

The Energy Transition: Exploring Change Management in Malaysia's Power Utilities

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ABSTRACT

Malaysia's decarbonization strategy is formally established through the National Energy Transition Roadmap (NETR) (Ministry of Economy, 2023) and the Malaysia Renewable Energy Roadmap (MyRER) (SEDA, 2021). These policies necessitate a structural shift from centralized fossil-fuel systems to decentralized renewable energy architectures, positioning power utilities as the primary executors of this transition. However, empirical data suggests a significant disparity between policy objectives and organizational readiness; PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC), 2024 reports that 59% of Malaysian corporations remain in the initial stages of transition, while 41% lack the cross-functional coordination and expertise required for implementation. The primary barriers to Malaysia's energy transition are not technological, but organizational. Progress is currently stifled by internal structural resistance, misaligned leadership, and deficient change management capabilities, all of which are compounded by a lack of workforce readiness. Despite the importance of these factors, the human-centric dimensions of the transition specifically leadership behavior, institutional culture, and employee engagement remain theoretically and empirically under explored. While existing scholarship extensively addresses technical and economic feasibility, it frequently neglects the critical organizational dimensions of change management. This study addresses the absence of a context-specific framework for managing internal shifts in leadership, culture, and employee readiness. Change management represents a critical enabler for the energy transition, as it modulates how organizations adapt to emerging technologies, regulatory frameworks, stakeholder expectations, and cultural norms. Prior research has highlighted persistent challenges such as institutional inertia, fragmented governance, inconsistent policy execution, and workforce resistance that collectively hinder progress in renewable energy deployment (Sovacool et al., 2020).

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