



## Organizational Change and Employee Performance in Higher Education Institutions in Nepal Mamata Prajapati<sup>1</sup>

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### **Abstract**

In modern institutions, organizational change is a crucial phenomenon that influences both employee performance and the overall efficiency of the institution. This study looks at how employee performance in Nepal's reaccredited higher education institutions (HEIs) is affected by organizational change, particularly changes in leadership and technology. A standard self-reported questionnaire was used to gather data from 270 employees of 11 reaccredited HEIs using a quantitative research approach. Multiple regression analysis and exploratory factor analysis were used in the study to evaluate the correlations between the variables. The results show that while leadership change has no statistically significant impact on employee performance, technology change considerably improves it. Employee performance and technology change were found to be strongly positively correlated by correlation analysis. Nonetheless, the weak association between leadership and technology advancements implies that these elements function separately. These results highlight the critical role that technology plays in increasing worker productivity and the necessity of making calculated investments in digital infrastructure and staff development. On the other hand, leadership changes by themselves could not have a direct impact on performance results, hence more research into the contextual elements affecting leadership efficacy is required. In addition to offering empirical insights for HEI administrators and policymakers to use in developing evidence-based methods to improve employee performance in the face of institutional upheavals, this study adds to the theoretical conversation on organizational change.

**Keywords:** organizational change, employee performance, technological change, leadership change, higher education institutions

### **1. Introduction**

In today's rapidly changing business environment, which is marked by frequent restructuring, mergers, acquisitions, and technological innovation, change is a pervasive and endemic phenomenon. In order to address the financial benefits of organizational change, academic researchers and practitioners need to understand how changes effect employee performance, even as firms strive for flexibility and competitiveness. The type, management, and context of organizational change most frequently affect employee performance, a crucial

factor in determining the success of an organization. This study examines the effects of organizational change on employee performance in Nepal's Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), with a focus on technological improvement.

Several studies have brought attention to the complex relationship between organizational change and employee performance. Research by authors like Rafferty and Jimmieson (2017) and Armenakis and Bedeian (1999) has emphasized the significance of several elements like leadership, communication, and employee attitudes during change initiatives. Furthermore, research by Oreg et al. (2011) and Armenakis et al. (2007) indicates that psychological resilience and adaptive coping strategies influence how employees react to change. Despite being useful, these studies demonstrate that organizational change is likely to result in temporary drops in employee happiness and performance because of things like ambiguity, disturbed routines, and job insecurity (Jones, 2020; Lee & Mitchell, 2021). However, the kind of change and how well change management techniques work determine the long-term implications (Smith, 2019). The performance consequences of implementing new technologies, systems, and procedures are not well understood, despite the substantial amount of research on organizational transformation, especially in non-Western cultures like Nepal. Previous research on technological transition offers conflicting results; some show that productivity levels increase over time, while others show brief declines in performance as staff members adjust to new software (Johnson, 2022; Wilson et al., 2020). This is especially important for HEIs, as digital transformation is gradually changing how institutions operate through data analysis, automation, and communications technology. Despite the fact that these innovations will foster creativity and efficiency, they necessitate significant changes and new skills, which disrupt existing work procedures (Smith, 2019).

In order to meet international standards for education, HEIs in Nepal are significantly changing their operations and implementing new technology. Nevertheless, little research has been done on how changes impact workers' performance in this particular environment. Thus, by investigating the complex effects of organizational transformation on the performance of Nepalese HEI employees, this study aims to close this gap. This study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the interactions of various factors that impact employees' attitudes, behavior, and performance. These variables include the type of change, communication practices, leadership behavior, organizational support, and job characteristics. The purpose of this study is to assess the position of organizational change, examine its relationship with employee performance, and analyze its impact on employee performance in reaccredited higher education institutions in Nepal.

### **1.1 Quality Assurance Accreditation and Higher Education Institutions in Nepal**

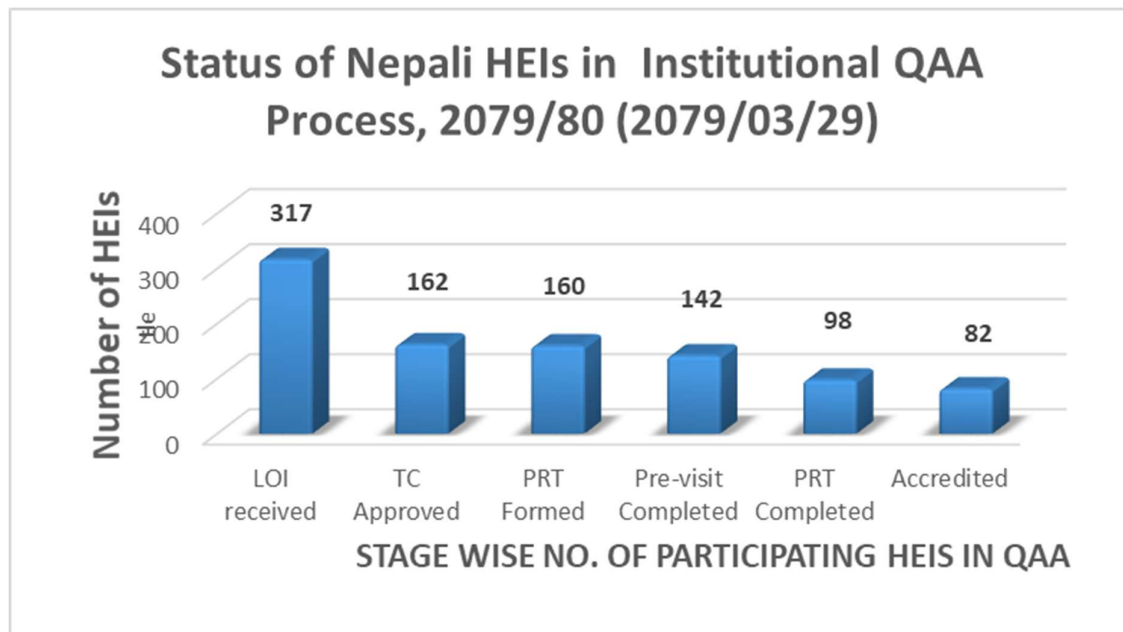
The system of Quality Assurance and Accreditation (QAA) in Nepal was first introduced in 2007 AD as one of the major components of Second Higher Education Project (SHEP), a project granted and technically supported by the International Development Agency (IDA/ The World Bank. The 7-year (2007-2014) project was implemented by the University Grants Commission (UGC) To steer the system of QAA, UGC Nepal formed a 21- member Quality Assurance and Accreditation Council (QAAC) under the chairmanship of UGC Chair, representing experts, professional councils, industrialists and students. The quality Assurance and Accreditation Division (QAAD) was established within the UGC as a secretariat to the Council, headed by the Director.

Initially the system of QAA in the higher education sector of Nepal, nine potential HEIs, were selected and provided with technical and financial support so they could achieve the accreditation requirement. Year 2009 has been the first milestone for the QAA system of Nepal since the first time in the history, an HEI was accredited.

Sixteen years completed since the QAA system was establishment in Nepal, the momentum for maturity is gradually growing. Today, on the one hand, it has been recognized as regular system under the UGC governance through ‘Educational Quality Assurance and Accreditation Regulation (EQAAR) – 2074’ and on the other hand, it has got wider reach, acknowledgement and acceptance among the HEIs of Nepal. The increasing number of HEIs willing to align under this process itself is an indication of widening scope of QAA system in the country.

Current scenario of the HEIs participating in QAA process can be observed as following:

**Figure 1:** Status of HEIs in the QAA process



**Sources:** Website of UGC Nepal

**Note:** The data excludes the HEIs in the re –accreditation process, i.e., at different stages. HEIs in reaccreditation process: 7 HEIs reaccredited, 2 HEIs PRT assessment completed, 4 HEIs PRT formed completed, 2 HEIs SSR submission and 2 HEIs LOI submission.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Organizational Change

Organizational change is a multifaceted phenomenon that encompasses alterations in structure, culture, and management within an organization. On the other hand, employee performance pertains to the output and efficiency of employees in achieving organizational goals. Over the past decade, a significant body of literature has examined the intricate relationship between organizational change and employee performance, elucidating both positive and negative implications. Organizational change has become an inevitable part of the business world due to factors such as globalization, technological advancements, and competitive pressures (Appelbaum et al., 2017). However, uncertainty also comes with change, and if it's not handled well, it can have an adverse effect on worker employee performance (Rafferty & Restubog, 2017). The purpose of this literature review is to examine current research on the effects of various organizational change factors on worker performance. It will concentrate on how management, corporate culture, and structure changes relate to employee performance results.

The process by which organizations transition from their current state to a desired future one by strategic interventions, improvements to organizational structures, procedures, culture, or strategies is known as organizational change. Technological developments, mergers and acquisitions, organizational culture changes, leadership changes, and restructuring are a few examples of this (Burnes, 2019). Any modification to the organizational systems that affects the way work is done or the culture of the business is referred to as organizational change. This includes adjustments to leadership, technology, procedures, and structure (Rafferty & Restubog, 2017).

## **2.2 Employee Performance**

The efficiency, productivity, and outcomes achieved by individuals within an organization with respect to their job duties and organizational objectives are referred to as employee performance. The output or results achieved by a single employee in respect to their designated tasks, responsibilities, and organizational goals are referred to as employee performance. It includes elements like productivity, commitment, job happiness, and general effectiveness, and it covers both individual and team performance (Cascio, 2018). Employee performance and organizational change have a complex relationship that is impacted by a number of variables, including communication, leadership, employee engagement, and flexibility. In order to improve performance during transitions, organizations must manage change effectively by involving staff members, helping, encouraging an adaptable culture, and coordinating personal ambitions with corporate goals. Employee performance and organizational change have a complex relationship that is impacted by a number of variables, including communication, leadership, employee engagement, and flexibility. In order to improve performance during transitions, organizations must manage change effectively by involving staff members, helping, encouraging an adaptable culture, and coordinating personal ambitions with corporate goals.

## **2.3 Theoretical Review**

### **2.3.1 Role Ambiguity and Role Conflict Theory**

According to the Role Ambiguity and Role Conflict Theory, employee performance is adversely affected by ambiguous work duties and competing expectations, especially during times of organizational change. According to this idea, which was developed within the framework of organizational behavior, workers perform best when they have limited conflicting demands and clear job expectations. Tett and Meyer (2016) claim that role ambiguity occurs when workers are uncertain about their duties, which causes misunderstanding and lower motivation. Similarly, role conflict lowers productivity and effectiveness when workers encounter conflicting demands from many stakeholders. Role ambiguity and conflict are more likely to occur in Nepali higher education institutions due to organizational instability, modifications to law, and changing academic expectations. The theory's applicability has been reaffirmed by recent research, which shows that role ambiguity and conflict can have a large impact on academic employees' performance. Role conflict raises stress levels, which compromises job happiness and productivity, according to Jehn and Bezrukova (2019). As faculty and administrative staff find it difficult to adjust to ambiguous job descriptions, role ambiguity during restructuring periods in educational institutions results in decreased organizational commitment, according to another study by Bauer and Simmons (2021). Employees may encounter contradictory expectations from administrators, academics, and students in Nepal's higher education system, where governance structures and rules are changing quickly. This misalignment can impair staff well-being, delay decision-making, and degrade academic quality, all of which can have an impact on institutional success.

There are some inconsistencies in the literature despite its solid theoretical foundation. Some research indicates that a reasonable amount of ambiguity might foster adaptation and creativity, despite the fact that many academics contend that role ambiguity and conflict have negative consequences. According to Hassan et al. (2020), workers that have some role flexibility in dynamic learning contexts may grow more resilient and adept at handling problems. This calls into question the notion that conflict and ambiguity invariably lead to unfavorable consequences. Higher education institutions in Nepal should strive for a balance between enabling flexibility to promote adaptability and maintaining enough role clarity to sustain performance in order to synthesize various viewpoints. Employee performance in the changing academic environment can be improved by successfully managing change through clear communication, leadership support, and professional development. This will help lessen the negative effects of role ambiguity and conflict.

### **2.3.2 Psychological Contract Breach Theory**

According to the Psychological Contract Breach (PCB) Theory, employees form implicit expectations regarding their relationship with a company, and when these duties are not met, it has a negative impact on their attitudes and behaviours (Rousseau, 2018). Implicit promises about job security, career advancement, workload management, and possibilities for professional development are all included in psychological contracts (Robinson & Morrison, 2000). Employees may perceive violations of these agreements during organizational change, such as reorganization or policy changes in Nepali higher education institutions, which could cause emotional discomfort and poor performance (Coyle-Shapiro & Parzefall, 2008). When abrupt administrative changes result in contract alterations or workload adjustments, for example, faculty members who anticipate employment security may feel deceived, which may ultimately undermine their motivation and engagement (Zhao et al., 2007). According to recent research, psychological contract breaches (PCBs) have the potential to undermine job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and trust especially in educational environments. According to a meta-analysis by Bal et al. (2017), PCB is closely linked to a decline in organizational citizenship behavior, which means that workers are less inclined to go above and beyond the call of duty. According to a study by Conway and Briner (2021), workers are more inclined to disengage, oppose change, or even think about quitting the company if they believe their psychological contracts are being broken. Employee expectations regarding promotions, research funding, and administrative transparency are regularly met in Nepalese higher education institutions, where financial limitations and unstable governance frequently result in erratic policy changes (Shrestha & Adhikari, 2020). These violations ultimately impact student results by causing job discontent and a decline in the quality of instruction.

However, other academics contend that organizational reactions and employee coping strategies can mitigate the impacts of PCB, thus not all breaches result in unfavorable results. De Hauw and De Vos (2010), for instance, discovered that strong leadership support and perceived fairness in communication can lessen the negative effects of contract violations. According to Restubog et al. (2008), psychological resilience is also essential for protecting staff members from the negative consequences of organizational change. Institutions can reduce the detrimental effects of PCB in Nepal's higher education system by encouraging open communication, collaborative decision-making, and organized career development initiatives.

(Aryal & Bhandari, 2021), Even in the midst of major organizational changes, universities can preserve confidence and improve performance by proactively meeting employee expectations. Without compromising student performance, resilient and flexible faculty and administrative personnel in Nepalese higher education institutions are better equipped to adopt new teaching techniques, embrace technology, and comply with changing

accreditation and policy requirements (Adhikari & Shrestha, 2020; Gautam, 2021). However, employees who lack resilience and flexibility may experience stress, oppose change, and perform worse during organizational transitions (Britt et al., 2020). Importantly, resilience and flexibility are not fixed attributes that may be fostered by organizational interventions such as stress management programs, professional development, leadership support, and mentorship (Kuntz et al., 2017; Poudel & K.C., 2022). By fostering a supportive work environment, higher education institutions may help their staff become more adaptable to change. During periods of transition, this will assist them in maintaining or even enhancing their overall performance.

### **2.3.3 Resilience and Adaptability Theory**

According to Luthans, Vogelgesang, and Lester (2016), the Resilience and Adaptability Theory highlights that employees' reaction to organizational change is determined by their capacity to get back from setbacks and adapt to new circumstances. The ability to tolerate stress, come back from setbacks, and sustain performance levels in the face of interruptions is known as resilience (Masten, 2018). Conversely, adaptability entails changing attitudes, abilities, and actions to meet evolving organizational needs (Pulakos et al., 2017). Resilient and adaptable faculty and administrative staff are more likely to remain effective during transitions in Nepal's higher education institutions, where policy changes, administrative reorganizations, and changing academic requirements are commonplace (Sharma & Dahal, 2021). These characteristics allow workers to adapt to new instructional approaches, deal with uncertainty, and incorporate technology into the classroom without suffering appreciable performance drops.

Resilience and adaptation are crucial for reducing the adverse consequences of organizational change, according to recent studies. Employees with greater psychological capital, such as resilience, report feeling less stressed and more satisfied with their jobs throughout organizational changes, according to a 2017 study by Youssef and Luthans. Likewise, Oreg et al. (2018) showed that flexibility increases workers' openness to change, creating a productive workplace even during tumultuous times. Because academic policies, financial mechanisms, and institutional governance change frequently, resilience and adaptation are especially crucial in the context of Nepalese higher education (Adhikari & Shrestha, 2020). In order to maintain instructional effectiveness and institutional stability, faculty members who actively cultivate these qualities are better equipped to manage changes in curricula, accreditation requirements, and administrative expectations (Gautam, 2021). Although resilience and flexibility are advantageous, not all employees are born with these qualities, and others may find it difficult to handle sudden changes. According to research by Britt, Shen, and Sinclair (2020), businesses can help people become more resilient by providing professional growth opportunities, supportive leadership, and a psychologically safe environment. Similarly, Kuntz et al. (2017) contend that inclusive decision-making procedures, mentorship, and training can all improve adaptation. Promoting stress management programs, leadership assistance, and opportunities for ongoing education might help staff members at Nepalese higher education institutions become more resilient and adaptable, preventing performance from being adversely affected by organizational change (Poudel & K.C., 2022). Institutions may give their employees the tools they need to succeed in the face of adversity by establishing a supportive atmosphere, which will ultimately lead to long-term success. Employees who can overcome obstacles and adjust to new organizational demands are better able to maintain performance in the face of change, claims the Resilience and Adaptability Theory (Luthans et al., 2016; Youssef & Luthans, 2017; Kuntz et al., 2017). Beneficial leadership, training, and a psychological safety culture that helps employees handle changes well without compromising productivity are ways that organizations might build these capacities. All things considered, organizational change whether it be in structure, technology,

leadership, or culture has a direct effect on employee performance. Employee performance is commonly measured by productivity, dedication, and job satisfaction (Appelbaum et al., 2017; Cascio, 2018). and digital transformation. Three primary theoretical positions can be used to explain this relationship. According to role ambiguity and role conflict theory, employees who have unclear or conflicting job expectations are less productive, committed, and satisfied (Tett & Meyer, 2016). Little is known about how Nepali HEIs handle flexibility and clarity during organizational transformation, despite some research suggesting that a certain amount of ambiguity may encourage adaptability. According to the PCB Theory, when employees' expectations for workload, job stability, and career advancement are not fulfilled, trust and engagement suffer (Rousseau, 2018). Although these breaches have been extensively studied in other countries, less is known about their effects in Nepalese HEIs, where governance is still inconsistent. The Resilience and Adaptability Theory highlights employees' capacity to overcome obstacles and adjust to shifting expectations (Luthans et al., 2016). The role of resilience and adaptation in sustaining success in Nepal's higher education system has not received much empirical study, despite the fact that they are recognized as crucial for managing change. Previous study has shown that changes in leadership and technology can either improve or worsen employee performance, depending on how they are managed, the degree of communication, and the training provided. However, a significant amount of this evidence comes from the public and private sectors. The relationship between organizational change and employee performance is still unclear in Nepal's higher education institutions, where technology use, governance reforms, and policy uncertainties are all accelerating. In order to better understand how organizational change impacts employee performance and how institutions can increase adaptability while reducing risks, the theoretical frameworks of resilience and adaptability, psychological contract breach, role ambiguity, and conflict need to be applied to the Nepalese HEI context.

#### **2.4 Empirical review**

The empirical research offers an in-depth understanding of the ways in which leadership and technological developments impact employee performance. According to research on digital transformation, innovations like artificial intelligence (AI), automation, and cloud computing greatly improve decision-making, teamwork, and job productivity (Smith & Johnson, 2021; Wang et al., 2021). To reduce employee resistance and ensure smooth transitions, research shows that digital adoption alone is insufficient and that appropriate training programs and change management techniques are required (Ahmed et al., 2020; Miller & Jones, 2019). Automation has also been shown to boost productivity in the workplace, but if workers believe technology will replace their jobs, job satisfaction may suffer (Kumar & Verma, 2019).

Employee engagement, work satisfaction, and adaptability are significantly influenced by changes in leadership. Organizational performance and employee morale have been demonstrated to be positively impacted by transformational leadership, which places an emphasis on innovation and staff development (Brown et al., 2020; Clarke & Davidson, 2022). If not handled well, leadership changes particularly frequent CEO changes—may cause employees to become uncertain, which could lead to higher turnover rates (Robinson & Clark, 2020; Carter & Hall, 2021). Research indicates that companies that embrace servant leadership and digital leadership practices improve trust and collaboration, especially in remote and digitally linked work environments (Evans & Scott, 2020; Griffin et al., 2021). Additionally, technology leadership strategies, like as AI-based performance management and decision-making tools, enhance the efficiency, fairness, and transparency of employee assessments (Williams & Evans, 2019; Robinson et al., 2018). Because it encourages a methodical but adaptable approach to managing technological change, digital leadership also

significantly contributes to lowering workplace stress and improving job satisfaction (Nguyen & Tran, 2021; Patel et al., 2020). These results suggest that effective integration of technology-driven processes in contemporary enterprises requires leadership adaptation.

To sum up, the empirical data indicates that in order to optimize employee performance and satisfaction, firms need to strike a balance between technical innovations and successful leadership techniques. According to Griffin et al. (2021) and Yadav & Sharma (2020), hybrid leadership models that integrate transformational, digital, and servant leadership concepts seem to be the most successful at managing change while encouraging innovation and workforce stability. Organizations may effectively manage technology changes and sustain a high level of employee engagement and productivity by placing a strong priority on change management, training for employees, and leadership agility.

## **2.5 Relationship between Organizational Change and Employee Performance**

Several studies into the connection between organizational change and employee performance have produced a variety of findings influenced by various factors. Employee performance is much improved by organizational change, particularly in the banking sector, according to Khosa et al. (2015), who also highlighted the significance of effective communication and leadership throughout transitions. According to Wanza and Nkuraru (2016), structural and technological changes have a favorable impact on employee performance at Kenyan universities, suggesting that well-managed change may raise morale and productivity. Dewi Rahmatika Shaumi et al. (2023) discovered a slight and adverse effect of organizational change on the performance of government employees, indicating that not all changes have positive effects. This result is consistent with Zakiy et al. (2023), who also saw negative impacts on employee performance after Bank Syariah Indonesia undergone organizational changes. This highlights the importance of context in evaluating these dynamics. Furthermore, studies by Ndahiro et al. (2015) and Olajide (2014) show that different types of changes, including behavioral or technological adjustments, might affect performance differently in different industries. Although Olajide (2014) pointed out that staff performance in the telecommunications industry is significantly impacted by technological changes, Ndahiro et al. (2015) emphasized that well-thought-out change management techniques are essential for improving university performance. In the Postal Corporation of Kenya, Karanja (2015) found that technological innovations improved employee performance by creating new job opportunities and increasing employee enthusiasm.

Factors such as communication and procedural fairness significantly influence the link between organizational transformation and employee performance. Tefera and Mutambara (2016) highlighted that insufficient involvement in change processes might dishearten workers, while McLagan (2002) observed that employees are more inclined to endorse changes when they see them as equitable and fair. In this context, a positive attitude towards organizational change might contribute to enhanced employee performance, as suggested by Kansal and Singh (2016).

Although many studies support for the beneficial benefits of organizational change on employee performance, it is necessary to analyze the unique context and type of the changes adopted (Ahmed et al., 2013; Karanja, 2015; Wanza & Nkuraru, 2016). The results imply that good change management practices characterized by clear communication, leadership participation, and consideration of employee perspectives are crucial for maximizing the advantages of organizational change on employee performance while reducing possible negatives. Therefore, following hypothesis has been presumed

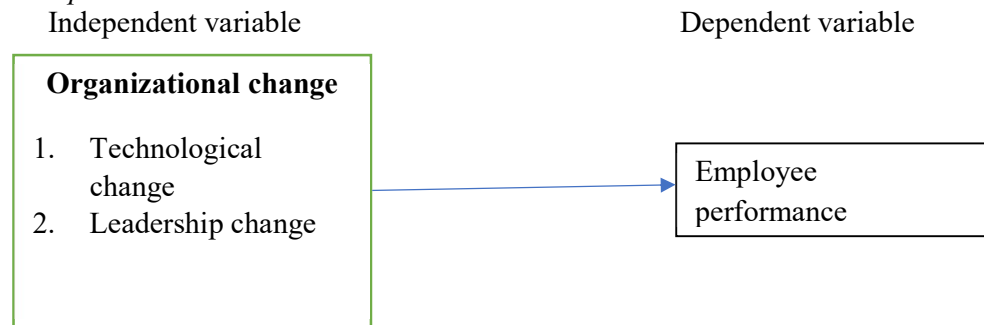
H1: Organizational change has significant impact on employee performance.

H2: Technological change has significant impact on employee performance.

## 2.6 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual model integrates role ambiguity and role conflict theory, psychological contract breach theory, and resilience and adaptability theory to examine the impact of organizational change, specifically technological and leadership change, on employee performance in Nepalese universities. Technological shifts, such as AI and electronic equipment, and leadership change, such as policy and governance changes, generate role conflict, uncertainty, and psychological contract breaches, leading to declining job satisfaction, engagement, and productivity levels (Rousseau, 2018; Jehn & Bezrukova, 2019; Luthans et al., 2016). Since technological change disrupts work habits and demands new skills, inadequate training intensifies stress and lowers performance, though hardy employees manage better (Oreg et al., 2018; Masten, 2018). Similarly, leadership change creates uncertain expectations and disengagement, but clear communication and participative leadership can mitigate negative effects, fostering adaptability and performance (Tett & Meyer, 2016; De Hauw & De Vos, 2010). This framework describes the ways in which leadership and technological innovation impact employees' performance via role clarity, psychological contracts, and adaptability in Nepalese HEIs.

**Figure 1:** *Conceptual Framework*



**Source:** Oreg et al. (2018); Bauer and Simmons (2021); Masten (2018); Tett and Meyer (2016); Jehn and Bezrukova (2019); Sharma and Dahal (2021); Shrestha and Adhikari (2020); Poudel & K.C. (2022).

### 2.6.1 Operationalize of the variables

Organizational change in this study is measured in terms of the level of change in higher education institutions in the areas of change in technology and leadership. The perceptions of these changes by the employees are measured using five Likert-scale items for technological adoption and leadership transition. Employee performance is the quality with which the teaching and administrative workforce completes their work responsibilities, such as task, contextual, and adaptive performance. All variables are operationalized through standard Likert-scale measures for reliability and consistency across respondents.

## 3. Research Methods

This study applied a realist ontology to hold that organizational change and employee performance are objective truths amenable to quantitative measurement. Epistemologically, a positivist stance was employed, using cross-sectional questionnaires and statistical testing to examine organizational change and employee performance within Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Nepal. Axiologically, the study prioritized objectivity and precision, being aware of the possibility of researcher bias but attempting unbiased and true results. Causal and descriptive research design was employed utilizing a quantitative approach of

collecting and analyzing numerical data to support statistical testing of the association between organizational change variables and employee performance outcomes.

The population was 898 faculty members from 11 reaccredited HEIs in Nepal which had completed the re-accreditation cycle successfully as of September 2024, as per the University Grants Commission (UGC). Simple random sampling was utilized with names of staff typed in an Excel file and serial numbers between 1 to 898. Sample size was estimated as 270 (below 50% population proportion, 5% margin error, and 95% confidence level) using the formula of Kothari (2004), corrected using finite population correction. Data were collected through a face and content validated by experts' pilot-tested among 36 non-participating respondents, structured, self-reported 5-point Likert scale questionnaire. After fine-tuning, the questionnaire was distributed through Google Forms to 650 randomly selected respondents and gave a response rate of 41.53% (270 responses).

#### **4. Data analysis**

The frequency distribution mainly frequency and percentage were calculated in order to assess the demographic profile of respondents. Summary statistics mainly mean and standard deviations were calculated to assess the average responses and scatteredness of data using SPSS version 27. Multivariate analysis was conducted for exploratory factor analysis and multiple regression has been employed for hypothesis testing.

##### **4.1 Measurement**

Organizational change is an evolving construct consisting of technological and leadership change that are measured on scales of five and six items each on a Likert scale with five points ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). Technological change, adapted from Pea-Assounga and Sibassaha (2024), captures perceptions of digital transformation, automation, and IT performance, for instance, "Technology in our institution facilitates organizational goal achievement" (Oreg et al., 2018; Shrestha & Adhikari, 2020). Items for leadership change, built from studies and expert recommendations, capture openness and management transition, for instance, "Changes in leadership are duly informed and prepared for strategically" (Tett & Meyer, 2016; Bauer & Simmons, 2021). They capture the frequency, impact, and management of change, providing us with a glimpse into employee attitudes and their influence on motivation and Nepalese higher education institution engagement (Jehn & Bezrukova, 2019; Kuntz et al., 2017).

Employee performance refers to the efficiency and effectiveness in carrying out the tasks of the job, such as task, adaptive, and contextual performance, scored using a 10-item scale derived from Chaudhary (2021) on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree. Factors quantify productivity, skill development, and adaptability, for instance, "I have acquired an additional degree since being appointed," demonstrating professional growth (Coyle-Shapiro & Parzefall, 2008; Pulakos et al., 2017). The indicator includes employee commitment and engagement during organizational transformation in Nepalese higher-educational institutions, providing a general performance evaluation in evolving circumstances (Rousseau, 2018; Shrestha & Adhikari, 2020).

##### **4.2 Demographic Information of Respondents**

Regarding the demographic information of the respondents, age, gender, role, and experience in years were obtained. The age of the respondents was measured in natural number in years ignoring decimals for months to obtained continuous data. Gender of respondents was measured with two options namely male, and female. Two options were provided for role of the respondents either as teaching or nonteaching staff. Natural whole number was used to represent the experience in years which remained open for obtaining continuous data. Under

this section, the frequency distribution was used to depict the demographic details of the 270 respondents.

Table 2 presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents. The gender distribution indicates that the majority of respondents were male (87.8%), while female participants comprised 12.2% of the sample. This distribution suggests that the workforce under study is predominantly male. Regarding educational qualifications, most respondents held a master's degree (61.5%), followed by MPhil holders (23.7%) and PhD holders (12.6%). A small proportion (2.2%) of respondents had a bachelor's degree. These findings indicate that the sample consists of a highly educated population, with the majority possessing postgraduate qualifications. The age distribution of respondents shows that the largest group falls within the 35–45 age range (46.7%), followed by those aged 45–55 (33.0%). A smaller proportion of respondents were between 25–35 years (17.4%), while only 3.0% were in the 55–65 age range. These results suggest that mid-career professionals constitute the majority of the sample. In terms of work experience, approximately one-third of respondents (32.6%) had 0–5 years of experience, while 24.8% had 5–10 years, and 26.7% had 10–15 years. Additionally, 15.9% of respondents had between 15–20 years of experience. This distribution highlights that a significant portion of the workforce consists of early- to mid-career professionals, with a relatively smaller group having extensive experience exceeding 15 years.

**Table 1:** *Frequency Distribution of Demographic Profile of Respondents*

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Gender		
	Female	33
	Male	237
Qualification		
	Bachelor	6
	Master	166
	Mphil	64
	Phd	34
Age Group		
	25 – 35	47
	35 -45	126
	45 - 55	89
	55 – 65	8
Experience		
	0 – 5	88
	5 – 10	67
	10 – 15	72
	15 – 20	43

## 5. Result

### 5.1 Descriptive Statistics

Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics for the items measuring technological change (TC), leadership change (LC), and employee performance (EP). The results indicate that all items were rated on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from a minimum of 1 to a maximum of 5. The mean scores of the technological change (TC) items range from 3.0074 (TC3) to 3.0667 (TC1), with standard deviations varying between 1.20097 and 1.24114. These results suggest a moderate perception of technological change among respondents, with relatively high variability in responses.

For leadership change (LC), the mean scores range from 2.9593 (LC4) to 3.0148 (LC6), with standard deviations between 1.19875 and 1.2628. The findings suggest that respondents perceive leadership change slightly less favorably compared to technological change. The relatively high standard deviations indicate considerable variation in responses, implying that perceptions of leadership change are not uniform across respondents. Regarding employee performance (EP), the mean scores range from 2.8963 (EP5) to 3.0556 (EP9), with standard deviations between 0.93663 and 1.06219. The overall mean scores indicate a moderate level of agreement regarding employee performance, with standard deviations slightly lower than those observed for technological and leadership change. This suggests that while perceptions of employee performance exhibit some variation, they are relatively more consistent compared to the other variables. Overall, the descriptive statistics highlight that respondents generally perceive technological and leadership changes as moderate, with substantial variability in their responses. The standard deviations indicate a diverse range of opinions, suggesting that individual experiences and perspectives may influence how employees respond to organizational changes and their subsequent performance outcomes.

**Table 2: Summary Statistics**

Items	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
TC1	1	5	3.0667	1.22064
TC2	1	5	3.0148	1.23749
TC3	1	5	3.0074	1.20097
TC4	1	5	3.0185	1.2208
TC5	1	5	3.0481	1.24114
LC1	1	5	2.963	1.21274
LC2	1	5	3.000	1.22853
LC3	1	5	2.9889	1.25986
LC4	1	5	2.9593	1.19875
LC5	1	5	2.9889	1.2628
LC6	1	5	3.0148	1.24049
EP1	1	5	2.937	1.00543
EP2	1	5	2.9037	1.06219
EP3	1	5	2.9296	1.05897
EP4	1	5	2.9222	1.01909
EP5	1	5	2.8963	1.02587
EP6	1	5	2.9556	1.04092
EP7	1	5	2.963	1.05891
EP8	1	5	2.9926	0.93663
EP9	1	5	3.0556	0.98722
EP10	1	5	2.9889	0.99621

**Descriptive Statistics of Position of Organizational Change and Employee Performance in HEIs in Nepal**

Table 3 presents the descriptive statistics for the key study variables: technological change, leadership change, and employee performance. The results indicate that all variables were measured on a five-point Likert scale, with scores ranging from a minimum of 1 to a maximum of 5. The mean score for technological change was 3.0311 (SD = 1.08436), suggesting a moderate perception of technological changes within the organization. The relatively high standard deviation indicates notable variability in respondents' perceptions, implying that while some employees may view technological changes positively, others may have differing opinions.

Leadership change had a mean score of 2.9858 (SD = 1.09847), which is slightly lower than the mean for technological change. This finding suggests that respondents perceive leadership change as slightly less favorable. The standard deviation indicates a substantial degree of variability in responses, signifying differing experiences or views regarding changes in leadership. Employee performance had a mean score of 2.9544 (SD = 0.86633), indicating a moderate level of perceived performance among employees. The standard deviation for employee performance is lower compared to the other two variables, suggesting more consistent responses regarding this aspect. Overall, the findings indicate that employees have mixed perceptions of technological and leadership changes, with varying impacts on their performance.

**Table 3: Descriptive Statistics (Position of Organizational Change and Employee Performance in HEIs in Nepal)**

Variable	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Tech_Change	1	5	3.0311	1.08436
Leader_Change	1	5	2.9858	1.09847
Employee_Per	1	5	2.9544	0.86633

### Correlation between Organizational Change and Employee Performance

Table 4 presents the correlation coefficients among the key study variables: technological change, leadership change, and employee performance. The results indicate that technological change is significantly and positively correlated with employee performance ( $r=.623$ ,  $p<.01$ ), suggesting that as technological changes are implemented, employee performance tends to improve. Similarly, leadership change is also positively correlated with employee performance ( $r=.530$ ,  $p<.01$ ), indicating that effective leadership transitions are associated with better employee outcomes. However, the correlation between technological change and leadership change is very weak ( $r=.007$ ,  $p=.915$ ), implying no meaningful relationship between these two variables. The significance values confirm that the correlations between both technological change and employee performance, as well as leadership change and employee performance, are statistically significant at the 0.01 level, demonstrating strong associations between organizational changes and employee performance outcomes.

**Table 4: Correlation Analysis (Organizational Change and Employee Performance)**

	Tech_Change	Leader_Change	Employee_Per
Tech_Change	1		
Leader_Change	.007	1	
Employee_Per	.623**	.530**	1
	.000	.000	

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

### 5.2 Reliability

Mark (1996) defined reliability “as the extent to which a measuring instrument is stable and consistent. The essence of reliability is repeatability. If an instrument is administered over and over again, will it yield the same results?” Table 6 presents the reliability analysis for the study variables, including technological change (TC), leadership change (LC), and employee performance (EP). The internal consistency of the scales was assessed using Cronbach’s alpha, where values above 0.70 are considered acceptable for reliability (Hair et al., 2019). The overall

Cronbach's alpha for the scale was 0.917, indicating strong reliability across the measured constructs.

For technological change, the Cronbach's alpha value was 0.931, demonstrating high internal consistency. The corrected item-total correlations for TC items ranged from 0.802 to 0.833, all exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.50 (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). Additionally, the Cronbach's alpha if any item were deleted remained above 0.90, suggesting that removing any item would not significantly improve reliability.

Leadership change exhibited strong reliability, with a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.948. The corrected item-total correlations ranged from 0.821 to 0.858, confirming that each item contributed meaningfully to the construct. The values of Cronbach's alpha if an item was deleted remained consistently high, indicating a stable and well-structured scale.

Employee performance also demonstrated excellent reliability, with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.957. The corrected item-total correlations ranged from 0.632 to 0.889, with EP8 (0.670) and EP9 (0.683) showing slightly lower values compared to other items. However, the overall reliability remained robust, and the deletion of any single item would not significantly improve the scale's internal consistency. These confirm that the measurement scales used for technological change, leadership change, and employee performance are highly reliable and suitable for further statistical analyses.

**Table 5: Reliability**

Item	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted	Cronbach's Alpha
TC1	12.0889	19.204	0.813	0.916	0.931
TC2	12.1407	18.902	0.833	0.913	
TC3	12.1481	19.346	0.815	0.916	
TC4	12.1370	19.085	0.827	0.914	
TC5	12.1074	19.145	0.802	0.919	
LC1	14.9519	30.477	0.858	0.936	0.948
LC2	14.9148	30.74	0.821	0.94	
LC3	14.9259	30.009	0.858	0.935	
LC4	14.9556	30.868	0.836	0.938	
LC5	14.9259	30.173	0.841	0.938	
LC6	14.9000	30.626	0.821	0.94	
EP1	26.6074	60.485	0.867	0.95	0.957
EP2	26.6407	59.473	0.882	0.95	
EP3	26.6148	59.688	0.87	0.95	
EP4	26.6222	60.251	0.87	0.95	
EP5	26.6481	60.192	0.867	0.95	
EP6	26.5889	59.849	0.877	0.95	
EP7	26.5815	59.419	0.889	0.949	
EP8	26.5519	64.122	0.67	0.958	
EP9	26.4889	63.351	0.683	0.958	
EP10	26.5556	63.988	0.632	0.96	
Overall Cronbach's Alpha					0.917

### 5.3 Exploratory Factor Analysis

Exploratory Factor analysis using the principal component method with varimax rotation was used for analyzing the factor structure and correlation between items included in the scale. The results of assumptions test for factor analysis are provided in Table 6.

**Table 6:** *KMO and Bartlett's Test*

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		0.944
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	6036.495
	Df	210
	Sig.	.000

The KMO value is above .60 so it indicates that criteria of sampling adequacy is met. The Bartlett test of sphericity is statistically significant ( $P < .05$ ) so it shows that our correlation matrix is statistically different from an identity matrix as desired. The communalities of each item have more than .50 which suggests that the variances of factors were extracted adequately.

### 5.4 Communalities

The table presents the factor extraction values for technological change (TC), leadership change (LC), and employee performance (EP) items. The extraction values, derived from principal component analysis (PCA), indicate the proportion of variance explained by each item within its respective factor. Most items exhibit high extraction values, ranging from 0.769 to 0.849, suggesting strong contributions to the underlying constructs. However, EP8 (0.509), EP9 (0.522), and EP10 (0.464) display relatively lower values, indicating weaker associations with the principal components.

**Table 7:** *Communalities*

Items	Initial	Extraction
TC1	1	0.777
TC2	1	0.81
TC3	1	0.779
TC4	1	0.792
TC5	1	0.769
LC1	1	0.815
LC2	1	0.772
LC3	1	0.82
LC4	1	0.788
LC5	1	0.798
LC6	1	0.768
EP1	1	0.817
EP2	1	0.836
EP3	1	0.819
EP4	1	0.822
EP5	1	0.816
EP6	1	0.832
EP7	1	0.849
EP8	1	0.509
EP9	1	0.522
EP10	1	0.464

## 5.5 Factor Loadings

The table presents the factor loadings from a principal component analysis (PCA) using varimax rotation. Three components were extracted, corresponding to employee performance (EP), leadership change (LC), and technological change (TC). The first component primarily consists of EP items, with strong factor loadings ranging from 0.651 (EP10) to 0.885 (EP6), indicating a well-defined construct. The second component includes LC items, with high loadings between 0.875 (LC6) and 0.905 (LC3), confirming their contribution to leadership change. The third component represents TC items, with loadings from 0.815 (TC5) to 0.837 (TC2), suggesting a distinct and coherent construct. Overall, the results confirm the validity of the three-factor structure, with strong item-group correlations and minimal cross-loadings, supporting the appropriateness of the measurement model. Hence, the final factor loadings of retained items were presented in Table 8.

**Table 8:** *Factor Loadings*

Items	Component		
	1	2	3
EP6	0.885		
EP2	0.874		
EP5	0.869		
EP7	0.868		
EP1	0.866		
EP3	0.86		
EP4	0.848		
EP8	0.696		
EP9	0.694		
EP10	0.651		
LC3		0.905	
LC1		0.903	
LC5		0.891	
LC4		0.887	
LC2		0.877	
LC6		0.875	
TC2			0.837
TC1			0.819
TC3			0.819
TC4			0.818
TC5			0.815

## Multiple Regression Analysis (Impact of Leadership and Technological Change on Employee Performance)

A multiple regression analysis was conducted to examine the effects of technological change and leadership change on employee performance. The regression model was statistically significant,  $F(2,267)=85.615$ ,  $p<.001$ , indicating that the predictors collectively explain a significant portion of the variance in employee performance. The coefficient of determination ( $R^2=.391$ ) suggests that 39.1% of the variance in employee performance is explained by the independent variables, with an adjusted  $R^2$  of .386, accounting for the number of predictors in the model. The standard error of the estimate (SEE) was 0.678, indicating the average deviation of observed values from the predicted values.

Examining the individual predictors, technological change was a significant positive predictor of employee performance,  $B = 0.498$ ,  $t(267) = 13.039$ ,  $p < .001$ , suggesting that

increases in technological change are associated with higher employee performance. In contrast, leadership change did not significantly predict employee performance,  $B = 0.038$ ,  $t(267) = 1.016$ ,  $p = .311$ , indicating that variations in leadership change do not have a statistically significant effect on employee performance. The variance inflation factor (VIF) values for both predictors were 1.00, suggesting no multicollinearity issues in the model. Diagnostic tests for regression assumptions were conducted to assess the robustness of the model. The studentized deleted residuals ranged from -2.802 to 2.385, remaining within the acceptable threshold of  $\pm 3$ , suggesting no extreme outliers. Additionally, Cook's distance values did not exceed the critical threshold of 1, with a maximum value of 0.059, indicating no influential data points affecting the model's stability. Leverage statistics also remained below the threshold ( $2p/n=0.0222$ ), confirming that no single observation disproportionately influenced the regression results. Overall, the model provides strong evidence that technological change significantly contributes to employee performance, while leadership change does not exhibit a substantial effect.

**Table 9: Model Summary (Impact of Leadership and Technological Change on Employee Performance)**

Variable	Unstand. Coeff.(B)	Std. Error	t	Sig.	VIF
(Constant)	1.332	0.166	8.02	.000	
Tech_Change	0.498	0.038	13.039	.000	1
Leader_Change	0.038	0.038	1.016	.311	1
R square	0.391				
Adjusted R Square	0.386				
SEE	0.678				
F( 2, 267)	85.615				
p-value	.000				
Stud. Deleted Residual	Min : -2.802	Max : 2.385	Threshold : 3		
Cook's Distance	Max : .059		Threshold : 1		
Lev. Statistics	Max : .026		Threshold (2p/n) : .022		

## 5.6 Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis 1 (H1) was that organizational change significantly influences employee performance. The overall model was significant,  $F(1, N) = 85.615$ ,  $p < .001$ , in support of H1. Hypothesis 2 (H2) was that technological change has a significant influence on employee performance. The result was a significant positive influence,  $B = 0.498$ ,  $t(1, N) = 13.039$ ,  $p < .001$ , and thus in support of H2. However, Hypothesis 3 (H3) that postulated leadership influences employee performance to a great extent was not confirmed because the influence was not statistically significant,  $B = 0.038$ ,  $t(1, N) = 1.016$ ,  $p = .311$ .

**Table 10: Hypothesis Testing Result**

Hypothesis	Predictor Variable	B (Unstandardized Coefficient)	t-value	p-value	Decision
H1: Organizational change has a significant impact on employee performance	Organizational Change (Overall Model)	-	85.615 (F-value)	$p < .001$	Supported

H2: Technological change has a significant impact on employee performance	Technological Change	0.498	13.039	p < .001	Supported
H3: Leadership change has a significant impact on employee performance	Leadership Change	0.038	1.016	p = .311	Not Supported

## 6. Discussion and conclusion

The findings of this study emphasize the strong contribution of technological change towards enhancing employee performance in recredited higher education institutions (HEIs) in Nepal, while leadership change did not have a direct significant impact. Descriptive statistics revealed moderate perceptions of technological and leadership changes among respondents with mean scores ranging from 2.8963 to 3.0667, indicating a balanced but not highly enthusiastic acceptance. Technological innovation was somewhat more favorably perceived, but the large standard deviations (0.8 to 1.2) suggest considerable variation in employee experience, likely due to variability in exposure to training, knowledge of technology, or institutional support (Smith & Johnson, 2021; Wang et al., 2021). This heterogeneity is consistent with earlier studies that suggest the success of digital transformation depends on employees' flexibility and the presence of strong support systems (Nguyen & Tran, 2021). The high positive correlation between staff performance and technological change ( $r = 0.623$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and its high level of predictability in regression analysis ( $B = 0.498$ ,  $p < .001$ ) indicate the revolutionary potential of digital technologies, automation, and process optimization to increase productivity and efficiency (Patel & Sharma, 2019). This is consistent with studies that confirm emphasis on building digital competency as a prime workforce driver of results, particularly in institutions of learning undergoing rapid technological changes (Oreg et al., 2011).

On the other hand, leadership change was found to have a very weak relationship with staff performance ( $r = 0.007$ ,  $p = .915$ ) and no predictive effect ( $B = 0.038$ ,  $p = .311$ ), which means that its impact is less direct than that of technological change. This finding is partly in line with earlier studies, which clarify that while transformational leadership may lead to job satisfaction and engagement, its impact is usually mediated by some other factors such as organizational culture or employee motivation (Brown et al., 2020; Clarke & Davidson, 2022). The least impact of leadership change might be attributed to the character of HEIs in Nepal as changes in governance or administrative structures may come with role ambiguity or uncertainty, which is taken for granted under role ambiguity and role conflict theory (Tett & Meyer, 2016; Jehn & Bezrukova, 2019). Employees can become demotivated or stressed due to unclear expectations or shifting institutional priorities, and this might be the reason for the lack of a direct effect on performance. Furthermore, Psychological Contract Breach Theory (Rousseau, 2018) explains why leadership changes might not have been significant in influencing performance: employees might perceive such changes as disruptions to implicit agreements on career growth, job security, or workload, leading to lower trust and commitment. The perceptiveness of technological change in shaping performance outcomes means Nepalese HEIs are relying increasingly on digital infrastructure to maintain international standards of education. However, these high levels of employee perception variability indicate uneven use, whereby some employees would likely be advantaged by cutting-edge training and equipment

while others might struggle with software adaptation (Adhikari & Shrestha, 2020). This disparity emphasizes the need for comprehensive change management strategies, like tailored training and transparent communication, to mitigate resistance and foster resilience, as proposed by resilience and adaptability theory (Luthans et al., 2016). The absence of strong impact of leadership change refutes hypotheses of Transformational Leadership Theory, which postulates that transformational leadership directly impacts performance (Bass, 1985). Instead, the evidence suggests that leadership may play a more enabling role in the Nepalese HEI environment, perhaps facilitating technological adoption or providing a solid foundation, but not necessarily directly impacting performance results. Such contextual nuance calls for further exploration of the dynamic between leadership style and technological and structural change in educational settings.

Theoretically, the research supports the applicability of Role Ambiguity and Role Conflict Theory by showing that badly managed changes, especially leadership changes, can enhance uncertainty and decrease performance. Likewise, Psychological Contract Breach Theory accounts for the possible disengagement resulting from perceived breach during organizational change. The prevailing nature of technological change gives credence to Resilience and Adaptability Theory, as employees who have access to training and resources tend to be adaptable, utilizing technology to enhance performance (Kuntz et al., 2017). In reality, these findings underscore the fact that HEIs must invest in digital infrastructure, organize continuous professional development, and provide equitable access to resources so that maximum benefit from technological advancement can be reaped. In addition, while leadership change is not likely to directly impact performance, stable and communicative leadership is crucial to guide employees through technological change and preserve organizational harmony.

Based on the findings of this study, it is concluded that technological change has a significant impact on Nepalese HEI employee performance, explaining 39.1% of performance variation ( $R^2 = 0.391$ ), whereas leadership change does not directly impact. The moderate change perception, with high response variability, suggests diverse worker experiences based on training and resources. The finding validates Role Ambiguity and Resilience and Adaptability Theories in that it highlights how technology advancements eradicate uncertainty and enhance productivity if suitably supported. The non-significant leadership transformation effect, however, defies Transformational Leadership Theory and indicates context-specific relations within HEIs. HEIs need to focus on digital infrastructure investment and comprehensive training in order to foster employees' adaptability, with stable leadership for maintaining organizational stability. Future research needs to explore mediating factors, including organizational culture, and longitudinal effects of leadership change in order to extend knowledge of change processes in education institutions.

## **7. Implications**

This study adds to the body of literature since it provides empirical evidence on organizational change and employee performance in Nepalese HEIs, affirming Role Ambiguity and Role Conflict Theory and Resilience and Adaptability Theory. It highlights that technological change enhances performance via adaptability, but leadership change does not have a direct impact, contradicting Transformational Leadership Theory and highlighting contextual dynamics. Practically, the results call on HEI managers to invest in technology and in-depth training to enhance employee flexibility, in addition to promoting open communication to mitigate resistance. Despite minimal effects of leadership changes, stable leadership continues to be essential to organizational cohesion. By synchronizing technology with the needs of employees, HEIs can gain lasting performance enhancement.

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