Artificial Intelligence as a Transformational driver in Change Management: a wake-up call

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Abstract

As AI technologies, particularly Large Language Models (LLMs), are embedded in business processes, they drive a profound, meta-redefinition of how change is conceived, executed, and managed.

This paper examines the revolutionary and transformative role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Organizational Change Management. In recent years, organizations across all sectors have faced unprecedented digital disruption, driven by the convergence of automation, data analytics, and Artificial Intelligence (AI). As diverse organizations navigate this complex transformation landscape, understanding how AI reshapes traditional Change Management practices has become increasingly important. In this remit, this study contributes to the academic debate by systematically exploring the intersection of AI technologies and Change Management (CM), aiming to clarify how emerging digital tools influence established instances of organizational transformation. The authors are particularly interested in exploring the emergent dynamics between traditional Change Management and AI, including key challenges and opportunities, and in identifying a critical gap: the absence of standardized approaches to integrating AI into the methodologies used by Change Management practitioners.

Consequently, this paper offers Researchers and SMEs (Subject Matter Experts) a starting point to critically interpret the disconnect between AI capabilities and traditional Change Management practices. To promote responsible adoption, this study advocates a fundamental shift in perspective: Artificial Intelligence should be viewed not just as a technical tool, but as a strategic partner in the co-design of organizational change processes.

Keywords: AI; Change Management; LLMs; Artificial Intelligence

1. Introduction

The role of Artificial Intelligence in modern business environments is rapidly expanding. Far beyond automation, AI now plays a central role in enhancing decision making, optimizing operations, and reshaping how organizations approach business strategies and transformation. (Islam et al., 2025)

Exactly like many other sectors and topics, Change Management, a structured approach to transitioning individuals, teams, and organizations from a current state to a desired future state (PMI, 2025), is currently undergoing a paradigm shift through the strategic implementation of AI technologies (Westover, 2024).

For this purpose, we might start framing the current business environment we operate in: as defined as VUCA (Volatile, Uncertain, Changeable, Ambiguous), the concept first emerged in the Defence domain, used by the military, and lately became widely used in business and technology. VUCA (Bennis, 1985) is characterized by rapid technological advancements, market disruptions, evolving customer expectations, and the need for agile and adaptive Change Management strategies.

Volatility is about the unpredictability of technological change, and Uncertainty is about instability in consumer behavior, the market, and the world. Complexity is derived from the diversified application and inter-relations between emerging technologies, including cloud computing, cybersecurity, and big data. Ambiguity is derived from diverse interpretations of the ethical, social, and regulatory implications of AI.

The urgency of facing the unpredictable nature of the events of a dynamic VUCA environment is underlined by recent failures, such as the CrowdStrike software update crash in July 2024 (Reuters, 2024), which resulted in global operational paralysis and financial damage, highlighting the fragile interconnectivity of today's digital

infrastructures.

While for other technologies, organizations are forced to adopt digital transformation programs in order to remaining competitive at a sustainable growth pace (Lahlali et al., 2021), AI is not just another technology: AI systems can already be found everywhere - from our car's assisted driving aids to custom recommendations on music streaming or marketplace apps, to AI-aided diagnostics in the healthcare sector. (Herremans, 2021)- often without users even knowing about it.

As such, AI is deeply changing the way we operate our business, inherently and profoundly, affecting all layers of engagement of business and technology.

Recent studies (Schwaeke et al., 2025) have emphasized that AI is a catalyst for organizational transformation towards sustainable operations. Their findings demonstrate that AI does not merely optimize business processes but also drives cultural and behavioral change across organizations. This aligns with the conceptual aim of this study to frame AI as a transformational rather than operational enabler in Change Management.

Hence, the motivation behind this article is to investigate the flourishing combination of AI and CM, as well as the benefits and the challenges, while finally demonstrating the absence of a standardized framework to facilitate its adoption.

2. The Confluence of AI and Change Management

Change management has always represented a critical aspect to mind in Organizations, as it requires a balanced approach to People, Technology and Processes factors.

The classic methodologies for Change Management, generally grounded on well-known models such as Lewin's 3-step model, Kotter's 8-step, and ADKAR, may prove to be insufficient in addressing the condition of complexities and speed of change, topical characteristics of the digital era.

In a brief overview of the formal discipline, Change Management was primarily developed in the 1960s and 1970s, influencing organizational behavior and development research.

As Murire (Murire, 2024) states:

> 'These models, which offer a conceptual basis of the change process, are limited in their flexibility and scale to engage the complexities of AI-driven transitions.'

Acknowledging the matter of adaptability, the ADKAR model was first developed in the 1990s by Jeff Hiatt, founder of PROSCI (Hiatt, 2006).

Since its creation, the business world has also adopted the ADKAR framework as a psychological model for facilitating large-scale organizational changes.

However, ADKAR is now struggling with the complexity and rapid development of technology integration: bringing AI into Change Management consequently opens doors to transformative opportunities in the four key areas mentioned above: People, Processes, Tools, and, adding on top, Financials (both CAPEX: Capital Expenditures and OPEX: Operational Expenditures).

By implementing AI, thanks to its transformational nature, these areas are not merely operational but become strategic levers for disruption within the organization, due to AI's analytical and automation capabilities.

AI is redefining Change Management by automating repetitive tasks, delivering personalized support during transitions, and offering real-time visibility into the change process, steering a new era of data-driven transformation. As such, AI can analyze vast datasets to identify patterns, predict potential resistance, and tailor communication strategies both internally to individual employee needs and externally towards other stakeholders and external organizations. While the disruptive nature of AI in the organizational change process cannot be ignored, resistance to change can appear. As it is expressed by fear of job displacement, lack of understanding for adoption, or simply preference for recurrent habits, they are common impediments to successful organizational transformations, and AI implementation is no exception, too.

In this rapidly changing VUCA world, traditional change approaches are getting more and more complemented - or even substituted by data-driven, adaptive, and smart systems which allow for reducing the lead time while enhancing the level of internal transparency and visibility within the organization. All this is provided with the aim of enabling true informed decision making for Executives and Managers.

The notions of 'Technology Leapfrogging' (Sharif, 1989) and 'Technological Singularity' (Vernor, 1983)

underscore such an accelerating tendency. Specifically, Technology Leapfrogging refers to when markets and organizations, especially those staying behind with regard to innovations, do not replace obsolete solutions by gradual implementation of updated technology but rather skip to the latest-generation tools instead. Technological singularity, on the other hand, represents the arrival point of an evolution, foreseeing a milestone in which AI will surpass human cognitive capabilities, revolutionizing with relevant impact, both human-machine interaction and organizational dynamics, and leading to the creation of an AGI (Artificial General Intelligence) (Gubrud, 1997).

In such a setting, ignoring the importance of AI in Change Management is equivalent to the perspective of 'an ostrich burying its head in the sand'.

The urgency is evident: the strategic integration of AI into Change Management is no longer a 'nice to have'; it is a matter of organizational life or death: adapt or be soon out of business.

3. Transformative Potential of AI in Change Management

The power of AI extends beyond automation and data analysis, introducing a new approach for organizations to assess, design, and execute change. (OECD, 2024)

Through AI algorithms, employee feedback can be analyzed, change champions identified, and adoption rates assessed, allowing Change Management to be more predictive of concerns and sentiments while fostering a more receptive environment.

By leveraging advanced AI tools, Organizations can streamline Change Management initiatives, mitigate the risk of failure, and accelerate the achievement of desired results.

For this reason, AI-powered Change Management can be transformational, in the sense that it can dynamically track the impact of change initiatives and provide feedback that allows for real-time corrections. The quote 'Managing at the speed of change' (Conner, 1993) underscores the importance of organizational resilience. The capability of AI to adapt to evolving circumstances in changing contexts also enables it to discover new information and infer facts in a dynamic and unpredictable environment (Holmström, 2021).

In this remit, AI-driven tools have the potential to:

•   Improve communication and engagement: AI-driven chatbots and virtual assistants deliver real-time access to answers, updates, and information, helping to raise communication and engagement during change initiatives.

These conversational interfaces (based on Large Language Models (LLMs), i.e., GPT-4) have been effective in 'digital plenitude' environments and in helping coordinate communication processes in more complex mediatic ecosystems (Cheyunski, 2024). They allow us to manage and adapt the spread of the change narrative to hierarchical levels in the organization.

•   Tailor learning and development: AI algorithms can understand employees' unique gaps by analyzing skills and preferences in learning style, hence serve personalized learning programs that help employees to close skill gaps faster and be more ready to change.

More specifically, LLMs provide personalized learning experiences by providing context-aware educational material and interactive training simulations, used in both health and educational domains for upskilling (Abdulaziz, 2024; Peifer, 2023). They can gather user interactions and feedback, enabling dynamically fine-tuned paths of training.

•   Predictive capabilities for SF (Strategic Foresight): Aligned with the principles of Strategic Foresight (Catapano, 2022), simulating alternative organizational futures in light of different conditions, such as economic, technological, behavioral, etc., is an essential element for Organizations and Change Managers.

AI algorithms augment the ability of scenario-based planning and consequently increase the capacity of improved decision making, especially in testing stress conditions for strategic assumptions. Such capability aligns with the broader organizational shift from reactive to proactive Change Management.

•   Predictive capabilities in reducing resistance: Utilize AI to analyze the overall sentiment and behavior of employees to identify potential areas of resistance, providing Change Management teams with actionable insights that enable them to pinpoint the driving factors of resistance, allowing for early intervention.

Utilizing AI for sentiment analysis and organizational pulse-taking as tools to support early internal risk detection and customized intervention design (Singh, 2023; Aldoseri, 2024).

While there are prerequisite competencies to deal with uncertainty in VUCA landscapes, it is essential to note that the successful deployment of AI in Change Management should involve both a strategic and ethical approach.

Organizations will need to address any biases that exist within their AI algorithms and formalize procedures that guarantee and protect both data privacy and security. Additionally, they must ensure that employees are adequately trained and well-supported in using AI-powered tools.

This will be achieved by establishing a clear governance structure, engaging stakeholders in co-creation sessions to design AI strategies, and promoting explainability and trust in AI outputs. (Stowasser, 2023, and Gomez, 2025)

The integration of AI into Change Management is not just a technology upgrade: it is a disruptive driver reshaping how businesses engage and manage change.

As stated above, AI tools can perform many routine tasks, process huge data volumes, and generate tailored change interventions, enabling Change Managers to focus on strategy and stakeholders' engagement. However, AI models must demonstrate a manageable approach to users to foster control and trust. By leveraging AI's capabilities, organizations can be more agile, nimble, and effective in their Change Management initiatives, speeding up the realization of desired results while also transforming their workforce into a more resilient and adaptable one.

Hence, AI is not just an instrument but a co-agent in human-AI interaction. Such a hybrid intelligence model in which both AI and humans can co-evolve is also supported by literature, creating a narrative in which creativity is boosted, administrative tasks are reduced, and participatory decisions are fostered.

Change Management strongly attains human capital management and, in relation to HR activities, AI is being deployed to achieve increased efficiency and purpose, thanks to its capability to gain insights from workers about what they are feeling, thinking, and needing (Dima et al., 2024). In addition to that, AI is more and more used for individual employee performance prediction and assessment, which will help accelerate future recruitments and allow for better workforce planning strategy (Hajal & Rowson, 2020). This trend extends to the rise of cloud-based AI platforms, AI-powered ERP systems, and real-time predictive dashboards that shape organizational structure and process design.

Moreover, AI-generated analytics can help to target potential change leaders, tailor communication methods, and personalize training to build a more responsive and involved workforce. Additionally, AI can help to find patterns and predict what risks are emerging on the horizon. In this way, Change Management teams can proactively prepare to face challenges and take actions to mitigate risk.

AI innovations are transforming industries from manufacturing, supply, and transport to retail, customer service, and even healthcare, finance, cybersecurity, government, and education.

In this remit, AI technologies are used by organizations to adjust or disrupt their ecosystem in the process of developing and optimizing their strategic competitive advantage (Wamba-Taguimdje et al., 2020): AI is the key for businesses to achieve a new level of agility, resiliency and competitive edge in today's fast-changing business climate.

The last key aspect to focus on when analyzing the implementation of AI in Change Management is the paradigm shift in building a new mindset and skill set for Change Practitioners.

First, in terms of knowledge management strategies, LLMs play a critical role in this transformation, enabling frictionless access to both tacit and explicit knowledge while also promoting change initiatives.

Second, Change Management teams must develop the capability to translate AI-driven inputs into change interventions that can facilitate achieving the success of the change initiative itself, while enhancing the transparency and visibility of communication related to the adoption of AI to stakeholders.

As said above, the advantages of the adoption of AI in change management are diverse, among them: improved resource allocation, the ability to continuously observe and adjust projects and other initiatives, better decision-making, and more effective stakeholder involvement. However, to enable these benefits, companies will need to invest in upskilling their workforce to effectively handle AI-powered tools through proper knowledge management.

The literature suggests that leadership and operational teams would have to build some kind of 'AI literacy' (Peifer, 2023) and align IT requirements and business needs to work closely together, with the aim of leveraging full adoption of AI.

In such a context, the need for an AI implementation framework to integrate organizational culture readiness and digital maturity assessment is undoubtedly needed.

What is absolutely clear is that the application of AI in Change Management is favoring a shift in the perspective of organizations to manage change in a better and faster way.

5. New Trends in AI

We have assessed that AI is a fast-growing domain with new developments and emerging technologies, rapidly expanding. These latest developments have the potential to revolutionize the field of Change Management and enhance the tenure of the organization towards innovative capabilities development.

In fact, as some key trends in AI are emerging, we might mention:

• *Recent AI Architectures with Efficient Memory*

New types of AI Architecture are following the implementation of Transformers models and witness the emergence of Post-Transformers models, which aim to process and store information more efficiently, in analogy to what the human mind is able to do.

In this way, AI systems can learn from video-recorded lectures and other massive datasets and can reach a fact-based decision. Adopting memory-efficient models may create new data-driven opportunities.

The evolution of the market to enable the above is evidenced by recent innovations like Google's Titans architecture, Hyena Hierarchy, and other Sub-quadratic types of memory networks.

Titans' core architecture brings together short-term attention mechanisms and long-term neural memory modules, replicating the dual-memory model of human-like cognition.

On the other hand, Hyena Machine Learning Models improve accuracy by more than 50 points over traditional Transformer operators, which rely on state-spaces and other implicit and explicit methods, while matching attention-based models and doubling the speed and optimization of attention. (Poli et al., 2023).

These advances open the doors to an AI working with much longer sequences, and in a much more optimized way, well beyond what was possible with standard transformers, to gain richer and more contextual understanding of long-form documents. The potential applications are infinite: from long research papers to documents, logs, or datasets from genomics sequencing.

These new architecture types are not just creating larger models, but embed more innovative memory layouts, which allow for reducing parameter expansions while boosting performance, hence improving energy efficiency. These improvements are substantial and affect several industries, especially those that depend on vast amounts of data flow, such as finance, healthcare, and research.

In that way, Change Managers are provided with systems that replicate the human mind, understanding historical context and subtle patterns over time, while promoting more sustainable and energy-efficient models.

• *Explainable AI*

XAI aims to make the decision-making process of AI more transparent and understandable, so that users can understand how AI systems arrive at certain conclusions and develop trust in the decisions made.

Explainability also originates from the current trend of creating 'visible thought processes', and so this is reflected in reasoning processes such as Claude 4.0 Opus and OpenAI's GPT-4o show. These models not only generate outcomes, but they also document their flow of logic — a design intended to make AI appear more transparent and easier to oversee for humans. In a Change Management context, XAI promotes accountability and compliance, especially for those use cases in which we question the 'why' above the 'what' of an AI recommendation.

• *Generative AI*

Generative AI, in its declination of 'multimodal' models, can generate new mixed types of content (texts, images, code, apps, audio) and can be leveraged to help Change Management teams produce more dynamic and individualized comms materials, training modules, and simulations.

The recent rise of multimodal AI models, such as GPT-4o, supports the cross-channel creation of synthetic, simulated employee responses and can even create avatars or stories based on specific Personas to manage resistance levels in transformation projects. This gives Change Managers something to communicate with, and test and iterate different options well in advance of the actual implementation.

- *Edge AI*

Edge AI involves processing data closer to the source, enabling fast responses and reduced latency. Edge AI picks up the thread of Edge Computing, as it proves particularly useful for applications in which speed is critical, or where a stable connection to a central server is not guaranteed. This is beneficial for solving connectivity and bandwidth issues, enabling real-time decision-making in remote areas or under limited resource conditions.

This ability is closely linked to the development of the phenomenon of embodied AI, in which robotic or embedded systems and devices (often integration of OT – Operational Technology and IT – Information Technology) use intelligence 'at the edge' – in field operations.

Leveraging AI with models trained on web-scale data, edge devices are learning to interpret and react at the edge of the network based on local inputs with an agility that mimics human intelligence, enabling greater depth in Change Management interventions in dynamic real-world applications.

- *AI-powered Decision Making*

AI's strategic use translates into converting data into insights while maintaining a competitive advantage.

AI allows automated decision making and strategic decision making, which is predictable by improving KPIs and quality of decisions, spanning from optimizing and refining procedures, to uncovering valuable business insights, to disclosing the benefits of AI by opening new areas for decision-making (Artene et al., 2024).

This trend is illustrated by the emergence of AI-based Decision Intelligence topics.

In fact, Decision Intelligence is defined as:

> *'...the science which helps to improve human decision-making by using AI and advanced analytics to process vast amounts of data quickly'*

(Pratt, 2019), has mainly been adopted by organizations.

AI is no longer restricted to standalone analytical tasks but is now integrated into BI (Business Intelligence) tools via LLMs (Large Language Models) and used as a virtual advisor to assist in informed decision making. In fact, as businesses are now integrating generative AI and machine learning into their business intelligence tools and analytics pipeline, this integration improves the capabilities of data analysis and allows decision-makers to make enlightened decisions in real time with the support of AI, therefore democratizing full access to data-driven decision-making.

These systems help LoB (Lines of Business) with scenario analysis, projected ROI, and real-time operational feedback. AI copilot, part of the value proposition of recent cloud offerings, enables Change Managers to ask natural-language questions such as 'Which transformation initiative is most resisted in region X?', and get answers rich in insights with structured KPIs, employee sentiment, and change outcomes over time. In this remit, AI is no longer a back-office activity accessible to Data Engineers and Analysts only, but it becomes the cognitive layer of the business.

These new elements in AI are indicative of a maturing AI landscape in which solutions are resource-efficient, accessible to a broader variety of users, and can deliver proven business value in productivity and a social engine for innovation. Firms lagging in AI implementation are going to stay behind competitors who are uplifting their entire organization with AI-enriched data and upgrading their value proposition.

However, embedding AI into business routines requires a deep understanding of AI systems along with a proper strategy for data governance, calling for data lineage and cleansing.

- *Agentic AI (as a Change Agent in Change Management)*

Outside of analytics, business tasks are being transformed by the trend of autonomous AI agents. These agents — such as OpenAI's Operator and the Chinese Manus — can perform intricate, multi-step functions across the web, whether that involves booking flights, handling HR onboarding, or processing vendor forms. They navigate software using machine vision APIs (Application Programming Interfaces) and reinforcement learning, rather than relying on predefined scripts, which introduces a new level of intelligence and flexibility in performing and automating digital tasks. Consequently, Change Management practitioners can reassign routine tasks and delegate work to AI agents, allowing them to focus on strategic, high-impact interventions themselves.

- *Decentralized AI*

The next level of Agentic AI has been reached by Tether, the popular company behind digital asset innovation and owner of USDT, the most widespread stablecoin in the Cryptocurrency world.

Tether introduced QVAC (QuantumVerse Automatic Computer), an experimental development platform designed to deliver Infinite Intelligence: scalable, decentralized AI systems that operate directly on personal user devices, rather than centralized data centers.

QVAC enables Agentic AI to run on-premises on local hardware, including mobile devices, portable computers, edge computers, single-board microcontrollers, and brain-computer interfaces, thereby discontinuing dependency on cloud control. Such a decentralized approach frees users from the burden of collecting and monitoring third-party data, thereby avoiding the problem of Data Residency.

QVAC is a foundational element for democratizing access to AI, based on a decentralized, self-governed future for artificial intelligence. As the CEO of Tether, Paolo Ardoino declared:

> *'Artificial Intelligence should be an instrument of humanity – not a tool to entrench further the positions of corporations that act as gatekeepers to it through proprietary servers and API keys'*

and,

> *'If you need an API key to access your AI, it's not really yours. So, with QVAC, we flip the model: intelligence is now local-first, privacy-centric, and decentralized. This is a critical step toward wresting back computational autonomy and constructing an open, invincible ecosystem of AI agents serving people, not platforms.'*

In a nutshell, AI is becoming a commoditized service like computing or internet access, hence becoming a minimum requirement for organizations to innovate and, very soon, to operate.

As its extensive usage is driving innovative ideas and new business models, upcoming AI trends will let Change Management teams implement automation, data, and intervention personalization processes, which are better suited to produce results and keep your organization agile (Dash et al., 2019).

In parallel, developments addressing the democratization and ethical governance of AI, such as the EU AI Act and open-source projects (including QVAC, Meta's LLaMA, and Mistral's compact 7B models), are redefining how organizations consume and trust AI.

Change makers will need to interact with those frameworks not just to maximize the opportunities of AI, but to support transparency, accountability, and sustainable adoption. SMBs (Small and Medium Enterprises), NGOs, and Governmental Bodies now have access to bespoke AI models for targeted transformation objectives, without the burden of significant infrastructural expenses, aligning digital transformation needs with equity and governance principles.

6. From practical to theoretical implications: the lack of a standardized model

We have already discussed the definition of Change management as a crucial activity for organizations to keep up with the changing conditions of the market, of technology, or internal structural changes, and how AI can help with that.

Disruption can be controlled by rigorously planning and executing the change, involving the workforce and generating business impact.

But how to effectively bring AI into Change Management?

The first element to consider for successfully implementing AI in Change Management is the need for organizations to understand its potential benefits, risks, and ethical implications.

This includes evaluating the organization's readiness for AI deployment, defining the proper use cases, and establishing robust data governance and security measures.

As Santhanam (Santhanam, 2020) states:

> *'The development of AI applications for Change Management necessitates careful consideration of data quality, security, and ethical implications...'*

To do so, companies need to ensure that AI algorithms are trained on diverse and comprehensive datasets to re-address bias and promote fairness.

Moreover, transparent and intelligible AI systems— the already mentioned XAI —are crucial for creating trust and acceptance among employees and stakeholders.

A second point is the importance of leadership in driving the paradigm shift to AI-enabled CM. As mentioned

above, 'AI literacy' is necessary for executives, as well as achieving digital maturity across different business units. Both are crucial conditions for the significant adoption of AI. Leaders must act as translators of AI potential into business value, reinforcing alignment between AI deployment and the organization's vision.

The leadership's dimension finds empirical confirmation in the concept of "visionary sustainability leadership" as a decisive success factor for AI adoption. (Schwaeke et al., 2025) Their TOE-based framework highlights how leadership alignment, stakeholder engagement, and hybrid impact metrics are critical to ensuring that AI integration produces sustained organizational value rather than isolated technological gains.

Solving these problems will require interdisciplinary collaboration among researchers, practitioners, and industry stakeholders to enable holistic frameworks, such as the TOE framework cited above, that properly address specific needs and challenges. Without it, no company will be able to use AI effectively in its CM journey and leverage the transformative power of this emerging tech.

For the above reasons, the urgency in formalizing a standardized framework is further underscored by the potential of AI to act as a transformative driver in CM.

An inspirational layer for the above framework is undoubtedly represented by 'The four archetypes of AI application in Business Model Innovation' (Aagaard and Tucci, 2024) as shown in Table 1.

The model presents four archetypes of organizations and leaders in technology domains, defining the impact on business in terms of gained competitive advantage versus the degree of integration of AI in the organization's processes.

Examples of the four archetypes are:

Table 1: The four archetypes of AI application in Business Model Innovation (Aagard and Tucci, 2024)

		Degree of AI Integration	
		Low	High
		Experience innovators (Low Integration, High Impact) Businesses apply AI in targeted, customer-facing functions to Enhance the customer experience and engagement, thus creating a competitive edge.	**Transformation leaders** (High Integration, High Impact) Organizations that fully embrace AI, redefining their business models, value propositions, and market positioning. They Leverage AI to create new products, services, and customers experiences, fundamentally altering the competitive landscape.
Impact on competitive advantage	**High**		
	Low	**Incremental optimizers** (Low Integration, Low Impact) Companies in this quadrant use AI for minor improvements in operational efficiency and customer service.	**Efficiency enhancers** (High Integration, Low Impact) Firms focus on internal processes, leveraging AI to streamline operations and reduce costs significantly, yet with limited external market differentiation.

• Experience Innovators: a digital health startup that provides AI insights to personalize engagement via an app that tracks health metrics and offers customized health advice, marking improved customer satisfaction and retention.

• Transformation Leaders: Tesla's use of AI goes beyond automation; AI is embedded in core functions like autonomous driving, energy management systems, and connectivity, and has changed the fundamentals of the company, both the operating model and market identity.

• Incremental Optimizer: A medium retail company introducing AI-powered chatbots in its supply chain to handle FAQs and basic service inquiries, streamlining customer support, but without altering its broader value proposition.

• Efficiency Enhancer: A global manufacturing firm using AI for predictive maintenance, cutting downtime and improving throughput, though its impact remains internal, with limited customer-facing innovation.

While the above model from Aagard and Tucci can be interpreted as an evolution of the Technology Curve for Innovation Adoption (Rogers, 2003), it represents a solid foundation for analyzing the trend of adoption of AI in organizations, hence also in Change Management.

However, more refinement and tailoring of the thought process is necessary in order to develop an ad-hoc framework that introduces potential patterns for managing the interaction of AI automation and human oversight.

Those models emphasize the criticality of maintaining 'man-in-the-loop' practices, ensuring human values, strategic judgment, and adaptive governance to enable AI-enhanced Change Management efforts to become a reality.

The authors anticipate that when organizing AI-CM interactions, the role of Human-Centric Design (HCD) is essential.

HCD is a balancing force for technocratic or opaque decision-making systems. Transparency, explainability, and employee co-design participation are not only ethical requirements but also practical implications for generating trust in AI.

AI has severe implications for the essence of Change Management itself: while traditional Change Management focuses on overcoming resistance to change and navigating humans through system change, AI-enhanced Change Management aims to enable a cyber-physical ecosystem, wherein agents — human and artificial — co-create adaptive strategies. This needs a redefinition of Change Management boundaries, combining IT Service Design, Data Science, and behavioral analytics.

Despite the increasing appeal and use of AI in Change Management, as it is 'trendy' to discuss and promote the adoption of AI in organizations, there is an evident lack of a proven, tested model for applying it effectively.

Organizations exploring the use of AI in Change Management often face several key challenges, such as unclear blueprints. Without a widely accepted framework, many companies struggle to identify effective strategies for selecting, deploying, and evaluating AI tools. This frequently leads to fragmented efforts and waste of resources.

Another critical aspect for aligning AI technologies with existing Change Management processes is integration complexity. It is rarely straightforward, and along with security, privacy, and ethical concerns, this further complicates the change process in the absence of clear governance models.

As noted by Touijer (2025), IT infrastructure gaps limit digital maturity, especially among small and medium-sized enterprises, constraining scalability.

Moreover, as the adoption of AI in CM lacks a unified framework, scaling AI-based programs across departments or regions becomes inconsistent and ineffective, resulting in the fragmentation of change initiatives. This is also due to unclear metrics: measuring the impact of AI on organizational change remains challenging without agreeing on indicators and benchmarks, making success difficult to define and replicate.

Finally, issues of bias, fairness, and transparency are often observed, as most existing frameworks fail to account for the ethical dimensions of AI in Change initiatives.

Due to all the above, several considerations can be made regarding the lack of a standardized framework:

'One is that 'The absence… can amplify problems inherent in the decision-making process rather than help to reduce them.' (Trunk et al., 2020).

This gap has resulted in:

'Unbalanced research, necessitating a coherent structure to provide clarity and direction for organizations aiming to integrate AI into Change Management strategies.' (Keding, 2020).

Finally, strategic planning should also be adaptable to sudden and unpredictable changes. A crucial element of the digital revolution is the incorporation of AI technologies into business operations.

It follows that:

'...companies are utilizing AI to stay competitive, improve processes, and promote innovation.' (Oyekunle & Boohene, 2024).

New company models and income streams are made possible by AI.

In light of these challenges, developing a 'hybrid framework' that combines traditional Change Management techniques (Kotter, ADKAR) with real-time AI augmentation is welcome.

One viable path is to translate Agile Loop-based models, such as the OODA loop (Boyd, 1976), into feedback-centric, iterative approaches in AI-enhanced Change Management.

7. Conclusions

Artificial Intelligence (AI) – and, in particular, Large Language Models (LLMs) - have brought about a profound change in how organizations design, run, and evaluate their change programs. As this expanded synthesis has emerged, AI is far more than a powerful enabler of efficiency and personalization: it is also a disruptive force requiring new narrative, capabilities, and ethical guardrails. That is because AI is not simply a new digital tool in the Change Management toolkit but is a transformative force that requires us to reflect on what Change Management means in the era of intelligent systems.

Although case-based experimentation with AI for Change Management is underway, the field remains fragmented, lacking theoretical depth. Reports on individual cases are promising but anecdotal, lacking well-controlled studies and providing limited conceptual knowledge. This fracture poses further risks, including AI stakeholder deployment misalignment, AI decision-maker opaqueness, and trust erosion due to a lack of interpretability or governance.

For this reason, we urgently need a standardized framework that integrates the rigor of Change Management methodologies with the agility of AI technologies.

While Change Management has evolved over the years into various methodologies (Kotter's 8 Steps, ADKAR, McKinsey 7-S, etc.), none of these were based on a Technology-Powered HCD (Human-Centric Design) setup with AI playing a central role in the co-creation of change itself.

This framework should include trust-building practices, agile feedback loops, predictive diagnostics, and stakeholder co-creation. It would be modular, scalable, and ethically informed, with the capacity for global oversight and local responsiveness.

A strong framework should include:

• AI-driven interaction for specific stakeholder engagement processes.

• Clear feedback and reasoning chains make the decisions of AI explainable and auditable.

• Predictive diagnostics and foresight tools, allowing long-memory AI structures to predict resistance and adapt in time.

• Rooted in agility, enabling iterative learning loops and course corrections in the journey of transformation.

• Capacity-building mechanisms to ensure AI literacy in leadership and operational roles, enabling responsible use and governance of AI systems.

In this direction, as cited above, Schwaeke et al. (2025) propose an enhanced Technology–Organization–Environment (TOE) framework that embeds AI adoption within sustainability-driven change programs. Their model offers a valuable operational lens for the hybrid frameworks envisioned in this study, particularly through its focus on impact measurement, data governance, and cross-sectoral learning mechanisms. However, that framework does not interpret AI in a co-agent role and does not address the ethical and cognitive dimensions of AI-human collaboration. Also, the work of Schwaeke et al. focuses on ESG metrics (financial and sustainability) while AI-driven indicators of change, such as resistance, foresight, and sentiment, are not considered.

The issue is not only about reaching technical readiness (as technology and skills have already been covered) but also, foremost, methodological maturity.

AI's transformative possibilities can only be fully realized within Change Management when we standardize its use across the areas of context, ethics, and strategy.

Only then can AI unleash its disruptive force and become a trusted collaborator for Organizations in their change transformation journeys.

In conclusion, the authors hope that the implications explored in this work serve both as a wake-up call and an encouragement for researchers and practitioners in the field. The integration of AI into Change Management is not simply a technological advance, but a paradigm shift demanding rapid and systematic scholarly engagement by Academia.

Linking the social sciences and STEM is the required approach to develop powerful, interdisciplinary research agendas on how AI is reconfiguring organizational change at conceptual, methodological, and ethical levels.

Scientific inquiry cannot be siloed or framed within disciplines, as the current disconnect between AI research, Change Management theory, and on-the-ground implementation poses a significant threat to the coherence, scalability, and trustworthiness of upcoming organizational transformations. This issue should be addressed through a multidisciplinary approach.

For academia, this represents not only a responsibility but also an unprecedented opportunity to shape the trajectory of future research and practice in organizational change.

8. Limitations and Future works

While the study demonstrates the transformative potential of AI in CM, it also faces certain limitations, such as data heterogeneity, lack of longitudinal validation, and challenges in operational adoption due to ethical and interpretability concerns.

Finally, qualitative results may be sensitive to publication-surge bias (post-2023 GenAI boom) and rapid tooling drift: for this reason, longitudinal validation is needed.

Future research should aim to validate the proposed conceptual insights through empirical case studies and cross-sector analyses, assessing how AI-driven Change Management frameworks perform in practice. Additionally, interdisciplinary studies combining behavioral science and AI governance could deepen understanding of how human–AI collaboration reshapes organizational transformation.

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