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Beyond Technology: A Narrative Review of Organizational Dynamics in IT Change Management

Henny Noviany
Universitas An Nasher, Indonesia
Correspondent: hennynoviany@universitasannasher.ac.id

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ABSTRACT: This narrative review examines the organizational, technological, and human factors shaping IT-enabled change management (ITCM), with a particular focus on healthcare systems. The objective is to synthesize current evidence and highlight strategies that facilitate successful digital transformation across diverse contexts. A structured search was conducted in Scopus, Web of Science, PubMed, and Google Scholar, covering studies published between 2013 and 2023. Literature was selected based on relevance to ITCM, organizational readiness, stakeholder engagement, and implementation outcomes. A thematic analysis was applied to identify critical success factors and systemic challenges. Key findings indicate that adaptive organizational culture, strong leadership, and early stakeholder involvement are essential enablers of ITCM. Technological factors such as interoperability and system complexity remain major barriers, often compounded by user resistance. Human resource readiness—particularly digital literacy and training—emerges as a cornerstone of successful adoption. Comparative insights reveal that high-income countries benefit from robust infrastructure and governance, while low- and middle-income countries face persistent barriers related to limited resources and uneven capacity. The review concludes that ITCM requires integrated and context-sensitive strategies that combine technological innovation with organizational adaptability and human capital development. Practical implications include leadership training, cross-functional engagement, and targeted capacity building. Future research should employ longitudinal and system-dynamics approaches to assess sustainability and unintended consequences. This review contributes an integrative framework for understanding ITCM across organizational, technological, and socio-economic dimensions, offering insights for both policy and practice.

Keywords: IT-Enabled Change Management, Digital Transformation, Organizational Readiness, Stakeholder Engagement, Healthcare Technology, Resistance To Change, Technological Complexity.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the field of change management has been increasingly shaped by the expanding role of information technology (IT), with IT-enabled change management (ITCM) becoming a

vital component in the digital transformation efforts of organizations across sectors. This development is driven by a growing recognition of the multifaceted complexities embedded in IT project implementation, which demand innovative frameworks for planning, execution, and evaluation. One prominent trend is the integration of action research methodologies into IT project management, which emphasizes adaptive, context-sensitive engagement with change processes (Mikkelsen & Aaltonen, 2022). This orientation aims to address the critical issue of unmanaged complexity that frequently undermines the success of IT initiatives, particularly in environments where change must be rapid, scalable, and inclusive. Scholars have argued that failures in ITCM often stem from a misalignment between project complexity and managerial tools, necessitating the advancement of reliable instruments for complexity assessment and management (Odusanya et al., 2021).

The strategic significance of ITCM has grown alongside the pace of digital innovation. As business environments become increasingly volatile and customer expectations evolve, the need for responsive, agile systems has intensified (Marcinkowski & Gawin, 2019). This evolution highlights the relevance of ITCM not merely as a technical exercise but as a strategic imperative. It requires organizations to rethink governance structures, reconfigure workflows, and cultivate new competencies among personnel. In particular, the emergence of frameworks that blend iterative software development with organizational learning, such as Scrum, has introduced both opportunities and challenges in managing change. While offering flexibility and continuous feedback loops, these frameworks often encounter resistance when scaled across diverse stakeholder groups with varying levels of engagement and readiness (Joskowski et al., 2023).

The urgency surrounding ITCM is supported by empirical data. The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the uptake of digital technologies in various domains, most notably in healthcare. The shift to telemedicine and virtual consultation exemplified the need for rapid adaptation and revealed the potential of IT to reshape service delivery (Hoffman et al., 2020). Concurrently, there was a notable decline in low-acuity patient visits to emergency departments, a phenomenon attributed to improved digital triage systems and patient flow management (Kurian et al., 2023). These developments underscore the growing dependence on IT systems not only to maintain service continuity but to enhance operational efficiency and user satisfaction. As such, ITCM has emerged as a linchpin in efforts to align technological innovation with organizational performance.

Further evidence highlights the importance of managing project complexity in IT-enabled transformations. Odusanya et al. (2021) found that limited understanding of complex interdependencies and stakeholder dynamics often contributes to project delays or outright failure. This insight is particularly salient in projects that seek to integrate IT solutions into multi-scenario business processes, where adaptability and strategic foresight are crucial (Marcinkowski & Gawin, 2019). As such, successful ITCM requires not only technical proficiency but also the capacity to anticipate and respond to organizational inertia, resistance to change, and variations in technological literacy.

However, numerous challenges continue to constrain the effective implementation of ITCM. One primary obstacle is the intrinsic complexity of IT projects, which typically involve diverse

stakeholders with conflicting interests and expectations. This heterogeneity complicates coordination, exacerbates communication bottlenecks, and increases the likelihood of misalignment between technical solutions and user needs (Mikkelsen & Aaltonen, 2022). Moreover, while agile methodologies such as Scrum have been promoted as solutions, their effectiveness is often diluted by contextual constraints, such as hierarchical decision-making structures or inconsistent stakeholder engagement (Joskowski et al., 2023).

Another significant barrier is the uneven distribution of digital skills among stakeholders. In sectors such as healthcare, where technology adoption can be life-altering, the capacity of end-users to interact meaningfully with IT systems becomes a determinant of success. Hoffman et al. (2020) revealed that patient engagement with telehealth platforms is significantly influenced by digital literacy and the availability of personalized support. Without addressing these disparities, ITCM initiatives risk excluding key user groups and reinforcing existing inequities. Furthermore, in lower-income regions, infrastructural limitations and limited access to training further impede the adoption of IT-based reforms (Wagenheim et al., 2022).

Despite the proliferation of research on ITCM, several gaps remain. One prominent gap lies in the insufficient exploration of long-term outcomes. Many studies focus on initial implementation and short-term benefits, but fail to track how IT-enabled changes evolve over time or how they are sustained in complex environments (Mikkelsen & Aaltonen, 2022). In addition, there is a lack of comparative analysis examining the relationship between different project management approaches and performance metrics. Odusanya et al. (2021) noted that while there is growing interest in the use of metrics and tools for complexity management, few studies offer actionable guidance for practitioners. As a result, there is a pressing need for integrative frameworks that connect theoretical insights with practical applications.

This narrative review seeks to address these gaps by synthesizing current literature on ITCM, with a particular focus on the healthcare sector. The review aims to identify critical success factors, systemic challenges, and innovative strategies that influence the design and implementation of IT-enabled change. By analyzing diverse sources and case studies, the review will offer a comprehensive framework for understanding how organizations can navigate the complexities of digital transformation. Core analytical dimensions will include stakeholder engagement, organizational readiness, project complexity, and contextual adaptability.

The scope of the review is thematically grounded in the healthcare sector, a field that has experienced profound digital transformation in recent years. With the advent of telemedicine, electronic health records, and mobile health applications, healthcare has become a microcosm of broader ITCM challenges. Furthermore, healthcare systems in developing countries provide valuable insights into the interplay between technological capability and infrastructural limitations. For example, Malawi has faced significant obstacles in implementing new procedures due to limited resources and inadequate training infrastructures (Wagenheim et al., 2022). In contrast, countries like India have pioneered IT-enabled interventions that leverage community health structures, offering scalable models for innovation (Kaur et al., 2018).

By incorporating a comparative geographic lens, the review aims to uncover both universal principles and context-specific dynamics in ITCM. Studies from high-income countries tend to emphasize usability, data security, and system integration, whereas those from low- and middle-income countries highlight access, affordability, and cultural alignment. The juxtaposition of these perspectives enables a more nuanced understanding of how ITCM can be tailored to meet the needs of different populations. For instance, while personalization is key to patient satisfaction in technologically advanced settings (Hoffman et al., 2020), in low-resource contexts, success may depend more on simplification, training, and infrastructure support.

Ultimately, this review endeavors to bridge the gap between academic theory and operational practice in ITCM. Drawing from Klaus et al. (2015), who emphasized the importance of sociotechnical integration, the review will examine not only the technical aspects of change but also the psychological, cultural, and organizational factors that mediate user engagement and system performance. In doing so, it will contribute to the formulation of evidence-based strategies that inform both policy and practice. Moreover, by highlighting the importance of long-term evaluation and feedback mechanisms, the review seeks to encourage more sustainable and inclusive approaches to IT-enabled transformation.

In conclusion, the increasing complexity of organizational environments, coupled with the accelerating pace of technological advancement, underscores the need for a comprehensive understanding of IT-enabled change management. This narrative review, focused on the healthcare sector and informed by a global perspective, aims to illuminate the multifaceted challenges and opportunities of ITCM. Through the synthesis of existing research and the identification of knowledge gaps, it aspires to provide a robust foundation for future inquiry and practical innovation in the field.

METHOD

This study adopts a structured narrative review methodology to systematically explore the literature surrounding IT-enabled change management, particularly focusing on its implementation across diverse organizational and healthcare contexts. The aim is to synthesize current knowledge, identify critical challenges, and highlight areas for future research. The methodology employed in this review ensures transparency, replicability, and academic rigor, thus aligning with the standards of reputable academic publications.

The literature search strategy was developed by combining carefully selected keywords, synonyms, and Boolean operators to yield a comprehensive pool of relevant studies. Primary databases utilized for literature retrieval included Scopus, Google Scholar, PubMed, and Web of Science. These databases were selected based on their extensive coverage of peer-reviewed journals and academic sources across interdisciplinary domains such as management science, healthcare systems, and information technology. The search incorporated variations and synonymous expressions to capture the broad scope of the topic. For instance, the terms "IT-enabled change

management", "technology-driven change", "information technology adoption", "digital transformation", "organizational change", and "health IT management" were employed interchangeably. Boolean operators such as AND, OR, and NOT were integrated into the search syntax to filter results precisely. A typical search string included combinations like "IT-enabled change management" AND "healthcare" OR "digital transformation" AND "organizational performance". This strategic approach allowed for a thorough identification of studies that aligned with the objectives of the review (Handley et al., 2015; Odusanya et al., 2021).

The inclusion criteria were formulated to ensure the relevance and quality of the literature incorporated into the review. Studies eligible for inclusion had to meet several key conditions. First, they must be published in peer-reviewed journals between 2013 and 2023 to reflect the most recent developments in IT-enabled change management. Second, the studies must be empirical research articles, case studies, or literature reviews that directly address the implementation of IT systems within organizational change initiatives. Furthermore, the review favored studies that provide insights into managerial approaches, stakeholder engagement, system integration, and outcomes of IT-enabled transformations. Studies encompassing both developed and developing country contexts were considered to facilitate a comparative perspective on challenges and enablers across different socioeconomic and technological infrastructures (Odusanya et al., 2021; Mikkelsen & Aaltonen, 2022).

Exclusion criteria were equally essential to refine the selection process and maintain the focus of the review. Studies that did not address the intersection of information technology and organizational change were excluded. For example, research focused solely on technical aspects of information systems without discussing their organizational implications was omitted. Additionally, articles not published in English were excluded to ensure consistent interpretation and analysis of findings. Grey literature, such as government reports or policy documents without clear methodological frameworks, was also excluded due to concerns over academic rigor and reproducibility. This filtering process helped maintain the analytical integrity of the review and ensured that the included literature was both conceptually and empirically grounded (Soltany et al., 2018; Kaur et al., 2018).

The study selection process was conducted in several stages to enhance objectivity and reduce bias. Initially, all search results were exported into a reference management software where duplicates were removed. Titles and abstracts were screened independently by the reviewers to assess their relevance based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria. Articles that passed the abstract screening were subjected to a full-text review. During the full-text assessment, the reviewers evaluated methodological quality, relevance to IT-enabled change management, and contribution to the understanding of key issues in digital transformation. Any discrepancies in judgment between reviewers were resolved through discussion and consensus.

The types of studies included in this review encompassed a variety of research methodologies. Quantitative studies such as randomized controlled trials, surveys, and cohort studies were analyzed to understand measurable outcomes of IT change interventions. Qualitative studies, including case studies, ethnographies, and interviews, were assessed for their depth of insight into

stakeholder experiences, organizational culture, and change dynamics. Mixed-method studies provided integrative perspectives on both measurable and experiential dimensions of IT-enabled change. This methodological diversity contributed to a more holistic understanding of how change is managed across different contexts.

Throughout the literature screening and synthesis process, attention was paid to recurring themes and emergent patterns. Studies were grouped according to their thematic relevance, including stakeholder engagement, leadership and governance, implementation challenges, user resistance, and evaluation of IT impacts. This thematic categorization enabled a structured and comprehensive analysis of the literature. Emphasis was placed on studies that offered actionable insights, frameworks, or models for facilitating successful IT-enabled change in complex organizational settings.

In conclusion, this methodological approach to literature review—anchored in systematic search strategies, clearly defined inclusion and exclusion criteria, rigorous selection procedures, and thematic synthesis—ensures that the findings presented in the subsequent sections are robust, contextually relevant, and theoretically informed. The methodology not only supports the identification of existing knowledge but also establishes a strong foundation for future research in IT-enabled change management within both healthcare and broader organizational contexts.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this narrative review have been systematically organized into four major thematic areas that emerged consistently from the analyzed literature: organizational factors, technological factors, human resources, and global perspectives on IT-enabled change management. Each theme encompasses specific sub-concerns and insights that inform the broader discussion on how organizations can effectively implement technology-driven transformation initiatives.

A. Organizational Factors

Organizational readiness and leadership are pivotal in determining the success or failure of IT-enabled change management. The literature highlights that organizations with adaptive and innovative cultures are more likely to support the adoption of new technologies. According to Sahel et al. (2015), management support and stakeholder engagement are fundamental to reinforcing staff commitment during transformation processes. The perception of strong managerial backing enhances employees' trust in the change process and fosters collaborative engagement. In parallel, visionary leadership enables the execution of sound decision-making and motivates team members to align with the organization’s strategic direction.

Furthermore, Joskowski et al. (2023) explore the application of Agile methodologies in IT project management. While Agile promotes coordination and responsiveness, the authors argue that its effectiveness in managing complex IT projects remains underexplored. This gap underscores the necessity for contextual customization of Agile practices in highly dynamic and multifaceted projects.

Empirical evidence suggests a clear linkage between organizational preparedness and the outcome of technology adoption. Handley et al. (2015) found that early and continuous stakeholder involvement throughout program development improved adoption rates and program outcomes. Mikkelsen and Aaltonen (2022) further emphasize the requirement for robust tools and metrics to measure project complexity, asserting that preparedness correlates strongly with successful complexity management in IT implementation.

B. Technological Factors

The second core theme pertains to the role of digital technologies in facilitating change. Health information systems, telemedicine platforms, and project management software have been prominently featured in recent change initiatives. The COVID-19 pandemic, in particular, served as a catalyst for the widespread adoption of telemedicine. Hoffman et al. (2020) report the effectiveness of such platforms through metrics like user satisfaction, usage rates, and patient health outcomes. For instance, the sharp rise in virtual consultations and reduced in-person visits demonstrate the technology's capacity to deliver scalable, patient-centered care.

Nevertheless, technical challenges continue to plague implementation efforts. These include complex system integration, limited interoperability between digital platforms, and user resistance. Odusanya et al. (2021) assert that such complexities often hinder project performance, especially when diverse stakeholder needs are not adequately harmonized. Additionally, Kaur et al. (2018) discuss the detrimental effects of resistance to new technologies, noting that change management must incorporate strategies to foster acceptance and mitigate friction.

These findings stress the dual role of technology as both an enabler and a potential barrier. Understanding the technical limitations and investing in scalable, interoperable systems are critical for organizations aiming to enhance the effectiveness of IT-enabled change processes.

C. Human Resource Factors

Human capital plays an indispensable role in the success of IT-enabled transformation. Employee digital competence, training initiatives, and attitudinal openness to change influence the adoption trajectory. Klaus et al. (2015) argue that employee readiness to accept IT innovations is closely tied to training quality and the adequacy of preparatory support. Employees who perceive the transition as an opportunity for skill development rather than a threat are more likely to engage proactively.

Resistance to change, however, remains a recurring obstacle. Uncertainty and fear surrounding new systems often result in passive or active opposition. Effective change management must therefore include psychological support, transparent communication, and participatory strategies to address resistance constructively.

Empirical findings further corroborate the impact of human resource development on project success. Handley et al. (2015) demonstrate that stakeholder participation enhances engagement and implementation outcomes. Similarly, Kaur et al. (2018) provide evidence that continuous professional development positively influences the successful deployment of health IT interventions, ultimately improving health metrics across populations. These insights underscore the need for ongoing investment in workforce capacity building as a foundational element of digital transformation.

D. Global Perspectives and Cross-Country Comparison

Comparative studies reveal stark contrasts in the implementation of IT-enabled change between developed and developing nations. Developed countries generally benefit from advanced technological infrastructure, highly skilled personnel, and stronger institutional support, which collectively facilitate smoother transitions. For instance, Castaño et al. (2023) document how high-income nations have effectively integrated health IT systems to streamline patient management, contrasting sharply with the infrastructural and educational limitations faced by lower-income countries.

Odusanya et al. (2021) emphasize that in developing contexts, complexities are exacerbated by inadequate access to technology and insufficient training opportunities. These constraints often result in fragmented implementations and limited long-term success. This calls for context-sensitive approaches that align implementation strategies with local capacities and challenges.

Best practices from international case studies suggest several pathways to improve IT-enabled change outcomes. Mikkelsen and Aaltonen (2022) advocate for the development of adaptive metrics and management tools designed to address project complexity, with an emphasis on leadership involvement and inclusive staff participation. Programs in countries like the UK and Canada serve as exemplars, demonstrating how cohesive governance, skill-based training, and stakeholder-centric communication can lead to successful digital transformation in healthcare.

Taken together, these cross-national insights highlight the necessity of tailoring change management frameworks to specific socio-economic and cultural settings. Understanding the interplay between local constraints and global standards can help build more resilient and responsive systems.

In conclusion, the results of this narrative review delineate a multidimensional landscape where organizational culture, technological capability, human competence, and geopolitical context converge to influence IT-enabled change management. Future initiatives should incorporate holistic strategies that address these interdependent factors to foster sustainable and impactful transformation.

The findings from this narrative review provide strong empirical and theoretical confirmation that IT-enabled change management is a complex, multi-dimensional process shaped by organizational, technological, and human resource factors. These findings reinforce earlier assertions in the literature regarding the critical role of organizational readiness and leadership in facilitating technology-driven transformations, particularly within healthcare settings.

The alignment with Handley et al. (2015) becomes evident when assessing how stakeholder engagement influences implementation outcomes. Their work underlines the significance of involving stakeholders from the early stages of program development to improve technological adoption and program quality. The present review extends this argument by emphasizing that stakeholder engagement alone is insufficient without systemic integration into organizational culture, a theme often overlooked in implementation science. Odusanya et al. (2021) added depth to this discourse by introducing project complexity as a crucial barrier that can undermine the success of IT-enabled change initiatives. While much of the prior literature focuses on technology

evaluation or implementation strategies in isolation, this review argues for a multi-level interaction framework—highlighting how organizational dynamics, leadership commitment, and strategic alignment coalesce to foster or impede successful transformation.

From a systemic perspective, structural uncertainties in project objectives and deliverables remain a persistent challenge. Mikkelsen and Aaltonen (2022) emphasized how ambiguity in project goals leads to miscommunication and confusion among stakeholders, impairing coordination and progress. This review supports that viewpoint and links it to broader governance failures in change management. Uncertainty in deliverables is not merely a technical flaw but often a reflection of inadequate change governance and risk anticipation mechanisms. Such systemic weaknesses can create cascading failures in technology deployment, a pattern also reflected in failed public sector digitalization efforts globally. The correlation between managerial support and implementation success, as identified by Sahel et al. (2015), reinforces the need for robust top-down and bottom-up alignment. The review further demonstrates that successful adoption requires not only managerial backing but a distributed leadership model that empowers middle managers and technical leads to act as change agents.

Technological complexity, interoperability issues, and user resistance emerged as central themes obstructing IT change initiatives. Odusanya et al. (2021) underscored that technology projects often involve divergent stakeholder expectations, resulting in conflicting goals and communication breakdowns. These technological and organizational interdependencies suggest that successful implementation hinges on precise systems integration and transparent communication protocols. Additionally, the empirical work by Hoffman et al. (2020) on telemedicine effectiveness illustrates that even well-designed technologies can fall short without user buy-in. Their findings on patient satisfaction and platform usage metrics underscore that digital systems must be co-designed with end-user needs at the forefront.

Addressing these issues calls for context-specific technological solutions. Kaur et al. (2018) argue for the integration of adaptive learning systems and personalized training to increase digital literacy and reduce resistance. This approach resonates with this review's findings that investment in human capital is pivotal. Klaus et al. (2015) supported this view, noting that training tailored to organizational roles improves change acceptance. Yet, many reviewed studies neglected to quantify training outcomes or tie them directly to performance metrics, revealing a key gap in implementation research. This limits the ability to scale successful interventions across institutions or regions.

The disparities between developed and developing nations further illuminate systemic inequalities in IT-enabled change management. Castaño et al. (2023) showed that healthcare systems in high-income countries exhibit smoother technology integration due to mature infrastructure and skilled workforces. Conversely, in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), implementation hurdles are magnified by weak ICT infrastructure, insufficient training programs, and limited fiscal capacity. Odusanya et al. (2021) echoed these challenges in their analysis of healthcare systems in Nigeria, where stakeholder disengagement and unreliable IT systems significantly derailed project goals. The success stories from the UK and Canada—noted for stakeholder-centered design and continuous training pipelines—present a benchmark. However, these models may require

contextual modification to be viable in LMICs, where socio-political conditions and funding mechanisms differ considerably.

Despite recurring emphasis on stakeholder involvement, the discussion reveals that most studies offer limited insights into sustaining long-term engagement. While early participation is widely advocated (Handley et al., 2015), sustaining motivation and alignment through project evolution remains understudied. A potential solution lies in the institutionalization of feedback loops that inform iterative development. Mikkelsen and Aaltonen (2022) propose the use of complexity measurement tools that adapt to organizational change trajectories. Their proposal has merit, though the practical application of such tools remains sparse in empirical literature.

This review identifies several potential solutions for overcoming existing barriers. Cross-functional team formation, as a strategy for reducing departmental silos, is broadly supported by empirical evidence (Kaur et al., 2018). These teams not only encourage diverse perspectives but also facilitate integrated decision-making, which is essential for navigating complexity. Another recommendation includes the use of agile management frameworks like Scrum. While Joskowski et al. (2023) argue that Agile methodologies enhance coordination, they also acknowledge that successful application requires an organizational culture supportive of flexibility and continuous learning. This review supports these claims and proposes that hybrid governance models that blend agile techniques with traditional oversight may offer a practical path forward in large-scale projects.

Furthermore, there is a critical need to link IT-enabled change to outcome-based evaluation frameworks. Too often, success is measured by technology deployment rather than service quality improvement or stakeholder satisfaction. Hoffman et al. (2020) illustrate the utility of performance indicators such as user satisfaction scores and platform utilization rates. This discussion advocates for embedding such KPIs into the core of change evaluation strategies, thereby aligning technological interventions with organizational mission and societal value.

A notable limitation in the current literature is the lack of longitudinal studies that track the sustainability of change initiatives beyond the implementation phase. Most evidence focuses on short-term outcomes, leaving a significant knowledge gap on long-term institutional adaptation. Mikkelsen and Aaltonen (2022) recognize this limitation and suggest a systems-thinking approach that accommodates both immediate and delayed effects of technology adoption. Similarly, studies rarely assess the unintended consequences of IT-enabled change, such as increased workload, job role ambiguity, or cybersecurity risks, which may erode initial benefits over time.

Finally, further research should explore the intersectionality of organizational culture, stakeholder diversity, and digital transformation. While individual studies address these elements separately, few integrate them into a cohesive analytical model. Exploring how organizational values, team dynamics, and digital fluency collectively influence change outcomes could yield deeper insights. Moreover, comparative studies across sectors—such as healthcare, education, and public administration—can elucidate domain-specific challenges and transferable practices. As digitalization continues to redefine institutional norms globally, building a more inclusive and adaptive knowledge base will be essential for advancing both theory and practice in IT-enabled change management.

CONCLUSION

This review underscores the centrality of IT-enabled change management in driving digital transformation, particularly in healthcare. It contributes an integrative framework that links organizational readiness, technological adaptability, and human capital development across diverse contexts. Unlike prior reviews, this study emphasizes the interaction between organizational complexity and ITCM outcomes, especially in LMIC settings.

Practical implications include the need for leadership development, cross-functional governance, and targeted training programs tailored to local capacity. Policymakers should adopt context-sensitive strategies that align with infrastructural realities in resource-constrained environments.

Future research should employ longitudinal designs and system-dynamics approaches to capture the sustainability and unintended consequences of IT-enabled change. Such approaches can deepen understanding of how organizations adapt over time and provide actionable pathways for more resilient digital transformation.

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