

## Improving Employee's Engagement in Change: Reassessing Kurt Lewin's Model

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### ABSTRACT

This study explores the relationship between Employee's Readiness to change (ER) and employee's Engagement (EE) with mediating effect of Employees Satisfaction (ES) and a moderating effect of Employee's Fear of Change on Employees Satisfaction. The data collected from the middle level managers of telecom sector of Pakistan. Data analysed through structural equation modelling employing two-step method i.e. Measurement Model and Structural Model. Utilizing Kurt Lewin's three-step model, this study found that readiness for change (unfreezing) creates satisfaction with change (moving) which then fosters employee engagement (refreezing). However, this study adds to the knowledge by suggesting the boundary conditions between readiness for change and satisfaction with change such that relationship of readiness for change and satisfaction with change is stronger when fear of change is lower rather than higher. Mediation of job satisfaction has also been found between change readiness and engagement. This study is unique such that it has considered fear of change and satisfaction with change in relationship between readiness and engagement with change. Secondly, this study has collected data from telecom sector of Pakistan which is under the constant structural changes due to variety of economic, and technological aspects. This study also suggests important implications for theory and practice.

### Keywords:

Readiness for change  
Satisfaction with change  
Engagement with change  
Fear of change

## INTRODUCTION

Nowadays organizations are very promptly facing the collision of change and organizations cannot survive in today's global economy until these are readily flexible towards the changing business environment (Battilana, Gilmartin, Sengul, Pache, & Alexander, 2010; Robbins & Judge, 2017) The change is widespread and obvious in telecommunication sector where the prompt changes due to technology advancement places more pressure on management to support and make employees ready to accept the change so that they can improve the efficiency of the organizations through adjusting their strategies according to the change (Haqq & Natsir, 2019). Beer and Nohria (2000) and Cinite, Duxbury, and Higgins (2009) stated that change initiatives are failing at the higher rate and researchers should focus on the factors that can turn this failure into a success. For the planned organizational change, Kurt Lewin is well-thought-out as a founding father because he has contributed a lot in managing change successfully through different theories out of which his three step model (unfreezing-moving-refreezing)

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is most widely used model of the change management and has become a foundation for the development of other models (Rosenbaum, More, & Steane, 2018).

Literature of organizational behaviour in general suggests that employee satisfaction with job is very much important factor in developing other attitudes and behaviours of employees (Alegre, Mas-Machuca, & Berbegal-Mirabent, 2016; Rayton & Yalabik, 2014). However, change management literature has not much focused on employee satisfaction with change and its influence in developing other change related behaviours. Caldwell, Oreg, Michel, and By (2013) provided very unique view of person environment fit and its interplay with the context of change. They argue that employee held some prior levels of fit when readiness is created, they need to develop some attitudes which again strengthen their fit with changing environment which further leads to normalization and later fit. In other words, they propose that employee readiness will lead to change engagement only when employees develop some attitudes favourable to change management process that enhance their fit to the change environment. Caldwell and Liu (2011) investigated employee job satisfaction right after the completion of change initiative. They suggested the employee job satisfaction after the change is dependent upon some change-related factors such as extent to which employee perceive that change will have an impact on them and procedure of change implementation is perceived to be fair and transparent.

Kimber, Barwick, and Fearing (2013) stated that when employees feel that process of change may yield some unwanted outcomes for them, they likely show less acceptance of the change process. This may be due to the fact that employees may feel having lower levels of skills set required for the successful implementation of the change (Frambach & Schillewaert, 2002). Weeks, Roberts, Chonko, and Jones (2004) argue that fear of change interplays the effect of readiness for change and employee implementation behaviours such that readiness for change will be effective only when level of employee fear of change is low. Very recently, Haffar, Al-Karaghoul, Irani, Djebarni, and Gbadamosi (2019) found that individual fear of change and uncertainties are major hindrance in the process of embracing the change. Authors also argued that this phenomenon is less explored in empirical studies. Feeling this significant gap in the literature, this study intends to know how employee fear of change may interact with employee readiness of change, satisfaction and engagement with change. Hence developing and improving the employee's attitude and behavior in order to engage themselves towards the organizational change.

Employee readiness is a common topic in change management research. It reflects the popularity and importance of this construct that change management literature always focusses on it. But recent research is focusing on more work related construct like engagement (Georgiades, 2015; Sonenshein & Dholakia, 2012). It is evident from the literature that majorly studies on readiness has focused on its determinants and to know how people adopt to change (Armenakis & Harris, 2009; Lippert & Davis, 2006) . recent management scholars are emphasizing more on creating employee engagement with change rather than the adoption (van den Heuvel, Demerouti, Bakker, Hetland, & Schaufeli, 2020). This study is a step ahead to incorporate the boundary conditions of the link between readiness for change and engagement with change (van den Heuvel et al., 2020). Incorporation of fear of change as a moderator and job satisfaction as a mediator is believed to make a difference.

## **STRUCTURAL CHANGES FACED BY TELECOM INDUSTRY**

In an extremely global and demanding environment the extraordinary practice of technology has enforced companies of telecommunication sector of Pakistan to get involved in structural changes which in today's world has become emergent due to their increased revenue specially in Pakistan where telecom sector is the second largest sector that is involved in structural changes after the banking sector to grab the large number of shares in the market (Kanwal, Ahmad, Majid, & Nadeem, 2014). The telecommunication industry is one of the fastest growing sectors of Pakistan's economy and is a significant driver for country's development. Telecommunication sector contribute 60% in GDP of Pakistan (Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA), 2017). Structural changes such as Mergers, Acquisitions and Divestitures are more frequent in telecom sector (Kumar & Sharma, 2019). Mobile networks operators in Pakistan are facing unprecedented changes due to technology, regulation, competition and growth. (PTA, 2018). The changes that present study follows are the structural change in an organizations caused through mergers and acquisitions and divestiture i.e. Warid was acquired by Mobilink, Ufone merged its management and operations with PTCL, Telenor divestitures Vimplecom these structural changes were in progression at the time of data collection.

### **Employee Readiness for Change**

Employee Readiness for change means employee's initiative to participate actively in the execution of change process (Holt, Armenakis, Harris, & Feild, 2007) and is primarily associated with employee's insights and behaviours M. Choi and Ruona (2010) depicting that the change is essential which not only benefits the employee personally but the organization as a whole (Bouckenooghe, Schwarz, & Minbashian, 2015). Armenakis and Harris (2002) believed that employees with greater determination, dedication, motivation and satisfaction towards work are positively impacted by the increased level of employee's change readiness. This readiness for change is attained by the means of removing doubts, worries and uncertainties (Van Praet & Van Leuven, 2019).

### **Employee Satisfaction with Change**

Employee satisfaction is a positive state of mind which is the result of contentment with a job in relation to different aspects of the job. Satisfaction with change refers to employee feeling of pleasure with proposed organizational change. In change management literature, scholars have tested variety of factors such as attitude towards change, behavioral support for change, change-related citizenship behavior and resistance to change (Bakari, Hunjra, & Niazi, 2017; J. N. Choi, 2007; M. Choi, 2011). Very few studies have tested satisfaction in relation to particular change-related intervention despite the fact that satisfaction at the time of change is very much crucial for employee engagement and wellbeing (Nelson, Cooper, & Jackson, 1995).

### **Employee Engagement with Change**

Employee's engagement with respect to change is defined as to what degree employees are likely to participate and involve themselves in the process of change (Masunda, 2015). Employee engagement refers to the employee's willingness by means of their skills with flexibility helps organization to be

successful (Markos & Sridevi, 2010). Shuck and Wollard (2010) correspondingly define employee engagement as state where employee's insights, spirits and performances are intended to achieve organizational goals. Similarly, (Chaudhary, Agrawal, Rangnekar, & Barua, 2012) viewed employee engagement as an energetic involvement in activities that ultimately increase their sense of professional efficacy. Singh, Burgess, Heap, and Al Mehrzi (2016) observed in the study of GCC countries that engaged employees' increases the productivity and the overall performances and decreases the employee's absenteeism. Saks and Gruman (2014) identified it as a challenge to determine the value generated from employee's engagement due to the vague theories.

Employee engagement cannot be formed within a day, it actually is a procedure that need to be developed and effective organizations place methods to make sure employee engagement increases through planning, employee input and satisfaction, strong communication and an understanding of what motivates employees. Employee engagement can also contribute to organizational success. Having satisfied employees who perform better and are in the right jobs, helps foster engagement. Having employees who are present and committed are also key factors. Engaged employees want good communication with their superiors, work that has meaning for them and motivates them, and it is a safe place to work. On the other hand, unengaged employees demonstrate poor customer service, lack of commitment and poor performance (Bakari, Hunjra, & Jaros, 2020). Their participation is lack lustre, they do not excel and do not care about the success of the organization. Engaged employees produce better financial results, are proud of their organization and demonstrate enthusiasm. It makes financial and motivational sense to foster employee engagement (Bin, 2015).

Recent research suggests that during times of change, employee engagement can be enhanced by leaders by giving employees more autonomy, empowerment and positive feedback (Hulshof, Demerouti, & Le Blanc, 2020). This means that when organizations take care of their employee by communicating positive energies, employees feel elevated and engage in work more than before.

### **Fear of Change**

Fear of change refers to when employees feel psychologically insecure and cannot see the direction that is not shattered (Cornescu & Adam, 2016). Gray (1987) and Hebb (1946) defined it as an employee's perception that the change is new and unfamiliar and cannot be established suitable feedback towards that change. It is triggered by the ambiguity regarding outcome, the risk of position or loss, the complications and threats drive in through the change itself (Piderit, 2000). Employees avoid whatever stimulates the feeling of fear since fear is a negative emotion so, irrespective of what origins fear of change, employees who experience fear of change are reluctant to engage themselves in the process of change. Or say it in other way, there is a negative relationship between the fear of change and employee's commitment and engagement towards change (Luo, Song, Gebert, Zhang, & Feng, 2016). Research suggests that in order to obtain positive outcomes, environment full with hope and optimism and free from fears and uncertainty is necessary (Bakari & Khoso, 2017).

### **Underpinning Theory- Kurt Lewin Theory of Change**

The underpinning theory in present research is the Kurt Lewin theory of change who has developed three step-levels to implement planned change within organizations. Change literature extensively employed his model due to its solid back-up in dealing with the managers insights through the change process.

Kurt Lewin is well-thought-out as a founding father in Planned Organizational Change (Bakari, Hunjra, & Masood, 2017; Burnes & Bargal, 2017; Burnes & Cooke, 2012) due to his dedication of half of his life in the theoretical and practical understanding of the organizational change. Kurt Lewin's change management theory defines three stages of change management unfreezing, moving and re-freezing. 'Unfreezing' stage discusses to unfreeze the present state through providing awareness to the employees regarding the need for the change plus uncovering the employee's insight and their natural struggle to cope up with the change. Second stage of 'Moving' discusses to deploy the changes within the organization through guiding the employees by the means of supporting them. The third stage 'Refreezing' discusses to confirm the consistent implementing of change within the organization which can be attained by engaging the employees in the change process (Al-Haddad & Kotnour, 2015).

## **Other Three Step Models of Change Management**

### **Armenakis's (1999) Three Step Model**

Armenakis, Harris, and Feild (1999) proposed a three-step model of change management which incorporates the social learning theory. The three steps include 1) Readiness 2) Adoption 3) Institutionalization. The first stage refers to Readiness, which refers to enhancing readiness and decreasing resistance by favorable organizational structure and the receptive attitude of the employees. Change Receptivity of the employees can be evidently achieved through communication (Magala, Frahm, & Brown, 2007). Second stage adoption refers when employees displays the behavior that follows the change expectations after discarding the previous behavior. Last stage is institutionalization which is achieved when permanency in employees' behaviors can be observed after successful implementation of change (Holt et al., 2007). Present research follows this conceptualization and linked it with present study in the context of effective communication.

### **Bakari's (2016) Three Step Model**

Bakari (2016) proposed a three-step model for managing change in the context of authentic leadership. The three steps include 1) Readiness 2) Commitment 3) Behavioral Support. The first stage readiness for change in employees can be accomplished by Unfreezing their behavior through authentic leadership. Second stage of commitment is where employees become committed to change which can be attained by applying the leadership style. As the third stage Behavioral support for change is accomplished by the support of leaders in order to implement change.

## **Integration of Three Step Models**

Lewin's model has been criticized for its linearity and lack of incorporation of individual cognitive factors (Bartunek & Woodman, 2015). Models of Armenakis et al. (1999) & Bakari (2016) tried to address some of limitations of Kurt Lewin model but again were following same sequence. This study by employing moderating role of fear of change is responding to general criticism on Lewin's model of not incorporating cognitive factors (Bartunek & Woodman, 2015).

The three step model of Lewin (1951), Armenakis et al. (1999) and Bakari (2016) are corresponding with three step model of present research. Lewin (1951) reports first stage as unfreezing the employee's current state to create new behaviour. This first stage of present research tallies with first stage of

Armenakis et al. (1999) and Bakari (2016) to create the change readiness in employees. The second stage moving Lewin (1951) alternates the adoption of change Armenakis et al. (1999) and commitment for the change Bakari (2016) is aligning with employee’s satisfaction in present research that actually support employees to move on in change process. The third stage refreezing Lewin (1951) surrogates with institutionalization Armenakis et al. (1999) and Behavioural change Bakari (2016) match up with the employee’s engagement to change in present research for implementing the change consistently in the organization.

Lining up the three step models of change in figure 1, Present research has incorporated the model of change readiness of the employees to create their satisfaction by discarding the old behaviour and beliefs then to engage employees in the change process to refreeze the state which is accomplishing the new behaviour of the employees.

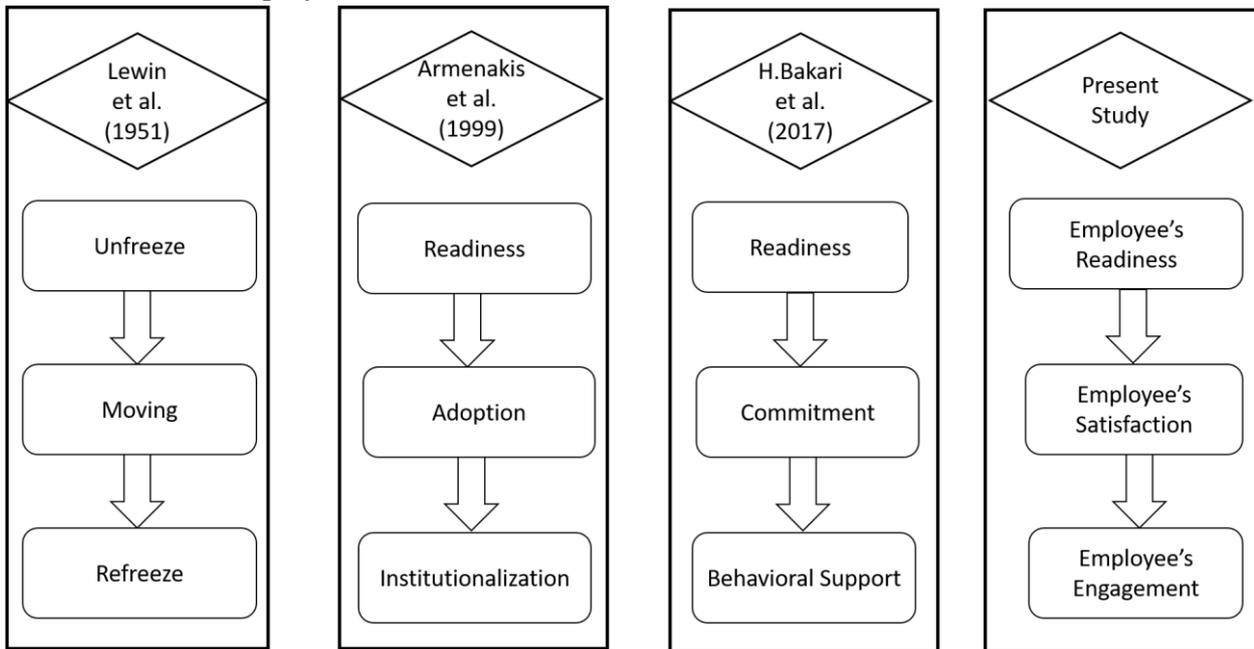


Figure I. Amalgamation of three step models (Source: Researcher)

### Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework (Figure II) of present research is grounded on Lewin (1951) theory of change where four constructs are recognized and their association with one another is explained. Present research model displays that employee’s satisfaction is positively mediating the relationship between employee’s readiness and employee’s engagement to change. Employee’s fear of change plays the role of moderator which when increases, reduces the employees satisfaction



Figure II. Conceptual framework (Source: Researcher)

## Hypothesis Development

### *Employee's Readiness and Employee's Satisfaction*

Organizations require employees to work efficiently and effectively (Aziri, 2011; Campbell, 1990). However, employees have their own perceptions of the organizational characteristics that influence how they feel positive or negative about the organizations ((Tsai, Cheng, & Chang, 2010). Such type of employee feelings about organizations considering aspects of the organizations which have some effect on their wellbeing in the organization is reflected by their Satisfaction. At the times of the change, employee satisfaction is crucial for garnering employee support and engagement. This employee satisfaction with change is direct outcome of employee readiness for change (Holt et al., 2007).

Vakola (2014) opines that employee readiness is based upon the employee appraisal of the change initiative based upon underlying benefits the change is offering to them. This feeling of change readiness is positively related to employee satisfaction (Vakola, 2014). Moawad and Elsheshengy (2014)) also found positive association between users' readiness for change and their satisfaction with IS Implementation. Men (2014) also argue that readiness developed through leaders' communication enhances employee satisfaction which may further be related to successful implementation of change. Shah, Irani, and Sharif (2017) tested how organizational factors such as loyalty, promotion, and identification are related to job satisfaction and further related to readiness for change. They found mediating role of job satisfaction between extrinsic and intrinsic factors and readiness for change. However, they also argue that this association may need further exploration. Therefore, this study posits that employee satisfaction at the time of organizational change will be solely dependent upon the elements of change rather than the elements of job, therefore employee satisfaction will be dependent upon their level of willingness to accept the change i.e. readiness for change. Cahill, McNamara, Pitt-Catsouphes, and Valcour (2015), also argued that satisfaction and engagement are affected by factors beyond job domains. Foregoing in view, it is hypothesized that:

**H1: Employee's readiness is positively associated with employee's satisfaction**

### *Employee's satisfaction and Employees engagement*

Employee engagement is vast domain that reflects synergetic interactions of employees with their organization. Engagement is special level of commitment that symbolizes emotional attachment of employees with organization (Bin, 2015). Kahn (1990) presented the concept of engagement however later scholarship has identified its multiple foci. For example, most prominent foci is work engagement

(Bakker & Albrecht, 2018). Skocpol and Fiorina (2004) suggested civic engagement, Macey and Schneider (2008) proposed employee engagement. Fredricks, Blumenfeld, Friedel, and Paris (2005) presented the concept of school engagement and Guthrie (2004) proposed literacy engagement. This study proposes that the engagement is target specific therefore there is need to test change engagement at the time of organizational changes. Literature suggests positive association between satisfaction and engagement both direct and reciprocal in cross-sectional as well as longitudinal studies (Giallonardo, Wong, & Iwasiw, 2010; Granziera & Perera, 2019). Jimmieson, Terry, and Callan (2004) conducted a longitudinal study in which they collected data from public sector organization undergoing regionalization process. They found that employee readiness created through effective communication was positively associated with employee engagement and satisfaction. Therefore, this paper hypothesize that:

**H2: Employee’s satisfaction is positively associated with Employee’s engagement**

**H3: Employee’s satisfaction mediates the relationship between employee’s readiness and employee’s engagement to change**

***Employees fear of change as Moderator***

This study has posited that employee readiness for change will enhance employee satisfaction which will further foster their engagement with change. However, literature suggests that readiness and satisfaction may have some boundary conditions. Weeks et al. (2004) tested role of readiness for change in performance of sales employees. They found the moderating role of fear of change such that readiness for change was only strongly related to performance when there was lower levels of fear. Bordia, Hunt, Paulsen, Tourish, and DiFonzo (2004), tested role of effective communication in decreasing strain and turnover intention. Satisfaction mediated the link however this link was dependent upon the level of uncertainties. Very recent paper has outlined the importance of readiness for change in change implementation behaviors (Weiner, Clary, Klaman, Turner, & Alishahi-Tabriz, 2020). They suggested that change agents should “need to persuade” (Weiner et al., 2020, p. 121) employees of organization by removing their fears and uncertainties and telling them that the change is beneficial to them. This way they will be satisfied and engage more in organizational change implementation

**H4: The positive relationship between employee’s readiness and employee’s satisfaction will be stronger when employee’s fear of change is lower**

Table I: Summary of Hypothesized Relationship

| <b>Hypothesis</b> | <b>Hypothesized Relationship</b>   |
|-------------------|--|
| <b>H1</b>         | Employee’s Readiness → Employee’s Satisfaction                                   |
| <b>H2</b>         | Employee’s Satisfaction → Employee’s Engagement to change                        |
| <b>H3</b>         | Employee’s Readiness → Employee’s Satisfaction → Employee’s Engagement to Change |
| <b>H4</b>         | Moderating Effect of Employees Fear of change → Employee’s Satisfaction          |

Source: Researcher

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Present research tails the positivist paradigm in order to understand the relationship of employee’s readiness on employee’s engagement in the change process for implementing change by thoroughly going through literature and establishes the hypotheses that is tested through questionnaire (Mangan,

Lalwani, & Gardner, 2004). Present research aims to test hypotheses based on theory reflecting deductive approach (Bryman, 1994; Creswell, 2007). Data was collected once from the middle level managers of telecommunication sector of Pakistan i.e. PTCL, Telenor, Mobilink and Ufone following the cross sectional research design using web survey method which aids researcher to collect data from large population that cannot be directly observed (Keeter, 2005).

## MEASURES

Present research integrates Five Demographic variables in questionnaire where Gender, cellular mobile operator and province are treated as nominal variable while education and employment tenure are treated as continuous variables. Four construct, are entailed in present research where **Employee's Readiness** as exogenous variable, measures to what extent employees receive the information to get ready to accept the change and be the part of it. The scale was adapted from the work of Shah et al. (2017). The sample item includes "*management struggles to create an acceptance of the change from its employees*". **Employee's Engagement** as endogenous variable measures to what extent employees are likely to engage themselves in the process of change. The scale was adapted from the work of Sonenshein and Dholakia (2012). The sample item includes "*I am willing to be the part of change*". **Employee's Satisfaction** as a mediator measures to what extent employees are satisfied with change in order to contribute in the process of change. The scale was adapted from the work of (Sattar, Ahmad, & Hassan, 2015). The sample item includes "*I am satisfied with the changes within my workplace*". **Fear of Change** as a moderator measures to what extent employees feel psychologically safe and can see the direction that is not shattered. The scale was adapted from the work of Weeks et al. (2004). The sample item includes "*I feel secure & confident about changes taking place at my workplace*"

The population of the present research are the middle level managers of Mobilink, Ufone, PTCL and Telenor in Pakistan (N = 7358, where Sindh = 1882, Punjab = 2109, Baluchistan = 1713, KPK = 1654) that are experiencing an organizational structural change (Mergers, Acquisition & Divestitures) and follows the Stratified random sampling technique in which strata were divided based on the provinces of Pakistan and random samples were selected from each stratum.

Present research used the *G\*power* (Faul, Erdfelder, Buchner, & Lang, 2009) software for determining sample size with the effect size  $f^2 = 0.15$  (Medium) Cohen (1992),  $\alpha = 0.05$ , number of predictors = 2, power = 0.80. Gefen, Rigdon, and Straub (2011) indicating 134 as the minimum sample size required in order to test the model of present research.

Web based 560 survey were sent, 140 randomly selected in each strata i.e. 35 stratum wise. Out of which 447 were received, 5 were discarded due to the same responses on all the Likert scale items where 1 represent Strongly Disagree and 7 represent Strongly Agree. Usable received survey were 442 that were used in data analysis. The response rate becomes 78.9% after excluding 5 discarded questionnaire (Jobber, 1989).

## DEMOGRAPHIC DETAIL

Table II: Demographic Details

| <b>Gender</b> |            |              |
|---------------|------------|--------------|
|               | Frequency  | Percent      |
| Male          | 321        | 72.6         |
| Female        | 121        | 27.4         |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>442</b> | <b>100.0</b> |

| <b>Cellular Mobile Operator (Company)</b> |            |              |
|---|------------|--------------|
|   | Frequency  | Percent      |
| Mobilink                                  | 133        | 30.0         |
| Telenor                                   | 94         | 21.3         |
| PTCL                                      | 121        | 27.4         |
| Ufone                                     | 94         | 21.3         |
| <b>Total</b>                              | <b>442</b> | <b>100.0</b> |

| <b>Province</b>    |            |              |
|--------------------|------------|--------------|
|                    | Frequency  | Percent      |
| Sindh              | 128        | 28.9         |
| Punjab             | 119        | 26.9         |
| Baluchistan        | 106        | 24.1         |
| Khyber Pakhtunkhwa | 89         | 20.1         |
| <b>Total</b>       | <b>442</b> | <b>100.0</b> |

| <b>Education</b>  |            |              |
|-------------------|------------|--------------|
|                   | Frequency  | Percent      |
| Bachelor's Degree | 143        | 32.4         |
| Master's Degree   | 273        | 61.7         |
| Doctorate Degree  | 26         | 05.9         |
| <b>Total</b>      | <b>442</b> | <b>100.0</b> |

| <b>Employment Tenure</b> |            |              |
|--------------------------|------------|--------------|
|                          | Frequency  | Percent      |
| Less than a year         | 53         | 12.0         |
| 2-5 years                | 212        | 49.1         |
| 6-10 years               | 137        | 31.0         |
| 11-15 years              | 31         | 07.2         |
| More than 15             | 03         | 00.7         |
| <b>Total</b>             | <b>442</b> | <b>100.0</b> |

The majority of the respondents were male representing 73%. Around 30% employees responded from Mobilink, 21% from Telenor and Ufone and 27% from PTCL. 29% participants belong to Sindh province, 27% from Punjab, 24% from Baluchistan and 20% from Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa. In terms of education, High percent of respondents were master's degree holder representing 62% of sample, 32% were bachelor's degree holders, 5% holds doctorate degree. Employment tenure of 49% respondents were 2-5 years, 31% were 6-10 years, 12% are employed less than a year 7% were employed from 11-15 years and 0.7% employees are in employment tenure of more than 15 years.

### Preliminary Analysis

In order to trash out the inappropriate data from the data set preliminary analysis is recommended (Hair, Hult, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2017). No missing values were found in present research as online procedures prevents the missing values (Hair et al., 2017). Mardia's measures (Mardia 1970) of multivariate skewness and kurtosis indicates the data of present research is not severely non-normal as value for skewness and kurtosis is out of the range of +1 and -1, and  $p < 0.05$  (Hair et al., 2017). So continuing to practice Smart PLS which is a non-parametric analysis software. Common Method Variance was not detected as a significant threat as all the VIF values in Table III are less than 3.3 indicating that the model of present research is free from Common Method Bias. (Kock, 2015)

Table III: Common Method Variance (VIF- Variance Inflated Factor)

| Employee's Readiness | Employee's Satisfaction | Employee's Engagement | Fear of change |
|----------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| 1.825                | 1.634                   | 1.769                 | 1.903          |

Source: Researcher

### Measurement Model Analysis

Table IV indicates that the outer loadings are satisfactory as are greater than 0.50 hence establishes the indicator reliability (Hair, Hult, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2017). The values of composite reliability (CR) are higher than the recommended value of 0.7 hence indicate the establishment of internal consistency reliability (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, & Tatham, 2006). Average variance extracted (AVE) values are greater than 0.5 and hence establishes the convergent validity (Hair et al., 2006). Present study following suggestion of (Henseler, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2015) assess the discriminant validity in the form of Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio of correlations. Table V indicates that all the HTMT values are less than 0.85 as the respondents understood that the 4 constructs are distinct. The discriminant validity has been ascertained in the present study. (Henseler et al., 2015).

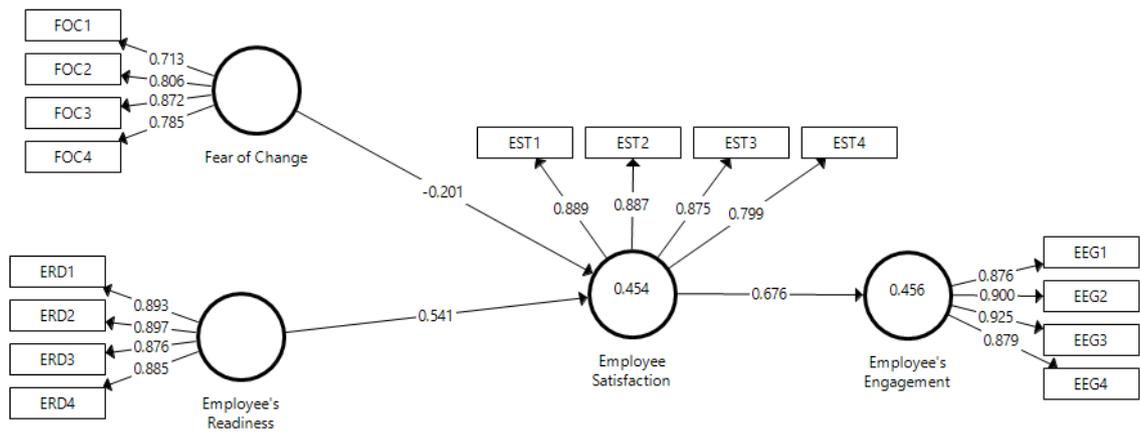


Figure III: Outer Model – SMART PLS (Source: Researcher)

Table IV: Outer Loadings, Composite Reliability and Average Variance Extracted

| Construct                 | Items | Outer Loadings | Composite Reliability | Average Variance Extracted |
|---------------------------|-------|----------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| Employee's Engagement     | EEG1  | 0.876          | 0.942                 | 0.802                      |
|                           | EEG2  | 0.900          |                       |                            |
|                           | EEG3  | 0.925          |                       |                            |
|                           | EEG4  | 0.879          |                       |                            |
| Employee's Readiness      | ERD1  | 0.893          | 0.937                 | 0.788                      |
|                           | ERD2  | 0.898          |                       |                            |
|                           | ERD3  | 0.876          |                       |                            |
|                           | ERD4  | 0.885          |                       |                            |
| Employee's Satisfaction   | EST1  | 0.889          | 0.921                 | 0.746                      |
|                           | EST2  | 0.887          |                       |                            |
|                           | EST3  | 0.875          |                       |                            |
|                           | EST4  | 0.799          |                       |                            |
| Employee's fear of change | FOC1  | 0.713          | 0.873                 | 0.634                      |
|                           | FOC2  | 0.807          |                       |                            |
|                           | FOC3  | 0.872          |                       |                            |
|                           | FOC4  | 0.785          |                       |                            |

Table V: Discriminant Validity (HTMT Ratio)

| Construct             | 1     | 2     | 3     | 4 |
|-----------------------|-------|-------|-------|---|
| Employee Satisfaction |       |       |       |   |
| Employee's Engagement | 0.740 |       |       |   |
| Employee's Readiness  | 0.724 | 0.625 |       |   |
| Fear of Change        | 0.562 | 0.723 | 0.631 |   |

## Structural Model Analysis

Having established reliable and validated results from measurement model, the next step is analyze the structural model. Present study has employed bootstrapping method with 5000 resamples (Hair et al., 2017) using Bias-Corrected and Accelerated (BCa) Bootstrap with one tailed test type where significance level is 0.05.

Moderating Effect

Figure IV: Inner Model- SMART PLS

Table VI: Relevance & Significance of Path Coefficients

| Hypothesis | Relationship | Beta   | Std Error | T Value | P Values | LCI 5.00% | UCI 95.00% | F Square | Effect Size | Decision |
|------------|--------------|--------|-----------|---------|----------|-----------|------------|----------|-------------|----------|
| H1         | ER → ES      | 0.509  | 0.049     | 10.480  | 0.000    | 0.424     | 0.581      | 0.372    | Large       | Accepted |
| H2         | ES → EE      | 0.676  | 0.028     | 24.429  | 0.000    | 0.629     | 0.718      | 0.839    | Large       | Accepted |
| H3         | ER → ES → EE | 0.344  | 0.036     | 9.446   | 0.000    | 0.284     | 0.405      | -        | -           | Accepted |
| H4         | ER*FC → ES   | -0.120 | 0.033     | 3.672   | 0.000    | -0.159    | -0.070     | 0.151    | Medium      | Accepted |

Source: Researcher

Table VI specifies that Employee Readiness is positively and significantly associated to Employee satisfaction  $\beta = 0.509$ ,  $t$ -value=10.480,  $p < 0.05$  (Hair et al., 2017) with CI [0.424, 0.581] not overlapping the zero value in between (Preacher and Hayes 2008). Hence indicating the acceptance of H1. The relationship has Large effect size,  $F^2 = 0.372$  (Wong, 2013).

H2 predicted that Employee Satisfaction positively associates with Employee Engagement, Table VI indicates that it is positively and significantly associated  $\beta = 0.676$ ,  $t$ -value=24.429,  $p < 0.05$  (Hair et al., 2017) with CI [0.718, 0.839] not overlapping the zero value in between (Preacher & Hayes, 2008). Hence indicating the acceptance of H2. The relationship has Large effect size,  $F^2 = 0.839$  (Wong, 2013).

The mediating effect of Employee satisfaction on the relationship that exists between Employee Readiness and Employee Engagement (Table VI) indicate that the indirect effect is significant with  $\beta = 0.344$ ,  $t$ -value 9.446 and  $p < 0.05$  ((Hair et al., 2017) with LCI = 0.284 and UCI = 0.405 not overlapping the zero value in between (Preacher & Hayes, 2008).indicating a positive mediating effect of employee satisfaction is statistically significant hence accepting and supporting H3.

From Table VI Present study provides the support that Fear of change negatively moderates the relationship between employee readiness and employee satisfaction  $\beta = -0.120$ ,  $t$ -value = 3.672 and  $p < 0.05$  (Hair et al., 2017). Hence accepting and supporting H4. As the significance level of the present study pertain to the coefficients is 0.05 (i.e., 95% confidence level) so by employing 95% bias-corrected bootstrap, CI of the interaction term's effect with fear of change is [-0.159, -0.070] indicating that confidence interval has not overlapped the zero value (Hayes, Montoya, & Rockwood, 2017; Preacher & Hayes, 2008) hence representing significant moderating effect of fear of change between employee readiness and employee satisfaction. The interaction effect has small effect size  $F^2 = 0.151$ , (Wong, 2013).

Present study interaction plot (Figure V) holds the buffering effect where increase in fear of change reduces the impact of employee's readiness on employee's satisfaction. Or in other words employee's readiness and employees' satisfaction was stronger when employee' fear of change was reduced however increased fear of change results in weaker relationship of employee's readiness and employee's satisfaction.



Figure V: Interaction plot

Present research indicates that 45.6% of total variance in employee's engagement and 45.4% of total variance in employee's satisfaction thus revealed moderate level of R-square (Chin, 1998).

The present study employed blindfolding procedure which reuse sample by omitting a part of a data matrix with omission distance 7 (Hair, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2013) that calculates the Stone-Geisser's  $Q^2$  value (Geisser, 1975; Stone, 1974), which represents an evaluation criterion for the cross-validated predictive relevance of the PLS path model. The present study indicate the predictive relevance of the model as the  $Q^2$  value of all endogenous variables is above zero, Employee's Satisfaction = 0.176 & Employee's Engagement = 0.243 (Henseler, Ringle, & Sinkovics, 2009) demonstrating moderate level of predictive relevance (Hair, Sarstedt, Ringle, & Gudergan, 2018).

Present study following the suggestion of Shmueli, Ray, Estrada, and Chatla (2016) using PLS Predict check the model's out of sample predictive power of employee engagement by using 10 folds and 10 repetitions. Table VII indicates that all the errors of the PLS model of Employee engagement indicators (Key Endogenous Construct) were lower than the LM model thus present study model has a strong predictive power (Shmueli et al., 2019).

Table VII: Key Endogenous Construct -Indicators Predictive Relevance

|      | PLS   |       | LM    |       | PLS-LM |        |
|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|--------|
|      | RMSE  | MAE   | RMSE  | MAE   | RMSE   | MAE    |
| EEG2 | 0.926 | 0.755 | 0.996 | 0.818 | -0.070 | -0.063 |
| EEG3 | 1.042 | 0.829 | 1.090 | 0.875 | -0.047 | -0.047 |
| EEG4 | 1.129 | 0.880 | 1.194 | 0.926 | -0.065 | -0.046 |
| EEG1 | 1.041 | 0.833 | 1.170 | 0.923 | -0.129 | -0.090 |

## DISCUSSION

This study aimed to test impact of readiness for change on employee engagement with change under the mediation of satisfaction with change and moderation of fear of change. Data were collected from telecom sector of Pakistan. Data were analyzed through structural equation modeling using two step approach. According to the research of Mehmood and Masood (2016) in telecommunication sector Lack of change readiness causes the loss of approximately 12 billion dollars every year and annual burden of 53% is on the economies of organization. Like any other change initiatives, structural change is also a noteworthy source of anxiety, worry, distress though the degree may vary across individual employees (Buono, Weiss, & Bowditch, 1989). Findings of the present study in implementing structural changes will help an organization to put it in perspective in the formulation of organizational policies.

First hypothesis was concerned with the relationship between readiness for change and satisfaction with change. Empirical results found support for this relationship. Claiborne, Auerbach, Lawrence, and Schudrich (2013) collected data from child care workers and found positive association between workers satisfaction with change related communication and readiness for change. Our results also supports the notion that readiness will be precursor to satisfaction with change. Second hypothesis was related to employee satisfaction and their engagement with change. Empirical results also supported the hypothesis such that there is positive relationship between satisfaction and engagement. Relationship between satisfaction and engagement is well known (Cahill et al., 2015; Harter, Schmidt, & Hayes, 2002). However, this study has firstly tested relationship of satisfaction with change with engagement with change and found support for this relationship.

Third hypothesis was related to mediating role of satisfaction with change between readiness and engagement with change. Empirical results presented in this study supported this relationship also. This result also suggest that mechanism between readiness and engagement is facilitated through satisfaction. Fourth hypothesis was related to moderating role of fear of change as a boundary condition between readiness for change and satisfaction. Major notion of this hypothesis was that relationship between readiness and satisfaction will be dependent upon level of employee fear of change. Results suggest that fear of change moderates the relationship such that readiness has positive and strong relationship only when level of fear of change is lower rather than high, . Weeks et al. (2004) tested role of readiness for change in performance of sales employees. They found moderating role of fear of change between readiness and performance.

## LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RECOMMENDATION

This study is not free from limitations. First limitation may be small sample size and non-probability sampling technique which may raise the issue of generalizability. Although sample size is rationalized through techniques of power analysis. Second major limitation to this study is its cross-sectional nature which may preclude the chances of causality, therefore future research may conduct longitudinal study and check whether level of satisfaction changes over time.

In short above results suggest a unique mechanism of outcomes of change readiness such that change readiness is separate from employee satisfaction and that the satisfaction may facilitate the change engagement. Moreover, in order to make change readiness more successful, organizations need to remove employee fear of change through effective communication and information sharing.

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