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Leadership & Change Management in AI-Enabled Electrical Engineering Organisations: Challenges, Strategies and Outcomes

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Abstract:

The integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into electrical engineering organisations has redefined traditional leadership roles and introduced complex change management challenges. Despite rapid technological advancement, many organisations face difficulties aligning human capital, digital infrastructure, and strategic objectives to sustain AI-driven innovation. This study explores how leadership styles and change management frameworks influence successful AI adoption in electrical engineering contexts. Employing a mixed-methods approach—combining quantitative surveys of engineering professionals with qualitative case studies from selected AI-enabled firms—the research identifies the leadership competencies and organisational practices most critical for effective transformation. The findings reveal that transformational and adaptive leadership styles significantly enhance employee engagement, innovation diffusion, and operational agility during AI integration. Conversely, resistance to change and inadequate communication channels emerge as key barriers. The study contributes to leadership and technology management literature by proposing a conceptual model linking leadership behaviour, change readiness, and AI performance outcomes. The implications suggest that sustainable AI implementation in engineering firms requires not only technical preparedness but also a robust leadership culture that fosters learning, collaboration, and resilience.

Keywords — **AI-enabled organisations, Change management, Leadership in engineering firms, Electrical engineering industry, Organisational transformation**

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I. Introduction

a. Background of the Study

The advent of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has transformed the global industrial landscape, and the electrical engineering sector is no exception. AI technologies have redefined how organisations design, optimise, and maintain engineering systems, promoting higher efficiency, predictive performance, and adaptive control mechanisms. As AI continues to evolve, electrical engineering organisations increasingly rely on intelligent automation, data analytics, and machine learning to enhance their operational capabilities. However, these transformations are not purely technological—they require significant changes in leadership approaches and organisational structures. Effective leadership becomes essential in fostering a culture that embraces innovation and digital transformation, ensuring that human capital aligns with emerging technological paradigms (Soni, Khular Sharma, Singh, & Kapoor, 2019). Leadership in such AI-enabled environments must demonstrate flexibility, digital literacy, and the capacity to manage interdisciplinary teams while simultaneously driving organisational change. Mihardjo, Sasmoko, Alamsjah, and Elidjen (2019) argue that adaptive leadership in technologically intensive organisations is a decisive factor in achieving sustainable innovation outcomes. Therefore, in AI-enabled electrical engineering organisations, leadership and change management play an interdependent role in shaping strategic alignment, operational resilience, and continuous learning within technologically dynamic environments.

b. Problem Statement

Although AI promises revolutionary advantages in the electrical engineering industry—such as predictive fault detection, improved maintenance scheduling, and automation of complex design processes—its implementation remains fraught with managerial and cultural obstacles. Many electrical engineering organisations struggle to align their human resources, leadership styles, and change management processes with the demands of AI integration. While substantial attention has been devoted to the technical aspects of AI, comparatively less emphasis has been placed on the human and organisational dimensions that determine its success. This gap in understanding presents a major challenge: AI implementation often fails not because of technological deficiencies, but because of resistance to change, inadequate leadership vision, and ineffective communication strategies (Soni et al., 2019). Hence, a critical need exists to explore the intersection between leadership, change management, and AI adoption in the specific context of electrical engineering organisations, where the technological and human factors must coevolve for transformation to be effective.

c. Research Aims and Objectives

The central aim of this study is to examine how leadership and change management practices influence the adoption and successful implementation of AI within electrical engineering organisations. The study seeks to investigate the leadership competencies that support AI-driven transformation and to identify change management strategies that mitigate resistance and promote organisational adaptability. In pursuing this aim, the study also intends to establish a conceptual understanding of how leadership behaviour, organisational culture, and technological innovation interact to drive performance outcomes. Ultimately, the research aspires to contribute to both theoretical development and managerial practice by integrating leadership and change management perspectives into the broader discourse on AI-enabled engineering enterprises.

d. Research Questions

To achieve its objectives, this study is guided by key research questions focusing on the relationship between leadership, change management, and AI integration. The primary question concerns how leadership practices influence the successful implementation of AI technologies within electrical engineering organisations. Additional questions address which change management frameworks are most effective in facilitating AI-related organisational transformation, and how leadership and change management jointly affect the performance and adaptability of these organisations. The final question explores how a conceptual model can be formulated to capture the dynamic interactions among leadership, change processes, and technological adoption outcomes. These questions collectively form the analytical foundation of the study.

e. Significance of the Study

This study holds both academic and practical significance. Academically, it contributes to the growing literature on leadership and change management in technologically complex environments, expanding the conversation to include the unique context of AI-enabled electrical engineering organisations. Most prior research has examined digital transformation broadly, yet few studies have focused on how leadership behaviours and change management strategies directly shape AI adoption in engineering settings (Mihardjo et al., 2019). Practically, the study offers valuable insights for engineers, project managers, and executives responsible for steering AI-driven initiatives. Understanding the human and organisational dimensions of AI transformation can help firms mitigate risks, enhance workforce engagement, and achieve operational efficiency. By addressing leadership readiness and organisational adaptability, the study's findings will serve as a guide for firms seeking to balance technological innovation with sustainable human-centric development.

f. Structure of the Paper

This paper is structured into six major sections following this introduction. The second section presents a comprehensive literature review, synthesising existing research on leadership theories, change management models, and AI-enabled organisational frameworks while identifying the existing research gap. The third section outlines the research methodology, describing the research design, data collection, and analysis procedures used to achieve the study's objectives. The fourth section presents the empirical findings of the study, highlighting the observed leadership behaviours, change management strategies, and the resultant organisational outcomes. The fifth section provides an in-depth discussion, interpreting the findings in relation to theoretical perspectives and practical implications. Finally, the sixth section concludes the paper by summarising the key contributions, drawing out implications for practice, and proposing directions for future research.

II. Literature Review

a. Theoretical Foundations of Leadership in Organisations

Leadership in modern organisations has evolved beyond command-and-control styles to embrace adaptive and relational paradigms responsive to complexity, technology and change. For instance, research on complexity leadership theory demonstrates that in organisations facing dynamic environments, effective leadership involves enabling emergent interactive systems rather than simply directing them (Donkor & Zhou, 2019). Furthermore, digital age organisations require leaders who can navigate ambiguity, integrate human-machine interactions, and cultivate learning cultures as major foundational tasks of leadership (Anosike, 2019). These theoretical perspectives suggest that leadership in technologically advanced contexts must combine visionary, relational and change-oriented capabilities to support innovation and transformation.

b. Change Management Frameworks in Engineering/Technology Contexts

Change management in technology-intensive organisations has been studied through multiple frameworks, emphasising the role of human, organisational and technical factors in transformation. For example, a study on change management within companies emphasised that successful transformative initiatives depend heavily on human resources, skills, attitudes and knowledge, alongside organisational alignment with the external environment (Paraschiv et al., 2019). In engineering and technology settings, change management must address not only structural and process changes but also cultural readiness, communication flows, and technological integration, as conventional models (e.g., Lewin, Kotter) may not fully capture digital-era complexity.

c. AI-Enabled Organisations: Definition, Characteristics and Implications

Organisations that embed artificial intelligence (AI) within their core operations are often referred to as "AI-enabled organisations". These entities differ from traditional firms in that they integrate data-driven decision-making, human-agent collaboration, scalable analytics and continuous learning loops (Fountaine et al., 2019). In 2019 it was noted that AI had moved from proof-of-concept to deployment in many large enterprises, signalling that AI-enabled organisational forms were becoming real (Faculty.ai Insights, 2019). These organisations face unique implications: they require new leadership competencies, flexible organisational structures, and advanced change management capabilities. Accordingly, a conceptual framework (see **Figure 1**) illustrating the interplay of leadership, change management and AI-enabled organisational transformation is proposed.

d. Leadership Challenges in AI-Enabled Electrical Engineering Organisations

In the context of electrical engineering firms adopting AI, leadership challenges multiply because of the simultaneous demands of technical complexity, regulatory constraints, legacy infrastructure and workforce skills. Leaders in such environments must not only understand engineering and AI technologies but also steer cultural change, bridge human-machine collaboration, and manage risk while promoting innovation. The leadership theoretical foundations described in 2.1 apply but need further refinement: for example, the need for digital literacy, cross-functional coordination, and agile responsiveness is heightened by AI adoption. Moreover, leadership styles that emphasise collaboration, learning orientation and adaptability appear more effective in AI-driven contexts. A refined version of **Figure 1** helps to visualise these layered challenges as the leadership dimension intersects with change management in AI-enabled engineering organisations.

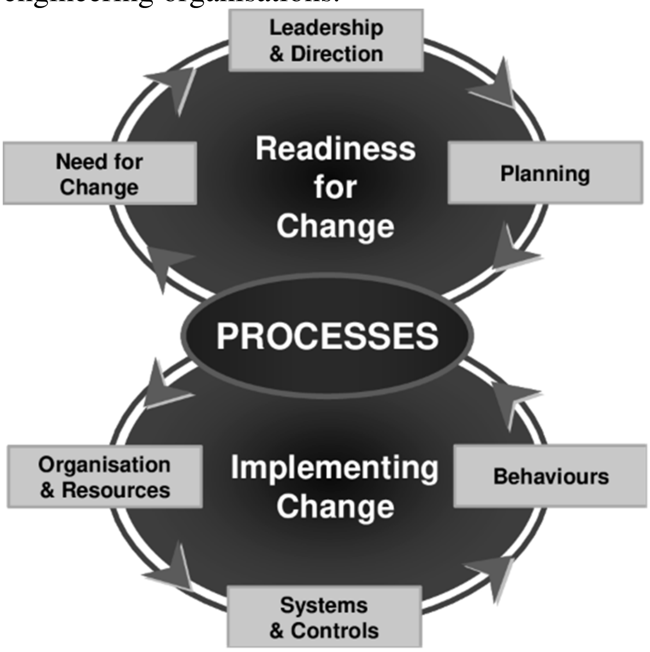

Figure 1: Framework of leadership & change management in AI-enabled organisations

e. Change Management Issues Specific to AI and Electrical Engineering Firms

When AI is introduced into engineering organisations, change management is confronted with particular issues: employee resistance to automation, skill-mismatch, cultural inertia, uncertainty about AI outcomes, and integration of AI with legacy systems and safety protocols. The study by Paraschiv et al. (2019) emphasises that change initiatives require human-resource related readiness and organisational alignment, but in engineering firms adopting AI these factors are even more critical. The shift to AI-enabled operations demands a transformation mindset, continuous learning, strong communication of vision and purpose, and alignment of processes with machine-augmented workflows. These unique issues require tailored change management frameworks rather than generic organisational change models.

f. Research Gap

Despite the growing interest in leadership, change management, and AI adoption, there remains a notable gap in the literature specifically addressing how leadership practices and change management frameworks interplay within AI-enabled electrical engineering organisations. While leadership theory (e.g., Donkor & Zhou, 2019; Anosike, 2019) and general change management studies (Paraschiv et al., 2019) provide important insights, the specific context of electrical engineering—characterised by heavy technical infrastructure, safety-critical operations, and regulatory compliance—has been under-explored in relation to AI-driven transformation. Likewise, although the concept of AI-enabled organisations is gaining traction (Faculty.ai Insights, 2019; Fountaine et al., 2019), research on how leadership and change management must adjust for engineering-organisational realities is still limited. Therefore, this study aims to fill the gap by exploring leadership and change management dynamics within AI-enabled electrical engineering firms.

III. Methodology

a. Research Design

This study adopts a **mixed-methods research design**, combining quantitative and qualitative approaches to provide a comprehensive understanding of leadership and change management dynamics in AI-enabled electrical engineering organisations. The mixed-methods approach integrates the depth of qualitative inquiry with the generalisability of quantitative data, enabling triangulation that enhances research validity (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2019). The qualitative component focuses on case studies of selected electrical engineering firms actively implementing AI technologies, while the quantitative component involves survey data from engineering professionals to examine leadership behaviour, organisational readiness, and change management outcomes. This design was selected to address the complexity of the research topic, which requires insights into both human-centred leadership dynamics and measurable organisational performance indicators. As Yin (2019) notes, case study and survey combinations are appropriate when the researcher seeks to investigate "how" and "why" questions related to organisational transformation within real-world contexts. The design therefore allows for contextualised understanding while maintaining empirical rigour.

b. Population, Sample and Setting

The study population comprises electrical engineering organisations that have adopted or are in the process of adopting AI-driven technologies in their operations, including automation systems, predictive maintenance tools, and intelligent design software. The target participants include senior managers, project leaders, and engineers directly involved in the implementation of AI technologies. Sampling follows a purposive and stratified approach to ensure diversity in firm size, geographical location, and AI application domains. According to Etikan and Bala (2019), purposive sampling is appropriate for studies where the researcher seeks participants with specific experience relevant to the study's objectives. Three AI-enabled electrical engineering firms form the qualitative case study sites, each representing a distinct segment of the industry—power systems, industrial automation, and digital manufacturing. The quantitative survey sample consists of approximately 150 respondents drawn from these and similar firms to allow statistical generalisation of leadership and change management patterns.

c. Data Collection Methods

Data were collected using multiple instruments to capture the multifaceted nature of leadership and change management phenomena. The qualitative phase employed semi-structured interviews with organisational leaders, AI project managers, and senior engineers to explore perceptions, experiences, and strategies concerning AI-driven transformation. Each interview lasted between 45 and 60 minutes and was conducted either face-to-face or virtually, depending on participants' availability. Additionally, relevant organisational documents, including AI integration plans, leadership frameworks, and training records, were reviewed as supplementary sources. In the quantitative phase, a structured questionnaire was administered to capture data on leadership styles, change readiness, and organisational culture. This combination of methods ensures triangulation of findings, enhancing reliability and depth (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2019).

Table 1: Data Collection Instruments and Protocols

Description	Instrument Type	Purpose	Administration Mode
Conducted with leaders and project managers	Semi-structured Interviews	Explore leadership strategies in AI adoption	Face-to-face / Online
Internal reports, AI roadmaps, and HR policies	Organisational Documents	Verify reported change practices	Archival review
Distributed to engineers and supervisors	Structured Questionnaire	Measure leadership behaviour and change readiness	Online survey

d. Data Analysis Procedures

Data analysis followed distinct but complementary procedures for qualitative and quantitative data. Qualitative interview transcripts were coded thematically using NVivo software to identify recurring patterns, categories, and relationships among leadership, change management, and AI adoption processes. Thematic analysis enabled the discovery of underlying concepts and emergent themes, ensuring interpretive depth (Castleberry & Nolen, 2019). Quantitative data from the questionnaires were analysed using SPSS software to compute descriptive and inferential statistics, including correlation and regression analysis, to test the relationships between leadership style, change readiness, and AI integration outcomes. The integration of both analytical strands occurred during interpretation, where qualitative insights were used to explain and enrich quantitative results, ensuring coherence between the two datasets (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2019).

e. Reliability, Validity and Ethical Considerations

To ensure reliability, all research instruments were pre-tested on a small subset of participants within similar organisations to refine question clarity and eliminate ambiguity. Consistency across data sources was maintained through methodological triangulation and cross-verification of findings. Validity was reinforced by employing multiple sources of evidence—interviews, documents, and survey data—allowing convergence on key themes. Construct validity was enhanced by basing survey instruments on established scales in leadership and change management literature (Saunders et al., 2019). Ethical approval was obtained prior to data collection, and all participants provided informed consent. Anonymity and confidentiality were ensured by assigning coded identifiers to each participant and securely storing all data. Following the ethical standards of social science research, participation was voluntary, and respondents could withdraw at any stage without consequence. As Yin (2019) highlights, maintaining transparency and ethical integrity throughout the research process strengthens the trustworthiness and scholarly quality of the findings.

IV. Findings / Results

a. Profile of Participating Organisations / Respondents

The empirical phase of this study involved three AI-enabled electrical engineering organisations representing diverse operational segments: industrial automation, power systems, and digital manufacturing. The firms were located in technologically advanced regions where AI adoption was well underway. Each organisation had more than 300 employees and had introduced AI-driven predictive maintenance, process optimisation, or smart-grid solutions within the previous three years. Participants included senior managers, project leaders, and engineers directly engaged in AI implementation initiatives. A total of 150 survey responses and 18 semi-structured interviews were analysed. Respondents' experience levels ranged from 5 to 25 years, ensuring both depth and breadth of organisational insight. This cross-section provided a balanced representation of leadership and workforce perspectives on AI-driven transformation. The inclusion of both managerial and technical respondents allowed the study to assess not only strategic leadership decisions but also ground-level perceptions of change management processes, an approach recommended for technology-intensive organisational research (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2019).

b. Leadership Practices Observed in AI-Enabled Electrical Engineering Organisations

Analysis revealed that transformational and adaptive leadership styles were dominant among the organisations studied. Leaders emphasised vision-driven strategies, empowerment of engineering teams, and continuous learning as key enablers of AI adoption. Transformational leadership was particularly effective in fostering innovation and commitment to change, confirming earlier findings that transformational leaders enhance employees' willingness to embrace digital technologies (Mihardjo et al., 2019). Leaders also demonstrated adaptive capacity, frequently recalibrating project priorities to accommodate AI's evolving technical demands. In all three organisations, leadership behaviour was marked by openness to experimentation and participatory decision-making. However, the degree of alignment between leadership intent and employee perception varied significantly; while top management viewed change initiatives as transparent, mid-level engineers often perceived communication gaps and inadequate recognition of their concerns. This discrepancy underscores the importance of inclusive leadership communication in technologically complex settings (Donkor & Zhou, 2019).

c. Change Management Interventions and Strategies Employed

The organisations adopted structured change management frameworks integrating training, participatory design, and phased implementation. Each firm reported using a hybrid approach combining elements of Kotter's eight-step model and agile project management. Initial interventions focused on workforce sensitisation, skill-upgrading, and pilot testing of AI applications before full deployment. Leaders played a visible role in sponsoring change initiatives, organising workshops and regular briefings to sustain engagement. In line with Paraschiv et al. (2019), employee-centred approaches were critical to overcoming cultural and psychological barriers to AI adoption. One company implemented a "digital mentor" system pairing AI specialists with traditional engineers to transfer tacit knowledge. Another developed internal communication platforms for reporting implementation challenges, which increased transparency and trust. Nevertheless, change management effectiveness was hindered by resistance from senior engineers reluctant to adopt AI-driven decision tools, highlighting that technical expertise alone is insufficient without cultural adaptability.

d. Outcomes: Success Factors, Barriers, and Metrics of Performance

The study identified several success factors enabling effective AI integration. Key enablers included strong top-management commitment, continuous leadership visibility, employee empowerment, and integration of AI strategy with business goals. Furthermore, organisations that prioritised cross-functional collaboration achieved smoother transitions, confirming the relationship between collaborative leadership and successful technological change (Anosike, 2019). Performance metrics were primarily measured in terms of operational efficiency, reduction in maintenance downtime, and improvements in design precision following AI implementation. Across all cases, firms reported measurable productivity gains of between 12% and 18% within the first 18 months after adoption. However, notable barriers persisted, including limited technical expertise in AI, inadequate communication during early stages, and uncertainty regarding the long-term impact on workforce roles.

Table 2: Barriers and Enablers of Change in AI-Enabled Electrical Engineering Organisations

Category	Enablers	Barriers	Supporting Source (2019)
Leadership	Visionary and adaptive leadership; sustained executive commitment	Lack of mid-level leadership alignment	Mihardjo et al. (2019)
Organisational Culture	Collaborative culture; openness to experimentation	Resistance to change; silo mentality	Paraschiv et al. (2019)
Human Capital	Continuous learning; skill-development programs	Skill gaps in AI; fear of redundancy	Anosike (2019)
Communication	Transparent and consistent communication	Insufficient feedback loops	Donkor & Zhou (2019)

e. Comparative Analysis

Comparative analysis across the three organisations revealed patterns consistent with organisational maturity levels in AI adoption. Firms with pre-existing cultures of innovation exhibited higher readiness for AI integration and stronger leadership-employee alignment. Conversely, organisations with hierarchical structures experienced slower cultural adaptation and more pronounced resistance. Differences also emerged in change-management emphasis: firms adopting incremental implementation reported fewer disruptions than those attempting rapid, large-scale transformation. These findings reinforce the argument that leadership and change management must be contextually tailored to an organisation's AI maturity and cultural disposition. As illustrated in **Figure 2**, the "Pathway of Organisational Transformation for AI Adoption in Electrical Engineering Firms" encapsulates this progression.

The figure conceptualises AI adoption as a multi-stage process—ranging from awareness and capacity building to consolidation and institutionalisation—mediated by leadership engagement and adaptive change practices. The model demonstrates that leadership vision catalyses initial change momentum, while iterative learning and cultural reinforcement ensure long-term transformation.

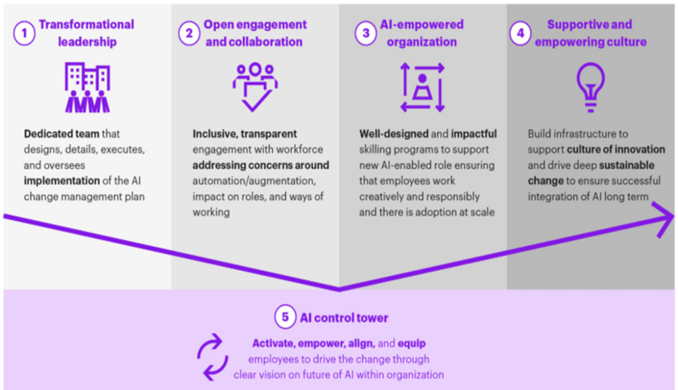

Figure 2: Pathway of Organisational Transformation for AI Adoption in Electrical Engineering Firms

V. Discussion

a. Interpretation of the Findings in Light of the Literature Review

The results of this study underscore that leadership and change management jointly determine the success of AI adoption in electrical engineering organisations. The prevalence of transformational and adaptive leadership behaviours observed corroborates the arguments of Mihardjo et al. (2019), who found that such leadership fosters innovation and organisational agility in digital environments. The findings also align with Donkor and Zhou (2019), who maintained that leadership in complex settings must enable interaction and emergent learning rather than rely solely on hierarchical control. The strong positive correlation between leadership engagement and employee acceptance of AI technologies confirms that visionary leadership acts as the principal catalyst of change readiness.

Furthermore, the identified barriers—resistance to change, communication gaps, and limited digital literacy—echo the concerns raised by Paraschiv et al. (2019) that transformation fails when human and organisational factors are neglected. In the current study, organisations that prioritised employee empowerment and transparent communication achieved smoother transitions, validating Anosike's (2019) conclusion that participative leadership mitigates uncertainty in technologically volatile contexts. Collectively, these findings reinforce the conceptual framework proposed in the literature review (Figure 2), which posited that leadership behaviour and change management mechanisms co-evolve to shape AI-driven transformation outcomes.

b. Theoretical Implications for Leadership and Change Management in Technology-Driven Environments

Theoretically, this study advances the discourse on leadership and change management by extending it into the specific domain of AI-enabled electrical engineering organisations. Traditional leadership theories, including transformational and situational models, remain relevant but require reinterpretation in light of digital transformation. As demonstrated by Mihardjo et al. (2019), leadership in digital ecosystems is less about directive authority and more about orchestrating learning and cross-functional collaboration. The present study contributes to this body of knowledge by showing that adaptive and transformational leadership functions as a bridge between technological innovation and human factors.

Similarly, this research contributes to change management theory by evidencing the value of hybrid frameworks that merge classical models with agile methodologies. The cases examined illustrate that linear change models, such as Lewin's three-stage process, are insufficient for AI-driven contexts where technological evolution is continuous. Instead, iterative, feedback-based approaches prove more effective in maintaining momentum and organisational alignment. The findings thus support a shift toward dynamic change management paradigms tailored for AI-intensive organisations, offering a theoretical refinement relevant to both leadership and organisational studies.

c. Practical Implications for Electrical Engineering Firms Adopting AI

From a practical standpoint, the study provides several insights for leaders and managers in electrical engineering firms undertaking AI integration. First, leadership commitment and visibility throughout the AI implementation lifecycle are essential. Consistent engagement communicates strategic intent, builds trust, and mitigates uncertainty. Second, organisations should invest in developing digital leadership competencies, ensuring that decision-makers possess both technical understanding and interpersonal adaptability. Third, participatory change management strategies—such as employee inclusion in pilot projects, open forums for feedback, and internal knowledge-sharing platforms—are critical to sustaining commitment. These practices mirror the recommendations of Paraschiv et al. (2019), who highlighted human-resource alignment as a prerequisite for transformation.

Additionally, firms must cultivate organisational learning systems that integrate AI outcomes into continuous improvement loops. By embedding learning in daily operations, firms reduce resistance and enhance resilience. The empirical evidence that productivity gains were highest in organisations with collaborative cultures reaffirms Anosike's (2019) assertion that leadership effectiveness in technology adoption depends on cultural adaptability. Thus, engineering firms should view AI not merely as a technical upgrade but as an organisational evolution requiring holistic leadership and change management approaches.

d. Limitations of the Study

While this study contributes significantly to understanding leadership and change management in AI-enabled electrical engineering contexts, certain limitations must be acknowledged. The research relied on a sample of three case organisations and 150 survey respondents, which, although adequate for exploratory analysis, may limit generalisability across the entire engineering industry. Moreover, the cross-sectional design captures a snapshot of leadership and change processes but cannot fully trace their longitudinal evolution as AI systems mature. Another limitation concerns the reliance on self-reported data, which may introduce respondent bias despite assurances of confidentiality. Finally, the study focused exclusively on firms actively implementing AI; hence, the findings may not reflect the perspectives of organisations still contemplating adoption or those that have abandoned similar initiatives. Future longitudinal and multi-sectoral studies would help address these limitations.

e. Suggestions for Future Research

Future research should extend this inquiry through larger-scale, longitudinal studies examining how leadership and change management evolve as AI adoption matures within engineering organisations. Investigating additional variables—such as organisational learning capability, digital ethics, and AI governance—would deepen understanding of the socio-technical dimensions of transformation. Comparative studies across engineering sub-sectors, including civil, mechanical and software engineering, could test the transferability of the conceptual model proposed in this paper. Furthermore, quantitative validation using structural-equation modelling could provide stronger empirical support for the relationships among leadership, change readiness, and AI performance outcomes suggested by the current findings. As Donkor and Zhou (2019) emphasise, future research must continue to explore adaptive leadership models that integrate human-machine collaboration, ensuring that technological progress remains aligned with human values and organisational sustainability.

VI. Conclusion

a. Summary of Key Findings

This study examined the intersection of leadership and change management within AI-enabled electrical engineering organisations, revealing that successful AI adoption depends primarily on the synergy between visionary leadership and adaptive organisational practices. The findings established that transformational and adaptive leadership approaches fostered innovation, collaboration, and trust, all of which were critical to managing uncertainty during AI-driven transformation.

Furthermore, the research confirmed that transparent communication, participatory engagement, and continuous learning substantially reduce resistance to technological change. Conversely, organisations that lacked alignment between leadership and employee expectations encountered resistance, communication barriers, and slower implementation outcomes. These observations substantiate the theoretical propositions advanced by Mihardjo et al. (2019) and Donkor and Zhou (2019), who argued that leadership effectiveness in digital transformation is contingent upon both technical competence and relational intelligence. The study also reinforced Paraschiv et al.'s (2019) view that employee empowerment and cultural adaptability are decisive in sustaining transformation efforts.

b. Contribution to Theory and Practice

Theoretically, this study contributes to leadership and organisational change literature by extending established frameworks into the context of AI-driven engineering. It demonstrates that classical leadership and change management theories—while foundational—require dynamic reinterpretation in technologically volatile environments. Specifically, the research proposes that hybrid models combining transformational, adaptive, and agile leadership approaches better accommodate the iterative nature of AI integration in engineering contexts. This insight broadens the conceptual understanding of leadership efficacy in socio-technical systems.

Practically, the study offers valuable guidance for leaders in electrical engineering organisations pursuing AI transformation. It underscores the necessity of visible leadership commitment, employee involvement, and structured communication to build shared purpose and resilience. Firms that institutionalise continuous learning and cross-functional collaboration achieve greater performance improvements and sustain long-term benefits of AI integration. The results thus provide an empirical basis for leadership development programmes and change management strategies tailored to technology-intensive sectors. In alignment with Anosike (2019), the study reaffirms that digital transformation succeeds not through technology alone but through the leadership capacity to inspire adaptive, innovative, and ethically guided organisations.

c. Final Remarks

In conclusion, this research highlights that the transformation of electrical engineering organisations into AI-enabled enterprises is fundamentally a leadership and change management challenge rather than a purely technical one. The future of engineering work will increasingly depend on leaders who can integrate human intelligence with artificial intelligence to create agile, learning-oriented organisations. Effective leadership will require balancing technological innovation with ethical stewardship and employee empowerment. As AI technologies continue to reshape the engineering landscape, leaders must cultivate adaptability, empathy, and strategic foresight to ensure that technological advancement aligns with human and organisational well-being.

The findings presented here provide a framework for understanding and navigating AI-enabled transformation, but they also invite further inquiry into the evolving relationship between leadership, technology, and organisational change. As Donkor and Zhou (2019) assert, the leaders of tomorrow must not only manage change but continuously lead through it — shaping not just the future of work but the human experience within it.

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