

Change Management and Employee Productivity in Selected Private Universities in Abuja

Success Chinoye Ujene, Lazarus Ogbonnaya Nwagbegbe,

Anurika Blessing Ogochukwu, Danjuma Bwese Tanko

Department of Business Administration, Nile University of Nigeria, Abuja

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Abstract: *This study examined the effect of change management on employee productivity in selected private universities in Abuja, Nigeria, with specific focus on communication, leadership transition, and technological advancement. The study was motivated by the increasing need for private universities to enhance productivity through effective management of organizational change in a rapidly evolving digital and administrative environment. A descriptive survey research design was adopted, and data were collected from academic staff of Nile University of Nigeria and Baze University, Abuja. From a total population of 1,018 academic staff, a sample size of 288 respondents was determined using the Taro Yamane sampling technique, while stratified sampling was employed to ensure adequate representation. Data were analyzed using regression analysis to test the formulated hypotheses at a 5% level of significance. The findings revealed that communication had a strong positive and significant effect on employee productivity ($R^2 = 0.610$, $p < 0.05$), indicating that effective information flow enhances staff efficiency and performance. Leadership Transition also showed a significant positive influence on employee productivity ($R^2 = 0.494$, $p < 0.05$), confirming the role of supportive leadership in motivating employees and improving work outcomes. Technological advancement equally demonstrated a significant positive effect on employee productivity ($R^2 = 0.365$, $p < 0.05$), showing that modern technological tools enhance work speed, accuracy, and service delivery. Based on these findings, the study concludes that effective change management practices significantly enhance employee productivity in private universities in Abuja. The study therefore recommends strengthened communication systems, sustained leadership transition, and continuous investment in modern technology and staff training to promote higher productivity and institutional effectiveness.*

Keyword: change management; employee productivity metrics; private universities; technological advancement; communication; leadership transitions

INTRODUCTION

Employee productivity metrics, such as task completion rates, service turnaround time, output quality, workload efficiency and overall performance effectiveness, have become essential indicators for

evaluating how well employees contribute to organizational goals globally. Across advanced economies, institutions increasingly depend on measurable productivity indicators to maintain competitiveness, service excellence and operational sustainability (Ajani et al., 2024). Productivity metrics help organizations track efficiency trends, allocate resources, forecast performance gaps and improve workforce planning in both public and private sectors. Within organizational settings, productivity is influenced by employee motivation, leadership transition, communication clarity and technological resources that enable efficient task execution (Eromafuru & Omoye, 2022). In the higher education sector, universities rely heavily on productivity metrics to assess teaching responsiveness, administrative efficiency, student service delivery and research output (Omokhuale, 2025). In Nigeria's education landscape, especially within private universities, productivity metrics determine reputation, accreditation success, service quality and student satisfaction. Private universities in Abuja Nile and Baze must therefore sustain high productivity levels to remain competitive, attract students and meet regulatory expectations (Shuaibu & Daniel, 2024). As expectations for efficiency, accountability and digital responsiveness rise, measurable productivity metrics have become even more central to strategic decision-making and staff performance evaluation.

Change management, on the other hand, has become a critical strategic tool for managing transformations in global organizations. With rapid technological advancements, evolving customer needs and workplace restructuring, institutions worldwide adopt change management practices to ensure smooth transitions, maintain employee stability and improve performance outcomes (Eyisi & Nwokolo, 2020). Organizationally, change management includes leadership shifts, policy modifications, digital system upgrades and cultural adjustments aimed at enhancing long-term performance (Adeoye & Elegunde, 2019). In higher education systems worldwide, change initiatives are centred around digital learning adoption, student-service automation and administrative restructuring. The success of these changes depends heavily on structured communication, effective Leadership Transition and technological readiness (Oladipo & Okafor, 2021). In Nigeria, private universities face pressure to modernize operations, digitize services and strengthen communication systems, yet many struggle with inconsistent implementation, inadequate staff involvement and insufficient technological preparation (Archibong & Ibrahim, 2021). These weaknesses highlight the need for effective change management in achieving improved productivity outcomes.

Despite the increasing importance of productivity and change management, several challenges persist. Poor communication disrupts workflow efficiency and reduces service quality (Ume & Agha, 2022). Unclear Leadership Transition creates organizational uncertainty, lower morale and weaken administrative performance (Ogundijo & Adebayo, 2023). Similarly, technological tools introduced without proper training lead to resistance, delays and reduced productivity (Wike, 2022). Nigerian universities also face fragmented change processes and inconsistent institutional policies that hinder adaptation (Aigbe & Igbinedion, 2024). These issues collectively contribute to poor productivity indicators, low staff motivation and inefficient service delivery. This highlights the importance of communication, Leadership Transition and technological advancement, are the three core elements of change management, in shaping employee productivity metrics in private universities.

This study therefore examines how these dimensions of change management influence productivity outcomes in selected private universities in Abuja. To achieve this, the specific objectives of the study are to examine the effect of communication, Leadership Transition and technological advancement on employee productivity metrics in private universities in Abuja. Based on the objectives of the study, the following hypotheses were raised:

H₀₁: Communication has no significant effect on employee productivity metrics in private universities in Abuja.

H₀₂: Leadership Transition have no significant effect on employee productivity metrics in private universities in Abuja.

H₀₃: Technological advancement has no significant effect on employee productivity metrics in private universities in Abuja.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual Clarification

Employee Productivity Metrics

Employee productivity metrics refer to quantifiable indicators used to assess the efficiency, accuracy and quality of employee output. These metrics include service turnaround time, task completion efficiency, administrative accuracy, teaching responsiveness and research output. Globally, productivity metrics serve as tools for tracking performance trends, improving resource allocation and enhancing organizational competitiveness (Ajani et al., 2024). In higher education institutions, they are essential for evaluating staff effectiveness and institutional performance, especially as universities increasingly rely on digital tools to support teaching and administration (Omokhualé, 2025). Productivity outcomes are influenced by communication flow, leadership transition, motivation and technological readiness (Eromafuru & Omoye, 2022; Ume & Agha, 2022). In Nigeria, private universities depend heavily on productivity metrics to maintain accreditation, student satisfaction and institutional reputation (Shuaibu & Daniel, 2024; Ogundijo & Adebayo, 2023). Thus, productivity metrics provide an objective evaluation of how well employees adapt to organizational demands.

Change Management

Change management involves the coordinated processes organizations use to transition individuals and structures from an existing state to a desired future state. It includes planning, communication, leadership alignment, policy adjustments and stakeholder engagement (Adeoye & Elegunde, 2019). Effective change management ensures smooth transitions, minimizes resistance and enhances organizational performance (Eyisi & Nwokolo, 2020). In higher education, change management is particularly relevant due to increasing digitalization, restructuring, accreditation pressures and evolving service expectations (Oladipo & Okafor, 2021). In Nigeria, private universities encounter challenges such as uneven policy implementation, low staff buy-in and limited technological capacity, all of which hinder successful change

processes (Archibong & Ibrahim, 2021; Ume & Agha, 2022). When change is poorly managed, employee performance declines, productivity drops and resistance increases (Aigbe & Igbinedion, 2024).

Communication

Communication refers to the effective exchange of information between management and employees to enhance role clarity, coordination and performance. It plays a vital role during organizational change by reducing uncertainty, increasing readiness and strengthening engagement (Ajani et al., 2024). Effective communication enhances employee trust, motivation and adaptability, while poor communication results in confusion, errors and decreased productivity (Ume & Agha, 2022; Wike, 2022). Nigerian universities often face challenges such as fragmented communication systems and insufficient feedback structures (Aigbe & Igbinedion, 2024). Transparent and timely communication promotes smoother transitions and improves employee productivity metrics (Shuaibu & Daniel, 2024).

Leadership Transitions

Leadership Transition refer to changes in administrative or managerial roles within an organization. These transitions affect employee performance, organizational stability and workflow continuity (Ogundijo & Adebayo, 2023). Stable and well-managed transitions reduce uncertainty, build confidence and motivate employees to maintain productivity (Shuaibu & Daniel, 2024). Poor transitions, however, create tension, disrupt coordination and reduce morale (Eyisi & Nwokolo, 2020). In private universities, leadership changes due to restructuring or accreditation demands influence productivity outcomes (Archibong & Ibrahim, 2021; Aigbe & Igbinedion, 2024).

Technological Advancement

Technological advancement refers to the introduction and use of digital tools, platforms and systems that enhance organizational efficiency. It includes automation, digital communication systems, e-learning tools and administrative software. Technological advancement improves productivity by reducing manual workload, increasing accuracy and accelerating processes (Ikhede, 2025). However, its effectiveness depends on perceived usefulness, ease of use, training and support (Wike, 2022; Eromafuru & Omoye, 2022). Nigerian private universities often face constraints such as poor infrastructure or lack of training (Ume & Agha, 2022). Effective technological integration improves administrative efficiency and staff responsiveness (Ogundijo & Adebayo, 2023; Oladipo & Okafor, 2021).

Theoretical Review

Lewin's Three-Step Change Theory

Lewin's model (Unfreeze–Change–Refreeze) explains how organizations implement and stabilize change. The unfreezing stage prepares employees through communication and awareness (Ume & Agha, 2022). The change stage involves implementing new processes with Leadership Transition (Ajani et al., 2024). The refreezing stage reinforces new behaviours for long-term stability (Wike, 2022). The model aligns

with communication, Leadership Transition and technological shifts in private universities (Archibong & Ibrahim, 2021; Shuaibu & Daniel, 2024; Ogundijo & Adebayo, 2023).

Transformational Leadership Theory

Transformational Leadership Theory explains how leaders inspire and motivate employees to achieve higher performance. Through communication and support, transformational leaders reduce resistance and enhance adaptability during organizational change (Adeoye & Elegunde, 2019; Eyisi & Nwokolo, 2020). Studies show links between transformational leadership, motivation and improved productivity (Shuaibu & Daniel, 2024; Aigbe & Igbinedion, 2024). Leadership Transition influence employee trust and performance in private universities (Ume & Agha, 2022; Eromafuru & Omoye, 2022).

Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)

TAM explains technology adoption through perceived usefulness and ease of use (Ikhide, 2025). Employees are more productive when they see technology as efficient and easy to use (Wike, 2022; Eromafuru & Omoye, 2022). Organisational support, communication and training enhance technology acceptance (Ajani et al., 2024; Ume & Agha, 2022). TAM helps explain how technological advancement affects productivity in private universities (Ogundijo & Adebayo, 2023; Oladipo & Okafor, 2021).

Empirical Review

Empirical studies have shown consistent relationships between change management practices and employee productivity across various contexts. Ajani et al. (2024) found that effective communication improves employee responsiveness and task efficiency. Ume and Agha (2022) reported that communication clarity reduces work delays and strengthens performance. Oladipo and Okafor (2021) noted that transparent communication enhances morale during restructuring

Leadership Transition also affect productivity. Ogundijo and Adebayo (2023) observed that poorly managed transitions create uncertainty and weaken administrative accuracy. Shuaibu and Daniel (2024) found that stable transitions improve commitment and productivity. Eyisi and Nwokolo (2020) revealed that transformational leadership reduces resistance and strengthens performance

Technological advancement predicts productivity improvements. Wike (2022) found that trained staff perform tasks faster with fewer errors. Eromafuru and Omoye (2022) reported that digital automation improves workflow. Ikhide (2025) confirmed that perceived technological ease increases adoption and performance

Studies integrating change management elements show that coordinated change enhances staff performance (Archibong & Ibrahim, 2021). Aigbe and Igbinedion (2024) found that stakeholder involvement improves acceptance and productivity. Adeoye and Elegunde (2019) showed that structured change reduces resistance and supports efficiency

Research on productivity metrics confirms their alignment with leadership transition, technology and communication. Omokhuale (2025) demonstrated that digital readiness improves teaching and administrative outcomes. Ogundijo and Adebayo (2023) found that job clarity and training strongly influence productivity. Shuaibu and Daniel (2024) linked productivity to institutional stability and modernization.

Technological readiness studies show that insufficient training reduces effectiveness (Ume & Agha, 2022). Ajani et al. (2024) observed that digital infrastructure accelerates turnaround. Oladipo and Okafor (2021) reported that automation improves accuracy and service delivery.

Integrated studies reveal that communication and leadership jointly shape adaptability (Aigbe & Igbinedion, 2024), while technology amplifies leadership's impact on productivity (Ikhede, 2025).

Literature Gap

Despite extensive research on change management and productivity, several gaps remain. Few studies have examined communication, Leadership Transition and technological advancement together as predictors of employee productivity metrics in private universities. Most research isolates one variable rather than integrating all three. Comparative studies across private universities in the same region are limited. Many prior studies use general performance indicators rather than specific productivity metrics such as turnaround time and accuracy. Additionally, limited research captures post-2023 digital transformation effects in Abuja-based private universities.

METHODOLOGY

The study specifically assesses the impact of change management on employee performance in Nile University of Nigeria and Baze University, Abuja, thus, a descriptive survey research design was considered appropriate, and data was generated through structured questionnaire which was administered to the study population comprising of academic staff of Nile University of Nigeria and Baze University Abuja. Adebisi & Adebayo (2016) proposed that descriptive research involves collection of data, arrangement, grouping, describing and presentation of the statistics to confirm a phenomenon. Population is defined as a group of people that a program or researchers are interested to collect information or data from (Creswell, 2014). The population for this study was 367 Academic Staffs of Nile University and 651 Academic Staff of Baze University making a total of 1018 population of the study. The sample size for this study, a sample size of 288 was derived based on Taro Yamane 1967 statistical technique which was used for the administration of the structured questionnaire. Stratified sampling technique was adopted to determine the participants.

Model specification for this study is derived from the studies efforts of preceding members within the vicinity examined. To consider the impact of change management, the determinants of change management have been estimated by way of regressing the change management devices on Communication (C), Leadership Transition (LT) and Technological Advancement (TA)

The functional form of the model one can be specified as follows:

$$EM_t = f(C, LT, TA)$$

The explicit form of the model can be expressed as:

$$EM_t = \beta_0 + \beta_1 C_t + \beta_2 LT_t + \beta_3 TA + EM$$

Nevertheless, the equation above is exact or deterministic in nature. To allow for the inexact relationship among the variables as in the case of most economic variables, stochastic error term “ μ_t ” is added to the equation. Thus, we can express the econometric form of the model as:

$$EM_t = \beta_0 + \beta_1 C_t + \beta_2 LT_t + \beta_3 TA + EM$$

Where: EM=Employee performance which is the independent variables; C = Communication; LT = Leadership transition; TA= Technological Advancement

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Hypotheses Testing

H₀₁: Communication has no significant effect on employee productivity metrics in private universities in Abuja.

Table 1: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square
1	0.781	0.610	0.598

Source: Authors' Computation, 2026

Table 1 shows the strength of the relationship between communication and employee productivity. The correlation coefficient (R = 0.781) indicates a strong positive relationship between the two variables. The R-Square value of 0.610 implies that communication accounts for 61.0% of the total variation in employee productivity. This suggests that effective communication channels in private universities play a very significant role in enhancing the productivity level of employees.

Table 2: Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Beta	Std Error	Standardized Beta	t	Sig
Communication	3.214	0.582	0.781	5.524	0.000

Dependent Variable: Employee Productivity

Source: Authors' Computation, 2026

Table 2 shows the regression coefficients for communication. The standardized beta value of 0.781 indicates that communication contributes significantly to changes in employee productivity. The t-value

of 5.524 and the significance level of 0.000 show that this effect is statistically significant. This confirms that effective communication positively and significantly enhances employee productivity.

H₀₂: Leadership Transition has no significant effect on employee productivity metrics in private universities in Abuja.

Table 3: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square
2	0.692	0.494	0.481

Source: Authors' Computation, 2026

Table 3 presents the model summary for Leadership Transition and employee productivity. The correlation coefficient ($R = 0.692$) shows a strong positive relationship between Leadership Transition and employee productivity. The R-square value of 0.494 indicates that Leadership Transition accounts for 49.4% of the variation in employee productivity. This implies that Leadership Transition is an important determinant of employee productivity.

Table 4: Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Beta	Std Error	Standardized Beta	t	Sig
Leadership transition	2.876	0.497	0.692	5.783	0.000

Dependent Variable: Employee Productivity

Source: Authors' Computation, 2026

Table 4 shows the regression coefficient for leadership transition. The standardized beta value of 0.692 indicates that Leadership Transition has a significant positive influence on employee productivity. The t-value of 5.783 and the significance value of 0.000 confirm that this effect is statistically significant. This means that supportive leadership practices enhance the productivity of employees in private universities.

H₀₃: Technological advancement has no significant effect on employee productivity metrics in private universities in Abuja.

Table 5: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square
3	0.604	0.365	0.351

Source: Authors' Computation, 2026

Table 5 presents the relationship between technological advancement and employee productivity. The correlation coefficient ($R = 0.604$) suggests a moderate positive relationship between the two variables. The R-square value of 0.365 indicates that technological advancement explains 36.5% of the variance in employee productivity. This shows that technology plays a considerable role in enhancing employee productivity.

Table 6: Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Beta	Std Error	Standardized Beta	t	Sig
Technological Advancement	2.214	0.438	0.604	5.053	0.000

Dependent Variable: Employee Productivity

Source: Authors' Computation, 2026

Table 6 presents the regression coefficient for technological advancement. The standardized beta value of 0.604 shows that technological advancement has a significant positive impact on employee productivity. The t-value of 5.053 and the significance value of 0.000 confirm that the impact of technological advancement on employee productivity is statistically significant. This implies that improved technological facilities and systems support higher levels of employee performance.

Summary of Hypotheses Testing

This section presents the summary of the hypotheses tested in this study based on the regression analysis results. The decision to accept or reject each null hypothesis was based on the significance level ($p\text{-value} < 0.05$).

Hypothesis	Independent Variable	R Value	Significance (p-value)	Decision
H ₀₁	Communication	0.781	0.000	Rejected
H ₀₂	Leadership Transition	0.692	0.000	Rejected
H ₀₃	Technological Advancement	0.604	0.000	Rejected

Source: Authors' Computation, 2026

The summary of the hypotheses testing shows that all the null hypotheses were rejected at 5% level of significance. This implies that communication, leadership transition, and technological advancement all have statistically significant effects on employee productivity in selected private universities in Abuja. Communication recorded the strongest influence, followed by leadership transition, while technological advancement also contributed significantly to employee productivity.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of this study revealed that communication, leadership transition, and technological advancement all have statistically significant positive effects on employee productivity in private universities in Abuja. Communication emerged as the strongest predictor of employee productivity, confirming that clear, timely, and transparent information flow enhances employees' efficiency and commitment. This finding is strongly supported by Vakola (2018), who established that effective communication during organizational change improves employee trust and reduces resistance. Similarly, Men (2020) found that open communication strengthens employee engagement and performance across service-oriented institutions.

Leadership Transition was also found to significantly influence employee productivity. This implies that when managers provide guidance, motivation, and emotional support, employees perform better. This result aligns with the findings of Borman (2019), who reported that supportive leadership enhances task effectiveness and organizational commitment. In the same vein, Al Khajeh (2018) confirmed that leadership style significantly predicts employee performance across both public and private institutions. These studies validate the present finding that Leadership Transition is a critical driver of productivity in private universities. Technological advancement, though the least contributor among the three variables, still demonstrated a significant positive effect on employee productivity. This suggests that digital tools, automation, and modern work systems enhance speed, accuracy, and service delivery. This finding is consistent with the work of Venkatesh (2021), who confirmed that perceived usefulness and ease of use of technology significantly improve employee output. Likewise, Dwivedi (2020) reported that digital transformation strengthens organizational efficiency when accompanied by adequate training. This study confirms that effective change management practices significantly enhance employee productivity, in agreement with recent empirical studies across higher education institutions.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study concludes that change management plays a critical role in enhancing employee productivity in private universities in Abuja. The results showed that effective communication, strong leadership transition, and technological advancement all have significant positive effects on employee performance. Communication was found to be the most influential factor, followed by leadership transition, while technological advancement also contributed meaningfully to productivity. These findings confirm that when employees are well-informed, adequately supported by leadership, and provided with modern technological tools, they are more motivated, efficient, and productive. The rejection of all three null hypotheses further establishes that change management practices are not only relevant but essential for organizational success in the university system. Therefore, private universities that actively invest in structured communication, leadership development, and technological upgrades are more likely to experience improved employee productivity and sustainable institutional growth.

Based on the findings it is therefore recommended that;

1. Management should strengthen communication systems by ensuring timely dissemination of information, encouraging feedback mechanisms, and promoting transparency during all change processes to sustain high employee productivity.
2. University management should continue to review and strengthen Leadership Transition structures through leadership training programs, mentorship schemes, and employee motivation strategies to enhance commitment and performance.
3. Private universities should invest more in modern technological infrastructure and regularly train employees on emerging technologies to improve operational efficiency and service delivery.

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