The Relationship Between Organizational Readiness for Implementing Change and Employee Work Performance at Government Agency Agriculture

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ABSTRACT

Organizational readiness for implementing change (ORIC) plays a pivotal role in ensuring the effective implementation of transformation initiatives within an organization. ORIC embodies employees' collective commitment to change and their assurance in the organization's ability to implement it effectively. The objective of this research is to investigate the relationship between ORIC and work performance among employees. The research was conducted at the Government Agency in the Agriculture industry with a population of 91 and 75 respondents. A quantitative research design was used, utilizing a structured questionnaire scattered through random sampling. The independent variable, ORIC, was measured using the scale developed by Shea et al. (2014), which includes two key dimensions; change commitment and change efficacy. Work performance was measured using the Individual Work Performance Questionnaire (IWPQ) by Platania et al. (2023), which covers task performance, contextual performance, and counterproductive work behavior. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The findings revealed that employees at Government Agency Agriculture exhibit a high level of ORIC and employee work performance. Additionally, the study identified a significant positive relationship between ORIC and high level of employee work performance. The results underscore the importance of strengthening organizational readiness to enhance employee performance during change initiatives.

Keywords: Organizational readiness for implementing change, employee work performance, government agency.

INTRODUCTION

Organizational readiness for change (ORC) has become a pivotal factor in determining the success of transformation initiatives in today's rapidly-changing environment (Armenakis et al., 1993). Distinctively, Organizational Readiness for Implementing Change (ORIC) reflects a shared belief among employees about their collective commitment and ability to implement change effectively (Weiner, 2009; Shea et al., 2014). When readiness is high, organizations are more capable of adapting to new systems, policies, and technologies. Despite that, most people still face difficulties in building readiness at all levels, particularly in fast-paced, technology driven settings where poor preparation can lead to resistance and reduced morale (Miake-Lye et al., 2020; Dawson et al., 2024). In the Malaysian public sector, readiness has become increasingly important due to ongoing digital and policy reforms. Previous studies indicate that low readiness can undermine employee performance and lead to transformation failures (Jamali et al., 2022; Roux et al., 2024). Employee work performance (EWP), which encompasses task, contextual, and counterproductive behaviours (Koopmans et al., 2011), is closely linked to how prepared employees feel to manage change. A high level of readiness fosters motivation and adaptability, while insufficient readiness reduces efficiency and engagement (Weiner, 2020). Therefore, this research examines how ORIC influences employee performance within a Malaysian government agency undergoing digital transformation.

ORIC refers to the shared commitment and collective confidence of members within an organization to execute and sustain change successfully (Weiner, 2009; Shea et al., 2014). Unlike individual readiness, ORIC captures

the collective mindset of employees towards change initiatives, encompassing two key components; change commitment and change efficacy, the belief in the organization's capability to carry it out effectively. High levels of readiness indicate that employees view change as beneficial and achievable, leading to more cohesive and effective implementation (Shea et al., 2014; Haenggli & Hirschi, 2020). In public sector organizations, where transformation efforts often involve both policy and technological reforms, readiness plays a crucial role in reducing resistance and fostering collaboration (Jayadi & Suryatni, 2025; Abdullah & Jaafar, 2025). However, fostering readiness across diverse organizational levels remains a challenge, especially when communication, leadership support, or training are insufficient (Miake-Lye et al., 2020; Jordan et al., 2025).

ORIC remains a pivotal issue in Malaysia's public sector, particularly within agencies undergoing policy and technological reforms. Despite structured governance and communication systems, many organizations continue to face challenges in sustaining readiness and ensuring successful implementation (Jamali et al., 2022; Roux et al., 2024). Research has found that insufficient readiness can lead to employee resistance, low morale, and poor work performance during change transitions (Miake-Lye et al., 2020; Dawson et al., 2024). Understanding how employees' collective commitment and confidence influence successful technology-driven government changes is crucial, as this organizational readiness directly impacts EWP, a key determinant of successful transformation. Research indicates that readiness affects how well employees adapt, engage, and perform in dynamic environments. While strong readiness fosters motivation and adaptability, poor readiness weakens engagement and productivity. However, limited empirical research has examined this relationship in Malaysia's public sector, especially among technology-dependent agencies. Although some, such as these research agencies, exhibit high readiness, maintaining this readiness consistently during ongoing digital reforms remains a challenge. Therefore, this study examines the influence of ORIC on employee work performance to strengthen change management practices and support effective public sector transformation.

Purpose Of The Study

The objective of this research are:

1. To identify the level of organizational readiness for implementing change among employees at Government Agency Agriculture in Kuala Lumpur.

2. To identify the level of employee work performance at Government Agency Agriculture in Kuala Lumpur.

3. To identify the relationship between organizational readiness for implementing change and employee work performance at Government Agency Agriculture in Kuala Lumpur.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Organizational Readiness for Implementing Change

Organizational Readiness for Implementing Change (ORIC) is a collective psychological state that reflects an organization's shared commitment and belief in its capability to execute and sustain change successfully (Weiner, 2009; Shea et al., 2014). It emphasizes the readiness of the entire organization, not just individual employees, highlighting how collective confidence and motivation determine implementation success. Shea et al. (2014) conceptualized ORIC as comprising two core components: *change commitment*, referring to members' determination to pursue change, and *change efficacy*, referring to their belief in collective ability to achieve it. When both are present, employees exhibit proactive engagement and adaptability, leading to more effective change implementation (Haenggli & Hirschi, 2020).

In public sector organizations, readiness is a vital factor in the success of transformation programs, particularly those involving technological and policy reforms. Abdullah and Jaafar (2025) found that Malaysian agencies achieved higher readiness when change initiatives were supported by open communication and participative leadership. Similarly, Jayadi and Suryatni (2025) emphasized that organizational support and employee agility significantly increase readiness for change. Conversely, MiakeLye et al. (2020) warned that low readiness contributes to employee resistance and implementation failure. Therefore, maintaining high readiness is essential to ensure alignment between policy reform goals and employee capability, particularly in government agencies navigating digital transformation.

Shea's Model of Organizational Readiness for Implementing Change (ORIC)

Shea's model adopts Weiner's (2009) Organizational Readiness for Change (ORC) Theory, which serves as the foundation for understanding ORIC. The theory proposes that readiness is a *shared psychological state* encompassing both commitment and efficacy within an organization. Weiner (2009) argued that when members collectively believe that change is both necessary and achievable, they are more likely to engage in behaviors that support its successful implementation. Building upon this framework, Shea et al. (2014) developed the ORIC model, operationalizing readiness through a validated 12-item instrument measuring *change commitment* and *change efficacy*. The ORIC model emphasizes that readiness is context-dependent and influenced by communication, leadership, and organizational culture. It aligns closely with the principles of change management, where leadership engagement and transparency play key roles in sustaining readiness (Jordan et al., 2025; Sembiring, 2024). In this study, the ORIC framework is applied to assess employees' collective preparedness to implement change initiatives within a Malaysian government agency, focusing on policy and technology reform.

Employee Work Performance

Employee Work Performance (EWP) refers to the degree to which employees successfully fulfill their job duties, contribute positively to their organization, and avoid behaviors that hinder performance (Koopmans et al., 2011). The concept views performance as multidimensional, encompassing *task performance*, *contextual performance*, and *counterproductive work behavior (CWB)*. Originally, Koopmans et al. (2011) introduced a four-dimensional model of work performance that included adaptive performance. However, Platania et al. (2023) later refined this framework, integrating adaptive elements within the three remaining dimensions to create a more practical and empirically applicable structure through the Individual Work Performance Questionnaire (IWPQ). Task performance reflects the effectiveness and efficiency with which employees complete their assigned responsibilities. Contextual performance captures discretionary behaviors such as cooperation, initiative, and persistence that support the organizational climate, while counterproductive work behavior represents negative or disruptive acts that oppose organizational goals (Koopmans et al., 2013; Platania et al., 2023). In modern workplaces, especially within the public sector, these dimensions interact dynamically rather than function independently. Employee performance is also shaped by organizational context, psychological factors, and environmental resources (de Gooijer, 2000; Bakker & Demerouti, 2012). Hence, performance is best understood as a dynamic process that evolves with changes in workload, leadership, and technology integration. Within the context of public organizations, maintaining high employee work performance is crucial for ensuring effective service delivery and adapting to digital reforms. Studies have shown that organizational factors such as readiness for change, leadership, and support mechanisms can significantly influence how employees perform during transformation processes (Hartini et al., 2019; Zhenjing et al., 2022). Therefore, assessing EWP through Platania's IWPQ model offers a comprehensive and empirically validated means to understand employee behavior and productivity in response to organizational change.

Research Framework

The prior study's findings assist the researcher in developing a conceptual framework, as seen in Figure 1. The conceptual framework development gave a basic understanding of how different factors can impact each other. The researcher intends to examine the relationship between organizational readiness for implementing change and employee work performance at Government Agency Agriculture in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

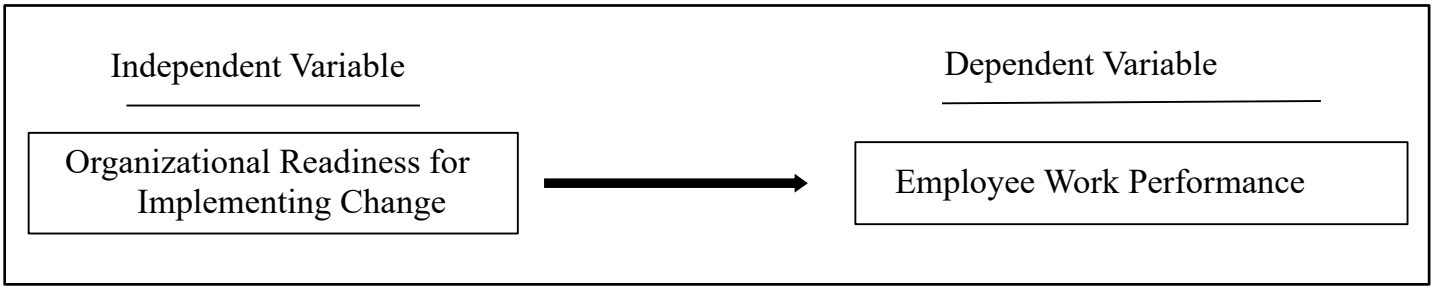

Figure 1: Research Framework

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Figure 2 shows the research design used in this study. This study used a cross-sectional survey method and a quantitative research design to investigate the association between Employee Work Performance (EWP) and Organizational Readiness for Implementing Change (ORIC) among Government Agency Agriculture personnel. A structured questionnaire was distributed to employees across various departments using a simple random sampling method. The instrument consisted of two main sections of ORIC, measured using the Organizational Readiness for Implementing Change (Shea et al., 2014) scale encompassing change commitment and change efficacy, and EWP, assessed using the Individual Work Performance Questionnaire (Platania et al., 2023) covering task performance, contextual performance, and counterproductive work behavior. Data were analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) 30.0 version software, applying both descriptive and inferential statistics, including Pearson's correlation coefficient, to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between ORIC and EWP. The quantitative design was chosen for its ability to produce objective, generalizable findings and to capture the overall readiness and performance patterns among employees during policy and technology transformations within the agency.

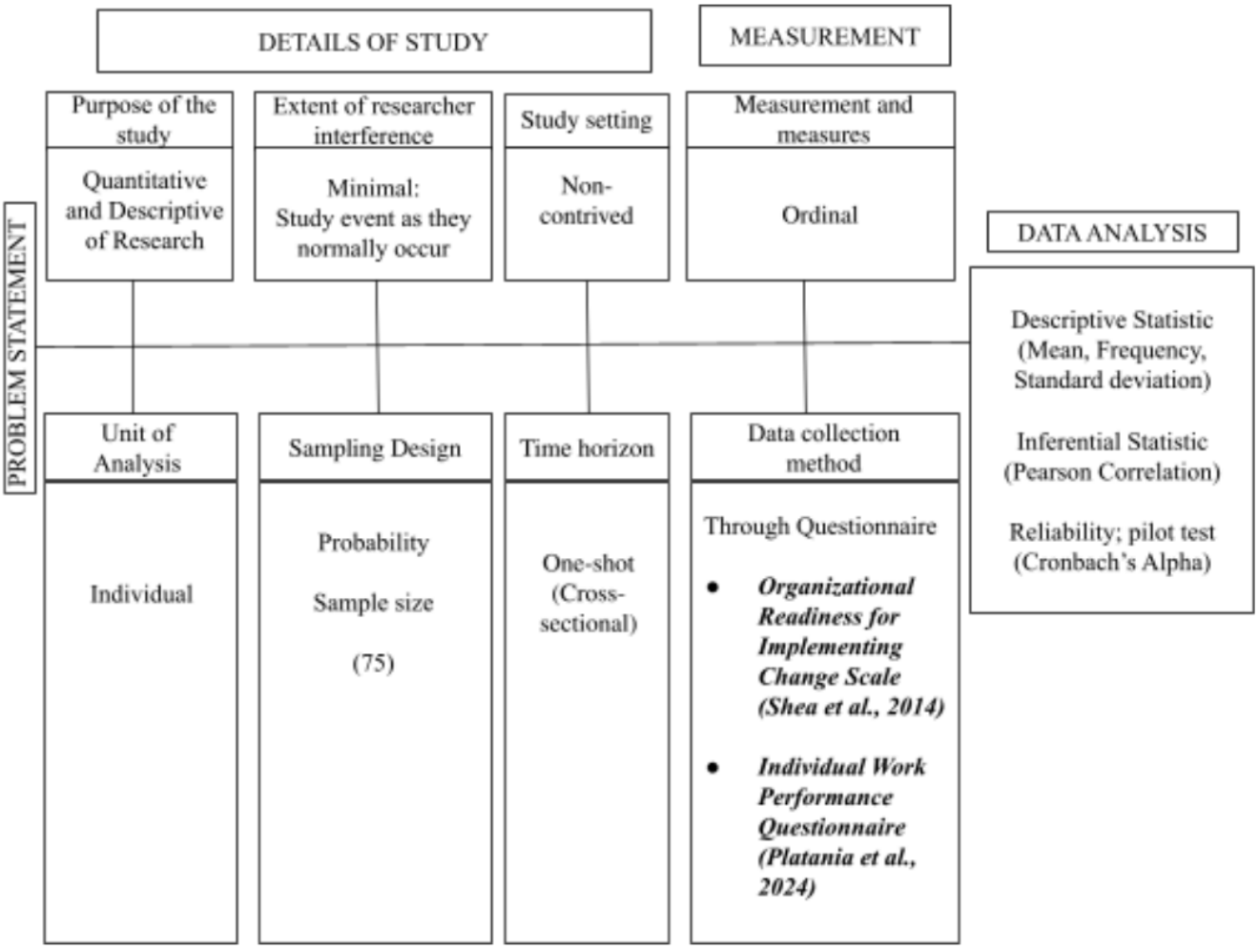

Figure 2: Research Design (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016); p.96

Research population

The total population in the research is 91 employees. Krejcie and Morgan (1970) suggest that a sample of 76 respondents is the minimal sample that is needed so as to have statistically significant results on a population of this size. In this study 75 respondents (98.7% response rate) were reached and this is considered sufficient enough to do the correlation analysis since this is close to the suggested size that is required. The minor loss of one respondent is not significant to the statistical power and validity of the results provided based on the large response rate and nature of correlation analysis performed.

Research Instrument

The questionnaire was adapted from the 12-item ORIC scale developed by Shea et al. (2014), which reflects two key dimensions of readiness: Change Commitment and Change Efficacy and 17-item IWPQ scale developed by Platania et al. (2023). There are closed-ended questions on the questionnaire for this study. Multiple-choice questions with a single-word answer, a yes/no option, or a rating scale are the type of questions the researchers used. The questionnaire is divided into three sections: Section A is for demographic information, Section B is for organization readiness for implementing change, and Section C is for employee work performance. Table 1 shows 11 items for Section A, including age, gender, highest education level, current job position, department, years of service, employment status, changes occurring while working in the organization, how many times changes occur, training after changes, and which area does the organization's current change initiative primarily focus. Table 2 shows 12 items for Section B, whereas Table 3 shows 17 items for Section C. Section B uses the five-point Likert scale ranging (1 = Disagree, 2 = Somewhat Disagree, 3 = Neither Agree nor Disagree, 4 = Somewhat Agree, and 5 = Agree). Section C uses a five-point Likert scale ranging (1 = Never, 2 = Rarely , 3 = Sometimes, 4 = Often, and 5 = Always).

Table 1: Demographic Items

Section	Item Code	Total Item
A	A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, A6, A7, A8, A9, A10, A11	11

Table 2: Items of Organization Readiness for Implementing Change

Section	Item Code	Total Item
B	B1, B2, B3, B4, B5, B6, B7, B8, B9, B10, B11, B12	12

Table 3: Items of Employee Work Performance

Section	Item Code	Total Item
C	C1, C2, C3, C4, C5, C6, C7, C8, C9, C10, C11, C12, C13, C14, C15, C16, C17	17

Reliability Test

Reliability is defined as the consistency and stability of a measurement instrument as time changes and as items change. Aithal and Aithal (2020) describe that a reliable instrument must record comparable scores under the same circumstances. This was determined in the present study to be the reliability of internal consistency which is calculated through Cronbach's Alpha, a very popular indicator in the field of social sciences studies. The Cronbach's Alpha of 0.70 and beyond is considered to be acceptable (Mohajan, 2020), which reflects sufficient internal consistency of the items within a scale. The reliability test was carried out on the 10 responses gathered

during the pilot study. The ORIC construct, measured using Shea et al.'s (2014) 12-item scale, consists of two sub-dimensions: Change Commitment and Change Efficacy, and the results from Table 4 showed ORIC has good reliability (.852). However, the study's items for employee work performance based on Table 4 were unreliable if the analysis's result were less than 0.6. According to conventional rule of thumb in Table 5, a Cronbach's alpha of .519 is a poor reliability.

Table 4: Internal Consistency Reliability of Variable

Variables	**ORIC**	**EWP**
No. of Items	12	17
Cronbach's Alpha	.852	.519

Data Analysis Technique

The level of mean score range value for ORIC and EWP is shown in Table 6. The Pearson's correlation coefficient interpretation is displayed in Table 7, and the type of analysis employed is shown in Table 8. The SPSS software was used in this work to conduct statistical analyses, including descriptive analysis and Pearson correlation. The respondents' demographics, ORIC level, and EWP level were then summarised by descriptive analysis. Pearson's correlation analysis has been used to determine the association between employee work performance at Government Agency Agriculture in Kuala Lumpur and organisational readiness for implementing change.

Table 5: The Level of Mean Score Range for ORIC

Mean Score	**Mean Score Interpretation**
1.00-2.33	Low
2.34-3.66	Moderate
3.67-5.00	High

(Source: Yusof et al., 2017)

Table 6: Interpretation of Pearson's correlation coefficient

Scale of Pearson Correlation Coefficient	**Interpretation**
$0.00 \leq r \leq 0.19$	Very low correlation
$0.20 \leq r \leq 0.39$	Low correlation
$0.40 \leq r \leq 0.59$	Moderate correlation
$0.60 \leq r \leq 0.79$	High correlation
$0.80 \leq r \leq 1.00$	Very high correlation

(Source: Abu Bakar et al., 2021)

Table 7: Summary of Data Analysis Topic

Scale of Pearson Correlation Coefficient	Interpretation
To identify the level of organizational readiness for implementing change among employees at Government Agency Agriculture in Kuala Lumpur.	Mean and Standard Deviation
To identify the level of employee work performance at Government Agency Agriculture in Kuala Lumpur.	Mean and Standard Deviation
To identify the relationship between organizational readiness for implementing change and employee work performance at Government Agency Agriculture in Kuala Lumpur.	Pearson Correlation Coefficient

RESEARCH FINDINGS

The Level of Organizational Readiness for Implementing Change

Table 9 demonstrates the first objective was to determine the level of organizational readiness for implementing change among employees. The high readiness level (M= 3.76, SD= 1.17) observed at Government Agency Agriculture indicates a strong belief among employees that the agency is capable of managing technological and policy transitions. This aligns with Weiner's (2009) and Shea's et al. (2014) emphasis that change commitment (the shared resolve to pursue change) and change efficacy (the collective belief in capability) together drive implementation success.

Table 9: Findings on the Level of ORIC

Variable	FINDINGS	Level
Organizational Readiness for Implementing Change	Mean: 3.76	High
	Standard Deviation: 1.17	

The Level of Employee Work Performance

Table 10 demonstrates the second objective was to determine the level of employee work performance (EWP) at Government Agency Agriculture. Findings indicated a moderate to high overall performance across task, contextual, and counterproductive behavior dimensions (M= 3.47, SD= 1.14). This outcome suggests that employees maintain a moderate to an adequate performance level despite simultaneous policy and technology changes. It reflects a work environment in which modernization has not disrupted, but instead enhanced, clarity and efficiency of job execution (Luitel & Poudel, 2024; Zhenjing et al., 2022).

Table 10: Findings on the Level of Employee Work Performance

Variable	FINDINGS	Level
Employee Work Performance	Mean: 3.47	Moderate
	Standard Deviation: 1.14	

The Relationship between Organization Readiness for Implementing Change and Employee Work Performance

Research findings on the coefficient association between employee work performance at Government Agency Agriculture in Kuala Lumpur and organisational preparedness for adopting change are shown in Table 11. The link between the two variables; the independent and dependent variables is seen in the table below. The results for these two variables are shown by the variable's p-value, which is less than 0.01. Additionally, the Pearson correlation value (r=.734**) demonstrates a robust and favourable association between employee job performance and organisational preparedness for adopting change. This indicates that there is a substantial relationship between the degree of employee work performance and the organization's readiness to undertake change. Table 11 provides measurements on the correlation between ORIC and EWP. Prior to correlation analysis, the assumptions of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity were verified and deemed to be appropriate to test the parameters.

Table 11: Coefficient correlation between ORIC and Employee Work Performance

	r	Sig	Level
ORIC and Employee Work Performance	.734**	<.001	High

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

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Discussion

The findings revealed that employees at the Government Agency Agriculture demonstrated a high level of readiness for implementing change. Using the Organizational Readiness for Implementing Change (ORIC) instrument by Shea et al. (2014), both dimensions change commitment and change efficacy recorded strong mean values. This indicates that employees collectively believe in the importance of the agency's policy and technological transformation and are confident in their collective ability to execute it. These results support Weiner's (2009**)** Organizational Readiness for Change theory, which postulates that shared confidence and commitment drive effective implementation. The finding also aligns with studies by Jayadi and Suryatni (2025) and Sembiring (2024), who emphasized that transparent communication and management support enhance employee readiness. Within Malaysia's public service context, Ramli (2017) similarly noted that readiness improves when employees receive sufficient training and leadership guidance during digital reforms. Overall, the high readiness level suggests that the agency has successfully fostered a change-conducive environment through training, open communication, and alignment with national digitalization goals (Abdullah & Jaafar, 2025). However, continuous reinforcement is essential to prevent readiness fatigue and sustain momentum as change initiatives evolve (Jordan et al., 2025).

The study found that employee work performance (EWP) at Government Agency Agriculture was at a moderate level overall, measured through the three dimensions of the Individual Work Performance Questionnaire (IWPQ) by Platania et al. (2023), which are task performance, contextual performance, and counterproductive work behavior (CWB). Employees demonstrated strong ability to complete assigned duties efficiently and adapt to new work systems introduced under the policy and technological reforms. The results correspond with the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2012), which explains that employees perform effectively when provided with sufficient organizational resources, such as support and communication, to manage job demands. High task performance and low counterproductive behavior indicate that employees experience positive motivation and accountability in their work environment. Nonetheless, the moderate contextual performance dimension suggests that while employees fulfill core responsibilities effectively, additional support is needed to encourage proactive behaviors such as taking initiative, collaborating across departments, and continuous learning (Hartini et al., 2019). This implies that fostering teamwork and recognition may further enhance performance sustainability within the agency.

Pearson's correlation analysis indicated a strong positive relationship between organizational readiness for implementing change (ORIC) and employee work performance (EWP), with r = .734** and p < .001. This

demonstrates that when employees collectively commit to and believe in their organization's ability to change, their performance tends to increase accordingly. This finding supports Weiner's (2009) theoretical view that readiness enhances coordinated implementation behavior and confirms Shea et al. (2014) that ORIC predicts effective organizational outcomes. Similar results have been reported by Zulkarnain et al. (2024) and Ul Haq & Abid (2025), showing that employees with higher readiness display better engagement and performance during transformation. In the context of Government Agency Agriculture, this suggests that readiness functions as a psychological and structural driver that enables employees to maintain productivity despite organizational reforms.

Recommendations

Based on the study findings, several recommendations are proposed to help sustain high readiness levels and enhance employee work performance during ongoing policy and technological transformations at the Government Agency Agriculture. First, it is crucial for the agency to strengthen communication and engagement practices to ensure that employees clearly understand the objectives, benefits, and expected outcomes of each change initiative. Transparent and continuous communication fosters trust, minimizes uncertainty, and enhances collective confidence, which is essential in maintaining readiness and reducing resistance to change (Armenakis & Harris, 2009).

Second, the agency should continue to prioritize training and capacity-building programs that focus on improving digital literacy, problem-solving, and adaptive performance. These initiatives will enable employees to manage evolving technologies more effectively and maintain performance consistency in dynamic environments (Omoseebi et al., 2025). Continuous upskilling also ensures that employees remain confident in their ability to contribute to the agency's modernization efforts.

Third, **l**eadership plays a central role in sustaining readiness and performance. Leaders should act as role models by demonstrating flexibility, providing constructive feedback, and recognizing employees' contributions throughout the change process. Adopting a transformational leadership style can inspire commitment, encourage innovation, and enhance overall morale (Suryadi et al., 2024). Furthermore, management should foster interdepartmental collaboration and teamwork to strengthen contextual performance. Encouraging cross-departmental projects and collaborative problem-solving not only enhances knowledge sharing but also promotes innovation and adaptability within the organization (Abhari, 2025).

Lastly, it is recommended that the agency implement regular evaluations of both readiness and performance to identify potential gaps early and reinforce areas requiring improvement. Monitoring mechanisms and employee feedback systems can help leaders maintain alignment between strategic goals, change initiatives, and daily work performance (Naseer et al., 2023). Collectively, these strategies will allow the agency to sustain a culture of readiness, continuous learning, and high performance, ensuring that technological and policy changes are effectively embraced across all levels of the organization.

Limitation and Future Research

There are various limitations associated with this research. The Employee Work Performance scale, first and above all, had poor internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's α =.519), which is lower than the traditionally accepted level of .70 (Taber, 2018). Although this reliability coefficient is, admittedly, not optimal, there are a few considerations which can put our findings into perspective. To start with, it has been found that Cronbach alpha is very sensitive to the size of items and the dimension of scales as it has been established through studies that Schmitt (1996) and Cortina (1993) conducted. Constructs that are multidimensional and assess heterogeneous behaviors, e.g., the combination of task performance and contextual performance and counterproductive work behavior in IWPQ, tend to have lower alpha values as they are intended to measure breadth as opposed to inner homogeneity. Streiner (2003) remarked that a large alpha might not be desirable where we are trying to measure various aspects of a multidimensional construct (p. 102). IWPQ was specifically developed as a multidimensional tool and a certain level of heterogeneity is thus to be anticipated and even desirable.

Second, when a lower reliability is warranted, exploratory studies in under-researched settings like organizational readiness in Malaysian agencies of the public sector may be the way to go. Some of the published research conducted in the context of public sector and organization change have reported results with Cronbach alpha of

the .50-.60 range using adapted instruments especially where the research is important with gap issue being filled and the findings taken with due caution (e.g., Kate Miriam Loewenthal & Christopher Alan Lewis, 2018, recommends .60 as an acceptable range of new scale in exploratory research). Our research is one of the earliest empirical studies of the ORIC-EWP relationship in a specific context of Malaysian governmental agriculture organizations in the process of digital transformation, which provides significant initial data on a poorly studied field.

Third, the correlation coefficient between ORIC and EWP ($r = .734$, $p < .001$) is very high showing a clear and significant association that cannot be fully explained by measurement error. Measurement imprecision will reduce (weaken) correlation coefficients, but does not normally spuriously lead to strong correlations. This result converges with the theoretical predictions of the results revealed in earlier empirical research (Jayadi and Suryatni, 2025; Ul Haq and Abid, 2025) and has convergent validity with other studies. However, we admit that the poor reliability entails error of measurement that might compromise the accuracy of EWP estimates and maybe the magnitude of the observed correlation. These results are then to be interpreted as a preliminary indication that needs to be replicated using validated tools of measurement. Some future research can be suggested as follows: (1) pilot testing the IWPQ on larger samples of Malaysian public sector in order to examine which items need to be revised; (2) research on the three performance dimensions (task, contextual, counterproductive) should be conducted individually rather than in a composite scale; (3) whether cultural or linguistic factors influence the interpretation of the item among the Malaysian population; or (4) the context specific performance measures and its reliability in other similar organizational contexts. Second, the research design was a cross-sectional design, which does not allow the establishment of causal relationships or the temporal change. The constructs of organizational readiness and employee performance are dynamic and they can change during various stages of transformation initiatives. The longitudinal study would give a better understanding of the effect of readiness on performance over the change implementation plan. Third, the sample was selected using one government organization in Kuala Lumpur (n= 75 out of 91, population; 98.7% response rate) and therefore restricts the generalizability of the results to other public sector organizations or geographical settings in Malaysia. Some agencies will be better prepared and perform better than others based on organizational culture, quality of leadership, availability of resources, and type of change initiatives. Fourth, the research is purely based on self-reported information, which brings the risk of the common method mistake. The respondent might have given socially desirable responses or the same-source bias may have made the respondent bias his/her ratings on the readiness perceptions and the self-evaluation of performance. The future studies need to consider the inclusion of various data, including the supervisor ratings of performance or objective performance measures, to triangulate results.

Notwithstanding these constraints, this research has some critical implications including contributing preliminary empirical support of the ORIC-EWP correlation in a little-researched context (Malaysian public sector digital transformation), applying theoretically based but internationally validated measures (Shea et al., 2014; Platania et al., 2023), and providing practical suggestions to the management of the public sector to go through organizational change. Although the results should be interpreted with great caution, there is an indication that there is a valuable association, which should be subject to additional research with better methodology.

CONCLUSION

This study investigated the relationship between Organizational Readiness for Implementing Change (ORIC) and Employee Work Performance (EWP) among employees of the Government Agency

Agriculture in Kuala Lumpur. The findings revealed that employees demonstrated a high level of readiness for change, characterized by strong commitment and confidence in their ability to implement organizational reforms, particularly those involving policy and technology. The study also found that employee work performance was moderate to high across the three dimensions of task performance, contextual performance, and counterproductive work behavior, indicating that employees were able to maintain productivity and adapt effectively during the transition period.

Furthermore, the correlation analysis showed a strong positive and significant relationship between ORIC and EWP, suggesting that greater readiness for change is associated with higher employee performance. This outcome supports Weiner's (2009) theory and Shea et al. (2014) ORIC framework, which emphasizes that shared belief

in the importance and achievability of change enhances both implementation and performance outcomes. The results also align with recent findings in public sector transformation studies, which highlight that readiness acts as both a psychological and structural enabler of effective change (Jayadi & Suryatni, 2025; Ul Haq & Abid, 2025).

In conclusion, the study underscores the importance of maintaining readiness as an ongoing organizational capability rather than a temporary pre-change condition. Sustained readiness through effective communication, leadership support, and continuous learning ensures that employees remain adaptable, engaged, and productive during organizational reforms. For public sector agencies, cultivating such readiness is essential not only for successful policy and technological transformations but also for long-term organizational performance and service excellence.

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