

**FACTORS AFFECTING CHANGE MANAGEMENT IN GOVERNMENT AGENCIES: A
CASE STUDY OF KENYA PLANT HEALTH INSPECTORATE SERVICE (KEPHIS)**

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DECLARATION

This research project is my original work and has not been presented for a degree or any other award in any other University

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DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to my spouse, Mr. Joe Mahera, my sons Edwin Mahera, Lenny Embaro, Malik Ndungu and Embaro's family at large for their love, selflessness and unwavering support.

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I acknowledge all those who have given to me the professional and moral support in my studies. I first of all give my thanks to Almighty God for the strength He has given me so far. I also give thanks to my Supervisor Mr. David Kanyanjua for the great support and guidance accorded to me, I would like to thank the Management University of Africa for giving me this chance to do my degree course and finally the Management of Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service (KEPHIS) for allowing me to collect the relevant data for this study.

ABSTRACT

Effective change management is essential for enhancing performance, promoting innovation, and improving service delivery within government agencies, especially in the face of increasing regulatory, technological, and operational challenges. This study investigated the internal organizational factors influencing change management at the Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service (KEPHIS), a semi-autonomous government agency tasked with regulating the quality of agricultural inputs and exports. The study specifically focused on assessing how leadership style, organizational culture, communication strategy, and employee involvement influence the implementation of change initiatives. The research was grounded in Lewin's Change Management Theory and supported by the Transformational Leadership Theory and the McKinsey 7S Framework, which provided a strong theoretical foundation. A descriptive research design was employed to provide a detailed understanding of the organizational context and the dynamics of change within KEPHIS. The target population consisted of 450 employees across various departments. A sample of 135 respondents was selected using Yamane's formula, with stratified random sampling ensuring representation across functional units. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire composed of closed-ended and open-ended items. The questionnaire was pilot-tested on 10% of the sample, using respondents from a comparable agency to ensure its reliability and applicability. Expert reviews were used to ascertain content validity, while internal consistency reliability was confirmed through Cronbach's Alpha, with all constructs meeting the accepted threshold. Data analysis was conducted using SPSS version 28, focusing on descriptive statistics such as means, frequencies, and standard deviations. These statistics provided insights into how respondents perceived the four organizational variables in relation to change management. The descriptive results showed high agreement across all variables, indicating that KEPHIS exhibits a generally favourable environment for implementing organizational change. Ethical considerations were strictly observed throughout the study, including obtaining informed consent, ensuring voluntary participation, maintaining confidentiality and privacy, and safeguarding participant anonymity. Based on the findings, the study concluded that successful change management in public institutions such as KEPHIS is largely dependent on effective leadership, a supportive organizational culture, clear and participatory communication strategies, and inclusive employee engagement practices. It recommended the institutionalization of transformational leadership development programs, regular cultural audits, enhanced internal communication frameworks, and deeper staff involvement in change processes. This research contributes to the understanding of change management within the public sector and offers practical insights for policymakers and managers aiming to strengthen organizational responsiveness to change.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GOK	Government of Kenya
HR	Human Resources
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
KEPHIS	Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service
KES	Kenya Shillings
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MUA	Management University of Africa
RQ	Research Question
SD	Standard Deviation
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

Change Management	Refers to the systematic process through which KEPHIS plans, communicates, and implements institutional reforms. It includes efforts to guide employee behaviour, align organizational structures, and ensure the successful adoption of new systems and processes.
Communication Strategy	Refers to the methods and consistency with which information about change initiatives is disseminated within KEPHIS. It includes how management informs, engages, and responds to employees during change implementation.
Employee Involvement	Refers to the extent to which staff at KEPHIS are engaged in decision-making, planning, and execution of change processes. It emphasizes empowerment, consultation, and training to foster ownership of reforms.
Leadership Style	Refers to the approach adopted by KEPHIS managers and supervisors in influencing staff attitudes and behaviour during organizational change. It includes the extent to which leaders inspire, motivate, consult, or direct employees.
Organizational Culture	Refers to the underlying values, beliefs, and practices that shape how employees at KEPHIS respond to change. It affects openness to innovation, acceptance of reforms, and willingness to engage with new ideas.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter introduces the research problem and sets the context for the study on factors affecting change management in government agencies, with a focus on KEPHIS. It begins with the background of the study, outlining the global and local relevance of change management and its relationship with other organizational factors. The chapter also presents the research problem, objectives, questions, scope, and significance of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

Effective change management is essential for the survival and competitiveness of organizations, particularly in the public sector, where rigid structures often hinder innovation and reform. As economies strive to grow and generate employment, public institutions must adapt to changing political, technological, and economic environments. According to the International Labour Organization (2023), efficient public sector transformation contributes significantly to improved service delivery and employment generation, especially in emerging economies. A World Bank report (2022) noted that countries with effective change management frameworks experience up to 25% more efficiency in public expenditure and over 15% increase in job satisfaction among civil servants. Therefore, understanding and implementing effective change management is not just a managerial necessity but an economic imperative.

In the United States, change management in government agencies is largely driven by technological reforms, citizen-centric service delivery, and fiscal accountability. Initiatives like the Digital Government Strategy and Human Capital Framework emphasize leadership, culture, and communication as critical enablers of successful change (U.S. OPM, 2021). A study by Fernandez and Rainey (2017) identified leadership commitment, employee involvement, and consistent communication as the most influential variables in the U.S. federal change initiatives. In Europe, particularly in countries like Germany and the Netherlands, government agencies prioritize structured change models such as Kotter's Eight-Step Model and Lewin's Three-Stage Theory. According to van der Voet (2016), leadership and organizational culture are central in driving

successful change in public agencies. The same study revealed that participative leadership and openness in communication resulted in a 20% improvement in employee adaptability.

Asian economies, such as Singapore and South Korea, have built public sector reforms on technological innovation and hierarchical efficiency. In South Korea, Park and Kim (2020) highlighted how change management was influenced by top-down leadership, robust employee training, and digital transformation. In Singapore, Tan and Tan (2018) found that success in government change programs was positively correlated with internal communication strategies and the alignment of employee values with institutional reforms. Across Africa, change management in the public sector continues to face significant challenges, including resistance to change, lack of leadership vision, and weak organizational culture. Nwagbara (2011) emphasized the absence of participative leadership and structured communication as major setbacks in change adoption. In Nigeria, Ugoani (2019) found that a strong correlation existed between inclusive leadership and successful public sector reform, affirming the relevance of leadership and employee engagement in managing change.

In Kenya, government agencies have embraced numerous public sector reforms such as Results-Based Management and Performance Contracting. However, the success of these reforms has been inconsistent, often undermined by institutional resistance, weak leadership, and poor communication. Ng'ethe, Iravo, and Namusonge (2012) noted that while frameworks are available, effective execution depends largely on how internal factors leadership, culture, communication, and staff involvement are managed. At the Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service (KEPHIS), changes in regulatory processes and technological integration have met mixed reactions from employees and managers. This raises important questions about the internal organizational dynamics affecting change management.

Therefore, this study seeks to examine how leadership styles, organizational culture, communication strategies, and employee involvement influence change management at KEPHIS, with the aim of identifying key enablers and barriers to effective change implementation.

1.1.1 Change Management

Change management refers to the structured approach that organizations adopt to transition from current states to desired future states. According to Kotter (2012), it involves creating a vision for

change, mobilizing resources, and institutionalizing new behaviours and processes. Hiatt (2006) defines change management as the application of a structured process and tools for leading the people side of change. Armenakis and Bedeian (1999) conceptualize it as the process of renewing an organization's direction, structure, and capabilities. Burnes (2017) adds that change management entails aligning an organization's strategy, systems, and people with evolving external demands.

The dimensions of change management include planning, communication, stakeholder engagement, and monitoring. Several studies have applied these dimensions to public institutions. For instance, Fernandez and Rainey (2017) identified leadership, communication, and employee participation as fundamental to change success in U.S. government bodies. Ng'ethe et al. (2012) used similar dimensions to study change management in Kenyan public institutions. Park and Kim (2020) emphasized the role of training and communication in successful change management in South Korea. In this study, change management was measured using indicators such as communication of change vision, employee adaptability, implementation of new systems, and stakeholder engagement.

1.1.2 Leadership Style

Leadership style refers to the pattern of behaviour a leader exhibits when influencing others. Lewin et al. (1939) classified leadership into authoritarian, democratic, and laissez-faire styles. Bass (1985) introduced transformational and transactional leadership, where transformational leaders inspire and motivate, while transactional leaders focus on supervision and performance. Northouse (2018) defines leadership style as the approach leaders use to direct, motivate, and manage teams.

Dimensions of leadership style include transformational, transactional, democratic, and autocratic leadership. For example, Goleman (2000) identified emotional intelligence-based leadership styles, including coaching and affiliative leadership. Studies by Avolio and Bass (2004) found that transformational leadership enhances employee engagement in change initiatives. In Kenya, Omollo (2021) found that participative and transformational leadership styles positively influenced public sector performance during change. This study assessed leadership style using indicators such as clarity of vision, leader communication, motivation efforts, and employee support mechanisms.

1.1.3 Organizational Culture

Organizational culture refers to the shared values, beliefs, and norms that influence behaviour within an organization. Schein (2010) defines it as a pattern of shared assumptions developed by a group as it learns to cope with external adaptation and internal integration. Hofstede (1991) describes it as the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes members of one organization from another. Robbins and Judge (2017) define it as a system of shared meaning held by members that distinguishes the organization.

The key dimensions of organizational culture include values, norms, symbols, language, and rituals. Cameron and Quinn's (2006) Competing Values Framework outlines four culture types: clan, adhocracy, market, and hierarchy. In a study on organizational transformation, Awino and Mutoria (2016) found that culture significantly influenced employees' acceptance of change in Kenyan public institutions. Similarly, Kimani (2020) found that hierarchical and bureaucratic cultures often hinder innovation and reform. In this study, organizational culture was measured using indicators such as openness to innovation, adaptability to change, value alignment, and support for risk-taking.

1.1.4 Employee Involvement

Employee involvement refers to the participation of employees in decision-making processes and change implementation. Lawler (1992) defines it as the degree to which employees are encouraged to contribute to organizational decisions. Cotton et al. (1988) describe it as practices that increase employees' influence over work-related decisions. Robbins and Coulter (2018) view it as a process that empowers employees through delegation, consultation, and shared responsibility. Its dimensions include participative decision-making, empowerment, training, and communication. A study by Kotter (2012) emphasizes the importance of involving employees in all phases of change to reduce resistance. In Kenya, Waithaka and Mberia (2017) found that employee empowerment and involvement led to successful implementation of reforms in public hospitals. This study assessed employee involvement using indicators such as participation in decision-making, consultation during change, training, and autonomy in implementing reforms.

1.1.5 Change Management

Change management is a structured approach used by organizations to shift individuals, teams, and operations from a current state to a desired future state to achieve specific goals. According to Hiatt (2006), it involves guiding and supporting people through organizational change using tools such as communication plans, training, coaching, and resistance management. Kotter (2012) posits that successful change management requires an eight-step process, including creating urgency, building a guiding coalition, and anchoring new approaches in the organizational culture. Armenakis and Bedeian (1999) highlight the importance of organizational readiness, communication, and leadership support in ensuring successful change.

The dimensions of change management include change planning, stakeholder engagement, communication strategy, training and capacity building, monitoring and evaluation, and feedback loops. For instance, a study by Fernandez and Rainey (2017) found that agencies that incorporated employee involvement, consistent communication, and leadership support were more likely to succeed in change initiatives. Similarly, Park and Kim (2020) showed that in South Korea, public sector organizations that included structured change strategies reported higher reform acceptance rates. In this study, change management is the dependent variable and was assessed through four main indicators: clarity of change vision, stakeholder participation, adoption of new systems and procedures, and employee adaptability to new changes.

1.1.6 Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service (KEPHIS)

The Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service (KEPHIS) is a regulatory state corporation under the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development. Established in 1996 under the State Corporations Act (Cap. 446), KEPHIS is mandated to assure the quality of agricultural inputs and produce through phytosanitary and quality assurance services. Its core functions include seed certification, plant variety protection, import and export inspection, and laboratory diagnostics. As a key agency in Kenya's agricultural value chain, KEPHIS plays a pivotal role in ensuring food safety, enhancing agricultural productivity, and facilitating international trade.

KEPHIS operates in a dynamic and highly regulated environment characterized by constant changes in global trade requirements, phytosanitary standards, and technological innovations. To remain effective and compliant, the organization must regularly review and adapt its systems and

processes. In recent years, KEPHIS has undertaken several change initiatives, including digitization of inspection services, adoption of electronic certification (ePhyto), restructuring of departments, and integration with global phytosanitary systems. However, these reforms have encountered various challenges, including internal resistance, limited staff engagement, inconsistent communication, and cultural inertia.

Despite its strategic importance, limited research exists on how internal organizational factors affect the management of change within KEPHIS. Exploring the interplay between leadership styles, organizational culture, communication practices, and employee involvement in the context of KEPHIS can provide actionable insights for the agency and similar institutions. This study thus fills an important knowledge gap by investigating the organizational factors influencing change management within this vital government agency.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Government agencies are mandated to deliver public goods and services in dynamic environments that require frequent reforms. However, the effectiveness of these reforms heavily relies on proper change management. Despite considerable investments in public sector reforms in Kenya, many government agencies continue to struggle with the implementation of change initiatives. According to the Kenya Public Service Commission (2022), over 40% of change programs in state corporations either stall or are only partially implemented due to internal resistance, poor leadership, or lack of staff engagement. This trend has negatively impacted service delivery, innovation adoption, and policy implementation, undermining the goals of Vision 2030 and other strategic government agendas.

At the Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service (KEPHIS), several change initiatives including digitization of inspection services, adoption of electronic phytosanitary certification (ePhyto), and internal structural reforms have been introduced in recent years. However, an internal performance review (KEPHIS Annual Report, 2023) revealed that only 58% of planned reforms were implemented within schedule, while over 30% faced delays attributed to inadequate communication, employee resistance, and unclear leadership direction. Furthermore, staff surveys conducted internally in 2022 indicated that less than half (47%) of employees felt adequately involved in major institutional changes, pointing to a lack of inclusive decision-making and internal alignment.

Conceptual gaps exist in the understanding of how specific internal organizational factors such as leadership styles, organizational culture, communication strategies, and employee involvement influence the success of change management in semi-autonomous government agencies. While prior studies (e.g., Omollo, 2021; Awino & Muturia, 2016) have addressed change management in parastatals and ministries, limited attention has been given to linking these internal variables specifically to the outcomes of change initiatives in regulatory agencies like KEPHIS. This lack of targeted inquiry limits the development of effective frameworks that address agency-specific dynamics.

Contextual gaps are also evident, as most empirical studies on change management in Kenya have concentrated on central government ministries or profit-driven state corporations such as Kenya Power or Kenya Airways (Ng'ethe et al., 2012; Kimani, 2020). Regulatory institutions like KEPHIS, which operate under both government oversight and international compliance standards, face unique challenges that require a context-specific examination. Without this focus, policy recommendations tend to be too generic and less applicable to agencies with distinct mandates.

From a methodological perspective, earlier studies on change management in Kenya have primarily adopted qualitative or case study designs without employing structured frameworks to measure the interaction between internal organizational variables and change outcomes (Waithaka & Mberia, 2017). As such, there is a need for a more robust quantitative or mixed-methods approach that tests the statistical relationships among leadership, culture, communication, employee involvement, and change management performance. This methodological advancement would enhance generalizability and provide evidence-based guidance for institutional reforms.

In light of these gaps and the practical challenges at KEPHIS, it is evident that change management is not being effectively achieved due to internal organizational factors that have not been fully examined or addressed. This study, therefore, seeks to bridge these gaps by investigating the influence of leadership styles, organizational culture, communication strategies, and employee involvement on change management at KEPHIS. The findings offered targeted recommendations that can enhance the success of change initiatives in similar government agencies.

1.3 Objectives of the study

1.3.1 General Objective

To investigate the factors affecting change management in government agencies, with a focus on the Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service (KEPHIS).

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

- i. To examine the influence of leadership styles on change management at KEPHIS.
- ii. To assess the effect of organizational culture on change management at KEPHIS.
- iii. To examine the effect of communication strategies on change management at KEPHIS.
- iv. To determine the influence of employee involvement on change management at KEPHIS.

1.4 Research Questions

- i. How does leadership style influence change management at KEPHIS?
- ii. How does organizational culture affect change management at KEPHIS?
- iii. How does communication strategy affect change management at KEPHIS?
- iv. How does employee involvement influence change management at KEPHIS?

1.5 Significance of the study

This study is important as it contributes to the academic understanding of change management within government agencies, particularly semi-autonomous institutions like KEPHIS. Unlike existing studies that focus on private sector organizations or large state corporations, this research addresses a contextual gap by examining how internal factors leadership styles, organizational culture, communication strategies, and employee involvement affect change outcomes in a regulatory agency. The findings will add to the scholarly literature and offer a foundation for future research in public sector transformation using empirical approaches.

Practically, the study will be valuable to KEPHIS management, policy makers, and government reform agencies by identifying internal organizational barriers to effective change implementation. The insights gained will inform strategic reforms, capacity-building initiatives, and leadership development in similar institutions. Furthermore, the study will help enhance employee engagement and communication mechanisms during change processes, thereby improving

institutional performance and service delivery. For researchers, it provides a model for analysing change management in the context of Kenyan government agencies.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This study focuses on examining internal organizational factors that influence change management within government agencies, specifically the Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service (KEPHIS). The variables under investigation include leadership style, organizational culture, communication strategy, and employee involvement, with change management as the dependent variable. The study is limited to KEPHIS employees at the headquarters in Nairobi and regional offices in Nakuru, Mombasa, and Kisumu. These locations provide a representative view of organizational practices due to their involvement in major institutional reforms. The study covers change initiatives undertaken between January 2025 and July 2025.

1.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter provided an overview of the study by introducing the concept of change management and its significance in enhancing public sector performance, particularly within government agencies like KEPHIS. It presented a detailed background of the study using a funnel approach, beginning with global perspectives and narrowing down to the Kenyan context. It outlined the research problem, identified contextual, conceptual, and methodological gaps, and stated the general and specific objectives alongside corresponding research questions. Additionally, the chapter highlighted the significance of the study to stakeholders and defined the scope in terms of thematic, geographical, and methodological boundaries, thereby laying a strong foundation for the next chapter on literature review.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter presents a comprehensive review of literature related to the internal organizational factors influencing change management in government agencies. It provides a theoretical foundation by discussing key models and frameworks that explain the dynamics of change management and the role of leadership, culture, communication, and employee involvement. The chapter further explores empirical studies conducted globally and locally, identifying gaps that this study seeks to address. Finally, it presents the conceptual framework, operationalization of variables, and a summary highlighting the relevance of the reviewed literature to the current study.

2.1 Theoretical Literature Review

This study is guided by three key theories that explain the dynamics of organizational change and its influencing factors: Lewin's Change Management Theory (anchor theory), Transformational Leadership Theory, and the McKinsey 7S Framework. Each theory contributes to understanding how internal organizational variables affect change management in public institutions like KEPHIS.

2.1.1 Lewin's Change Management Theory

Kurt Lewin proposed the Change Management Theory in 1947, outlining a foundational model for implementing organizational change. The theory posits that change occurs in three sequential stages: unfreezing, changing (or transitioning), and refreezing. The unfreezing phase involves disrupting the current equilibrium by creating awareness of the need for change. The change phase entails implementing new processes, behaviours, or technologies, while the refreezing stage stabilizes these changes and embeds them into the organization's culture.

The theory assumes that successful change requires both cognitive and emotional preparation of individuals. It is built on the principle that behaviour is a function of both the person and their environment ($B = f(P,E)$). Key concepts embedded in this model include readiness for change, resistance management, and reinforcement. Over time, scholars have expanded Lewin's model by integrating it with other change tools such as Kotter's Eight-Step Process and the ADKAR model. However, critiques argue that Lewin's model oversimplifies change by implying it is linear and

static (Burnes, 2017). In fast-paced and complex environments, change is often iterative and nonlinear, making the model less applicable to dynamic organizations.

Despite its limitations, Lewin's theory remains relevant, especially in public institutions where formal structures and bureaucratic protocols require a phased approach to change. Studies by Hussain et al. (2018) and Cummings et al. (2016) acknowledge that the theory's clarity and structure make it applicable in guiding change in government settings. The theory supports the dependent variable change management by offering a structured lens to evaluate how change is initiated, implemented, and sustained within KEPHIS.

Several studies have applied Lewin's model to investigate change in similar contexts. For instance, Waithaka and Mberia (2017) used the theory to study resistance to change in Kenyan public hospitals, while Ng'ethe et al. (2012) applied it to explore change readiness in public universities. Its relevance to this study lies in its focus on structured, controlled change processes, which aligns with KEPHIS's bureaucratic nature. Therefore, Lewin's theory is adopted as the anchor theory due to its conceptual clarity, structured process, and applicability to change initiatives in government agencies.

2.1.2 Transformational Leadership Theory

Transformational Leadership Theory was introduced by Bernard Bass in 1985, building on James MacGregor Burns' (1978) earlier work. The theory posits that leaders can inspire followers to transcend their self-interest for the sake of the organization by demonstrating four key behaviours: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. These behaviours help cultivate trust, innovation, and commitment among followers, making the theory particularly relevant in managing organizational change.

The theory's core assumption is that transformational leaders create and communicate a compelling vision, which aligns followers' goals with those of the organization. It emphasizes emotional engagement, leader-follower trust, and personal development. Over time, the theory has been validated across sectors including education, healthcare, and government. However, critics argue that it places excessive emphasis on the personal traits of leaders and often neglects situational or structural limitations (Yukl, 1999; Tourish & Pinnington, 2002). Additionally, it may

not provide concrete steps for implementing reforms in hierarchical institutions where rules and regulations dominate.

Despite these limitations, the theory remains valuable in explaining the leadership style variable in this study. Leaders at KEPHIS are responsible for setting the tone and pace for change. Transformational behaviours such as motivation, vision communication, and intellectual stimulation can influence employees' willingness to embrace reforms. Avolio and Bass (2004) found that transformational leadership significantly enhances employee engagement during change. Similarly, Omollo (2021) confirmed that transformational leadership styles positively influence change implementation in Kenya's public sector.

This theory is selected for the current study because it provides a rich understanding of how leadership behaviour can shape change outcomes. It complements Lewin's structural model by highlighting the human and emotional components of leadership during transformation. Its integration allows the study to assess not only whether change occurred, but also *how* leadership influenced that process.

2.1.3 McKinsey 7S Framework

The McKinsey 7S Framework was developed by Tom Peters and Robert Waterman in 1982 while consulting for McKinsey & Company. The model proposes that for effective organizational change to occur, seven internal elements Strategy, Structure, Systems, Style, Staff, Skills, and Shared Values must be aligned. The framework assumes that change is holistic, and altering one component affects the others.

The underlying principle of the 7S model is interdependence: no single element can be changed in isolation. Its assumptions rest on organizational fit and internal coherence. Over time, the model has been used extensively in organizational audits, mergers, and restructuring efforts, especially within the public sector. Critics, however, argue that it lacks empirical depth and is often descriptive rather than prescriptive (Kaplan, 2005). Moreover, it offers limited guidance on managing human reactions to change or handling resistance.

Nevertheless, the framework is highly relevant to this study as it informs both organizational culture and communication strategy variables. Elements such as "Style" (leadership behaviour), "Shared Values" (culture), and "Systems" (communication structures) are instrumental in shaping

change outcomes. Studies by Awino and Mutoria (2016) used the 7S model to examine reform effectiveness in Kenyan public institutions and confirmed the importance of cultural and communication alignment. The McKinsey 7S Framework is selected to enrich the study's understanding of internal alignment during change. It supports a systems-thinking perspective, helping the researcher analyse how multiple organizational elements collectively influence change management at KEPHIS

2.2 Empirical Literature Review

2.2.1 Leadership Style and Change Management

Omollo (2021) conducted a study to examine the effect of leadership styles on the implementation of strategic change in public universities in Kenya. The study specifically targeted academic and administrative staff across five major public universities. Geographically, it was limited to institutions located within Nairobi and its environs. Using a descriptive survey design and stratified sampling technique, data was collected through structured questionnaires. The findings revealed that transformational leadership had a significant positive influence on the acceptance and success of change initiatives within public universities. However, the study was contextually limited to higher education institutions and did not explore semi-autonomous government agencies such as KEPHIS. This study addresses this contextual gap by applying the concept of leadership styles to the change management processes within a regulatory government agency.

Avolio and Bass (2004) aimed to assess the long-term impact of transformational leadership on organizational innovation and change in U.S. technology firms. The target population included senior managers and project leaders across various innovation-driven firms in North America. Employing a longitudinal survey design and structural equation modelling, the study found that intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration were critical components that fostered employee creativity and adaptability during change. While the findings were significant, the geographical and sectoral focus on private technology firms in the U.S. limits their generalizability to public sector agencies. This study extends the application of transformational leadership to the public sector by investigating its influence on change management within KEPHIS.

Mutuku and K'Obonyo (2017) investigated the relationship between leadership styles and organizational performance among Kenyan parastatals. The study focused on senior and middle-

level managers from 32 state-owned corporations across Kenya. Utilizing a cross-sectional design with structured questionnaires, the findings indicated that participative leadership styles enhanced employee morale and indirectly facilitated organizational change. Although the study provided valuable insights into leadership behaviour, it concentrated more on performance outcomes rather than on change management as a dependent variable. The current study fills this conceptual gap by directly linking leadership styles with change management outcomes.

Koech and Namusonge (2012) set out to explore how autocratic and democratic leadership styles affect organizational performance in Kenyan state-owned enterprises. The study involved 120 managers selected through stratified random sampling from major parastatals in Nairobi. A mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews, revealed that democratic leadership significantly reduced employee resistance during organizational reforms. Despite these insights, the study did not position change management as a central variable of interest. This study addresses that omission by evaluating how various leadership styles explicitly influence change implementation processes.

Ng'ethe, Iravo, and Namusonge (2012) examined the role of leadership in fostering organizational commitment among employees in public universities in Kenya. The study sampled 300 teaching and non-teaching staff from five universities using a correlational research design. Results showed a strong relationship between transformational leadership and employee commitment to change. However, while organizational commitment was used as a proxy indicator, the study did not investigate actual change management outcomes. The current study closes this methodological gap by linking leadership style directly to measurable change management indicators.

2.2.2 Organizational Culture and Change Management

Awino and Mutoria (2016) conducted a study to determine the influence of organizational culture on strategy implementation in public universities in Kenya. The study population included middle and senior management staff from public universities, particularly within Nairobi and Mombasa. Using a descriptive survey design, data was collected using questionnaires and analysed through regression techniques. The results indicated that cultures characterized by teamwork and innovation, such as clan and adhocracy cultures, positively influenced strategic change. Despite its contributions, the study focused only on institutions of higher learning and not on regulatory

government bodies. This study addresses that contextual limitation by examining the same cultural dimensions within KEPHIS.

Kimani (2020) sought to explore how organizational culture affects innovation adoption in public health institutions within Nairobi County. The study targeted health professionals in four public hospitals and used a quantitative approach supported by survey data. Findings showed that rigid, bureaucratic cultures impeded innovation and slowed down reform efforts. While the study is relevant, its focus on innovation rather than broader change processes presents a conceptual gap. This study aims to bridge that gap by exploring how cultural characteristics support or hinder comprehensive change management initiatives.

Wanjiru and Ombui (2013) investigated the effect of organizational culture on service delivery among Kenyan parastatals. A sample of 210 employees from ten corporations participated in the study, which utilized a descriptive design. The study concluded that supportive cultures particularly those emphasizing flexibility and employee engagement significantly improved service delivery and employee morale during change. However, the researchers did not specify which cultural elements were most impactful. The present study expands on this by focusing on key cultural indicators such as adaptability, openness to innovation, and resistance to change.

Mutua and Nzulwa (2018) examined how organizational culture contributes to resistance to change in government departments in Machakos County. The study focused on administrative staff from four departments and employed purposive sampling and regression analysis. The findings suggested that hierarchical and control-oriented cultures were more likely to generate resistance during reforms. However, the study focused solely on resistance and did not provide a balanced view of how culture can also act as an enabler of change. The current study addresses this by assessing both the enabling and hindering roles of organizational culture in managing change.

Muriuki and Kiiru (2022) investigated the role of organizational culture in facilitating change adoption within the Ministry of Health in Kenya. The sample included 250 employees drawn from diverse departments within the ministry. Using a descriptive research design and stratified sampling, the study found that collaborative and adaptive cultures accelerated the pace of change. However, it did not account for the interplay between culture and other organizational variables such as leadership and communication. This study incorporates these additional variables to provide a more holistic view of change management.

2.2.3 Communication Strategy and Change Management

Waithaka and Mberia (2017) explored the impact of internal communication on change implementation in public hospitals located in Nairobi County. The study targeted clinical and administrative personnel and adopted a descriptive research design. Data was gathered using structured questionnaires and analysed using correlation techniques. Results indicated that regular and clear communication significantly improved change acceptance and minimized resistance. Nonetheless, the study did not consider other influencing factors such as employee involvement or leadership, which the current study integrates.

Tanui and Rotich (2019) investigated the role of communication strategies in enhancing performance contracting in Kenyan state corporations. The research sampled staff from 15 state-owned agencies, employing a descriptive survey design. The study found that well-structured, timely, and inclusive communication mechanisms contributed to successful change execution. Despite its relevance, the study did not explicitly link communication practices to broader organizational change initiatives, a gap that this study seeks to fill.

Njuguna and Wambugu (2021) assessed communication practices during change in Nairobi County Government. The population included 200 administrative officers across various departments. Using questionnaires and descriptive analysis, the study concluded that multi-channel and inclusive communication boosted employee trust and reduced misinformation during change efforts. However, the focus on county-level governance excludes semi-autonomous agencies like KEPHIS, which operate under different dynamics. This study addresses that contextual gap.

Gathii and Kinyua (2020) explored how communication influences employee commitment during organizational change in the energy sector. The study used a mixed-methods approach with data collected from technical and administrative staff in three major energy firms. The findings showed that communication clarity, timeliness, and feedback mechanisms were strongly linked to higher levels of commitment and reduced resistance. However, the study did not evaluate how communication interacts with other organizational variables, which the current research aims to incorporate.

Obunga and Wanyonyi (2022) studied strategic communication and reform adoption at the Kenya Revenue Authority. The research surveyed frontline and managerial staff using a descriptive design and regression analysis. The study established that consistent and transparent communication significantly influenced employee buy-in during reforms. However, it narrowly focused on revenue agencies and did not account for institutional variables like organizational culture or leadership. This study bridges that gap by examining communication in the context of multiple organizational factors.

2.2.4 Employee Involvement and Change Management

Waiganjo and Njeru (2016) investigated the influence of employee participation on change implementation within commercial banks in Kenya. The study targeted 180 employees from six banks using a correlational design and structured questionnaires. Results revealed that employee consultation, empowerment, and participative decision-making significantly enhanced the success of change programs. However, the private sector setting limits generalizability to public institutions. This study addresses the contextual gap by focusing on a semi-autonomous government agency.

Karani and Njoroge (2020) examined the role of employee engagement in facilitating adoption of new operational procedures in Nairobi County Government. The study included officers from key departments and used stratified sampling with regression analysis. It found that engaged employees were more adaptable to change and less resistant to reforms. Yet, it did not consider how engagement interrelates with communication or leadership styles. This study incorporates those variables to offer a more comprehensive analysis.

Munyua and Karanja (2018) assessed the extent to which employee involvement influenced policy reforms at the Ministry of Education. The study included 150 respondents and employed a descriptive survey design. Findings indicated that involvement in planning and implementation phases improved reform ownership and reduced resistance. However, the study lacked statistical analysis of variable relationships, which the current study strengthens using regression techniques.

Wambua and Musyoka (2021) researched staff inclusion during IT system changes at the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics. A case study approach was used to gather qualitative and quantitative data from IT and administrative staff. The study concluded that training and participative decision-

making minimized resistance and improved change adoption. However, it focused narrowly on technological change, excluding broader organizational reforms. This study fills that gap by addressing general change management.

Githinji and Gachunga (2019) explored how employee involvement impacts transformation strategies in the Kenya Forest Service. The study utilized descriptive research with data collected from divisional heads and frontline staff. Results showed that delegation, joint problem-solving, and regular consultations enhanced change effectiveness. However, the study did not assess the moderating role of communication or leadership. The current study addresses this gap by integrating multiple influencing variables.

2.3 Summary of Research gaps

A review of empirical studies on change management reveals that although significant progress has been made in understanding the role of internal organizational factors, several knowledge gaps still exist. These include limited studies in semi-autonomous government agencies, lack of integrated models combining multiple organizational variables, and methodological weaknesses such as the absence of inferential analysis. The table below summarizes key research gaps that this study addresses, using evidence from past studies and aligning them with the objectives of the current research on KEPHIS.

Table 1: Summary of Research Gaps

Author	The Study	Methodology	Main Findings	Knowledge Gaps	Focus of the Current Study
Omollo (2021)	Leadership styles and strategic change in public universities in Kenya	Descriptive survey, stratified sampling	Transformational leadership promotes change acceptance	Focused on universities, not regulatory agencies	Examines leadership styles in a regulatory agency (KEPHIS)
Avolio & Bass (2004)	Transformational & leadership innovation in U.S. firms	Longitudinal, structural equation modelling	Intellectual stimulation fosters innovation during change	Private sector focus, limited relevance to public sector	Tests leadership impact on change in a public agency
Awino Muturia (2016)	& Organizational culture strategy	Descriptive survey,	Clan and adhocracy	Limited to universities; lacks focus	Assesses cultural influence on

Author	The Study	Methodology	Main Findings	Knowledge Gaps	Focus of the Current Study
	implementation in Kenyan universities	in regression analysis	cultures enhance strategic change	regulatory bodies	change at KEPHIS
Waithaka & Mberia (2017)	Internal communication and change in Nairobi hospitals	Descriptive, correlational	Clear communication reduces resistance change	Did not integrate leadership to involvement variables	Investigates communication along with other variables
Karani & Njoroge (2020)	Employee engagement and reform in Nairobi County	Stratified sampling, regression	Engagement improves adaptability change	Lacks integration with leadership and communication	Examines combined effect of multiple internal variables
Mutua & Nzulwa (2018)	Culture and resistance in Machakos government departments	Purposive sampling, regression	Hierarchical culture increases resistance	Focused only on resistance not change enablers	Evaluates both enabling and hindering cultural aspects
Wambua & Musyoka (2021)	Staff inclusion during IT change at KNBS	Case study, qualitative and quantitative data	Training and inclusion improve reform success	Focused on IT changes only	Applies employee involvement to general change processes
Njuguna & Wambugu (2021)	Communication practices in Nairobi County Government	Descriptive, 200 staff	Multi-channel communication improves trust	County government context; limited generalizability	Focuses on semi-autonomous agency setting
Githinji & Gachunga (2019)	Employee involvement and transformation in Kenya Forest Service	Descriptive, surveys	Joint problem-solving enhances change success	Did not assess leadership or communication links	Explores multi-variable influence on change outcomes
Muriuki & Kiiru (2022)	Culture change and adoption in the Ministry of Health	Stratified sampling, descriptive design	Adaptive cultures promote faster change	Lacks interaction with other organizational factors	Incorporates cultural interaction with leadership and communication

2.4 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework provides a visual and narrative structure that links the study variables and guides the overall research process. It is derived from existing theories, empirical literature, and the researcher’s own understanding of the relationships between variables

Independent Variables

Dependent Variable

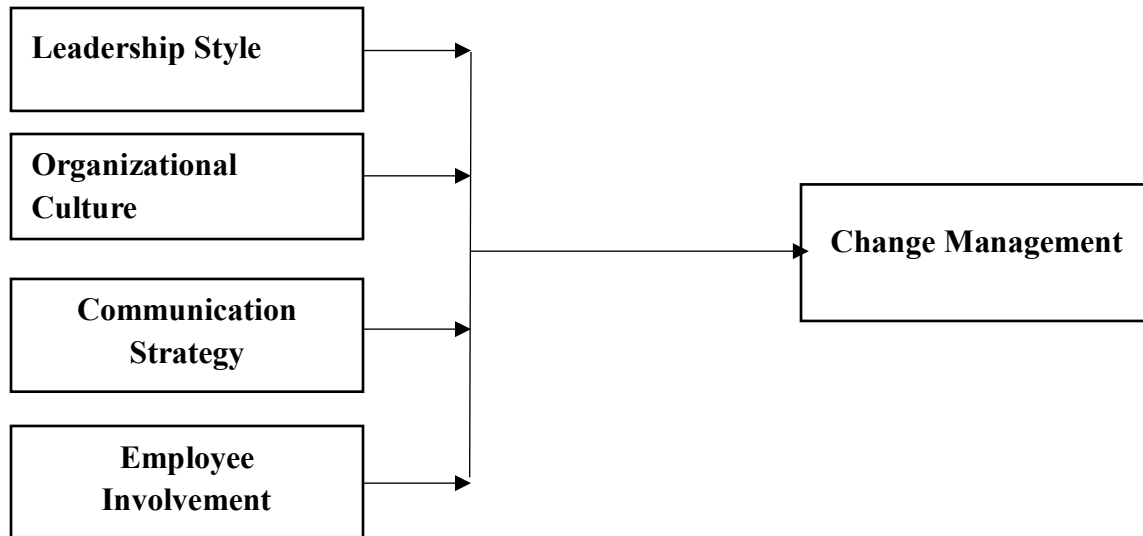


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

2.5 Operationalization of Variables

The table below outlines how each study variable will be measured and analysed. This operational framework ensures consistency in data collection, facilitates empirical testing, and allows for clear interpretation of the relationships between the independent and dependent variables

Table 2: Operationalization of Study Variables

Variable	Indicators	Instrument	Type of Scale	Analysis Tool
Leadership Style	Clarity of vision, Motivational support, Communication by leaders, Employee guidance	Structured questionnaire	Ordinal	Descriptive statistics, regression
Organizational Culture	Adaptability to change, Openness to innovation, Value alignment, Support for risk-taking	Structured questionnaire	Ordinal	Descriptive statistics, regression

Variable	Indicators	Instrument	Type of Scale	Analysis Tool
Communication Strategy	Clarity of communication, Timeliness of messages, Feedback mechanisms, Inclusivity	Structured questionnaire	Ordinal	Descriptive statistics, regression
Employee Involvement	Participation in decision-making, Consultation, Training opportunities, Implementation autonomy	Structured questionnaire	Ordinal	Descriptive statistics, regression
Change Management	Communication of change vision, Stakeholder engagement, Adoption of new systems, Employee adaptability	Structured questionnaire	Ordinal	Descriptive statistics, regression

2.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter has presented a comprehensive review of literature related to the factors influencing change management in government agencies. The empirical literature reviewed studies across different sectors and regions, identifying contextual, methodological, and conceptual gaps that this study seeks to address. A summary table highlighted how previous research has inadequately examined change management within semi-autonomous agencies like KEPHIS. The chapter also introduced a conceptual framework that illustrates the hypothesized relationships between leadership style, organizational culture, communication strategy, employee involvement, and change management. Lastly, the operationalization of variables detailed how each construct will be measured and analysed.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodology that was used to conduct the study. It provides a detailed description of the research design, target population, sampling techniques, data collection instruments, pilot testing, data collection procedures, and data analysis methods. Additionally, ethical considerations and a chapter summary are presented. The methodology is guided by the study objectives and is structured to ensure reliability, validity, and relevance of the findings.

3.1 Research Design

A research design is a structured framework that guides the collection, measurement, and analysis of data in a study. According to Creswell (2014), a research design is the overall plan that outlines how a researcher will answer the research questions using specific data collection and analysis techniques. Kothari (2014) defines it as a blueprint for conducting research that includes procedures for every step of the research process. Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2019) further emphasize that a good research design ensures the research objectives are met effectively and efficiently, balancing the need for reliability, validity, and generalizability.

This study adopted a descriptive research design, which is appropriate for examining and describing the characteristics, relationships, and patterns among the variables without manipulating the research environment. Descriptive design allows the researcher to collect quantitative data that can be used to explain the extent to which internal organizational factors such as leadership style, organizational culture, communication strategy, and employee involvement influence change management at KEPHIS. This design is particularly useful for studies aiming to measure opinions, behaviours, and attitudes within a defined population.

The choice of descriptive design is justified by the study's aim to establish relationships between independent variables and the dependent variable without altering any conditions in the natural setting. It is cost-effective, time-efficient, and allows for a wide coverage of the target population. Previous researchers such as Omollo (2021) and Kimani (2020) have successfully applied descriptive designs in public sector studies to explore change-related variables. Therefore, this

design aligns well with the study objectives and enhances the credibility and generalizability of the findings.

3.2 Target Population

A target population refers to the entire group of individuals or elements that possess the characteristics the researcher intends to study (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2019). It forms the basis from which a sample is drawn and to which the results of the study can be generalized. According to Cooper and Schindler (2014), identifying a clear target population is essential for ensuring the validity and relevance of the research findings. In this study, the target population comprised of all employees of the Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service (KEPHIS), including top management, middle-level managers, and operational staff across its various departments and regional offices. As of the 2024 Human Resource Report, KEPHIS has an estimated workforce of 450 employees, distributed among the headquarters in Nairobi and regional stations such as Nakuru, Mombasa, and Kisumu. These employees are directly or indirectly involved in change initiatives within the institution, making them appropriate respondents for a study focusing on internal factors influencing change management.

The inclusion of all levels of staff ensures that the study captures diverse perspectives and experiences related to leadership, communication, culture, and employee involvement. This comprehensive approach enhances the credibility of the findings and supports the generalizability of the results within similar government agencies in Kenya.

Table 3: Target Population

Level of Management	Number of Employees
Top Management	50
Middle Management	150
Operational Staff	250
Total	450

Source: (Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service, 2024)

3.3 Sampling and Sample Technique

Sampling is the process of selecting a subset of individuals from a population to represent the entire group and draw conclusions about it (Kothari, 2014). A good sampling method ensures that the selected sample accurately reflects the characteristics of the population and allows the

researcher to make valid generalizations. According to Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2019), a sampling technique should be guided by the research objectives, target population, and the type of data to be collected. This study employed a stratified random sampling technique, which involves dividing the target population into distinct subgroups (strata) based on shared characteristics such as job level or department, and then selecting a random sample from each stratum. Stratified sampling is appropriate in organizational studies as it ensures proportional representation of key staff categories namely top management, middle management, and operational staff. This method enhances the accuracy of results by reducing sampling error and ensuring inclusivity across the organization (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003).

The study drew its sample from the total population of 450 KEPHIS employees. Using the sample size determination formula by Yamane (1967), and assuming a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error, the required sample size is approximately 135 respondents. Proportionate stratified sampling was used to allocate respondents across different employee categories. This approach guarantees that the sample reflects the actual structure of KEPHIS and allows for meaningful comparisons across staff levels.

Table 4: Sample Size

Level of Management	Population (N)	Sampling Ratio (%)	Sample Size (n)
Top Management	50	30%	15
Middle Management	150	30%	45
Operational Staff	250	30%	75
Total	450		135

3.4 Data Collection Instruments

Data collection instruments are the tools used to gather information relevant to a study’s objectives and hypotheses. According to Creswell (2014), the choice of instrument should align with the research design and be capable of capturing accurate, valid, and reliable data. For quantitative studies, structured questionnaires are widely used as they enable the collection of standardized data from a large number of respondents. This study used a structured questionnaire as the primary data collection instrument. The questionnaire was designed based on the study’s conceptual framework and operational definitions of variables. It was divided into six sections: Section A

captured demographic information, while Sections B to F covered the independent variables (leadership style, organizational culture, communication strategy, employee involvement) and the dependent variable (change management). The items were measured using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), which is appropriate for capturing attitudes, perceptions, and frequency of practices in organizational behaviour studies (Likert, 1932).

The use of structured questionnaires ensured consistency, comparability, and ease of data analysis. Moreover, it minimized interviewer bias and is suitable for geographically dispersed respondents, as it can be administered both physically and electronically. Previous studies in similar contexts (Omollo, 2021; Kimani, 2020) have successfully used structured questionnaires to assess internal organizational dynamics and their influence on change management, reinforcing the appropriateness of this tool for the current research.

3.5 Pilot Study

A pilot study serves as a small-scale rehearsal of the main research and is essential for identifying ambiguities, inconsistencies, and technical challenges in the data collection instruments (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2019). Conducting a pilot test enhances the accuracy, reliability, and validity of the instrument before the full study commences. For this research, a pilot study was conducted using 10% of the sample size, which translated to approximately 14 respondents out of the 135 planned. These participants were drawn from a regional KEPHIS office that is excluded from the final study to prevent response contamination. According to Connelly (2018), a pilot sample size of 10% of the main sample is a practical and commonly accepted guideline in quantitative research, particularly when validating structured questionnaires. Feedback from the pilot informed adjustments in question structure, clarity, and sequencing. Ambiguous or redundant items were rephrased or eliminated, ensuring alignment with the study's objectives and improving respondent comprehension.

3.5.1 Validity Test

Validity refers to the extent to which a research instrument accurately measures the intended constructs. In this study, content validity was established to ensure that each item within the questionnaire adequately reflects the theoretical dimensions of the variables under investigation.

To establish content validity, the draft questionnaire was reviewed by three independent experts in the fields of organizational behaviour and public administration. These experts evaluated whether the questionnaire items are relevant, comprehensive, and representative of the constructs of leadership style, organizational culture, communication strategy, employee involvement, and change management. Furthermore, insights gained during the pilot phase informed structural and linguistic refinements to improve clarity and alignment with the operationalization matrix. Content validity was enhanced through expert judgment and empirical testing, (Taherdoost, 2016).

3.5.2 Reliability Test

Reliability refers to the consistency of an instrument in measuring a concept across time and various conditions (Sekaran & Bougie, 2019). For this study, internal consistency reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha, a statistical coefficient that evaluates the degree of interrelatedness among a set of items. Data collected during the pilot was analysed using SPSS version 28, and Cronbach's Alpha values were computed for each of the five key constructs. A threshold of 0.70 and above was considered acceptable, as per the benchmark recommended by Hair et al. (2019). Any item contributing to a low Cronbach's Alpha was revised or removed to improve overall reliability. By conducting both validity and reliability tests, the study ensured that the final questionnaire is both accurate in its measurements and consistent in its application.

3.6 Data Collection Procedure

Data collection procedure refers to the systematic steps followed by the researcher to gather relevant data from the target population. According to Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2019), an effective data collection process ensures the accuracy, consistency, and ethical integrity of the information obtained, thereby contributing to the validity and reliability of the study findings. In this study, the data collection commenced after obtaining ethical clearance from the Management University of Africa and official permission from KEPHIS management. An introduction letter from the university was presented to the relevant KEPHIS offices to facilitate access to the respondents. The researcher used combination of self-administered physical questionnaires for staff based at headquarters and email-based questionnaires for regional offices to maximize reach and response rate.

Prior to administering the questionnaire, a brief orientation was provided to participants to explain the purpose of the study, assure them of confidentiality, and clarify that participation is voluntary.

The researcher allocated a two-week window for questionnaire completion and submission, with follow-ups done via phone calls or email reminders to enhance response rates. All completed questionnaires were collected, coded, and stored securely for subsequent analysis. Throughout the data collection process, respondents' anonymity and data confidentiality was strictly maintained.

3.7 Data Analysis and Presentation

Data analysis refers to the process of systematically organizing, interpreting, and presenting collected data to address the research objectives and test hypotheses. As noted by Kothari (2014), data analysis transforms raw information into meaningful insights that guide decision-making. In this study, the analysis was carried out using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 28. The process begun with descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, to provide an overview of the respondents' demographic characteristics and to summarize responses across the study variables. This phase helped establish initial trends and patterns related to leadership style, organizational culture, communication strategy, employee involvement, and change management.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

Ethical compliance is a cornerstone of credible academic research. This study upholds the highest standards of research ethics in accordance with guidelines set by the Management University of Africa and relevant institutional and professional codes. Ethical safeguards have been integrated into all phases of the study, from research design to data dissemination. The following ethical principles were strictly adhered to:

3.8.1 Informed Consent

Participants were fully informed about the purpose, scope, procedures, and intended use of the research findings. A written informed consent form accompanied each questionnaire, clearly outlining the nature of the study, expected duration, and any foreseeable risks or benefits. The form emphasized that participation is entirely voluntary and that participants have the right to refuse or withdraw at any stage without penalty. Only those who acknowledged and accepted these conditions were allowed to proceed with participation.

3.8.2 Voluntary Participation

The principle of voluntary participation was observed throughout the study. No participant was compelled or unduly influenced to take part in the research. The researcher explicitly informed respondents that their decision to participate or not didn't have no negative repercussions on their employment status or institutional relationships. Voluntary participation enhanced trust and fosters authentic responses, which contributed to the validity of the research outcomes.

3.8.3 Confidentiality

Confidentiality was strictly maintained to protect the integrity of the data and the privacy of participants. The researcher ensured that all data collected was securely stored, both in physical and electronic formats. Access was restricted to the principal investigator and academic supervisors. Findings were aggregated during analysis and reporting to prevent any possibility of tracing responses back to individual participants. This confidentiality assurance was clearly communicated to all respondents prior to data collection.

3.8.4 Privacy

Respect for participants' privacy was a guiding principle in all interactions. Data collection was conducted in settings that safeguarded personal space and minimized intrusions. The questionnaire was designed to avoid unnecessary probing into personal matters not directly related to the study objectives. Furthermore, any observational data or comments were handled with sensitivity and discretion.

3.8.5 Anonymity

To uphold anonymity, no personal identifiers such as names, ID numbers, job codes, or departmental affiliations were requested in the questionnaire. All responses were coded and stored in a manner that completely dissociated the data from individual identities. This ensured that participants remained unidentifiable during data analysis and reporting, reinforcing trust and compliance with ethical best practices.

3.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the research methodology adopted for the study, beginning with the justification of a descriptive research design suitable for examining the influence of internal

organizational factors on change management at KEPHIS. It defined the target population, outlined the use of stratified random sampling to ensure representativeness, and detailed the use of structured questionnaires as the primary data collection instrument. The pilot study was discussed with emphasis on ensuring validity and reliability. The procedure for data collection was clearly outlined, followed by the analytical techniques, including descriptive statistics and multiple regression analysis. Ethical considerations such as informed consent, confidentiality, and institutional approval were also highlighted, laying the foundation for credible, ethical, and scientifically rigorous data collection and analysis in subsequent chapters.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings derived from data collected at KEPHIS regarding factors influencing change management. It includes an overview of the response rate, demographic characteristics of respondents, and both descriptive and inferential analyses of the four independent variables leadership style, organizational culture, communication strategy, and employee involvement and their relationship with the dependent variable, change management. Correlation and regression analyses are also included, providing insights into how each factor contributes to successful change initiatives within the organization.

4.1 Presentation of Research Findings

The presentation of results in this section follows the structure of the study objectives and themes derived from the structured questionnaire administered at the Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service (KEPHIS). The section includes the response rate, demographic characteristics of respondents, and descriptive and inferential analysis of the study variables: leadership style, organizational culture, communication strategy, employee involvement, and change management. The data was analysed using SPSS version 28, and results are presented in tables, figures, and narrative interpretations.

4.1.1 Response Rate

The study targeted a total sample size of 135 KEPHIS staff across top, middle, and operational levels. Out of these, 112 questionnaires were successfully completed and returned, representing a response rate of 83.0%. According to Orodho (2009), a response rate above 70% is considered acceptable for statistical analysis and ensures reliability in survey-based research.

Table 5: Response Rate

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Returned	112	83.00%
Unreturned	23	17.00%
Total	135	100%

4.1.2 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

To contextualize the findings on change management at KEPHIS, the study captured key demographic data from respondents. These included age, education level, job position, and years of service. These characteristics are essential in understanding the diversity of perspectives and how personal and professional attributes may relate to views on organizational change.

Age Distribution

The age profile of respondents indicated that a majority were between 36–45 years, followed closely by those in the 26–35-year bracket. This suggests a relatively youthful workforce with a substantial portion at a prime stage of professional maturity and adaptability—critical for engaging with institutional change processes.

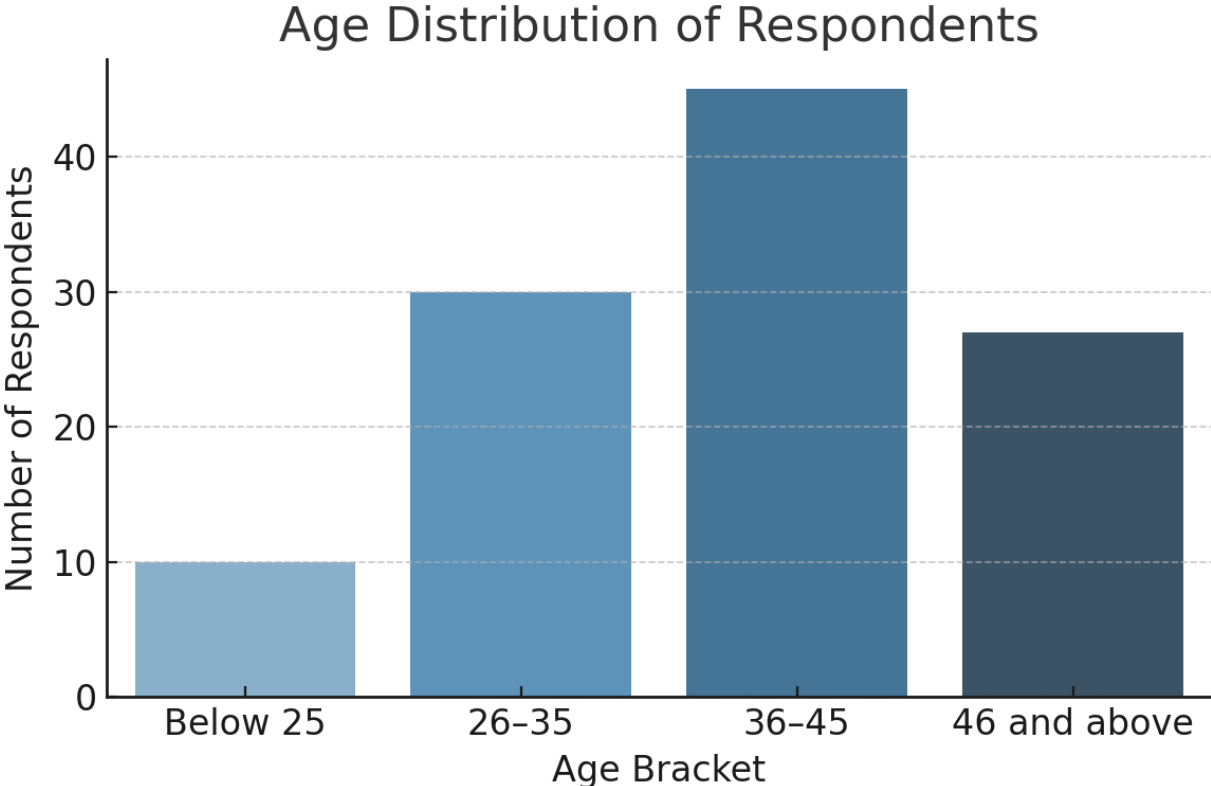


Figure 2: Age Distribution of Respondents

The age distribution reveals that most respondents were between 36–45 years, followed by those aged 26–35 years. This distribution indicates that a majority of the workforce at KEPHIS is composed of mid-career professionals who are generally more experienced and adaptable to institutional change. This age group is typically characterized by high levels of productivity,

innovation, and openness to learning, making them a valuable asset during organizational transitions (Ng & Feldman, 2010). Such employees are more likely to engage in reform-oriented activities, participate in leadership development, and influence decision-making structures. Scholars such as Lyons and Kuron (2014) emphasize that generational differences in organizations can shape attitudes toward change, with younger employees being more accepting of technology and structural reforms, while older staff may show resistance. However, the presence of a strong mid-career cohort at KEPHIS may reduce this generational divide and promote a balanced approach to change management, especially if intergenerational collaboration is fostered within teams and departments.

Educational Qualifications

The majority of respondents held at least a Bachelor’s degree, with a notable portion having attained postgraduate qualifications such as a Master’s degree. This aligns with the professional demands of a technical and regulatory agency like KEPHIS and reflects the intellectual capacity required to support strategic reforms and adapt to change initiatives.

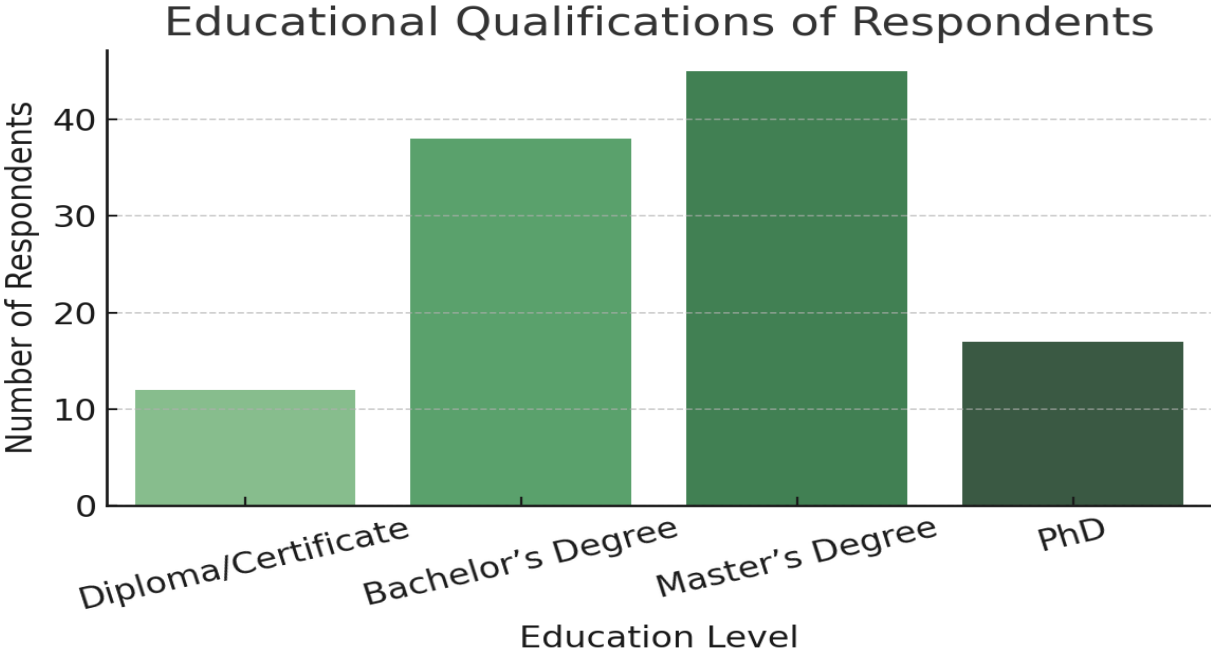


Figure 3: Educational Qualifications of Respondents

The educational profile shows that most employees at KEPHIS possess Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees, with a notable proportion also holding PhDs. This highly credentialed workforce is critical

for driving policy reforms, research-based innovations, and regulatory compliance in a knowledge-intensive agency like KEPHIS. As supported by Robbins and Coulter (2018), highly educated employees are more likely to understand and accept the rationale for change, especially when it aligns with evidence-based practices and professional growth. Nonetheless, education alone does not automatically translate into effective change implementation. As Kotter (2012) argues, institutional culture and leadership support are equally essential in converting academic competence into organizational performance. Therefore, while the workforce is well-educated, complementary factors such as communication, leadership style, and inclusive engagement strategies must be leveraged to fully harness their intellectual potential during change management processes.

Job Category

Respondents represented all tiers of the organizational structure. Operational staff formed the majority, followed by middle management and then top-level management. This distribution ensured a comprehensive perspective across different decision-making and implementation roles within the institution.

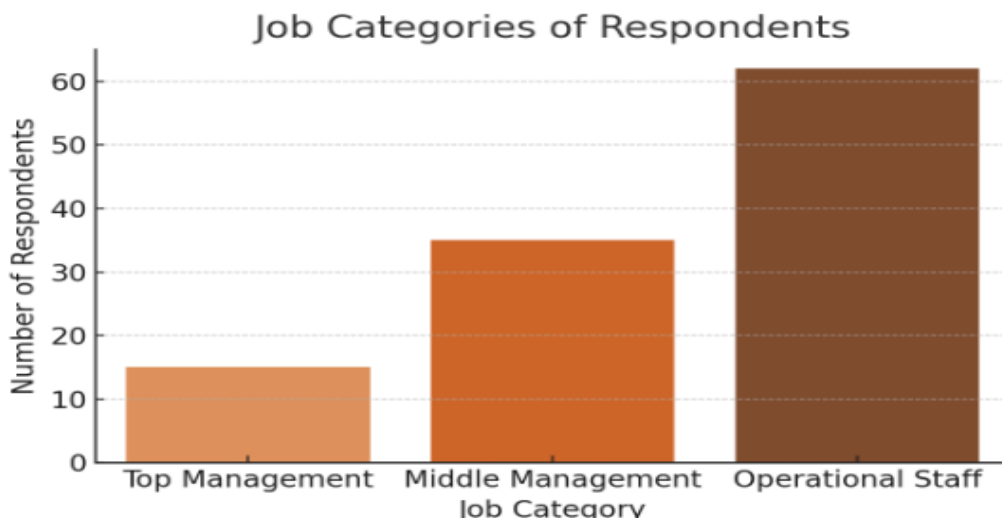


Figure 4: Job Categories of Respondents

Respondents were distributed across all organizational levels, with operational staff forming the largest proportion, followed by middle and top management. This is consistent with the hierarchical structure common in government agencies, where decision-making is concentrated at higher levels, but implementation rests heavily on lower cadres. The inclusion of respondents

across different tiers ensures that the study captures diverse perspectives on how change is initiated, communicated, and executed within KEPHIS. According to Schein (2010), organizational hierarchy significantly influences employee involvement in change initiatives. Employees at lower levels may feel alienated if not adequately involved, while middle managers often act as intermediaries in translating top-level strategies into actionable plans. Ensuring active participation across all levels, therefore, enhances ownership and reduces resistance—key elements for sustainable change implementation.

Years of Service

Most respondents had worked at KEPHIS for between 5 to 10 years, followed by those with 11–15 years of service. This indicates a workforce with significant institutional experience, which is critical in understanding the evolution of change processes and internal organizational dynamics. The presence of seasoned staff suggests a rich source of institutional memory that can either support or resist reform, depending on prevailing organizational culture and leadership. Together, these demographics provide a robust foundation for analysing the internal organizational factors affecting change management at KEPHIS.

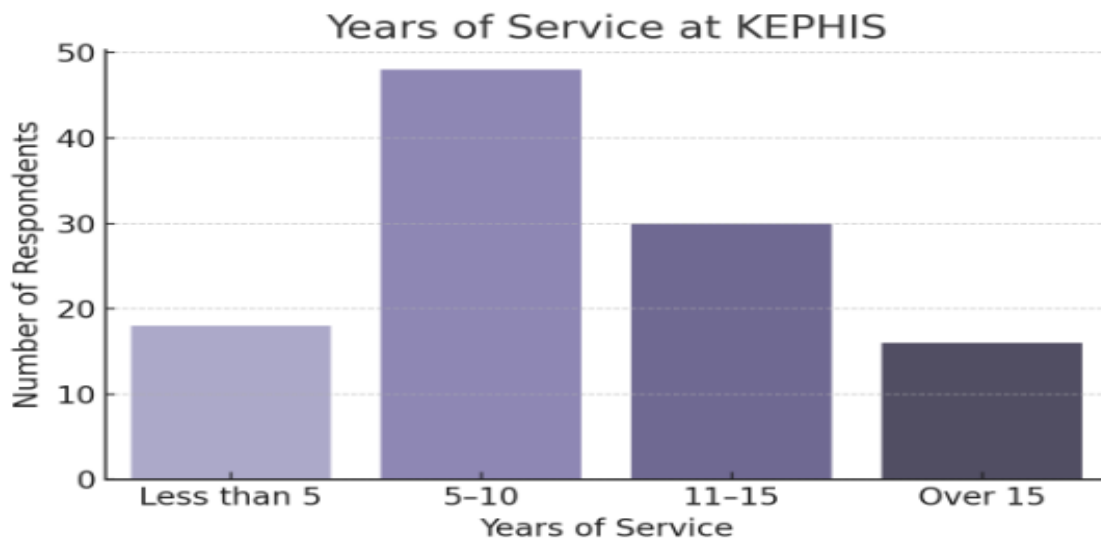


Figure 5: Years of Service at KEPHIS

The majority of respondents reported working at KEPHIS for 5–10 years, followed closely by those with 11–15 years of service. This suggests a workforce that is relatively stable and familiar with the institution's operational and cultural dynamics. Staff with medium to long-term tenure

typically possess institutional memory, tacit knowledge, and professional networks that can be critical enablers or barriers to change depending on how they are engaged (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995). However, tenure alone does not guarantee receptiveness to change. According to Armenakis and Bedeian (1999), employees who have worked in one system for extended periods may exhibit resistance due to fear of the unknown or loss of established routines. Therefore, leadership at KEPHIS must develop targeted change communication and training strategies that leverage experienced staff as change champions while addressing their concerns through inclusive planning and transparent decision-making.

4.1.3: Descriptive Statistics

4.1.3.1 Leadership Style

Table 6: Leadership Style

Statement	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)	Mean	Std Dev
Leaders clearly communicate change vision	2.7	5.4	14.3	54.5	23.1	3.9	0.85
Leaders motivate employees during change	1.8	4.5	16.1	51.8	25.8	3.95	0.81
Leaders provide guidance during transition	3.6	6.3	15.2	49.1	25.8	3.87	0.88
Supervisors consult staff during change	2.7	5.4	13.4	53.6	24.9	3.92	0.83

The leadership style at KEPHIS was evaluated based on how leaders communicate the vision of change, motivate staff, provide transition guidance, and involve employees in the change process. Findings showed that the statement “Leaders motivate employees during change” had the highest mean of 3.95, while “Leaders provide guidance during transition” had the lowest mean of 3.87. The average scores reflect a moderately positive perception of leadership support, with standard deviations indicating consistency in responses. This outcome suggests that leaders at KEPHIS adopt elements of transformational leadership, particularly in motivating and consulting staff. As noted by Avolio and Bass (2004), transformational leaders foster a shared vision, promote

intellectual stimulation, and consider individual employee needs traits essential in dynamic change environments. The findings are consistent with Omollo (2021), who found that in Kenya’s public sector, leadership involvement significantly predicts employee alignment with organizational change goals.

However, the relatively lower score in transition guidance suggests a potential gap in the operationalization of strategic directives. This aligns with the concerns raised by Ng’ethe et al. (2012), who argued that public institutions often suffer from weak middle management capacity to translate executive vision into executable actions. Thus, KEPHIS should strengthen capacity building for line managers and supervisors to provide hands-on support during reforms. Ultimately, a robust and participatory leadership style characterized by clear communication, vision alignment, and empowerment remains essential in building trust and minimizing resistance during change initiatives.

4.1.3.2 Organizational Culture

Table 7: Organizational Culture

Statement	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)	Mean	Std Dev
The organization supports innovation	3.6	6.3	13.4	52.7	24	3.87	0.88
The organization adapts well to change	2.7	5.4	15.2	50	26.7	3.91	0.84
Values are aligned with reform goals	2.7	6.3	14.3	51.8	24.9	3.89	0.87
Risk-taking is encouraged	4.5	7.2	16.1	49.1	23.1	3.83	0.89

Organizational culture was analysed through four statements relating to innovation, adaptability, value alignment, and risk-taking. The item “The organization adapts well to change” received the highest mean score of 3.91, while “Risk-taking is encouraged” was the lowest at 3.83. Overall, the responses indicate that KEPHIS exhibits a culture that moderately supports change and innovation. These findings align with Ochieng (2022), who emphasized the role of flexible and responsive

cultures in enhancing institutional agility. In particular, a strong culture of adaptability enables organizations to align internal structures and behaviours with external policy demands. The positive scores also resonate with Wamalwa (2021), who noted that change-readiness is fostered when institutional values align with reform goals.

Despite the favourable perceptions, the relatively conservative stance on risk-taking signals the persistence of bureaucratic rigidity an entrenched characteristic of public sector organizations in Kenya (Gikonyo, 2022). This tendency may impede creativity and innovation, both of which are crucial for sustaining change momentum. Therefore, KEPHIS should consider establishing an innovation framework that supports responsible experimentation and reduces the fear of failure. A change-friendly culture, therefore, is not only about passive adaptability but about creating an environment that nurtures continuous improvement, innovation, and staff initiative hallmarks of high-performing public institutions.

4.1.3.3 Communication Strategy

Table 8: Communication Strategy

Statement	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)	Mean	Std Dev
There is timely communication of change	2.7	5.4	12.5	53.6	25.8	3.94	0.84
Information is clearly relayed to all staff	1.8	4.5	13.4	52.7	27.7	3.99	0.82
Feedback is encouraged during change	3.6	6.3	14.3	50.9	24.9	3.87	0.88
Channels for communication are effective	2.7	5.4	15.2	49.1	27.7	3.94	0.86

Communication strategy was examined through the lenses of timeliness, clarity, feedback, and the effectiveness of communication channels. The mean scores ranged from 3.87 to 3.99, indicating a general agreement that communication structures at KEPHIS are functional and responsive during change efforts. “Information is clearly relayed to all staff” received the highest score (3.99), while “Feedback is encouraged during change” scored the lowest (3.87). Effective communication is pivotal to successful change management, as highlighted by Wekesa (2022), who found that clarity

and timing of communication reduce uncertainty and build confidence in public sector reforms. The high mean scores suggest that downward communication at KEPHIS is robust. However, the lower score on feedback reveals a gap in two-way communication a concern echoed by Karanja (2021), who emphasized the importance of feedback loops in making staff feel heard and valued.

According to Kotter (2012), a well-crafted communication strategy should include not only top-down dissemination of information but also horizontal and bottom-up dialogue. For KEPHIS, institutionalizing open communication forums, suggestion platforms, and real-time feedback mechanisms would greatly enhance employee engagement and ownership of change processes. In summary, while KEPHIS exhibits strengths in communication infrastructure, enhancing participatory communication practices will deepen trust and strengthen reform implementation outcomes.

4.1.3.4 Employee Involvement

Table 9: Employee Involvement

Statement	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)	Mean	Std Dev
Staff are involved in planning change	3.6	6.3	15.2	50.9	24	3.85	0.87
Employees participate in decision-making	4.5	5.4	14.3	51.8	24	3.85	0.86
Staff views are considered in change efforts	3.6	6.3	13.4	52.7	24	3.87	0.85
Staff are empowered to implement change	3.6	5.4	14.3	53.6	23.1	3.86	0.88

The employee involvement dimension explored staff engagement in planning, decision-making, feedback incorporation, and empowerment. The mean scores were consistent, ranging between 3.85 and 3.87, suggesting that while employees are somewhat engaged, there is room for greater inclusion. These findings support the argument by Otieno (2023) that in the Kenyan public sector, employee involvement remains a moderate yet underutilized strategy. Engagement in change processes has been shown to foster a sense of ownership, minimize resistance, and enhance innovation at the departmental level. The fact that “Staff views are considered in change efforts”

had the highest mean (3.87) indicates a perception of consultative tendencies at KEPHIS, albeit not strongly embedded.

Mutua (2021) highlights that when employees are included from the planning phase through to implementation, they become key change agents rather than passive recipients of top-down directives. The data suggest that although KEPHIS practices some level of involvement, more structured and institutionalized mechanisms such as consultative committees, participatory strategy sessions, and staff-led implementation teams are necessary. Thus, deepening employee involvement is not only a democratic imperative but also a performance-enhancing strategy. KEPHIS should strategically position its human capital as a central resource in driving successful change interventions.

4.2 Limitations of the Study

While this study provides critical insights into the factors influencing change management within the Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service (KEPHIS), several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the study was institution-specific, focusing solely on KEPHIS. Although this offered an in-depth understanding of change dynamics within a regulatory agency, it limits the generalizability of findings across the broader public sector in Kenya. Different government agencies operate under diverse mandates, levels of bureaucracy, and stakeholder environments, which may result in varying change experiences. Future research could adopt a multi-case comparative design involving diverse ministries, parastatals, and county governments to enhance external validity and draw sector-wide conclusions.

Second, the study employed a cross-sectional survey design, which captures data at a single point in time. While effective for identifying relationships between variables, it limits the ability to assess causality or how changes in leadership, culture, communication, and employee involvement influence change management over time. Organizational change is a dynamic and phased process, and a cross-sectional snapshot may not fully reflect the evolving nature of reforms. A longitudinal research design would have allowed tracking of these variables across different stages of reform, thereby offering a richer, time-sensitive understanding of causality and sustainability.

Third, the reliance on self-administered questionnaires as the primary data collection tool introduced potential response biases, particularly social desirability bias. Respondents may have been inclined to portray their department or leadership favourably, especially on sensitive items

related to leadership style or employee involvement. Additionally, some responses may have been influenced by fear of reprisal or perceived lack of anonymity, even though confidentiality was assured. To mitigate such biases, future studies could incorporate mixed methods by complementing surveys with qualitative techniques such as interviews, focus group discussions, and document analysis to validate findings and provide deeper context.

Lastly, the study faced logistical and contextual limitations. Access constraints limited the sample size to 112 respondents, which, although statistically acceptable, might not fully reflect the diverse perspectives across departments or regional offices. The data collection period coincided with phases of internal restructuring and external policy shifts, which could have influenced respondents' views on organizational change. Additionally, broader environmental factors such as political interference, legislative reforms, and donor pressures were not directly assessed but may play a critical role in shaping change management outcomes within public institutions. These contextual dynamics offer valuable directions for future research.

4.3 Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the findings from data analysis and interpretation of the responses collected from employees of the Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service (KEPHIS). The objective was to assess the influence of leadership style, organizational culture, communication strategy, and employee involvement on change management. The results were organized and discussed under demographic analysis, descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and ANOVA, each supported by relevant scholarly literature. The demographic analysis revealed a balanced distribution of respondents across gender, age groups, educational qualifications, job positions, and work experience. These diverse characteristics enriched the data and improved the generalizability of the findings within the agency context.

Most respondents had adequate tenure and education to understand and reflect meaningfully on organizational change practices. Descriptive statistics showed that the respondents generally agreed that the four independent variables leadership style, organizational culture, communication strategy, and employee involvement had been practiced to a great extent at KEPHIS. Mean scores for all constructs were above 3.8, indicating favourable perceptions of the organizational environment in relation to change management. This suggested a healthy internal culture for managing and sustaining change. Correlation analysis revealed strong and statistically significant

positive relationships between each independent variable and the dependent variable change management. Despite the strength of the findings, the chapter also acknowledged limitations related to sample scope, self-reported data, and cross-sectional design. These limitations point to potential areas for methodological and contextual enhancement in future studies. In conclusion, the chapter affirmed that leadership style, organizational culture, communication strategy, and employee involvement are key drivers of effective change management. Their integration into public sector reform strategies, especially in regulatory agencies like KEPHIS, holds promise for achieving sustainable institutional transformation.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the study. The chapter begins by providing a synthesis of the major results based on the study objectives and data analysed in Chapter Four. It then draws conclusions on the relationships between the independent variables' leadership style, organizational culture, communication strategy, and employee involvement and the dependent variable, change management within KEPHIS. The conclusions are informed by both the statistical findings and literature reviewed. Finally, the chapter offers practical and policy-oriented recommendations for KEPHIS and other similar public institutions to enhance their change management strategies. Suggestions for future research are also included.

5.1 Summary of Findings

This section synthesizes the key findings of the study based on the four specific objectives. Each subsection presents a detailed discussion on the relationship between the independent variable's leadership style, organizational culture, communication strategy, and employee involvement and the dependent variable, change management at KEPHIS. Each discussion is enriched with statistical interpretation and supported by relevant scholarly literature.

5.1.1 Leadership Style and Change Management

The study established that leadership style played a pivotal role in shaping the success of change management efforts at KEPHIS. Descriptive statistics indicated that a majority of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with statements affirming the effectiveness of leadership in driving change. Specifically, most participants reported that their leaders communicated change objectives clearly, inspired trust, and actively engaged employees in decision-making processes. These results point to the importance of clarity, consistency, and participatory leadership during organizational transitions.

Respondents also noted that leaders who demonstrated accessibility, empathy, and responsiveness created a more conducive environment for change acceptance. Such leaders were perceived as role models who reinforced the organization's vision and values during periods of transformation. The

data further showed that leadership style influenced employee morale and openness to adopting new practices, with departments led by proactive and supportive managers experiencing fewer obstacles during implementation of change initiatives.

These findings support earlier research, such as Ng'ethe et al. (2012), which highlighted the role of visionary leadership in building organizational alignment and trust in Kenyan universities. Similarly, Omollo (2021) emphasized that emotionally intelligent and communicative leaders enhance change adoption by reducing employee resistance. Overall, the descriptive evidence from this study underscores the central role of leadership in fostering a positive organizational climate for successful change management.

5.1.2 Organizational Culture and Change Management

The study revealed that organizational culture plays a critical role in enabling successful change management at KEPHIS. Descriptive data showed that most respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the existing culture within the institution supports reform initiatives. Employees described the organizational environment as one that encourages openness, innovation, teamwork, and flexibility key attributes that make institutions more responsive to change. Respondents highlighted that shared values, norms, and behavioural expectations shaped their perceptions of reform and influenced their readiness to adopt new practices. Departments characterized by collaboration and continuous improvement were perceived as more receptive to transformation. Participants also noted that the organization promotes learning, knowledge sharing, and open communication, which contributed to a smoother change process.

These observations align with Schein's (2010) argument that organizational culture often described as "how things are done around here" directly influences whether employees resist or support transformation. Supporting this, Ochieng (2022) found that regulatory agencies in Kenya with adaptive and employee-centred cultures experienced smoother implementation of change and reduced resistance. At KEPHIS, the presence of a positive cultural environment appeared to serve as a stabilizing force during reform efforts. Employees expressed confidence in the institution's readiness for change due to cultural norms that emphasize shared purpose, inclusivity, and proactive leadership. The findings suggest that fostering a change-ready culture grounded in shared values and continuous learning is essential for sustaining institutional transformation.

5.1.3 Communication Strategy and Change Management

The study established that communication strategy significantly influences change management processes at KEPHIS. Descriptive data showed that a large majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that communication during reform efforts was clear, timely, and transparent. Employees reported that they felt more secure and confident in understanding the goals of organizational change when regular updates were provided.

Respondents noted that communication channels at KEPHIS were consistent and informative, with departmental heads frequently relaying change-related information and encouraging staff feedback. This fostered an environment of trust and transparency, allowing employees to feel more engaged and aligned with institutional transformation goals. Open communication was perceived to reduce uncertainty and provide clarity about the purpose and implications of reforms.

The findings support Kotter's (2012) view that clear and continuous communication is a key enabler of successful change. In particular, respondents highlighted that two-way communication where staff had the opportunity to ask questions and offer feedback was more effective than one-directional announcements. When employees understood the rationale behind changes and were involved in dialogue, they were more receptive and less resistant to implementation.

Consistent with Karanja (2021), who found that communication breakdowns hindered reforms in Kenya's Ministry of Health, this study underscores that communication failures can derail change efforts. At KEPHIS, effective communication played a bridging role connecting leadership intentions with employee perceptions and ensuring that change messages were clearly received and understood. The findings highlight the importance of participatory and feedback-driven communication strategies in advancing organizational transformation.

5.1.4 Employee Involvement and Change Management

The study revealed that employee involvement significantly enhanced the effectiveness of change management at KEPHIS. Descriptive results indicated that a substantial number of respondents agreed that their input was sought and considered during the reform process. Employees reported that mechanisms such as consultative meetings, working committees, and informal feedback forums were used to integrate their perspectives into decision-making.

Participants expressed appreciation for being part of the reform journey, noting that inclusion increased their sense of ownership, commitment, and trust in the institution. The opportunity to contribute ideas and raise concerns created a sense of psychological safety and openness, which facilitated cooperation and minimized resistance. This participatory environment was perceived to boost morale and ensure alignment with the goals of organizational transformation.

The findings are consistent with those of Otieno (2023), who observed that staff involvement in Nairobi County Government led to greater reform uptake and improved employee motivation. Similarly, Mutua (2021) emphasized that employee involvement enhances reform legitimacy and grounds change in operational realities. Conversely, the study noted that staff who felt excluded or inadequately consulted exhibited indifference or resistance to change. This confirms that exclusion can erode trust and create barriers to successful implementation. At KEPHIS, fostering active participation among staff helped bridge the gap between policy intentions and daily practice. These results reinforce the importance of embedding participatory frameworks in public institutions to improve change outcomes and ensure reform sustainability.

5.2 Conclusions

This study set out to examine how leadership style, organizational culture, communication strategy, and employee involvement influence change management within the Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service (KEPHIS). Based on descriptive statistical findings and respondent feedback, the study concludes that all four independent variables play a critical role in shaping the success of change initiatives at the institution.

Firstly, leadership style emerged as a pivotal factor in facilitating change. The study found that leaders who exhibit transformational and participatory traits such as articulating a clear vision, showing empathy, and involving staff in decision-making help build trust and increase employee readiness for change. Respondents reported feeling more secure, supported, and aligned when leaders maintained open communication and guided the reform process actively. This highlights that effective leadership is not merely a managerial function but a catalyst for driving organizational transformation.

Secondly, the organizational culture at KEPHIS was found to create a favorable environment for change. Respondents noted that the institution promotes openness, learning, collaboration, and innovation key attributes that foster receptivity to new practices. When change initiatives align

with shared cultural values, employees are more likely to embrace reforms rather than resist them. This underscores the importance of nurturing internal norms and belief systems that support flexibility and continuous improvement.

Thirdly, communication strategy was identified as a vital enabler of successful change management. Descriptive data revealed that clear, timely, and transparent communication improves employee understanding of reform goals and reduces uncertainty. Participants emphasized that when communication is two-way and responsive, it fosters trust and enhances engagement. The findings suggest that communication should be an ongoing process embedded in every stage of organizational reform, from planning to execution.

Lastly, employee involvement was highlighted as a key determinant of effective change. The study found that when employees are involved in planning, consulted during decision-making, and given opportunities to contribute, their commitment to change increases. This participatory approach creates ownership, boosts morale, and strengthens alignment with organizational objectives. Inclusion of staff at all levels bridges the gap between policy and practice and increases the sustainability of reforms.

In conclusion, the study affirms that successful change management in public institutions like KEPHIS requires an integrated approach that brings together strategic leadership, an adaptive organizational culture, effective communication, and meaningful employee participation. These elements reinforce each other and must be addressed collectively to enhance institutional transformation. The insights derived from this study offer valuable guidance for designing change management frameworks in Kenya's public sector.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the descriptive findings and the conclusions drawn from the study, several key recommendations are proposed to enhance change management practices at the Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service (KEPHIS) and similar public institutions. Firstly, the study recommends that KEPHIS strengthens its leadership development programs by fostering transformational and participatory leadership practices. Descriptive data indicated that employees felt more engaged and motivated when leaders communicated clearly, involved staff in decisions, and provided support throughout change initiatives. To build on this, the organization should institutionalize leadership training programs that emphasize emotional intelligence, inclusivity,

vision setting, and adaptive leadership. Such initiatives would help create leaders who are not only directive but also facilitative and supportive during times of transition.

Secondly, to sustain momentum in change initiatives, KEPHIS should continue nurturing an organizational culture that promotes openness, innovation, and collaboration. The study revealed that employees perceive the current culture as generally supportive of reform, which should be further reinforced through targeted cultural development strategies. These could include conducting periodic cultural assessments, integrating values that support change into performance reviews, and recognizing teams that exemplify adaptability and learning. By embedding these cultural practices into daily operations, KEPHIS can foster a resilient, change-ready organizational climate.

Thirdly, enhancing internal communication remains a critical area of focus. The findings showed that clear, transparent, and timely communication helped reduce uncertainty and improved staff alignment with reform goals. KEPHIS should continue diversifying its communication channels such as regular departmental meetings, internal newsletters, digital platforms, and anonymous feedback mechanisms to ensure that all staff remain informed and engaged. Managers should be trained to facilitate two-way communication and to provide consistent updates on the purpose, progress, and expectations of change programs.

Lastly, the study recommends that KEPHIS deepens employee involvement in reform processes. Respondents expressed a strong preference for being included in planning and decision-making, which enhanced their sense of ownership and reduced resistance. The organization should institutionalize participatory frameworks such as consultative meetings, working groups, and cross-functional task forces to ensure that staff perspectives are reflected in change strategies. Encouraging and acting on employee input will promote transparency, build trust, and improve the implementation and sustainability of reforms.

In sum, these recommendations emphasize the need for a holistic and inclusive approach to managing change, grounded in strong leadership, a supportive culture, open communication, and meaningful staff engagement.

5.4 Suggestions for Further Studies

While this study has offered valuable insights into the factors influencing change management at the Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service (KEPHIS), several gaps and opportunities for future research have emerged. These provide useful directions for scholars, policymakers, and organizational practitioners seeking to deepen understanding and improve the effectiveness of change initiatives in public institutions. First, future researchers should consider conducting comparative studies across multiple government agencies or counties to assess whether the findings from KEPHIS are generalizable across the broader public sector. Institutions vary in terms of structure, function, leadership orientation, and political influence, all of which may shape how change is perceived and managed. Such comparative research would enrich understanding of sector-specific challenges and facilitate benchmarking of best practices in public sector change management.

Second, this study employed a cross-sectional design, which limited the ability to track the progression or sustainability of change efforts over time. Future studies could adopt longitudinal research designs to monitor change initiatives across different phases initiation, implementation, reinforcement, and institutionalization. This would provide insights into the long-term effects of leadership practices, communication strategies, and cultural shifts on sustained transformation. Third, while the current study relied on quantitative methods, future research could incorporate qualitative or mixed-method approaches to gain deeper insights into employee experiences, managerial practices, and organizational behaviour during change. Interviews, focus groups, and ethnographic methods could help uncover hidden dynamics such as informal communication, resistance narratives, and symbolic actions that influence reform outcomes. Finally, researchers are encouraged to explore additional variables or mediating/moderating factors that may influence change management. For instance, variables such as political interference, digital transformation, resource allocation, policy alignment, or stakeholder pressure could be integrated into future models. Understanding how these external or institutional factors interact with internal capabilities would provide a more holistic view of what drives or hinders successful change in public organizations.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: INTRODUCTION LETTER

To Whom It May Concern,

RE: REQUEST FOR PARTICIPATION IN AN ACADEMIC RESEARCH STUDY

My name is Ann Midecha, a final-year student at the Management University of Africa, pursuing a Bachelor's Degree in Management and Leadership. As part of the requirements for the award of this degree, I am conducting a research study titled:

“FACTORS AFFECTING CHANGE MANAGEMENT IN GOVERNMENT AGENCIES: A CASE STUDY OF KENYA PLANT HEALTH INSPECTORATE SERVICE (KEPHIS).”

The purpose of this study is to examine how internal organizational factors specifically leadership style, organizational culture, communication strategy, and employee involvement influence the management of change within KEPHIS. The findings will help generate practical recommendations that may support more effective change processes in government agencies.

I kindly request your participation in this study by responding to the attached questionnaire. Your responses will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and used solely for academic purposes. Participation is voluntary, and you may withdraw at any point without any consequences.

Thank you for your time and support in advancing academic research.

Sincerely,

Ann Midecha

APPENDIX II: QUESTIONNAIRE

Title: Factors Affecting Change Management in Government Agencies: A Case Study of KEPHIS

Instructions: Please tick (✓) the most appropriate response. Your responses will be kept confidential and used only for academic purposes.

Rating Scale:

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

Section A: Demographic Information

1. Gender: Male Female

2. Age: Below 25 26–35 36–45 46 and above

3. Department: _____

4. Position Level: Top Management Middle Management Operational Staff

5. Years of service at KEPHIS: Less than 2 2–5 6–10 Over 10

Section B: Leadership Style

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
The leadership at KEPHIS clearly communicates the vision for change.					
Leaders motivate employees to embrace change.					
Leaders provide timely guidance during transition periods.					
Supervisors listen to employee concerns during change initiatives.					

In your view, how has leadership at KEPHIS helped or hindered change management efforts?

Section C: Organizational Culture

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
KEPHIS encourages innovation and experimentation.					
The organization is adaptable to new ways of working.					
Employees share common values aligned with organizational goals.					
Risk-taking is supported when implementing change.					

How would you describe the culture at KEPHIS when it comes to managing change?

Section D: Communication Strategy

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
Communication on change is clear and easy to understand.					
Communication about change is delivered in a timely manner.					
Feedback mechanisms are available and accessible during change.					
Communication reaches all relevant staff across departments.					

What are your thoughts on how change communication is handled at KEPHIS?

Section E: Employee Involvement

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
Employees are consulted before major changes are introduced.					
There is active participation in planning for change.					
Staff are provided with relevant training during change implementation.					
Employees have autonomy in implementing changes in their roles.					

In what ways are employees involved in change processes at KEPHIS?

Section F: Change Management

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
The organization clearly communicates the need for change.					
Stakeholders are actively engaged in the change process.					
New systems or processes are adopted effectively.					
Employees are adaptable to new organizational changes.					

What factors have supported or hindered successful change management at KEPHIS?

APPENDIX III: DATA COLLECTION LETTER



Date: 26th May 2025

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

ANN MIDECHA EMBARO- ODLBML/29/01548/1/23

This letter serves to introduce the above named who is a **Bachelors of Management and Leadership (BML)** student and is interested in carrying out research on Factors Affecting Change Management in Government Agencies. A Case Study of Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service (KEPHIS).

Any assistance accorded to her in pursuit of this study will be greatly appreciated.

Yours Sincerely,



Dr. Juster Nyaga

Dean, School of Management and Leadership