International Research Journal of Business and Social Science

Volume: 12 Issue: 3
April-June, 2026
ISSN:2411-3646

KMF Publishers

http://irjbss.net/

International Research Journal of Business and Social Science
Volume: 12, Issue: 3, 2026

DOI: https://doi.org/10.64907/xkmf.v12i3.irjbss.8

Research Article

http://irjbss.net/

OPEN ACCESS

Navigating Change Management in Fashion Retail Digitisation: A Qualitative Exploration

Jubaida Binte Tanhiyat[1*]; Anju Akter Tiya[1]; Kazi Abdul Mannan[2]
[1*]Department of Fashion Design & Technology
[2]Department of Business Administration
Shanto-Mariam University of Creative Technology, Uttara, Dhaka, Bangladesh

ABSTRACT

The rapid digitisation of the fashion retail industry has necessitated significant organisational transformation, making effective change management a critical success factor. This study explores how fashion retailers navigate change management in the context of digital transformation, focusing on leadership, organisational culture, employee adaptation, and technological integration. Adopting a qualitative research design based on secondary data, the study synthesises insights from academic literature, industry reports, and documented case studies. The analysis is grounded in established theoretical frameworks, including Lewin's Change Management Model, Kotter's 8-Step Model, and the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), providing a multidimensional understanding of change processes. The findings indicate that successful digital transformation depends on strategic leadership, a supportive organisational culture, continuous employee development, and effective integration of digital technologies. However, challenges such as resistance to change, skill gaps, and legacy systems remain significant barriers. The study contributes to the literature by offering a comprehensive perspective on managing digital transformation in fashion retail and provides practical implications for managers seeking to implement sustainable change strategies.

ARTICLE HISTORY
Received 20 May 2026
Revised 25 June 2026
Accepted 30 June 2026

KEYWORDS
Change management; digital transformation; fashion retail; organizational culture; technology adoption; qualitative research

CONTACT Jubaida Binte Tanhiyat, Email: jubaidatanhiyat@gmail.com

1. Introduction

The fashion retail industry has undergone a profound transformation in recent years, driven by technological innovation, shifting consumer behaviours, and global competition. Digital tools such as e-commerce platforms, artificial intelligence (AI), big data analytics, and omnichannel retailing have reshaped traditional business models (McKinsey & Company, 2022). These changes require organisations to adopt effective change management strategies to remain competitive and sustainable.

Change management in fashion retail digitisation is particularly complex due to the industry's dynamic nature, short product life cycles, and strong reliance on creativity and human capital (Kapferer & Bastien, 2012). Unlike other industries, fashion retail combines artistic expression with commercial imperatives, making organisational transformation both strategic and cultural.

Despite the growing importance of digital transformation, many fashion retailers struggle with implementation. Resistance from employees, lack of digital skills, and misalignment between strategy and execution often hinder successful change (Verhoef et al., 2021). Therefore, understanding how organisations manage change in this context is critical.

This study aims to explore the processes, challenges, and success factors of change management in fashion retail digitisation using a qualitative approach based on secondary data.

2. Literature Review

The literature on digital transformation and change management provides a critical foundation for understanding the evolving dynamics of the fashion retail industry. As digital technologies reshape business models and consumer behaviour, organisations are compelled to adapt through strategic and structural changes. Existing studies highlight the importance of omnichannel retailing, customer-centric innovation, and organisational agility in navigating digital disruption (Vial, 2019; Verhoef et al., 2021). This section reviews key scholarly contributions on digital transformation, consumer behaviour, organisational change, and cultural adaptation, establishing the conceptual basis for analysing how fashion retailers manage the complexities of digitalisation.

2.1 Conceptualising Digital Transformation in Fashion Retail

Digital transformation has emerged as a central paradigm in contemporary business research, referring to the integration of digital technologies into organisational processes, structures, and value creation mechanisms (Vial, 2019). In the context of fashion retail, digital transformation is not merely technological adoption but a strategic reorientation that reshapes how firms design, produce, market, and deliver fashion products.

The fashion retail industry is particularly susceptible to digital disruption due to its reliance on fast-changing consumer preferences, seasonal cycles, and globalised supply chains (Hagberg et al., 2016).

Technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), big data analytics, augmented reality (AR), and mobile commerce have enabled retailers to enhance operational efficiency and customer engagement. For instance, AI-driven demand forecasting allows retailers to optimise inventory management, reducing waste and improving responsiveness to market trends (Grewal et al., 2020).

Moreover, the emergence of e-commerce and mobile platforms has transformed traditional retail models. Consumers now expect seamless, personalised, and omnichannel shopping experiences, which has compelled fashion retailers to integrate online and offline channels (Brynjolfsson et al., 2013). This shift has redefined competitive dynamics, emphasising speed, convenience, and customer-centricity.

2.2 Omnichannel Retailing and Consumer Behaviour

Omnichannel retailing represents a significant evolution in retail strategy, where multiple channels are integrated to provide a unified customer experience. Unlike multichannel retailing, which operates channels independently, omnichannel strategies focus on synchronisation and consistency across touchpoints (Verhoef et al., 2015).

In fashion retail, omnichannel approaches have become essential due to the experiential nature of fashion consumption. Consumers often engage in "webrooming" (researching online and purchasing offline) or "showrooming" (examining products in-store before buying online) (Brynjolfsson et al., 2013). These behaviours necessitate a seamless integration of digital and physical channels.

Digital technologies also enable personalisation, which is a key driver of consumer satisfaction and loyalty. Through data analytics, retailers can tailor product recommendations, marketing messages, and shopping experiences to individual preferences (Grewal et al., 2020). However, this requires sophisticated data management systems and raises concerns about privacy and data security.

2.3 Organisational Change and Digital Transformation

Digital transformation is inherently linked to organisational change. It involves not only the adoption of new technologies but also changes in organisational structures, processes, and cultures (Vial, 2019). As such, change management becomes a critical factor in determining the success of digital initiatives.

Traditional change management literature emphasises the importance of leadership, communication, and employee engagement (Burnes, 2020). However, digital transformation introduces additional complexities, such as rapid technological advancements, increased uncertainty, and the need for continuous adaptation.

In the fashion retail context, organisational change is particularly challenging due to the industry's creative orientation and reliance on human capital. Employees may resist digital transformation due to fear of losing creative autonomy or being replaced by technology (Kapferer & Bastien, 2012). Therefore, managing the human aspects of change is crucial.

2.4 Barriers to Digital Transformation in Fashion Retail

Despite the potential benefits of digital transformation, many fashion retailers face significant barriers. One of the primary challenges is resistance to change, which can arise from both individual and organisational factors (Kotter, 1996). Employees may be reluctant to adopt new technologies due to a lack of skills, fear of job loss, or scepticism about the benefits of change.

Another major barrier is the presence of legacy systems. Many established fashion retailers operate with outdated IT infrastructures that are incompatible with modern digital technologies (Verhoef et al., 2021). Upgrading these systems requires substantial investment and poses operational risks.

Additionally, the fast-paced nature of the fashion industry creates pressure for rapid implementation, which can lead to poorly planned and executed transformation initiatives. This highlights the importance of strategic planning and phased implementation.

2.5 Role of Organisational Culture in Digital Transformation

Organisational culture plays a pivotal role in shaping the outcomes of digital transformation. A culture that fosters innovation, collaboration, and learning is more conducive to change (Schein, 2010). In contrast, rigid and hierarchical cultures may hinder transformation efforts.

Research suggests that successful digital transformation requires a shift toward a more agile and customer-centric culture (Verhoef et al., 2021). This involves breaking down silos, encouraging cross-functional collaboration, and promoting a mindset of continuous improvement.

In fashion retail, cultural transformation is particularly important due to the industry's emphasis on creativity and brand identity. Balancing tradition with innovation is a key challenge for many organisations.

2.6 Emerging Trends and Future Directions

The literature indicates that digital transformation in fashion retail is an ongoing process, driven by emerging technologies and evolving consumer expectations. Technologies such as blockchain, virtual reality, and the Internet of Things (IoT) are expected to further transform the industry (Grewal et al., 2020).

Sustainability is also becoming a critical consideration, with digital technologies enabling more transparent and efficient supply chains. Consumers are increasingly demanding ethical and sustainable practices, which have implications for digital transformation strategies.

Overall, the literature highlights the complexity of digital transformation in fashion retail and underscores the importance of effective change management in navigating this process.

3. Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded in three key theoretical frameworks: Lewin's Change Management Model, Kotter's 8-Step Change Model, and the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). These frameworks provide complementary perspectives on organisational change and technology adoption, enabling a comprehensive analysis of digital transformation in fashion retail.

3.1 Lewin's Change Management Model

Lewin's (1947) model is one of the earliest and most influential theories of organisational change. It conceptualises change as a three-stage process: unfreezing, changing, and refreezing.

The unfreezing stage involves preparing the organisation for change by challenging existing beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours. In the context of fashion retail digitisation, this may involve recognising the limitations of traditional retail models and creating awareness of the need for digital transformation.

The changing stage involves the implementation of new processes, technologies, and behaviours. This stage is characterised by uncertainty and requires strong leadership and support mechanisms. In fashion retail, this may include adopting e-commerce platforms, implementing data analytics tools, and restructuring organisational processes.

The refreezing stage involves stabilising the changes and integrating them into the organisational culture. This stage is critical for ensuring the sustainability of digital transformation initiatives. However, in dynamic industries such as fashion retail, continuous change may challenge the notion of refreezing, suggesting the need for more flexible approaches (Burnes, 2020).

3.2 Kotter's 8-Step Change Model

Kotter (1996) expanded on Lewin's model by providing a more detailed and actionable framework for managing change. His 8-step model includes:

- Establishing a sense of urgency
- Forming a guiding coalition
- Developing a vision and strategy
- Communicating the change vision
- Empowering employees for action
- Generating short-term wins
- Consolidating gains and producing more change
- Anchoring new approaches in the culture

This model emphasises the role of leadership and communication in driving change. In the context of fashion retail digitisation, Kotter's framework is particularly relevant for managing large-scale transformation initiatives.

For example, creating a sense of urgency is essential in responding to digital disruption, while short-term wins can help build momentum and demonstrate the value of digital initiatives. However, critics argue that the model's linear structure may not fully capture the iterative nature of digital transformation (Appelbaum et al., 2012).

3.3 Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)

The Technology Acceptance Model (Davis, 1989) focuses on individual-level factors influencing technology adoption. According to TAM, two key variables determine user acceptance:

- **Perceived usefulness**: The extent to which a person believes that using a technology will enhance their performance
- **Perceived ease of use**: The extent to which a person believes that using a technology will be free of effort

In fashion retail digitisation, TAM is particularly relevant for understanding employee adoption of digital tools. Employees are more likely to embrace new technologies if they perceive them as beneficial and easy to use.

TAM also highlights the importance of training and system design in facilitating adoption. User-friendly interfaces and adequate support can enhance perceived ease of use, while demonstrating tangible benefits can increase perceived usefulness.

3.4 Integrative Framework for the Study

By integrating these three frameworks, this study provides a holistic understanding of change management in fashion retail digitisation. Lewin's model offers a macro-level perspective on the stages of change, Kotter's model provides practical guidance for managing the change process, and TAM explains individual-level technology adoption.

This integrative approach allows for a comprehensive analysis of both organisational and human dimensions of digital transformation. It also highlights the interdependence between structural, cultural, and technological factors, emphasising the need for a systemic approach to change management.

4. Research Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative research methodology to explore change management in fashion retail digitisation. Given the complexity of organisational transformation, a qualitative approach enables an in-depth understanding of underlying processes and contextual factors (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The research is based on secondary data, including academic literature, industry reports, and case studies, allowing for a comprehensive synthesis of existing knowledge. A thematic analysis technique is employed to identify key patterns and insights across the data. This methodological approach ensures analytical rigour while providing a holistic perspective on digital transformation practices in the fashion retail sector.

4.1 Research Design

This study adopts a qualitative research design grounded in the interpretivist paradigm to explore change management processes in fashion retail digitisation. Qualitative research is particularly appropriate for examining complex organisational phenomena, as it enables in-depth understanding of social, cultural, and behavioural dynamics (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Given that digital transformation involves multifaceted interactions between technology, organisational structures, and human actors, a qualitative approach allows for a nuanced exploration of these interdependencies.

The study specifically employs a secondary data-based qualitative methodology, which involves the systematic analysis of existing literature, industry reports, and documented case studies. Secondary data analysis is increasingly recognised as a valuable method in organisational research, particularly when primary data collection is constrained by time, resources, or access limitations (Johnston, 2017). In the context of this research, secondary data provides a rich and diverse source of insights into change management practices across different fashion retail organisations.

4.2 Data Sources and Selection Criteria

The data for this study were collected from multiple secondary sources to ensure comprehensiveness and credibility. These sources include:

- Peer-reviewed academic journal articles
- Books and scholarly publications
- Industry reports (e.g., McKinsey & Company, Deloitte, PwC)
- Case studies of leading fashion retailers
- Conference proceedings and white papers

A systematic selection process was employed to identify relevant sources. Inclusion criteria were based on:

- Relevance to digital transformation or change management
- Focus on retail or fashion-related industries
- Publication in reputable academic journals or by recognised organisations
- Recency (primarily sources published within the last 10–15 years, with foundational theories included regardless of date)

Exclusion criteria included non-scholarly sources, outdated materials lacking contemporary relevance, and studies with insufficient methodological rigour.

4.3 Data Analysis Technique: Thematic Analysis

The study utilises thematic analysis as the primary analytical method. Thematic analysis is a widely used qualitative technique for identifying, analysing, and interpreting patterns within data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). It is particularly suitable for secondary data analysis, as it allows for the synthesis of diverse sources into coherent themes.

The analysis followed a six-step process:

- **Familiarisation with data:** Extensive reading and review of selected sources
- **Initial coding:** Identification of recurring concepts and ideas

- **Searching for themes:** Grouping codes into broader thematic categories
- **Reviewing themes:** Refining and validating themes for consistency
- **Defining and naming themes:** Developing clear definitions and labels
- **Interpretation:** Linking themes to theoretical frameworks and research objectives

This systematic approach ensures analytical rigour and transparency in the research process.

4.4 Theoretical Integration

To enhance the analytical depth, the study integrates findings with established theoretical frameworks, including Lewin's Change Management Model, Kotter's 8-Step Model, and the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). This theoretical triangulation enables a comprehensive understanding of both organisational and individual dimensions of change (Vial, 2019).

By mapping empirical insights onto these frameworks, the study identifies how theoretical concepts manifest in real-world contexts, thereby bridging the gap between theory and practice.

4.5 Reliability and Validity

Ensuring the trustworthiness of qualitative research is critical. This study employs several strategies to enhance reliability and validity:

- **Data triangulation:** Using multiple sources to corroborate findings (Creswell & Poth, 2018)
- **Transparency:** documentation of data collection and analysis
- **Consistency:** Applying systematic coding and thematic analysis procedures
- **Credibility:** of peer-reviewed and reputable sources

Additionally, the study maintains analytical rigour by critically evaluating sources and avoiding bias in interpretation.

4.6 Ethical Considerations

As the study is based on secondary data, it does not involve direct interaction with human participants. However, ethical considerations remain. All sources are properly cited following APA (7th edition) guidelines to ensure academic integrity and avoid plagiarism.

Furthermore, the study ensures that all interpretations accurately represent the original authors' perspectives, maintaining scholarly responsibility (Mannan & Farhana, 2026).

4.7 Limitations of the Methodology

Despite its strengths, the chosen methodology has certain limitations. First, reliance on secondary data may limit the depth of context-specific insights, as the researcher does not have direct control over data collection. Second, the findings are dependent on the quality and scope of existing literature, which may introduce bias.

Additionally, the absence of primary data means that the study cannot capture real-time organisational dynamics or employee perspectives. Future research could address these limitations by incorporating primary data collection methods such as interviews or surveys.

5. Findings and Analysis

The thematic analysis of secondary data reveals that change management in fashion retail digitisation is shaped by five interrelated dimensions: leadership and strategic vision, organisational culture, employee resistance and skill transformation, technological integration, and customer-centric innovation. These themes collectively illustrate the complexity of managing digital transformation in a highly dynamic and creative industry.

5.1 Leadership and Strategic Vision

Leadership emerges as the most critical determinant of successful change management. Effective leaders not only articulate a compelling vision for digital transformation but also align organisational resources and capabilities toward achieving it. According to Kotter (1996), creating a sense of urgency and forming a guiding coalition are foundational steps in managing change, which are particularly relevant in the fast-paced fashion retail sector.

Empirical insights from industry reports indicate that organisations with digitally literate leadership are more likely to succeed in transformation initiatives (McKinsey & Company, 2022). Leaders in fashion retail must navigate a dual challenge: maintaining brand identity and creativity while embracing data-driven decision-making. This requires a hybrid leadership style that integrates transformational and adaptive leadership approaches.

Moreover, leadership communication plays a pivotal role in reducing uncertainty and fostering trust. Transparent communication about the goals, benefits, and implications of digital transformation helps employees understand the necessity of change, thereby reducing resistance (Burnes, 2020). Leaders who actively engage with employees and encourage feedback create a more inclusive and participatory change environment.

5.2 Organisational Culture and Change Readiness

Organisational culture significantly influences the success or failure of digital transformation initiatives. A culture that promotes innovation, experimentation, and continuous learning enhances an organisation's readiness for change (Schein, 2010). In contrast, rigid and hierarchical cultures often hinder transformation efforts.

The analysis reveals that many traditional fashion retailers struggle with cultural inertia. Established norms, legacy practices, and resistance to new ways of working create barriers to digital adoption. This aligns with Lewin's (1947) concept of "unfreezing," where existing mindsets must be challenged before new behaviours can be adopted.

Digital transformation requires a shift from product-centric to customer-centric thinking, which necessitates cultural change at all organisational levels. Companies that successfully implement this shift often invest in internal communication campaigns, cross-functional collaboration, and innovation labs to foster a culture of agility (Verhoef et al., 2021).

Furthermore, the role of middle management is critical in translating strategic vision into operational practices. Middle managers act as change agents, bridging the gap between top leadership and frontline employees. Their support and engagement are essential for embedding digital practices into daily operations.

Additionally, employee engagement strategies, such as involving employees in decision-making and recognising their contributions, help reduce resistance and increase commitment to change. Participatory approaches not only enhance acceptance but also foster a sense of ownership among employees.

5.3 Employee Resistance and Skill Transformation

Employee resistance is identified as a major challenge in change management. Resistance often stems from fear of job displacement, lack of digital skills, and uncertainty about the future (Burnes, 2020). In fashion retail, where many employees are accustomed to traditional retail practices, adapting to digital tools can be particularly challenging.

The Technology Acceptance Model (Davis, 1989) provides a useful framework for understanding employee behaviour. The findings indicate that employees are more likely to adopt digital technologies when they perceive them as useful and easy to use. Therefore, organisations must focus on enhancing both the functionality and usability of digital systems.

Skill gaps are another significant barrier. Digital transformation requires new competencies such as data analytics, digital marketing, and e-commerce management. Organisations that invest in training and development programs are better positioned to overcome these challenges. Continuous learning initiatives, including workshops, online courses, and mentoring programs, play a crucial role in building digital capabilities.

5.4 Technological Integration and Infrastructure

Technological integration is a complex and resource-intensive process. Fashion retailers often operate with legacy systems that are not compatible with modern digital technologies. Integrating these systems requires significant investment and strategic planning (Verhoef et al., 2021).

The findings suggest that successful organisations adopt a phased approach to technology implementation. Instead of implementing large-scale changes at once, they introduce digital solutions incrementally, allowing time for adaptation and learning. This approach aligns with agile methodologies, which emphasise flexibility and iterative development.

Cloud computing, artificial intelligence, and big data analytics are among the key technologies driving digital transformation in fashion retail. These technologies enable organisations to enhance operational efficiency, improve supply chain management, and deliver personalised customer experiences (Grewal et al., 2020).

However, technological adoption also introduces risks, including cybersecurity threats and data privacy concerns. Organisations must implement robust governance frameworks to address these issues and ensure the safe and ethical use of digital technologies.

5.5 Customer-Centric Innovation and Omnichannel Strategy

Customer expectations are a primary driver of digital transformation in fashion retail. Modern consumers demand personalised, convenient, and seamless shopping experiences across multiple channels. This has led to the rise of omnichannel retailing, where online and offline channels are integrated to provide a unified customer experience (Brynjolfsson et al., 2013).

The analysis reveals that successful fashion retailers prioritise customer-centric strategies in their digital transformation efforts. They leverage data analytics to understand customer preferences and tailor their offerings accordingly. Personalisation, virtual fitting rooms, and mobile applications are some of the innovations enhancing customer engagement.

Moreover, social media platforms play a crucial role in shaping consumer behaviour and brand perception. Fashion retailers use these platforms to interact with customers, gather feedback, and promote products. This interactive approach strengthens customer relationships and enhances brand loyalty.

The shift toward customer-centricity also requires organisational changes, including restructuring processes and redefining roles. Employees must be trained to deliver consistent experiences across channels, and organisational silos must be eliminated to ensure seamless integration.

6. Discussion

The findings of this study underscore the multifaceted nature of change management in fashion retail digitisation. By integrating insights from the theoretical frameworks of Lewin (1947), Kotter (1996), and Davis (1989), this section provides a deeper interpretation of the results and highlights their implications for both theory and practice.

6.1 Interpreting Change Through Lewin's Model

Lewin's three-stage model, unfreezing, changing, and refreezing, offers a useful lens for understanding the transformation process. The findings indicate that many fashion retailers face significant challenges during the unfreezing stage, where existing mindsets and practices must be disrupted.

Cultural inertia and resistance to change often prevent organisations from effectively transitioning to the next stage. This highlights the importance of creating a strong sense of urgency and clearly communicating the need for change. Without successful unfreezing, digital transformation initiatives are likely to encounter resistance and fail to achieve their objectives.

The changing stage involves implementing new technologies and processes. The findings suggest that organisations adopting phased and agile approaches are more successful in this stage. These approaches allow for experimentation and continuous improvement, which are essential in a rapidly evolving industry.

The refreezing stage, where changes are institutionalised, appears to be the most challenging. Many organisations struggle to sustain digital initiatives due to a lack of reinforcement and alignment. This underscores the need for continuous monitoring, feedback, and adaptation to ensure long-term success.

6.2 Evaluating Kotter's 8-Step Model in Digital Contexts

Kotter's (1996) model provides a comprehensive framework for managing change, particularly in emphasising leadership, communication, and employee engagement. The findings align with several steps of the model, including the importance of creating urgency, building coalitions, and communicating vision.

However, the linear nature of Kotter's model may not fully capture the dynamic and iterative nature of digital transformation. In the fashion retail context, change is not a one-time event but an ongoing process that requires continuous adaptation. Therefore, organisations must adopt more flexible and iterative approaches to complement Kotter's framework.

Despite this limitation, Kotter's emphasis on short-term wins is particularly relevant. Achieving quick successes helps build momentum and demonstrate the value of digital transformation, thereby increasing employee buy-in and reducing resistance.

6.3 Technology Acceptance and Human Factors

The Technology Acceptance Model (Davis, 1989) provides valuable insights into the human aspects of digital transformation. The findings confirm that perceived usefulness and ease of use are key determinants of technology adoption among employees.

Organisations must therefore focus on designing user-friendly systems and providing adequate training to enhance perceived ease of use. Additionally, demonstrating the benefits of digital tools in improving job performance can increase perceived usefulness.

The study also highlights the importance of addressing emotional and psychological factors. Fear of job loss and uncertainty about the future can significantly impact employee attitudes toward change. Effective communication, support systems, and inclusive practices are essential for addressing these concerns.

6.4 Integrating Strategy, Culture, and Technology

One of the key insights from this study is the need for alignment between strategy, culture, and technology. Digital transformation is not merely a technological upgrade but a holistic organisational change that requires integration across multiple dimensions (Vial, 2019).

Organisations that fail to align these elements often experience fragmented and ineffective transformation efforts. For example, implementing advanced technologies without addressing cultural resistance can lead to low adoption rates and wasted resources.

Conversely, organisations that successfully integrate strategy, culture, and technology are better positioned to achieve sustainable transformation. This requires a systemic approach that considers the interdependencies between different organisational components.

6.5 Implications for the Fashion Retail Industry

The findings have several implications for fashion retailers. First, leadership development should be prioritised to ensure that leaders are equipped with the skills and knowledge required to manage digital transformation. Second, organisations must invest in building a culture of innovation and continuous learning.

Third, employee engagement should be a central component of change management strategies. Involving employees in the transformation process not only enhances acceptance but also leverages their insights and expertise.

Finally, organisations must adopt customer-centric approaches and leverage digital technologies to enhance customer experiences. This requires continuous monitoring of consumer trends and adapting strategies accordingly.

6.6 Contributions to Theory and Future Research Directions

This study contributes to the literature by integrating multiple theoretical frameworks to provide a comprehensive understanding of change management in fashion retail digitisation. It highlights the limitations of traditional models in dynamic digital contexts and emphasises the need for more flexible and adaptive approaches.

Future research could build on this study by conducting empirical investigations using primary data. Comparative studies across different regions and organisational contexts would also provide valuable insights. Additionally, exploring the role of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence and blockchain in shaping change management practices could further enrich the literature.

8. Conclusion

This study provides a comprehensive exploration of change management in the context of fashion retail digitisation, highlighting the complex interplay between technological innovation, organisational structures, and human factors. By employing a qualitative methodology based on secondary data, the research synthesises insights from academic literature and industry practices to identify key drivers and barriers of digital transformation.

The findings underscore the importance of leadership, organisational culture, employee engagement, and technological integration in managing change effectively. Leadership emerges as a critical factor in shaping vision, fostering trust, and guiding transformation efforts. Similarly, a supportive organisational culture that promotes innovation and continuous learning is essential for sustaining change (Schein, 2010).

The study also highlights the challenges associated with employee resistance and skill gaps, emphasising the need for training and inclusive change strategies. The integration of advanced technologies, while offering significant opportunities, requires careful planning and alignment with organisational goals (Verhoef et al., 2021).

The application of theoretical frameworks, Lewin's model, Kotter's model, and TAM, provides a holistic understanding of change management processes, demonstrating their relevance in contemporary digital contexts.

While this study contributes to the growing literature on digital transformation in fashion retail, several avenues for future research remain. First, empirical studies based on primary data could provide deeper insights into organisational practices and employee experiences. Qualitative interviews and case studies would be particularly valuable in capturing context-specific dynamics.

Second, future research could explore regional perspectives, particularly in emerging markets such as Bangladesh, where the fashion industry plays an economic role. Understanding how local contexts influence change management practices would enhance the generalizability of findings.

Third, the role of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, blockchain, and virtual reality in shaping change management processes warrants further investigation. These technologies are expected to redefine retail operations and consumer engagement, presenting new challenges and opportunities.

Finally, longitudinal studies could examine the long-term sustainability of digital transformation initiatives, providing insights into how organisations adapt to continuous change.

References

Appelbaum, S. H., Habashy, S., Malo, J. L., & Shafiq, H. (2012). Back to the future: Revisiting Kotter's 1996 change model. *Journal of Management Development, 31*(8), 764–782.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3*(2), 77–101.

Brynjolfsson, E., Hu, Y. J., & Rahman, M. S. (2013). Competing in the age of omnichannel retailing. *MIT Sloan Management Review, 54*(4), 23–29.

Burnes, B. (2020). *Managing change* (8th ed.). Pearson.

Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry and research design* (4th ed.). Sage.

Davis, F. D. (1989). Perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and user acceptance of information technology. *MIS Quarterly, 13*(3), 319–340.

Grewal, D., Roggeveen, A. L., & Nordfält, J. (2020). The future of retailing. *Journal of Retailing, 96*(1), 1–6.

Hagberg, J., Sundstrom, M., & Egels-Zandén, N. (2016). The digitalisation of retailing. *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management, 44*(7), 694–712.

Johnston, M. P. (2017). Secondary data analysis: A method whose time has come. *Qualitative and Quantitative Methods in Libraries, 3*(3), 619–626.

Kapferer, J.-N., & Bastien, V. (2012). *The luxury strategy*. Kogan Page.

Kotter, J. P. (1996). *Leading change*. Harvard Business School Press.

Lewin, K. (1947). Frontiers in group dynamics. *Human Relations, 1*(2), 143–153.

Mannan, K.A., & Farhana, K.M. (2026). *The Principles of Qur'anic Research Methodology: Deriving the Process of Knowledge from Revelation.* KMF Publishers. Open Access (CC BY 4.0). DOI: https://doi.org/10.64907/xkmf.book.pqrm.26.02.12

McKinsey & Company. (2022). *The state of fashion 2022*. McKinsey.

Schein, E. H. (2010). *Organisational culture and leadership* (4th ed.). Jossey-Bass.

Verhoef, P. C., Broekhuizen, T., Bart, Y., Bhattacharya, A., Dong, J. Q., Fabian, N., & Haenlein, M. (2021). Digital transformation. *Journal of Business Research, 122*, 889–901.

Vial, G. (2019). Understanding digital transformation. *Journal of Strategic Information Systems, 28*(2), 118–144.