedural justice has a positive effect on employee engagement. Procedural justice stands for the appropriateness of procedures in an organization. According to the self-efficacy theory, the employee engagement level is closely associated with the feeling that employees have their competencies and their perceptions of how good they are in each change domain (Olivier *et al.*, 2019).

In terms of empirical studies, Ahmed (2019) assessed how management support for change, affects readiness for change. The study was conducted in Ethiopia with a sample size of 326 employees of Awash banks. The results of this analysis established that management support for change has a positive and significant effect on readiness for change. The study used readiness for change dimensions as dependent variables. The current study used readiness for change as the independent variable. Matthysen and Harris (2018) assessed how employee engagement impacts employees' readiness to change. The data were assembled by cross-sectional survey method and further analyzed using structural equation modelling. The results of this analysis confirmed that employee engagement has a positive and significant impact on employees' readiness to change. The study only examined the direct relationship between employee engagement and employees' readiness to change. However, more research is needed on the mechanism through which employee engagement can influence employees' readiness to change. Based on this discussion, this study hypothesized that:

H₂: Employee engagement significantly mediates the relationship between management support for change and employee performance at selected Hospitals in Abuja.

2.2 Theoretical framework

The use of Kurt Lewin's theory of planned change can support this study through the transition and identification of strength and resistance before implementing change. The unfreezing stage is where understanding of the difficulties related to the identified problems is sought and strategies are developed to strengthen the driving forces and weaken or reduce the restraining forces (Bozak, 2003). Unfreezing may be achieved by applying appropriate management support to create the readiness for change (Al-Haddad & Kotnour, 2015). The moving stage is where the actual change in practice takes place as a result of the equalization of the opposing forces, thereby allowing the driving forces to support the change. This driving force to support change can be achieved with employee engagement and active participation. The third stage which is the refreezing stage can be used to evaluate the stability of the change. The stability of the change can be measured by the level of employee performance. This theory has been

applied in similar studies such as Gelaidan *et al* (2018) and Kimhi and Oliel (2019) who studied the effects of leadership changes on organizational performance. However, Lewin's theory of planned change is without its limitations. For example, some critics believe that because today's healthcare systems are complex and unpredictable, change occurs faster than Lewin's theory can account for (Shirey, 2013). Notwithstanding, this study adopts the theory since after the pandemic most hospitals have opportunities to effect changes that have a positive impact.

2.3 Conceptual framework

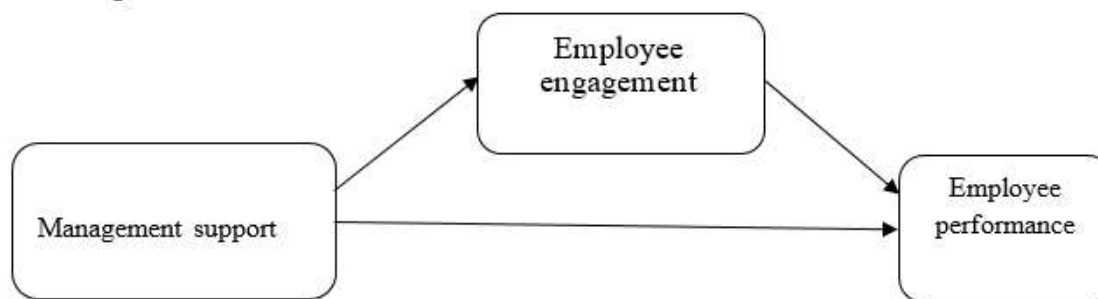


Figure 2.1: Research model

In this model, which was underpinned by Kurt Lewin's change theory, management support is the independent variable (IV), while employee performance is the dependent variable (DV) and employee engagement serves as the mediating factor which helps to clarify the relationship between the IV and the DV. Management support is having a direct relationship with employee performance as shown in the model above. Also, there is an indirect relationship between management support and employee performance through employee engagement. Here, the direct effect of management support on employee performance is considered partial, and the effect of employee engagement on employee performance is equally partial.

3.0 Research Design

This study used a quantitative cross-sectional research design which allows for the generalization of findings in a large population. The current study targeted hospitals in Abuja, namely, 1) Garki Hospital, Garki Abuja, 2) Kelina Hospital, Gwarimpa, Abuja, 3) Zanklin Medical Center, Abuja, 4) St Francois Medical Center Abuja, 5) Asokoro General Hospital, Abuja, 6) Alhassan Hospital, Abuja, 7) First Hospital and Maternity, Abuja, 8) Horizons Medical Centre, Abuja, 9) Ideal Hospital, Abuja, 10) Iduna Specialists Hospital, Abuja, 11) Kings Care Hospitals, Abuja, 12) Federal Staff Clinic, Abuja, 13) Wuse General Hospital, Abuja and 14) Cedar Crest Hospital, Abuja. The criteria for selection of these hospitals were based on proximity, accessibility, and employee willingness to participate.

Sample

The units of observation were doctors, nurses, and laboratory technicians. Therefore, the population of the study was 350 clinical services staff. The sample size of 187 clinical services staff for this study was arrived at by using the formula suggested by Taro Yaman. However, this sample size was increased to 280 (1.50×187) to allow for possible non-response and also

to have an adequate number for SEM based on the recommendation of Bartlett *et al* (2001). 100–150 is considered the minimum sample size for conducting SEM (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007).

The study has adopted the online questionnaire as a tool for collecting primary data. An online data collection tool was designed and executed using Google Forms (via docs.google.com/forms). The online questionnaires will be easy to administer and save time, and prepared based on the Likert scale. (Lefever *et al.*, 2007).

The measures for these variables were adopted from previous studies. The items for management support for change were adopted from scales developed by Armenakis *et al* (1993) and Holt *et al* (2007). Likewise, employee engagement was adopted from the items developed and validated by Khoreva and VanZalk (2016). Lastly, employee performance was adapted from the scale of Rodwell *et al* (1998). This study adopted the Partial Least Square, Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) method for empirical examination of the hypothesized model through smart PLS 3.0 software. PLS-SEM was also used to establish convergent validity, discriminant validity, and composite reliability. The returned copies of the questionnaire were only 207. Thus, the response rate was 74%.

4.0 Results and Discussions

4.1 Measurement Model

As shown in Table 1 and Figure 1, the research model included 15 items (5 items for each variable) measuring management support for change, employee performance and employee engagement. The outer loading of the items in the questionnaire is equal to or above then the threshold standard of 0.70 (Hair *et al.*, 2016), except for one item of management support for change, one item of employee engagement and three items of employee performance, that are deleted. However, one item for employee performance (0.649) is slightly weak, but Hair *et al* (2017) suggested that slightly weak items can be maintained in the model due to its scale validity, therefore, this item for employee performance (EP6) is maintained in the model.

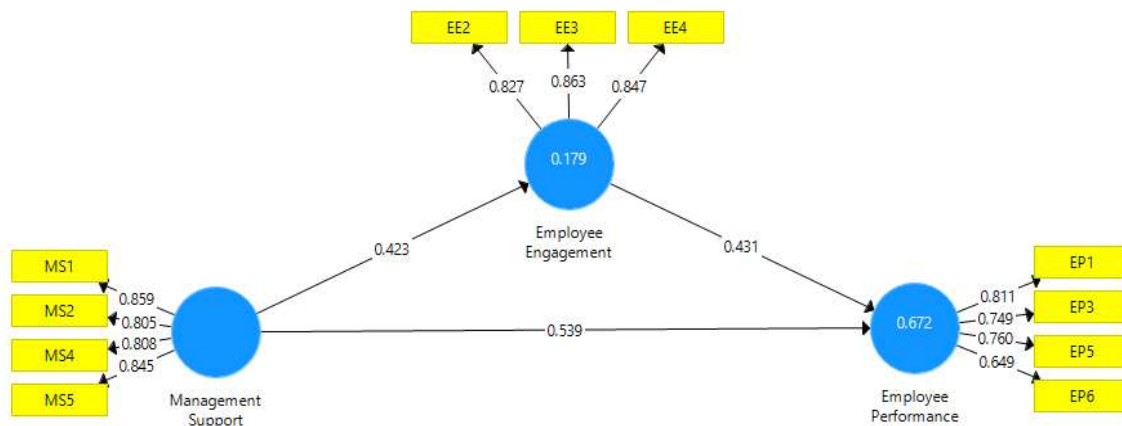


Figure 1: Modified Measurement Model



Table 1. Model Assessment

Variables	Items	Outer VIF Values	Outer Loadings	Construct reliability and validity			
				CR	A	rho_A	AVE
Management Support	MS1	2.264	0.859	0.898	0.849	0.850	0.688
	MS2	1.745	0.805				
	MS4	1.760	0.808				
	MS5	2.037	0.845				
Employee Engagement	EE2	1.640	0.827	0.883	0.801	0.803	0.715
	EE3	1.793	0.862				
	EE4	1.743	0.847				
Employee Performance	EP1	1.543	0.811	0.832	0.732	0.746	0.554
	EP3	1.375	0.749				
	EP5	1.428	0.760				
	EP6	1.265	0.649				

Note: CR = Composite Reliability, α = Cronbach Alpha, rho_A = Dijkstra–Henseler’s rho indicators, AVE = average variance extracted.

Construct convergent validity is measured by the average variance extracted (AVE). In Table 1, the AVE of all constructs is greater than the threshold level of 0.5. Therefore, construct validity and reliability are confirmed (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

The collinearity issue of the model is examined through the values of the variance inflation factor (VIF). The values of VIF less than 5 are considered acceptable (Hair *et al.*, 2016). All inner VIF values of the constructs are less than 5 which indicates no collinearity issues in the model (See Table 1).

Table 2: Discriminant Validity.

Fornell-Larcker Criterion				Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio			
Constructs	MS	EE	EP	Constructs	EE	EP	MS
MS	0.830			EE	0.000		
EE	0.423	0.846		EP	0.865		
EP	0.721	0.659	0.745	MS	0.5103	0.8926	0.000

Note: MS = Management Support, EP = Employee performance, EE = Employee engagement

Table 2 presents the discriminant validity of the model. Discriminant validity is examined through the Fornell-Larcker Criterion and Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratios methods. Henseler *et al* (2015) consider a 0.90 maximum threshold level of HTMT to be appropriate. The result in Table 2 shows the HTMT inference ratios were less than 0.90, thus indicating that the indicators used in the study have discriminant validity.

4.3 Structural Model

4.3.1 Direct Effect

Table 4 explains the direct significant positive relationship between management support and employee performance with β value of .5409, a t-value of 14.0141, and a p-value of .000 at a .05 level of significance. Thus, H1 is supported.

Table 4: Direct Effect

Structural Path	Path Coefficient (t-value)	Confidence interval (2.5%, 97.5%)	(P Values) 0.05	Decision
MS -> EP	0.5409 (14.0141)	(0.4595, 0.6102)	0.000	H ₁ is Supported

Note: MS = Management Support, EP = Employee performance

4.3.2 Indirect Effect

The indirect relationship of the variables is explained in Table 5. The indirect effect was analyzed using bootstrap analysis suggested by Preacher and Hayes (2008). The indirect effect of management support for change on employee performance through employee engagement was highly significant ($\beta = 0.184$, $t = 7.335$, $p = 0.000$)

. Thus, H₂ is also supported. Figure 2 explains the post-analysis model of this study.

Table 5: Indirect Effect

Structural Path	Path Coefficient (t-value)	Confidence interval (2.5%, 97.5%)	(P Values) 0.05	Decision
MS -> EE -> EP	0.1835 (7.3349)	(0.1392, 0.2339)	0.000	H ₂ is Supported

Note: MS = Management Support, EP = Employee performance

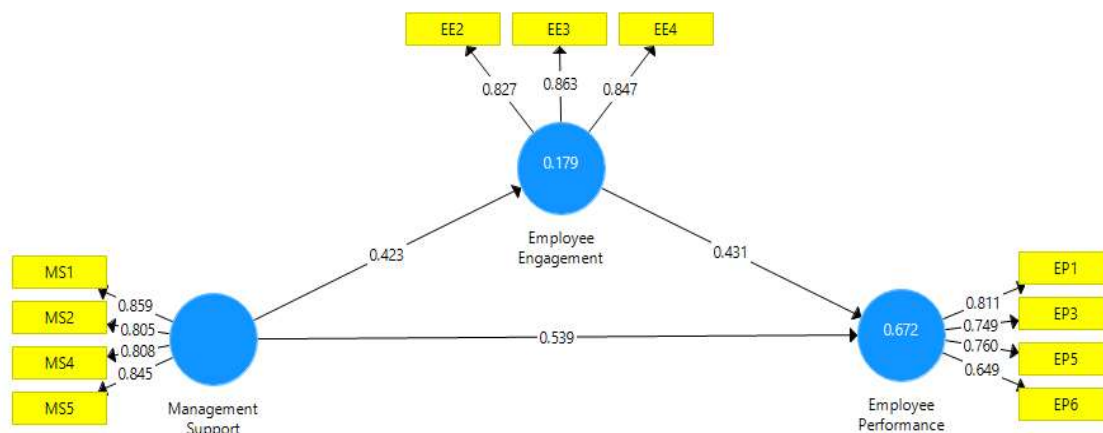


Figure 2: Post-analysis model



4.4 Discussion

The main objective of this study was to examine the effect of management support for change on employee performance through the mediation of employee engagement in the healthcare industry. Existing related works have focused on the effect of management support for change on performance and little attention has been paid to the mediation of employee engagement in these relationships. The research model is depicted in Figure 2. The two hypothesized paths in the model were found to be both significant and positive.

First, management support for change on employee performance was found to have a positive and significant effect on employee performance. This result could be a result of top management members being the senior executives who are responsible for one or more functional areas in organizations, therefore, their support is a strong reason for employee readiness for change. This implies that management plays a vital role in planning for change. In the context of hospital management, this result implies that when the hospital's senior leaders encourage their employees to embrace this change and put all their support behind change efforts, employees could set very high standards for themselves and turn in high-quality work performance. The results of this study are in line with the results of Ismail *et al* (2021) who found that management support for change influence employee performance. Likewise, Sirma *et al* (2019) showed that top management commitment and support have a positive and significant impact on operational performance.

Secondly, employee engagement was found to significantly mediate the relationship between management support for change and employee performance at the selected hospitals in Abuja. The empirical outcomes of this study proved that management support for change has a positive and significant relationship with employees' engagement and employee performance. The positive results of this study showed that employee engagement is a good tool to help every organization to strive to gain a competitive advantage over others (Anitha, 2014). When an organization makes fundamental changes, it becomes the most important element for the success of the organizational change. Thus, when organizations initiate change and when employees perceive the existence of management support for change in doing their job, time availability as well as flexible intra-organizational boundaries, they will respond by showing vigour, absorption and dedication to their job and organization which in turn will improve their performance. Furthermore, this study not only confirms the application of the three-step change theory and engagement theory but also extends the application of these theories to the healthcare sector. In applying the theory to this case study, the pre-COVID era where the system of medication delivery and administration at our health facilities involves old medication carts in poor repair. The COVID-19 pandemic outbreak has forced healthcare providers to adapt to new ways of delivering medical services to avoid the contraction of the disease by medical personnel. The change in practices will have the greatest impact on the frontline nurses, doctors, and laboratory workers, many of whom are skeptical of change or lack confidence in their abilities to adapt to new technology, therefore, careful implementation of this new normal is important. The use of Kurt Lewin's change management theory can support the transitions and identify areas of strength and resistance or driving and restraining forces before implementing change.

Here, management support for change and employee engagement are important tools that could be used as driving forces against any resistance to change programs. When the change is actualized through this mechanism, and there is an achievement of positive employee performance, there is therefore the need for sustainability of the measure through continuous adoption of management support (through the provision of modern medical equipment and regular interface by management) and employee engagement practices to encourage employment in the organization.

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

This study seeks to investigate the mediating role of employee engagement in the relationship between management support for change and employee performance in selected hospitals in Abuja. Based on the empirical findings, the study concludes that there is a significant effect of management support on employee performance. In addition, the study concludes that management support has an indirect effect on employee performance, through employee engagement. Although the survey data were obtained from hospitals in Abuja only, it offers valuable insights about management support for change and employee engagement. Therefore, this study has both theoretical and managerial contributions.

In terms of theory, recent studies on organizational support, tend to examine the mediating effect of trust (Gigliotti *et al.*, 2019). However, the mediating effect of employee engagement within the context of readiness for change has not been sufficiently explored by extant research. This study's theoretical and conceptual framework is used to determine the significance of individual readiness for change and employee engagement on employee performance in achieving a sustainable healthcare system. The findings of this study fill gaps in the literature that lack empirical examination of the relationships between management support for change, employee engagement and employee performance.

At the managerial level, organizations operate in an era of rapid changes and a competitive marketplace. The findings from this study prove that employee engagement is one of the business strategies for managing change. Not only does engagement have the potential to significantly affect employee retention, productivity and loyalty, but it is also a key link to customer satisfaction, company reputation and overall stakeholder value. High levels of engagement promote the retention of talent, foster customer loyalty and improve employee performance. The present study collected data from clinical services staff. In hospitals, clinical services staff deal with different patients with various challenges and demographic profiles. There could be challenges in solving all problems with the traditional method. As a result, unsupported and encouraged clinical services staff may become disengaged. In such a situation, through management support for change, these issues maybe are handled by developing a culture where employees strongly get involved in their work with a sense of pride and enthusiasm.

Improving employee engagement requires support from the top management team, and a successful engagement strategy warrants thoughtful corporate planning. Employees are more engaged when there is a clear goal to focus on and a purpose to inspire them. An organization's



core values and mission statement are the foundation of its culture, which plays a large role in how engaged your employees are. Managers could train their employees in these values for high engagement. Doing so will ensure employees understand the significance of the organization's core values to employee performance. In addition, managers should focus on being highly engaged in the change program themselves through management support for change, which is an effective way to quickly increase employee engagement at all levels.

This research had a number of constraints. The measurement tool is a questionnaire and interpretation of the results is limited to this survey tool. Therefore, the content of this research is limited to the understanding of clinical staff from the items in the questionnaire. Future research may consider other sectors and the public at large using appropriate sampling techniques that may provide a large sample. This study used employee engagement as a mediating in the relationship between management support for change and employee performance. Further research should be done to investigate the effect of other factors that serve as intervening variables which may not have been conceptualized in this study.

References

- Ahmed, S. (2019). Determinants of employees' readiness for organizational change: The Case of Awash Bank, North West Region, Ethiopia. *Ethiopian Journal of Business Management and Economics*, 2(2), 32-32.
- Alagaraja, M. & Shuck, B. (2015). Exploring organizational alignment-employee engagement linkages and impact on individual performance: A conceptual model. *Human Resource Development Review*, 14(1) 17-37.
- Al-Haddad, S., & Kotnour, T. (2015). Integrating the organizational change literature: a model for successful change. *Journal of organizational change management*, 28 (2), 234-262.
- Anitha, J. (2014). Determinants of employee engagement and their impact on employee performance. *International journal of productivity and performance management*.
- Armenakis, A. A., Harris S.G., & Mossholder K.W. (2012). "Creating readiness for organizational change. *Journal of Human Relations*, 46 (6), 681-699.
- Armenakis, A. A., Harris, S. G., & Mossholder, K. W. (1993). Creating readiness for organizational change. *Human Relations*, 46(6), 681-703.
- Arnéguy, E., Ohana, M., & Stinglhamber, F. (2018). Organizational justice and readiness for change: a concomitant examination of the mediating role of perceived organizational support and identification. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 9, 1172.
- Atthahira, N. A., Eliyana, A., & Joesah, N. (2021). Change management and creativity during pandemic Covid-19 in Indonesia. *Systematic Reviews in Pharmacy*, 12(1), 953-959.

- Bartlett, J. E., Kotrlik, J. W., & Higgins, C. C. (2001). Organizational research: Determining appropriate sample size in survey research. *Information Technology, learning, and Performance Journal*, 19(1), 43-50.
- Bello, S. M., Che Ahmad, A., & Mohamad Yusof, N. Z. (2018). Internal audit quality dimensions and organizational performance in Nigerian federal universities: the role of top management support. *Journal of Business & Retail Management Research*, 13(01), 156-170.
- Boikanyo, D. H. (2012). *An exploration of the effect of employee engagement on performance in the petrochemical industry* (Doctoral dissertation, North-West University).
- Bozak, M. G. (2003). Using Lewin's force field analysis in implementing a nursing information system. *Computers, Informatics, Nursing*, 21(2), 80-85.
- Carnevale, J. B., & Hatak, I. (2020). Employee adjustment and well-being in the era of COVID-19: Implications for human resource management. *Journal of Business Research*, 116, 183-187.
- De Valle, N. A. C. (2021). *How does family firm status moderate the relationship between organizational readiness for change and organizational resilience in times of crisis?* (Doctoral dissertation, The University of North Carolina at Charlotte).
- Egboka, P. N. (2018). Principals' application of management support practices for enhancing teachers job performance in secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria. *Online Submission*, 5(17), 582-590.
- Ferreira, P., & Rodrigues, P. (2018). Engagement as an antecedent of the satisfaction-performance relation: a study with line managers. *International Journal of Human Resources Development and Management*, 18(1-2), 32-50.
- Fornell, C. & Larcker, D.F. (1981). Evaluating structural equation models with unobservable variables and measurement error. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 18(1), 39-50.
- García-Sánchez, E., García-Morales, V. J., & Bolívar-Ramos, M. T. (2017). The influence of top management support for ICTs on organisational performance through knowledge acquisition, transfer, and utilisation. *Review of Managerial Science*, 11(1), 19-51.
- Gelaidan, H. M., Al-Swidi, A., & Mabkhot, H. A. (2018). Employee readiness for change in public higher education institutions: examining the joint effect of leadership behavior and emotional intelligence. *International Journal of Public Administration*, 41(2), 150-158.
- Gigliotti, R. Vardaman, J. Marshall, R. & Gonzale, K. (2019). The role of perceived organizational support in individual change readiness. *Journal of change management*. 19 (2) 89-100.



- Hadiana, R. N. (2019). *The influence of transformational leadership and commitment organization implications for performance employee State Civil Apparatus (Asn Bandung Indonesian)* (Doctoral dissertation, Universitas Pasundan).
- Haffar, M., Al-Karaghoul, W., Irani, Z., Djebarni, R., & Gbadamosi, G. (2019). The influence of individual readiness for change dimensions on quality management implementation in Algerian manufacturing organisations. *International Journal of Production Economics*, 207, 247-260.
- Hagerty, S. L., & Williams, L. M. (2020). The impact of COVID-19 on mental health: The interactive roles of brain biotypes and human connection. *Brain, Behavior, & Immunity-Health*, 5(2), 10-28.
- Hair, J. F., Hult, G. T. M., Ringle, C., & Sarstedt, M. (2017). *A Primer on Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) (2nd ed.)*. London, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Hair, J.J., Hult, G., Ringle, C. & Sarstedt, M. (2016), *A Primer on Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM)*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Haziroh, A.L. Pramodanti, A.D. & Sukono, F.I. (2020). *The effect of multiple role conflict on employee performance. Moderated by self-efficacy*. In: The 2nd International Conference on Business and Banking Innovations (ICOBBI) 2020, 14 - 15 Agustus 2020, STIE Perbanas Surabaya.
- Henseler, J.Ringle, C.M. & Sarsted, M.(2015).A new criterion for assessing discriminant validity in variance-based structural equation modelling. *Journal of the academy of marketing sciences*.43 (1) 115-135.
- Holt, D. T., Armenakis, A. A., Feild, H. S. & Harris, S. G. (2007). Toward a comprehensive definition of readiness for change: A review of research and instrumentation. *Research in organizational change and development*, 16(1), 289-336.
- Ishola, J. A., Ityonzughul, T. T., & Gbamwuan, A. (2021). Entrepreneurship and Small-Scale Businesses in the Era of Coronavirus Pandemic in Oyo State, Nigeria. *KIU Journal of Social Sciences*, 6(4), 229-241.
- Ismail, A. I., Majid, A. H. A., Jibrin-Bida, M., & Joarder, M. H. R. (2021). Moderating effect of management support on the relationship between HR practices and employee performance in Nigeria. *Global Business Review*, 22(1), 132-150.
- Kahn, W.A. (1990). Psychological conditions of personal engagement and disengagement at work. *Academy of Management Journal*, 33(4), 692-724.
- Kassa, A. G., & Raju, R. S. (2015). Investigating the relationship between corporate entrepreneurship and employee engagement. *Journal of Entrepreneurship in Emerging Economies*, 7(2), 148-167.

- Khoreva, V., & van Zalk, M. (2016). Antecedents of work engagement among high potential employees. *Career Development International*, 21(5), 1-30.
- Kidagisa, F.C. Mukanzi, C. & Okello, M.B. (2020). Influence of selected Human resource practices on employee job performance in selected sugar companies in Western Kenya. *International journal of recent research in social sciences and Humanities*.7 (2), 78-96.
- Kimhi, S., & Oliel, Y. (2019). Change management and organizational performance in selected manufacturing companies in Anambra State, Nigeria. *The International Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities Invention*, 6(05), 5437-5445.
- Kirrane, M., Lennon, M., O'Connor, C., & Fu, N. (2017). Linking perceived management support with employees' readiness for change: the mediating role of psychological capital. *Journal of Change Management*, 17(1), 47-66.
- Kumar, D. P., & Swetha, G. (2011). A prognostic examination of employee engagement from its historical roots. *International Journal of Trade, Economics and Finance*, 2(3), 232.
- Lefever, S. Dal, M. & Matthiasdottir, A. (2007). Online data collection in academic research advantages & limitations. *British journal of educational technology*. 38(4)574-582.
- Mangundjaya, W. L. (2012). Are organizational commitment and employee engagement important in achieving individual readiness for change? *Humanitas: Jurnal Psikologi Indonesia*, 9(2), 185-192.
- Mardhatillah, A., Rahman, S. A., & Ismail, K. (2017). the relationship between psychosocial predictors and employee readiness to change. *International Journal of Economics & Management*, 11(2), 345 – 364.
- Markos, S. & Sridevi, M.S. (2010). Employee engagement: the key to improving performance. *International Journal of Business and Management*, 5(12), 89-96.
- Matthysen, M., & Harris, C. (2018). The relationship between readiness to change and work engagement: A case study in an accounting firm undergoing change. *SA Journal of Human Resource Management*, 16(1), 1-11.
- Mayo, A. (2016). The measurement of engagement. *Strategic HR Review. Journal of Emerald Group publishing company Limited Vol. 15(2) 83-89*.
- Metwally, D., Ruiz-Palomino, P., Metwally, M., & Gartzia, L. (2019). How ethical leadership shapes employees' readiness to change: The mediating role of an organizational culture of effectiveness. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 10(1), 24-93.
- Mitonga-Monga, J., & Cilliers, F. (2015). Ethics culture and ethical climate in relation to employee engagement in a developing country setting. *Journal of Psychology in Africa*, 25(3), 242-249.



- Olivier, E., Archambault, I., De Clercq, M., & Galand, B. (2019). Student self-efficacy, classroom engagement, and academic achievement: Comparing three theoretical frameworks. *Journal of youth and adolescence*, 48(2), 326-340.
- Özer, Ö., Uğurluoğlu, Ö., & Saygili, M. (2017). Effect of organizational justice on work engagement in healthcare sector of Turkey. *Journal of Health Management*, 19(1), 73-83.
- Preacher, K. J., & Hayes, A. F. (2008). Asymptotic and resampling strategies for assessing and comparing indirect effects in multiple mediator models. *Behavior Research Methods*, 40(3), 879–891.
- Rahmi, B. A. K. İ. (2019). The impact of information technologies and top management support on supply chain performance: an empirical approach for Turkey. *Avrupa Bilimve Teknoloji Dergisi*, (17), 916-926.
- Robinson, D., Perryman, S., & Hayday, S. (2004). The drivers of employee engagement report 408. *Institute for Employment Studies, UK*, 72.
- Rodwell, J. J., Kienzle, R., & Shadur, M. A. (1998). The relationship among work-related perceptions, employee attitudes, and employee performance: The integral role of communications. *Human Resource Management: Published in Cooperation with the School of Business Administration, The University of Michigan and in alliance with the Society of Human Resources Management*, 37(3-4), 277-293.
- Rubel, M. R. B., & Kee, D. M. H. (2013). Perceived support and employee performance: The mediating role of employee engagement. *Life Science Journal*, 10(4), 2557-2567.
- Saks, A. M. (2006). Antecedents and consequences of employee engagement. *Journal of managerial psychology*, 21(7), 600-619.
- Sasaki, N., Kuroda, R., Tsuno, K., & Kawakami, N. (2020). Workplace responses to COVID-19 associated with mental health and work performance of employees in Japan. *Journal of occupational health*, 62(1), e12134.
- Schaufeli, W. B., & Bakker, A. B. (2004). Job demands, job resources, and their relationship with burnout and engagement: A multi-sample study. *Journal of Organizational Behavior: The International Journal of Industrial, Occupational and Organizational Psychology and Behavior*, 25(3), 293-315.
- Schaufeli, W. B., Salanova, M., González-Romá, V., & Bakker, A. B. (2002). The measurement of engagement and burnout: A two sample confirmatory factor analytic approach. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 3(1), 71-92.

- Sendawula, K., Kimuli, S.N, Bananuka, J., &Muganga, G.N. (2018). Training, employee engagement and employee performance: Evidence from Uganda's health sector. *Cogent Business & Management*, 5(1), 1470891.
- Shamila, V. J. (2013). Employee engagement-an approach to organizational excellence. *International Journal of Social Science & Interdisciplinary Research*, 2(5), 111-117.
- Schaufeli, W. (2012). Work engagement: What do we know and where do we go? *Romanian Journal of Applied Psychology*, 14(1), 3-10.
- Shen, H., Fu, M., Pan, H., Yu, Z., & Chen, Y. (2020). The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on firm performance. *Emerging Markets Finance and Trade*, 56(10), 2213-2230.
- Shirey, M. R. (2013). Lewin's theory of planned change as a strategic resource. *JONA: The Journal of Nursing Administration*, 43(2), 69-72.
- Sihag, P. (2021). The impact of perceived organizational support on employee engagement: a study of Indian IT Industry. *International Journal of Human Capital and Information Technology Professionals (IJHCITP)*, 12(2), 35-52.
- Siregar, H., Adnans, A. A., & Hadiyani, S. (2021). The effect of perceived organizational support on employee readiness to change in correctional officer at Sibolga City. *International Journal of Progressive Sciences and Technologies*, 26(1), 176-184.
- Sirma, P. J., Misoi, M., & Omillo, F. (2019). Effect of top management support on operational performance of commercial banks in Nandi County, Kenya. *European Journal of Management and Marketing Studies*, 4(1), 54-67.
- Siswanto, S., & Haryati, E. (2020, October). The role of individual readiness to change on the influence of organizational culture change and motivation on employee performance of PT. Angkasa Pura I (PERSERO) in the pandemic of COVID-19. In *1st International Conference of Business and Social Sciences*.
- Tabachnick, B. G., & Fidell, L. S. (2007). *Using multivariate statistics* (5th ed.). Allyn & Bacon.

