

Organizational Learning, Change Management and Performance of Governmental Agencies in Nigeria

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Abstract

This study investigated the effects of organizational learning and change management on organizational performance. Two (2) vital questions were asked: first, the extent to which organizational learning can enhance organizational performance, and second, the extent to which change management would result in increased performance of governmental agencies. The survey research design was used and a sample of two (2) governmental agencies in Delta and Edo States were employed. Data obtained were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical tools. The multiple regression results demonstrated that organizational learning and change management significantly and positively influence the performance level of governmental agencies. Given the findings, it is recommended that governmental agencies should imbibe and grow a learning culture in order to increase their performance. In addition, governmental agencies should constantly embrace change when they surface in the environment by putting all mechanisms in place to ensure effective and efficient implementation of change in order to improve their level of performance. The study contributes to knowledge by providing empirical evidence of two (2) imperative tools such as organizational learning and change management that can be used to enhance organizational performance. The study not only employed organizational learning but also examined how change management together with organizational learning enhances organizational performance.

Keywords: Organizational learning; Change management; Governmental agencies; Firm performance

1. INTRODUCTION

Predominantly, one of the distinctive features of learning organizations is their capability to boost and ensure that continuous learning is realized throughout the organization. This according to Abasalt and Hamed (2023) can be realized when organizations engage in a systematic thinking, embrace and effectively manage change when it emerges so as to enable them to understand their business operations and other interconnecting elements that creates a learning culture expected to influence performance, gain competitive advantage and other

work-related outcomes. Ali and Hassan (2022) asserted that realizing increased performance is imperative for organizations and thus, creating environments that promote stern adherence to a learning culture and change management will play essential roles in improving organizational performance and in empowering employees towards collective vision.

Amrullah, Haryono and Wahyuningsih (2022) believed that concerns relating to learning organization and organizational performance can be linked to adaptation capabilities and the pursuit for survival in a fast-changing environment. Abimbola, Odukoye, Ashikia and Adefulu(2019) see organizational learning as a systematic process of continuous action towards learning. Organizational learning process is vital to creativity in an organization as learning is directly linked to the utilization of novel ideas and information (Angelina &Yanuar, 2021). Ewans, Olai and Offor (2017) see organizational learning as a representation of a knowledge-based view of the organization that identifies knowledge as the most important determinant of performance and sustainable competitive advantage. Knowledge is a valuable resource and an intangible asset to an organization. As noted by Fatma and Gbemi(2021), the general processes in organizational learning are knowledge creation, acquisition and processes of creating, retaining and transferring the knowledge.

On the other hand, change management is a methodical process of applying knowledge and the resources needed to effect the change in employees who will be affected by the process (Mensah, Ahiaxonu & Twum, 2023). Notably, the culture of most governmental agencies in Nigeria that have been so bad needs to be changed such that public services can run well. Thus, the formation of a new culture can be envisaged from the fortitude of values of the governmental agencies encompassing integrity, professionalism, service, synergy and perfection (Akunne & Ibrahim, 2021). As Alfin (2022) opined that change management enables an organization to be able to constantly renew their structures and capabilities to serve the ever-changing demands of employees and the general public.

The reason is that change is unavoidable and can be a key catalyst for increased growth, performance and remaining competitive, even though change could be hard to embrace. Owing to the above discuss, in improving organizational performance, it is essential that management of organizations should embrace change and imbibe a learning culture that can influence performance because countless number of employees have varied attitudes, cultural background and understanding that can influence performance in an organization (Furxhi, 2021; and Gil, Rodrigo-Moya & Cegarra-Navarro, 2021). In realizing increased organizational performance, it requires that organization needs to equip existing human resources in order to work efficiently so as to improve performance.

As Sabino, Neto, Morais and dos-Santos (2021) rightly put it; performance is the key that guarantees the growth, longevity and sustainability of organizations. Furthermore, when organizations are performing well, it implies that the overall goals and objectives of the organization are in the right direction (Wirapong, Roy, Krithika, Anil, Ramesh & Luigi, 2020). Due to the unavoidable nature of change and the need to imbibe a learning culture, management and researchers have advocated for changes and learning cultures that can influence organizational employee positively.

Consequently, management must ensure that factors affecting organizational performance are warily considered while building a learning culture and advocating for change. Given the import of organizational learning and change management, there is therefore the need to carry out further investigations on the extent to which organizational learning and change management will influence the performance level of governmental agencies in Nigeria.

1.1 Research Hypotheses

Ho1: Organizational learning has no significant impact on the level of performance of governmental agencies

Ho2: Change management has no significant impact on the level of performance of governmental agencies

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Organizational Learning

Nam and Park (2019) defined organizational learning as an organization that enhances the learning capability of its members and incessantly transforms itself to remain competitive in the environment. Organizational learning as observed by Udin(2023) refers to a process involving continuous action targeted at learning to gain competitive edge and increased organizational performance. As Nanang, Setiawan, Hadiwidjojo and Idris (2021) rightly puts it, competition is no longer about accumulated resources by an organization, emphasis is now placed on the use of knowledge within the organization. Thus, attention has drifted from acquiring wealth to an era where organizational learning and knowledge management become more critical to organizational survival, growth and increased performance.

Consequently, it is, therefore of great significance for an organization to create, acquire, and use knowledge obtained via learning to cope and remain ahead of competitors in this ever-changing business environment (Udin, 2023). Organizational learning entails a systematic capability of an organization to engage in creative process and apply novel approaches, then generate novel ideas (Chiavoghi & Emerole, 2017). Knowledge has become vital in the context of global economy, particularly in era of radical change and hyper-competition. Thus, it is significant to identify and stimulate dynamics determining its growth in organizations. For instance, in hyper-competitive environment, there is need for organization to change ways of learning while at the same time, looking for ways of retaining talents or making them loyal to the organization

Kyoungshin and Zhenqiu (2019) opined that organizational learning is an imperative catalyst for long-term survival and performance of organizations. Mensah, et al (2023) asserted that organizations access and obtain information and knowledge from varied means and make sure that such information and knowledge obtained is put to best use in decision-making. Abasalt and Hamed (2023) opined that experience and knowledge from varied units/departments should be archived in organizations' memory for ease of access when required by

organizations; stating that such information and knowledge can be used to enhance organizational learning and performance.

2.2 Change Management

Change is an act of becoming different or effect of something being modified. In order for employees to get out of their comfort zone, they need to accept that change is constant and must be accepted. Change management refers to management style that tries to assist an organization and employees adapt to as well as in dealing with constant flux of their working environment. According to Dagogo and Akpan (2021) organizations' goals are dependent on employee success; hence change must begin with the employees. Broadly, there are numerous ways via which organizations may adapt to change such as mergers and acquisitions, new leadership, technology, restructuring and a change in regulation/ product.

As observed by Ekhsan, Sudiro, Mugiono and Hussein (2022), change may take a form as downsizing causing employee to feel anxious, unsafe and unsure of their own capabilities and future. The reality is that employees are not willing to embrace change, regardless of the fact that it is a required process. Thus, the nature and environment of the business give rise to the idea of organizational change and the managing of the change (Errida & Lotfi, 2021). Change management is therefore a systematic process of managing the change in new development, technologies, rescheduling operations amidst others. The broad aim of change management is to enable an organization easily and effectively adapt to the environment or improvement in performance.

Kotter (1996) as cited in Rehman, Mahmood, Ibtasam, Murtaza, Iqbal and Molnár. (2021) categorized change management into three (3)- business process re-engineering, technical and incremental change. First, business process re-engineering is a management method focusing on the study/design of workflows and processes inside a corporation. In the course of re-engineering business processes, old method of doing things are totally turned down; second, incremental change does not change the current structure of organizations; it is carried out in a step-by-step manner and its main goal is to enhance the aggregate efficiency of an organization. Third, technical change enables an organization to embrace novel invention in an intuitive manner as well as the operational efficiency.

2.3 Organizational Performance

Organization performance is very cumbersome to operationalize due to the complexity of the concept. Edi, Basri and Arafah (2020) defined organizational performance as a way of how organizations are able to efficiently use their time and efforts into quality of work; it thus portends that organizational performance is how well an organization is able to efficiently get tasks done and be able to achieve their short, medium and long-term goals. Similarly, Hassen, Fakhri, Bilel, Wassim and Faouzi (2018) opined that when an organization is performing well, customers' satisfaction may be positively affected, sales, profits, market share and other metrics of performance will move up.

Notably, organizational performance or performance can be broadly grouped into two (2) – financial and non-financial performance of organizations (Tarurhor, Aruoren & Owolabi, 2022; Tarurhor & Olele, 2020; Tarurhor & Emudainohwo, 2020); however, this study was hinged on non-financial performance of organizations. Most studies on organizational performance focus on financial performance and yet to fully explore other aspects that can be linked to learning organization and organizational performance (Omotayo, 2019).

Considering the dynamic nature of the environment within which businesses operate, changes must take place as a result of technological adoption and innovation, thus, the urgent call for a learning organization to ensure it secure increased performance and sustainability. To the researcher’s knowledge, there is scarcity of studies that had assessed whether organizational learning and change management affect the level of organizational performance in Edo and Delta States; hence, there is a lacuna in management literature on this research theme.

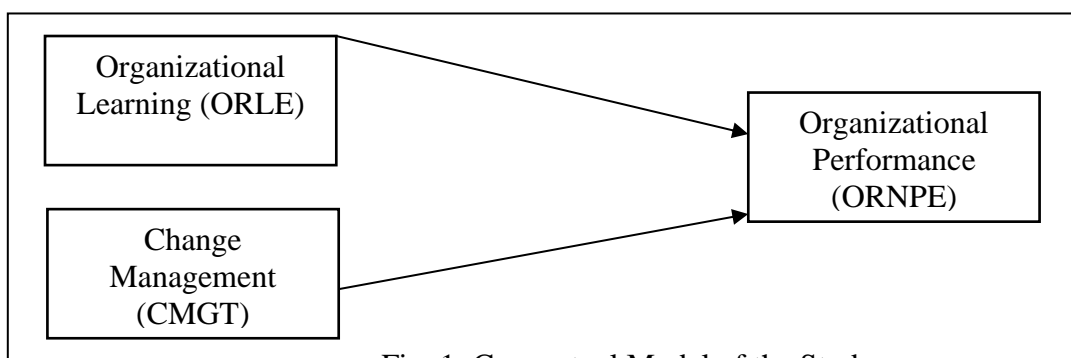


Fig. 1: Conceptual Model of the Study

Source: Conceptualized by the Researcher (2024)

2.4 Theoretical Framework

This study was anchored on the Knowledge Management Theory (KMT) and Burke- Litwin Model of Organizational Change (BLMOC); these theories are briefly discussed as follows:

- Knowledge Management Theory (KMT)

KMT relates to the application of methods, techniques and values of an organization that encourage flow of knowledge between employees and retrieval, processing and the use of knowledge in innovation (Azizi, 2017). Knowledge management implies learning from each other, developing novel knowledge as well as exploring a range of fields that can be aligned to meta-knowledge and its relevance to organizational success. Wanza and Nkuraru(2016) showed that KMT is a learning tool and the theory is employed in this current study because of organizational learning and organizational performance as it is linked to employees and group learning, thus making employees acquire the relevant knowledge aimed at improving organizational performance.

According to Orinda, Limo and Chepkwony (2020)., knowledge management consists of a range of management practices aimed at creating, identifying, storing, diffusing, replicating and applying knowledge within organizations. Hence, KMT is a fundamental ingredient in creating competitive advantage and increased organizational performance. Organizations are

highly dependent on knowledge management behaviour for the overall successful performance.

- Burke- Litwin Model of Organizational Change (BLMOC)

The BLMOC is otherwise known as causal model of organizational change links how performance is expected to be influenced by internal and external factors (Udeme & Umar, 2021). Burke and Litwin proposed the BLMOC in 1989 and it present a vital framework for evaluating the dimensions of an environment and organization that are imperative to effective change. BLMOC demonstrates how aspects of an organization are casually linked to realize a variation in organizational performance. The BLMOC describes how varied measurements interact with one another to produce a change in an organization. It shows how external factors influence various elements in an organization.

BLMOC is vital as it offers a framework for organizational diagnosis and management of change that clearly indicates a logical cause and effect-relationship (Okenda, Thuo&Kithinji, 2017). The BLMOC ideally presents how a combined framework comprising of external environment, mission, strategy, organizational culture, structure, practice by management, systems, jobs, skills, needs of employees, values and motivation are likely to affect both employee and organizational performance. However, the BLMOC showed some constraints as regards capacity to manage change for an effective performance of any organization. The critics of BLMOC is that of oversimplification of varied factors of change leading to producing sub-factors which makes it a very complex model

2.5 Empirical Studies

Mensah, et al (2023) investigated how organizational change affects the performance of employees using structured questionnaires from 278 respondents in Ghana. The linear regression result revealed that organizational change was mainly characterized by the establishment of novel divisions capable of producing what the market requires. Also, the linear regression revealed that structural, strategic and technological changes significantly influence employee performance.

Ali and Hassan (2022) studied the effect of change management on the performance of employees in Pakistan using descriptive methods. The descriptive results revealed that change management has significant effect on the performance of employees. In addition, it was found that employee willingness, change in attitudes, readiness and behaviour were identified as vital dynamics influencing employee performance.

A study by Alfin(2022) determined how organizational change and development affect human resource management in Indonesia using descriptive methods. The results showed that change management and organizational development together significantly influence human resource management, particularly in area of employee performance; thus, change together with organizational development can improve employee performance because employees are required to adapt to changes in the organization.

Fatma and Gbemi (2021) examined the impact of organizational learning and effectiveness on operation, employee productivity and management performance in Turkey using questionnaire. Data obtained were analyzed via confirmatory factor and hierarchical multiple regression. The result showed that there is a positive link between organizational learning and effectiveness, operation, employee productivity and management performance, indicating that organization learning impacts on employee productivity and management performance

Udeme and Umar (2021) assessed the effect of change management on the performance of employees in Nigeria using a sample of 311 respondents. The regression result showed that change management in organizational structure has significant effect on the quality of employees' service delivery. In addition, it was shown that technological change relates with quality of employees' service delivery even though the link was not strong

Akunne and Ibrahim (2021) evaluated the extent to which change management affects the performance of employees Nigeria using 60 respondents. The regression results showed a positive significant relationship between change management (technological, structure and culture) and the performance of employees to work.

Orindo, et al (2020) assessed the indirect effects of employee loyalty on organizational learning and employee performance using a cross-sectional sample of 411 respondents in Kenya. The regression results revealed that while organizational learning influence the level of employee performance, it was shown that employee loyalty affects organizational learning. In addition, it was established that organizational learning has indirect effects on employee performance through employee loyalty.

Abimbola, et al (2019) investigated the moderating effects of strategic leadership on the link between organizational learning and employee performance in Nigeria via a sample of 676 respondents. The multiple regression results revealed significant moderating effect of strategic leadership on the link between organizational learning and the performance of employee in Nigeria.

Chiavoghi and Emerole (2017) evaluated the effect of change management on employee commitment and performance in Nigeria using a sample of 122 respondents. Findings via the Spearman's Rank Order Correlation Coefficient (ρ) for hypotheses testing indicated that there is a significant positive relationship between change management and employee commitment and performance

3 RESEARCH METHODS

The survey research design was employed; the choice of design is hinged on the fact that it would enable the researcher make inferences about a given population of interest while trying to measure the perception of people on how organizational learning and change management influence performance level of governmental agencies in Delta and Edo States, Nigeria. The study population was made up of two (2) governmental agencies in Delta and Edo States, namely State Board of Internal Revenue (SBIR) and Ministry of Education. The population of the two (2) governmental agencies amounted to two hundred and sixty (260).

The study sample comprised a subset of the entire population that was investigated. In this study, the population was made up of two (2) governmental agencies in Delta and Edo States, resulting to a total population of 260. To arrive at the sample of the study, Taro-Yamane sample size determination formula was used. Using Taro-Yamane sample size determination, the study sample was one hundred and fifty-eight (158).

The major instrument of data collection was the questionnaire which was designed to elicit responses on how organizational learning and change management influence the level of performance in governmental agencies. The study used questionnaire to obtain data on the dependent variable (organizational performance) and the independent variable (change management and organizational learning).

The questionnaire was divided into two (2) parts: Section 1 dealt with socio-demographic characteristics of respondents while section 2 covers themes on the dependent and independent variables of the study. The questionnaire was designed on a 4-point Likert scale of strongly agree(4), agree(3), disagree(2) and strongly disagree(1); to reduce respondents' answering-time on the questionnaire, questions were made precise and be able to retain vital and relevant information relating to the research theme. The items on organizational learning and change management were adapted from Abasalt and Hamed(2023); Furxhi, 2021; and Gil, et al (2021) while performance items from Mensah, et al, (2023).

The questionnaire was given to the research supervisor to check whether questions are relevant, unambiguous and clear for the respondents. The research supervisor evaluated it and made suggestions were necessary. Second, content validity is the degree to which the instrument appears to expansively examine the scope it is intended to measure, and to ensure that relevant contents are inputted in the questionnaire to guide the realization of the objectives of the study. In testing for reliability, test-retest method was used; outcome was subjected to Cronbach Alpha reliability; the pilot tests showed that Cronbach Alpha was reliable, since Cronbach Alpha coefficients were above 0.5.

Table 1: Results of Cronbach Alpha Coefficients

Variables	Cronbach Alpha Index
Change Management	0.84
Organizational Learning	0.77
Organizational Performance	0.81

Source: Compiled by the Researcher (2024).

In this study, the empirical models were adapted from Abasalt and Hamed(2023); Furxhi, 2021; Gil, et al (2021) and Mensah, et al, (2023)In view of this, the empirical models expressing the relationship between organizational learning, change management and performance are shown as follows:

$$ornpe = f(orle, cmgt) \quad - \quad eq. 1$$

Equation 1 is the implicit form of multiple regression models; equation 2 was expressed in their explicit form as follows:

$$\text{ornpe}_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{orle}_i + \beta_2 \text{cmgt} + u_i \quad \text{eq. 2}$$

Where ornpe = Organizational performance; orle = Organizational learning; cmgt = Change management; U_i = Error term; β_1 - β_2 = Coefficient of the variables. In this study, descriptive inferential statistical techniques were employed. The descriptive statistics include mean, standard deviation, minimum and maximum values, skewness, kurtosis and Pearson correlation while the inferential statistics include multiple regression models. The regression result was used to test the relevant hypotheses of the study and data analysis was done using STATA 16.0 software.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 2: Result of Socio-Demographic Variables of Respondents

Items	Frequency(N)=158	Percentage (%)
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	108	68.4%
Female	50	31.6%
Total	158	100%
<i>Age</i>		
21-25 years	10	6.3%
26-30 years	17	10.8%
31-35 years	57	36.1%
36years & above	74	46.8%
Total	158	100%
<i>Marital Status</i>		
Single	33	20.9%
Married	116	73.4%
Others	9	5.7%
Total	158	100%
<i>Highest Educational Qualification</i>		
OND/NCE	36	22.8%
B.Sc./HND	79	50.0%
M.Sc./MBA	30	18.9%
Others	13	8.3%
Total	158	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 2 shows the socio-demographic variables of the respondents in terms of their gender, age, marital status and highest educational qualifications. It was shown that 108(68.4%) of the respondents were males while 50(31.6%) were females who participated in the survey involving the two (2) governmental agencies in Delta and Edo States. The result implies that majority of the respondents were males compared to females. The age of respondents revealed

that while most of the respondents were within age 36years and above representing 74(46.8%), the remaining were within ages 31-35years.

The marital status of respondents revealed that majority of the respondents representing 116(73.4%) were married while the remaining were either single, divorced or separated/widowed. The highest educational qualifications of respondents revealed that majority of the respondents had obtained B.Sc./HND degrees representing 79(50%) while the remaining had obtained other educational degrees such as OND/NCE and M.Sc./MBA.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics

Variables	Obs.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min. Value	Max Value
ornpe	158	2.3236	0.3826	1	4
orle	158	2.4173	0.5382	1	4
cmg	158	2.4045	0.3898	1	4

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 3 showed that all the variables (ORNPE, ORLE and CMGT) beat the mean scale of 2.0, indicating that respondents perceived the items of questionnaire as good indicators for assessing organizational learning, change management and organizational performance. The standard deviation were quite small ranging from 0.3898 to 0.5382; an indication that the perceptions of respondents were not far from each other and hence they share similar views on organizational learning, change management and performance of governmental agencies in Edo and Delta States, Nigeria.

Table 4: Normality Result

Statistics	ORNPE	ORLE	CMGT
Skewness	0.3685	0.6489	0.8572
Kurtosis	3.4861	2.2590	3.3835

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 4 revealed that orle (2.2590) had the smallest kurtosis while ornpe (3.4861) the highest; however, it appeared that no scores were far away from the mean. also, orle had a score in its tail and is not far away from its mean. The skewness values showed that organizational learning and change management (orle and cmgt) skewed towards same direction (positive) with organizational performance (ornpe). Also, all the kurtosis values were not far away from 3; an indication that the variables of ornpe, orle, and cmgt were normally distributed.

Table 5: Pearson Correlation Matrix

	orne	orle	cmgt
orne	1.0000		
orle	0.0512	0.4537	1.0000
cmgt	0.0394	0.5372	0.2272

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 5 revealed that organizational performance (orne) was positively correlated with organizational learning (orle) and change management (cmgt); this implies that there is a positive relationship between orne, orle and cmg of the selected governmental agencies in Delta and Edo States

Table 6: Organizational Learning, Change Management and Performance Variables

Number of Observations:	158			
F(2, 155):	13.11			
Probability > F:	0.000			
R-Squared:	0.882			
Adjusted R-Squared:	0.777			
Parameters	Coefficient	Standard Error	t-value	P>/t/
orle	0.3349	0.0229	6.730	0.000
cmgt	0.3154	0.0344	7.812	0.000
Constant	3.2466	0.2034	18.10	0.000

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 6 showed that value of R-squared is 0.88 and this indicates that the independent variables (orle and cmgt) explained about 88% of the systematic variation in the dependent variable (ornpe); the large R-squared showed among others that there may be few variables that drive organizational performance. The F-statistics (df=2, 155, F-value = 13.11; p-value of 0.000) indicate that the result is significant at 5% level. The coefficients of regression and t-values carried positive signs; this implies that the null hypothesis was rejected while alternate hypothesis was accepted, showing a significant relationship between organizational learning and change management and organizational performance.

This study assessed the effect of organizational learning and change management on the level of performance of selected governmental agencies in Delta and Edo States, Nigeria. The study used two (2) independent variables (change management and organizational learning) and one dependent variable (organizational performance). Mensah, et al (2023) showed that organizational change is mainly characterized by the establishment of novel divisions capable of producing what the market requires. Also, that structural, strategic and technological change significantly influences employee performance. Hence, organizations that seek to gain competitive advantage and increased performance, it is essential to have a learning organization and be able to manage change when they emerge in the business environment.

Our results showed that organizational learning and change management had positive significant relationship with organizational performance. This finding is similar to those of Ali and Hassan (2022); and Alfin(2022) who showed that organizational learning and change management positively and significantly influence the level of organizational performance; on the other, this result fails to disagree with prior studies. Thus, to improve organizational performance, management must show that they are growing a learning organization and be able to manage change in any form(s).

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study investigated the effects of organizational learning and change management on organizational performance. Two (2) vital questions were asked; first the extent to which organizational learning can enhance organizational performance and second is the extent to which change management would result to increased performance of governmental agencies. In this study, we used a sample of two (2) governmental agencies in Delta and Edo States. The study demonstrates that organizational learning and change management significantly and positively influence the performance level of governmental agencies. On the basis of the findings, the following recommendations were made:

- (1) The study suggests that governmental agencies should imbibe and grow a learning culture in order to increase their performance
- (2) That governmental agency should constantly embrace change when they surface in the environment by putting all mechanisms in place to ensure effective and efficient implementation of change in order to improve their level of performance.

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