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BUSINESS PROCESS MANAGEMENT

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MASTER THESIS

<p>TRANSFORMACINĖS IR ĮGALINANČIOS LYDERYSTĖS ĮTAKA DARBUOTOJŲ ATSAKUI Į POKYČIUS MEDIJUOJANT PASITIKĖJIMUI LYDERIAIS IR MODERUOJANT SUVOKIAMAM ORGANIZACINIAM PALAIKYMUI</p>	<p>THE IMPACT OF TRANSFORMATIONAL AND EMPOWERING LEADERSHIP ON EMPLOYEE RESPONSE TO CHANGE: MEDIATING ROLE OF TRUST IN LEADERSHIP AND MODERATING ROLE OF PERCEIVED ORGANISATIONAL SUPPORT</p>
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INTRODUCTION

Relevance of the topic. In today's rapidly changing environment, organisations are required to continuously adapt to changing market conditions, technological evolution, rising stakeholder and client expectations, as well as the hardships they experience internally. Change is an inevitable part of organisational life (Armenakis and Harris, 2009). The digital transformation and the rising influence of artificial intelligence (AI) push organisations to adapt and implement new processes and technologies to enhance efficiency and remain competitive. Therefore, now more than ever, it is crucial for all stakeholders within an organisation to be ready and well-prepared for the changes that inadvertently will come with the new technologies.

Leadership is one of the most important factors influencing employee reactions during times of organisational transition. As examined in a recent study of Bonini et al. (2024), leaders can help workers adopt a proactive, positive attitude toward change and even encourage employee-driven initiatives. This creates a necessity to understand better how each leadership style impacts employees' responses and emotional behaviors towards the change. One of the leadership styles that is widely researched and recognized in the field is transformational leadership. Transformational leadership focuses on changing employees' attitudes and behaviours (Khan and Khan, 2019). Leaders who follow transformational leadership behaviours mentor and guide their followers, strengthening their individual contributions, innovation, and performance. Another well-known leadership style is empowering leadership that emphasizes granting autonomy, encouraging participative decision-making, and enabling employees to take ownership of their roles (Ahearne et al., 2005). Although both leadership styles are widely researched, primarily transformational leadership, there are just a few studies specifically focusing on their impact on employees' response to change. Employee's response to change can be understood as a set of reactions and behaviours towards the change, which are usually either positive or negative. When discussing the relationship between the leader and the follower, it is primarily not isolated, as other organisational elements surround it. Employees' trust not only in the direct leader but also in the leadership team as a whole might affect their perception of the change the organisation is trying to implement. Deng et al. (2023) in their research highlight trust in management, leadership, and leader-member relationships, among others, as key factors that have an impact on employees before and during change implementation. In addition to that, the employee's response to change might be shaped and influenced by the support that comes from the

organisation. The mediating effect of trust in leadership, as well as the moderating effect of perceived organisational support, is widely discussed in scientific literature; however, there is no recent research done on the impact of trust in leadership as a mediator and perceived organisational support as a moderator in a model that examines the relationship between different leadership styles and employee response to change.

Research novelty. Although previous studies have examined the individual effects of leadership, trust, or organisational support on employee attitudes toward change, there is still a limited number of studies where these constructs are examined within a single research framework. Although both transformational and empowering leadership styles are widely recognized, the research on their impact on employees' responses to change, especially when examining additional variables, is definitive. The vast majority of the studies related to these constructs examine the impact of transformational leadership on employee's response or reactions to change. Yet, some scholars find this relationship significant (van der Voet et al., 2016), while other studies report no significant correlation (Seo et al., 2012) or only partial (Peng et al., 2020). The role and significance of trust in leadership between transformational leadership and response to change was studied in several recent scientific papers (Cao and Le, 2024), yet most of them focus on organisational trust (Hamza et al., 2022; Zainab et al., 2022), which although it is a similar construct, does not specify in focus on trust in leadership or leaders. There is a minimal number of studies that incorporate empowering leadership, trust, and response to change within a single research model. Perceived organisational support as a moderator is applied when examining employees behaviours (Morales-Sánchez and Pasamar, 2020), reactions, and emotional well-being (Djurkovic et al., 2008), work engagement and trust (Zacher and Winter, 2011), or extra-role behaviour (Kurtessis et al., 2017; Alnaimi and Rjoub, 2021), but there is limited research done when examining POS as a moderator in the context of organisational change (Huang, 2025), or in a framework of the relationship between different leadership styles and change perception.

Research problem. The research problem is to examine what impact transformational leadership and empowering leadership as two independent variables have on employee's response to change as a dependent variable, while trust in leadership acts as a mediator and perceived organisational support acts as a moderator.

The aim of this master's thesis. To explore and deepen the knowledge of the influence of transformational and empowering leadership styles on employees' response to change, while trust in leadership is mediating and perceived organisational support is moderating this relationship.

The objectives of this master's thesis. There are six objectives of this master's thesis, identified below:

1. To review and explain concepts of transformational leadership (TL in abbreviation), empowering leadership (EL in abbreviation), employee's response to change (ERC in abbreviation), trust in leadership (TiL in abbreviation), and perceived organisational support (POS in abbreviation) based on the scientific literature and existing research papers.
2. Identify the gaps in scientific knowledge by reviewing the existing research papers.
3. After the theoretical literature review, create a research model showing the relationship and links between transformational leadership, empowering leadership, employee's response to change, trust in leadership and perceived organisational support.
4. To apply the chosen methodology and prepare a questionnaire by using the selected measurement scales in order to assess the links between the concepts.
5. Based on the conducted research, evaluate the impact of transformational leadership and empowering leadership on employee's response to change, while trust in leadership acts as a mediator and perceived organisational support acts as a moderator.
6. To summarize all findings and, based on them, draw conclusions and recommendations, as well as suggestions for future research.

Research methods. In the theoretical part, a scientific literature review was conducted to analyse and synthesize relevant scientific papers on transformational leadership, empowering leadership, employee responses to change, trust in leadership, and perceived organisational support. This review established the conceptual foundation for the study, identified existing research gaps, and informed the development of the research model and hypotheses. A quantitative survey design was applied to examine the proposed relationships between the constructs. The survey instrument incorporates validated measurement scales: transformational leadership (Carless et. al, 2000), empowering leadership (Ahearne et al., 2005), employee response to change (Tsaousis and Vakola, 2018), trust in leadership (Mayer and Davis, 1999), and perceived organisational support (Eisenberger et al., 1997). Data analysis was conducted using the IBM SPSS Statistics package with the Hayes PROCESS macro package.

The use of artificial intelligence. OpenAI tool ChatGPT was used for creating a plan for research and generating ideas related to the research topic. ChatGPT was also used for searching well-known seminal works in social science that are often referred to or cited in scientific literature when explaining the concepts. Google Scholar Lab AI was used for searching relevant scientific papers and literature.

Structure of this master's thesis. In the first part of this master thesis, an overview and analysis of scientific literature and research papers is done to understand the concepts of transformational leadership better, empowering leadership, employee's response to change, trust in leadership, and perceived organisational support. The links between these concepts are examined, and the gaps are identified by analysing the existing knowledge about these concepts. The second part of this thesis presents the conceptual research model and describes the quantitative research and survey design conducted using a questionnaire prepared with the chosen measurement scales. The third part of this thesis analyses the received results of the survey by utilizing various statistical data analysis methods, including descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, regression, mediation, and moderation tests. Finally, the conclusions and suggestions are shared.

1. THEORETICAL CONCEPTS OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP, EMPOWERING LEADERSHIP, EMPLOYEE RESPONSE TO CHANGES, TRUST IN LEADERSHIP, AND PERCEIVED ORGANISATIONAL SUPPORT

1.1. The concept of transformational leadership

One of the key aspects of a successful business is the ability to adapt to changing economic, financial, and social conditions. In the rapidly changing world, businesses need to make quick decisions, accept new and evolving technologies, as well as adapt to stay relevant and grow their business. Leadership is recognized as crucial to driving innovation, managing crises, and supporting long-term growth (Muna, 2022). Leaders are considered essential to driving an organisation's success (Kindarto et al., 2020), but that success highly depends on the leader's personal qualities and the way they choose to guide their teams or the whole organisation towards success. Leaders must not only help employees navigate the everyday challenges they face, but also set the example. Given the rapid digitalization and adoption of new available technologies, they also need to embrace digital transformation (Khaw et al., 2023). Over time, various leadership styles or types have formed, and out of all, transformational leadership stands out as strongly recognizable due to its focus on inspiring and guiding followers.

Over the last few decades, transformational leadership has been evolving and gaining popularity among practitioners. James MacGregor Burns introduced the concept of transformational leadership in his book *Leadership* (1978), distinguishing it from transactional leadership, which is based on motivational techniques. As described by Burns (1978), a transformational leader is “a person who taps the motives of followers in order to reach better the goals of leaders and followers” (p.18). In his book, he highlights that transformational leaders inspire commitment through charisma, fostering a positive organisational culture and higher performance. This concept was further analysed and improved over time by various scholars. Usually, in scientific papers that discuss Transformational Leadership, the dimensions suggested by Bass and Avolio (1990) are used to characterize Transformational Leadership, as they emphasize the key dimensions: 1) idealized influence, 2) inspirational motivation, 3) intellectual stimulation, and 4) individualized consideration (Hassan and Salem, 2023). Various researchers further explain each dimension. According to Bass (1999), idealized influence refers to a leader's ability to shape followers' core beliefs, values, and

ideals, inspiring them to pursue meaningful goals and address significant, overarching challenges. Transformational leaders are able to create a realistic vision for change and inspire their followers through their charisma (Faupel and Süß, 2019). Another key dimension - intellectual stimulation - is demonstrated when leaders who encourage follower input foster independent thinking, creativity, and a culture where learning and innovation can thrive (Pawar, 2016). Individual consideration is important for leaders who provide training that fosters their followers' personal development, not only shaping their behavior but also motivating them to achieve more through improved performance (Wang et al., 2008). According to Khan et al. (2025), leaders who follow transformational leadership behaviours strive to create effects of individualized considerations; however, without inspirational motivation and intellectual stimulation, the effect of it is questionable, so it is important to look at it holistically.

Other scholars, for instance, Podsakoff et al. (1990) list six components of transformational leadership: articulating a vision, fostering the acceptance of group goals, setting high-performance expectations, providing an appropriate model, intellectual stimulation, and individualized support. As highlighted by Pawar (2016), transformational leadership starts with putting together a vision, whether developed by the leader, senior team, or through broad discussions that fully capture the leader's commitment and inspire potential followers. Pawar (2016), like Podsakoff et al. (1990), highlights that transformational leaders must set high expectations, be persistent, and visionary. A transformational leader must set an example and show the right values. Bass (1985), Podsakoff et al. (1990), and Pawar (2016) argue that transformational leaders serve as role models, thus increasing and strengthening cooperation and collaboration within the team. Transformational leadership, in particular, has been positively linked to the development of trust, as such leaders demonstrate empathy, vision, and moral standards that resonate with follower expectations (Podsakoff et al., 1990).

As illustrated in Table 1, various measurement scales and dimensions describe transformational leadership and the traits that transformational leaders should possess. Although all are different, the core dimensions of transformational leadership across scales are consistent: Vision, Motivation, Intellectual Stimulation, Support, and Goal Orientation are the key characteristics of transformational leadership.

Table 1*Transformational leadership dimensions described by various scholars*

Author	Measure	Dimensions or Behaviours
Bass and Avolio (1990)	Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire	Four I's: Idealized Influence, Inspirational Motivation, Intellectual Stimulation, Individualized Consideration.
Podsakoff et al. (1990)	Transformational Leadership Inventory	Articulating a Vision, Providing an Appropriate Model, Fostering the Acceptance of Group Goals, High Performance Expectations, Individualized Support, and Intellectual Stimulation
Leithwood and Jantzi (2000)	Leithwood's Six Transformational Leadership Dimensions	Building visions and goals, Providing intellectual stimulation, Offering individualized support, Symbolizing professional practices and values, Demonstrating high performance expectations, Developing structures to foster participation in decisions.
Carless et al. (2000)	Global Transformational Leadership Scale	Vision, Staff Development, Supportive Leadership, Empowerment, Innovative or Lateral Thinking, Lead by Example, Charismatic Leadership.
Edwards et al. (2010)	Sensible Transformational Leadership Scale	Integrity, Sensible Risk, Encourages Innovation, Demonstrates Innovation, Inspirational Motivation, Develops Others, Supports Others, Task Delegation, Expects Excellence.
Song et al. (2024)	Transformational Leadership Scale	Vision Motivation, Personalized Care, Virtue of Virtue, Charisma

Source: compiled by the author based on Bass and Avolio (1990), Podsakoff et al. (1990), Leithwood and Jantzi (2000), Carless et al. (2000), Edwards et al. (2010), and Song et al. (2024)

The impact of transformational leadership has been studied in various scientific papers. Transformational leadership is often associated with job performance. In the article of Sürücü et al. (2022), the data collected from 524 employees showed that this leadership style has a positive influence on job performance, while self-efficacy mediates this relationship. The study by Bakker et al. (2023) examined the influence of transformational leadership on job engagement and performance, which was significant, as transformational leadership practices focus on individuals' strengths and motivate followers to take initiative. The influences of transformational leadership on individuals are various; for instance, Jun and Lee (2023) have examined transformational leadership's influence on employees' creativity, and their study results showed that it increases innovative behaviour through commitment to change, with the strengthened effectiveness when organisational support for creativity is high. Similar conclusions were set by Vu et al. (2025), whose research showed that transformational leadership has a significant influence on innovative work behaviour through empowerment. Leaders with transformational leadership behaviours can even have an impact on employee retention (Raziq et al., 2021) by minimizing employees' intentions to leave and increasing satisfaction with their job.

Although widely studied and applied in practice, transformational leadership is also criticized by various scholars for several reasons. A commonly shared concern regarding transformational leadership as a construct is its similarity and conceptual overlap with other leadership theories, e.g., charismatic or authentic leadership. Van Knippenberg and Sitkin (2013) argue that the boundaries of transformational leadership are blurred, making it difficult to distinguish from other related constructs. In addition to that, Stock et al. (2023) highlight that although there is an extensive number of scientific papers about transformational leadership, it is still not clear how much transformational leadership behaviours actually cause key outcomes, as there are no defined metrics or measures that could show the cause-and-effect relationship. The 4 I's concept is vague enough to put multiple aspects into it, and as noted by Fischer et al. (2024), both constructs and measures of transformational leadership are very arguable, and do not really outline concrete leader behaviors. There are also potential adverse effects that might impact the followers of transformational leaders. The recent study of Pan (2025) that gathered data from 441 Chinese employees shows that transformational leadership is indirectly linked to unethical pro-organizational behaviour, meaning that employees can act in a way that benefits the organization, but bypasses social norms and ethics. Similar research conclusions were published in the earlier study of Kim et al. (2023). In general, the findings suggest that the influence of a leader, even if it has a positive impact on the organisation, can be misused. Any

relationship where one party holds the power of decision-making and influence can become unhealthy, as followers may be manipulated and blindly follow the leader's commands.

To summarize, transformational leadership is one of the most examined leadership styles in research. It emphasizes the ability of leaders to inspire, motivate, and lead by articulating a clear vision and supporting their followers. Measurements by different authors have shown that some core dimensions remain constant over time; however, some scholars, such as van Knippenberg & Sitkin (2013), argue that the dimensions overlap with other leadership styles, making transformational leadership difficult to distinguish. Nevertheless, transformational leadership remains one of the most recognized leadership behaviours and has proved to influence employees positively.

1.2. The concept of empowering leadership

Empowering leadership is another leadership style that has been widely discussed in scientific narratives over the last years. As a construct, compared to transformational leadership, empowering leadership is less commonly researched in scientific studies and is often grouped with other leadership styles, such as ethical or authentic leadership. Altogether, empowering leadership aligns with transformational leadership principles, highlighting the value of delegation, trust, and support for autonomy (Amundsen and Martinsen, 2014). Similar to transformational leadership, empowering leadership emerged in response to a rapidly changing business landscape, technological evolution, and economic crises that compelled organisations to adapt and increase efficiency, and is also characterized by a set of leader behaviors that involve delegating authority and enhancing follower autonomy (Ahearne et al., 2005). Kim et al. (2018) argue that, unlike other types of leadership, empowering leadership extends beyond decision-making participation by granting subordinates autonomy over various aspects of their work, regardless of job level or whether participation is individual or group-based.

Arnold et al. (2000) developed the *Empowering Leadership Questionnaire (ELQ)*, which comprises five dimensions: coaching, informing, leading by example, participative decision-making, and showing concern. Ahearne et al. (2005) identified the key dimensions of empowering leadership as enhancing the meaningfulness of work, encouraging participation in decision making, expressing confidence in high performance, and granting autonomy from bureaucratic constraints. Wang et al. (2009) emphasized that when studying empowering leadership in the Chinese context, it includes six dimensions: support for individual development, process control, delegation of authority, outcome control, participation in decision-making, and coaching for work. Similarly, Amundsen and Martinsen (2015) proposed that empowering leadership comprises three core dimensions: power sharing,

motivation support, and development support. In the recent research paper, Schermuly et al. (2025) have reviewed the existing and well-known dimensions of empowering leadership, and proposed their own *Psychological Empowerment Leadership Scale (PELS)* that focuses on psychological empowerment and followers' enablement. The dimensions they suggest in their work include sense-making, coaching, participation, transfer of power, competence development, and leading by example.

Empowering leadership is often linked to psychological empowerment due to the aspects these two concepts share. Psychological empowerment is recognized as an important topic (Schermuly et al., 2022), as Kim et al. (2018) highlight that in “dynamic working environments, employee empowerment could give organization advantages” (Kim et al., 2018, p. 257), especially when it comes to strengthening the position and competitiveness in the relevant business field. Amoroso et al. (2021) argue that empowering leadership can have an impact on psychological empowerment, and the positive correlation was also proved by Schermuly et al. (2025). The latter scholars also highlighted in their work that the direct relationship between empowering leadership and psychological empowerment was the strongest compared to other leadership styles.

In the scientific literature, empowering leadership is often described similarly to other leadership constructs, such as self-leadership (Kim et al., 2018), transformational leadership, leader-member exchange (LMX), ethical leadership, participative leadership, and shared leadership (Cheong et al., 2019); however, the distinguishing factor of empowering leadership is that the focus is put on the leader's empowering behaviours and psychological empowerment. Out of them all, empowering leadership is mainly linked to self-leadership due to the employees' autonomy and increased level of participation in decision making; however, as Cheong et al. (2019) note, while empowering leadership consists of leader-driven behaviors that cultivate employees' sense of purpose, confidence, involvement, and autonomy, self-leadership refers to the self-regulatory strategies individuals apply to manage their actions and performance. The similarities between the leadership styles and concepts discussed above can cause blurred distinctions and confusion when conducting research. This statement is supported by the research paper of Schermuly et al. (2022), as they highlight that empowering, transformational, and servant leadership are often mixed up together, and it is difficult to distinguish the effects of each of the styles.

To achieve effectiveness and positive outcomes, it is not enough to empower followers and give them authority. Empowering leadership requires leaders to develop emotional intelligence and reach a balance between guiding and giving autonomy (Hassan et al., 2013). When power is distributed and leaders promote shared decision-making, employees are more willing to share

concerns and ideas and collaborate as a team (Webber and O'Neill, 2020). Leaders who follow the empowering leadership practices can expect that their employees show more engagement in work and willingness to take charge (Kong et al., 2024). However, it is also important to acknowledge the potential negative outcomes of empowering leadership. Cheong et al. (2016) highlighted that empowering leadership can have a "burdening" effect, and the autonomy granted to employees has a chance to become a culprit of anxiety, especially among individuals who lack self-confidence, task clarity, or sufficient support structures. Similar to transformational leadership, researchers have found that empowering leadership can have an influence on unethical pro-organisational behaviour of employees, and lead to moral disengagement (Dennerlein and Kirkman, 2022).

To summarize, although empowering leadership is not as widely studied as other leadership styles and concepts, it has been gaining more attention lately because it aligns well with transformational leadership, enabling organisations to address current challenges effectively. It is built on principles such as giving people autonomy, enhancing trust, and encouraging everyone to participate in decision-making. The multidimensional nature of this leadership style is reflected in various frameworks, such as those proposed by Arnold et al. (2000), Ahearne et al. (2005), and others, all of which emphasize coaching development and motivational support. On the other hand, with the poor implementation and unbalanced power-sharing, empowering leadership might add additional stress to employees, especially those who are not ready for more autonomy. Hence, it is important to establish the relationship between leader and follower based on trust and to follow organisational values, morale, and work ethic.

1.3. The concept of response to change

Changes are an inevitable part of our lives. It is expected that at some point in the organisational lifecycle, natural shifts will occur, or the organisation will inevitably need to make changes. Before analysing the concept of employees' responses to change, it is essential to understand what change is, particularly in an organisational context. These are a few examples of organisational change descriptions found in scientific literature and research papers:

- Kotter (1996) argues that a change involves modifying organisational structures, processes, or practices in response to external pressures or internal needs to enhance performance.
- Burnes (2017) defines change as a process that enables organisations to shift from their current state to a more effective future state.

- Organisational change can involve a range of actions – for example, introducing new technology, restructuring organisational layout, changing work practices, etc. (Rousseau and Ten Have, 2022).
- Organisational change is a process in which the status quo needs to be moved in order to achieve organisational goals (Petrauskaitė-Jocienė and Korsakienė, 2023).

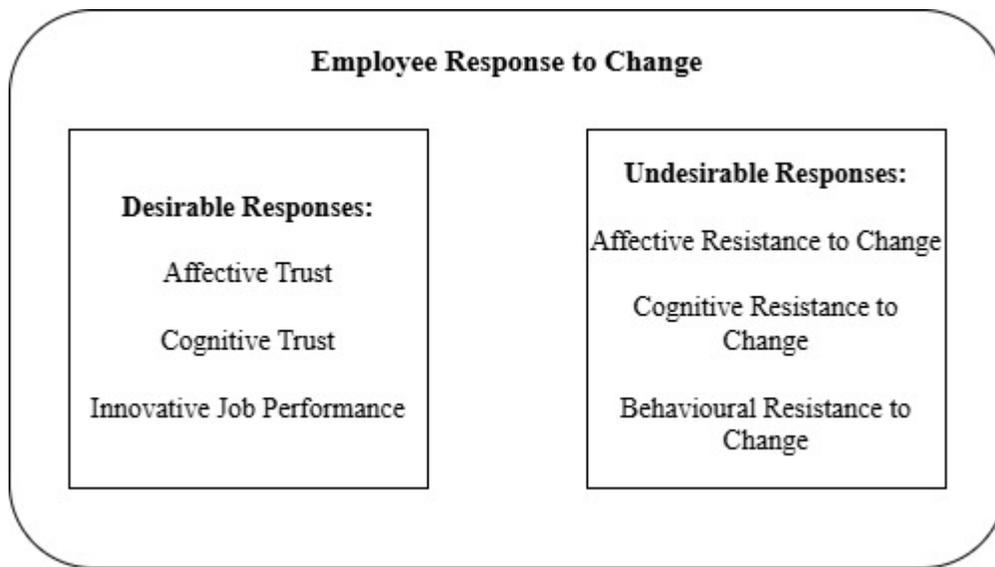
As Cummings and Worley (2014) note, change is not only about modifying visible elements but also deeply rooted beliefs and behaviors that shape how work is done. This means that any kind of shift – procedural, financial, or even cultural can be defined as a change in organisation. Organisational changes help businesses to stay afloat while facing financial crises and similar recessions (Oskutienė and Korsakienė, 2012). According to Burnes (2017), organisational change can also stimulate learning, encourage adaptability, and support long-term survival in dynamic environments. However, not every change is driven in a positive light. Negative changes include downsizing, restructuring, layoffs, wage freezes, and reductions in benefits or autonomy, which often signal threats to job security and career prospects (Khaw et al., 2023). Organisational changes that affect employees directly (e.g., layoffs or wage cuts) or indirectly (team sizing or the appointment of a new C-level employee) can inevitably provoke a response.

Understanding employee responses to organisational change is crucial because employees are typically the ones who implement and directly or indirectly experience the change. Hughes (2022) states that although the importance of preparation for organisational changes is constantly rising and is recognized now more than ever, approximately 70 % of all changes are likely to fail. During the organisational change, it is important to acknowledge naturally occurring reactions and responses of the stakeholders (employees) that are directly or indirectly affected by the change. As Kotter (1996) emphasizes in his 8-step change model, without addressing the human side of change, even well-planned and well-shaped change strategies are likely to fail. Responses to a change may vary across employees, ranging from showing loyalty and acceptance to willingness to leave or decreased job satisfaction. In the extensive research of Khaw et al. (2023), researchers review existing scientific literature and discuss a wide spectrum of possible employees' reactions towards organisational change, and they conclude that organisations need to take employee reactions, especially the negative ones, into consideration as early as possible, to avoid further negative outcomes. The reactions also affect employee's work engagement and willingness to stay as a part of organization (Khaw et al., 2023).

There are various frameworks for responding to changes identified in the scientific literature. As Oreg et al. (2011) emphasize, there is minimal alignment among the terms used to describe and classify the types of responses individuals can have when reacting to changes. In their work, Oreg et al. (2011) emphasize three main types of responses: affective (emotional), cognitive (belief-based), and behavioral responses, as well as the differences between them, which are derived initially from Piderit's (2000) tripartite definition of resistance to change. Under these three definitions, Oreg et al. (2011) classified different terms used in previous scientific papers. Later on, the same dimensions were mentioned in a newer study of Oreg and Berson (2019). It was further expanded by Weber et al. (2022), as they suggested dividing the responses into two main groups: desirable and undesirable, and focusing on the trust factor and resistance to change.

Figure 1

Two main dimensions of employee response to change



Source: compiled by the author based on Weber et al. (2022)

Affective response is defined as an individual's emotional response to accepting and experiencing a change. Pircher Verdorfer and van Ginkel (2024) argue that affective response can both shape a person's opinion about the change, as well as have an impact on the next steps and actions taken. Scientific researches suggest that changes fail as the reaction of the employees is often ignored, although positive reactions can reduce resistance, while negative reactions make it even stronger, often following higher turnover rates (Khaw et al., 2023). Cognitive response describes how individuals often reflect upon and evaluate organisational change, considering the benefits for themselves, the organisation, or both. Studies reviewed by Oreg et al. (2011) show that cognitive

reactions often involve beliefs about whether the change is positive or practical, as seen in concepts such as sensemaking and perceived improvement. Behavioural reactions define the actual employee behaviours and intentions towards the change. Those can include both supportive actions, such as participating in change-related initiatives (Islam et al., 2021a), and supportive behaviors, as well as withdrawal or resistance behaviors, including quitting intentions or undermining efforts. Resistant reactions or behaviour can also range from mild resistance, when the employee expresses the disagreement verbally, complaints, or even neglect on the employee's side, often followed by resignation from the role in an organisation (Khaw et al., 2023). The change engagement model, proposed by Albrecht et al. (2020), suggests how the organisation-related, job-related, and personal-related change resources can help change initiators to evaluate the possible change outcome and employee's engagement. Transformational leadership, clear communication, organisational change capability, culture, empowerment, involvement, and participation are only a few of the many elements that can impact change outcomes and employee engagement. This suggests that employees' response to change is not isolated; on the contrary, it is influenced by many organisational factors, and shows that certain behaviors can have a positive impact on followers' response towards the change.

An employee's response to change reflects what the employee feels, thinks, and behaves when the change is being implemented, and it directly or indirectly affects the individual. Scientific literature distinguishes three types of responses: affective, cognitive, and behavioural (Oreg et al., 2011), and the range of responses varies from positive ones, including engagement, participation, support, and proactive collaboration to negative reactions, such as resistance or even intentions to leave (Khaw et al., 2023). Scholars agree that it is crucial to acknowledge employees' reactions, as they can directly determine change success, and suggest that changes usually fail when not supported (Weber et al., 2022). Employee's response to change as a construct still needs to be further researched, as there are multiple organisational and personal factors that can affect it.

1.4. The concept of trust in leadership

Trust in leadership is a foundational construct in organisational behavior. In many scientific studies, the explanation by Rousseau et al. (1998), as quoted by Dirks and de Jong (2022), is widely used to describe trust, which is defined as “a psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability based upon positive expectations of the intentions or behaviour of another” (p. 395). Mayer et al. (1995), as quoted by Dirks and de Jong (2022) define trust as “the willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectations that the other will perform a particular action important to the trustor, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control that other

party” (p.712). Other scholars emphasize the vulnerability and expectations of a trusting party, too. Six and Verhoest (2017) state that based on their initial perception of trustworthiness, the trustor decides whether or not to take the risk of being vulnerable, defining the key element of trust. Dirks and de Jong (2022) mention in their work that trust can be defined by several primary characteristics, including involvement of at least two parties, which is also understood as a psychological state that can change over time. According to Dirks and de Jong (2022), trust basically works in those situations only when there is uncertainty in the situation and dependence on other people’s actions. Gustafsson et al. (2021) state that, as the situations in the workplace can often be unpredictable and hard to evaluate, the trust that followers built in their leaders is of great significance. According to Islam et al. (2021b), during organisational change, trust boosts employees’ motivation, involvement, and performance. This shows how fundamental trust is in modern workplaces.

Another part of this construct is leadership. Various definitions of leadership can be found in scientific literature, such as:

- As stated by Bass (1990), “leadership is the ability of an individual to influence, motivate, and enable others to contribute toward the effectiveness and success of the organisations of which they are members.”
- According to the House et al. (2004), leadership refers to an individual’s capacity to influence, inspire, and empower others to actively contribute to the success and effectiveness of the organisation to which they belong.
- Antonakis and Day (2018) state in their book *The Nature of Leadership (3rd edition)* that leadership involves guiding and influencing individuals in ways that encourage their voluntary effort toward achieving collective goals.

Alongside trust in leadership, trust in leaders is also a commonly used and mentioned construct in research papers. Trust in leadership is a broader term and reflects trust in the overall leadership system, including executive leaders or the organisational leadership structure (Burke et al., 2007). This refers to leadership as a structural unit in an organisation. Trust in leaders might often be understood as trusting someone on a personal level. In this master’s thesis, trust in leadership as a construct will be further analysed.

McAllister (1995), as quoted by Qin (2024), states that trust in leadership is built through two psychological flows: cognitive trust, which covers the knowledge about the leader, and affective trust, which explains the emotional part of the relationship. Hasel and Grover (2017) expands this discuss

in their paper how trust in leadership could be categorized. They integrate and expand three forms of trust previously defined by Lewicki and Bunker (1996), and define calculus-based, identification-based, and knowledge-based trust types, along with specific leadership behaviors:

- Calculus-based trust is grounded in rational expectations and deterrence (i.e., people trust leaders because of rewards or punishments).
- Identification-based trust relies on emotional alignment, shared values, and mutual respect.
- Knowledge-based trust stems from the predictability of a leader's behavior based on past interactions.

Trust in leadership plays a crucial role in shaping the atmosphere and well-being in an organisation, influencing job satisfaction, commitment, and performance. The findings of the research done by Legood et al. (2020) show that trust acts as a fundamental and primary channel through which leadership behaviours can actually influence outcomes. The trust in leadership can have a significant effect on employees' well-being and emotional state, too. The study of Babu et al. (2024) reveals that trust in leadership can be impactful during crisis periods, as COVID-19. In their study, the results have shown that followers with higher trust in senior leadership were in stronger psychological health, showed resistance to stressful events, and emotional stability (Babu et al., 2024). González-Cánovas et al. (2024) agree with the importance of trust in organisation, and highlight that leaders are responsible for creating space for trust which can contribute to higher employee's engagement and commitment.

Scientific literature supports the value of trust in leadership in an organisational context. Employee's trust in leadership is shown through the vulnerability and acceptance of the leader's decisions and actions, and the perception of the leader's ability to be competent and fair. Trust in leadership often acts as an enabler and catalyst, strengthening the effect of certain leadership styles (Legood et al., 2020; Cao and Le, 2024), employees' well-being (Babu et al., 2024), and their commitment (González-Cánovas et al., 2024). The studies show that trust in leadership is an important element in organisation, and should be taken into account when analysing employee's well-being and engagement.

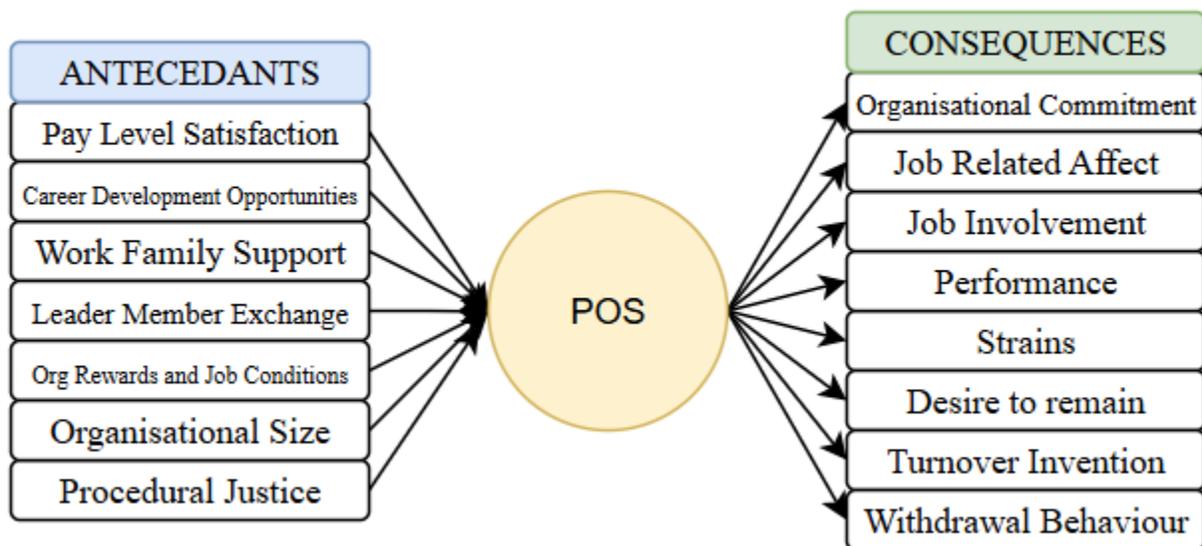
1.5. The concept of perceived organisational support

Perceived Organisational Support, usually referred to as POS, describes organizational behavior and reveals employee's perception of how much the organization they are part of values their

contributions, cares about their well-being, and is ready to support the employee when needed (Sabir et al., 2022). Conceptualized initially by Eisenberger et al. (1986), POS comes from organizational support theory, which posits that employees develop general beliefs concerning the extent to which the organization appreciates their work and is committed to them. Akgunduz and Sanli (2017) summarizes the POS, describing it as a “general belief that the organization cares for the contributions and welfare of its employees” (p.119).

Figure 2

Antecedents and consequences of perceived organisational support



Source: compiled by the author based on Eisenberger et al. (1990), Krishnan and Mary (2012), and Eisenberger et al. (2020)

Pay level satisfaction, or the extent to which employees are content with their compensation that matches their expectations, is a crucial financial antecedent. Results from various research studies have demonstrated that when employees are satisfied with their compensation, they are more committed to their organisation and less likely to seek alternative employment (Williams et al., 2006). According to de la Torre-Ruiz et al. (2024), the research paper results show that the employees satisfaction with their compensation is linked to the perception of care shown by the organisation, thus linking it to POS. When talking about organisational rewards, Eisenberger et al. (2020) argue that POS can be linked to higher expectations of reward when showing high performance and results. Results from scientific research support a strong positive relationship between career development opportunities and POS. For instance, Allen et al. (2003) found that employees who perceive more

opportunities for career advancement within their organisations report significantly higher levels of POS. This perception, in turn, leads to organisational commitment, reduced turnover intentions, and higher work engagement. POS is also found to be positively moderating the effect of career growth on employee's commitment and efforts to meet organisational goals (Jia-Jun and Hua-Ming, 2022). Organisational initiatives, such as flexible working hours, remote work options, family leave policies, and on-site childcare, are interpreted by employees as a genuine concern for their well-being, thereby enhancing their perception of organisational support (Kossek et al., 2011). Muse et al. (2008) found in their study that employees in organisations with strong work-life balance practices reported higher POS, which led to greater job satisfaction and lower turnover intentions. Eisenberger et al. (2020) suggest that various employee-oriented good job conditions, policies, and organisational rewards can result in higher organisational support perception by employees. This statement is supported by previous research done by Kurtessis et al. (2017), where the results reveal that there is a significant relationship between POS and positive, employee- and family-oriented human resource practices. Leader-member exchange refers to the quality of the relationship between leaders and employees, where high-quality exchanges are characterized by trust, mutual respect, and socio-emotional support (Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995). According to Eisenberger et al. (2010; also 2020), leader-member exchange research has consistently shown that supervisors act as agents of the organisation, and employees often interpret their behavior as indicative of the organisation's intentions. In the study by Liao et al. (2020), it was confirmed that leaders who nurture relationships with subordinates positively influence broader organisational perceptions, including POS. Organisational size can also significantly influence the way employees perceive their organisation as supportive. Leaders in smaller organisations are more likely to interact personally with employees, which helps to carry organisational support through feedback, individualized attention, and dedicated time (Kurtessis et al., 2017). In contrast, in larger organisations, it might be more difficult to maintain a personalized relationship with subordinates due to hierarchical complexity and the overall number of people working in the organisation.

In the previous studies, POS was found to be positively impacting employees sense of belonging to organisation, work engagement and trust (Zacher and Winter, 2011; Kurtessis et al., 2017), as well as employee well-being and overall job satisfaction (Kurtessis et al., 2017). Several studies have found POS positively linked to extra-role behaviour too (Kurtessis et al., 2017; Alnaimi and Rjoub, 2021). Previous researches also discuss a direct link between POS and employees' readiness for organisational change. According to Mumtaz et al. (2024), the stronger organisational

support can lead to increased motivation on the employee's end and direct participation in decision making. The increased organisational support also helps to decrease the resistance during organisational changes (Kebede and Wang, 2022). It is essential to recognize that POS captures employees' subjective perceptions of well-being and their feelings of being supported and valued by their organisation (Swift and Virick, 2013). This means that perceptions of support can vary from individual to individual working in the same organisation.

Perceived organisational support unifies many different organisational elements, policies and procedures, starting with pay level up to organisational culture and employee-oriented benefits and values. Employees' perceptions of how well they are treated in their workplace ultimately define perceived organisational support. When the perceived support is strong and positive, it results in overall job satisfaction, motivation, and willingness to go the extra mile for organizational goals (Kurtessis et al., 2017). It can also minimize employee's resistance and rebellious behaviours during the organizational change (Kebede and Wang, 2022). The studies examining POS support the positive outcomes of POS, and its value in strengthening employee-leader relationships and well-being in the organisation.

1.6. The links between transformational leadership, empowering leadership, response to change, trust in leadership, and perceived organisational support

Recent studies have made substantial progress in exploring the constructs of transformational leadership, empowering leadership, response to change, trust in leadership, and perceived organisational support, both as separate constructs and the links between them.

Peng et al. (2020) revealed in their study that transformational leadership is significantly linked to various employee responses to organisational change, including increased commitment, openness, and readiness for change, while also reducing resistance and cynicism. However, the study also showed that the transformational relationship does not have a significant relation to support for change, thus showing that followers' behavioral support can not be easily influenced by transformational leadership (Peng et al., 2020). The study of Khadija et al. (2022) examines the effect of transformational leadership on reaction to change, which consists of employee's affective commitment and intention to support the change, while innovative behaviour is a mediator in the model. The study that was done based on 401 gathered responses from employees in Hungary shows that transformational leadership has a positive influence on follower's intentions to support the change, while the relationship between transformational leadership and affective commitment is not

significant (Khadija et al., 2022). However, the more recent study of Khadija et al. (2024) shows the opposite. The study was done based on the data gathered from 550 employees from various industries in Hungary, and this time organisational trust was chosen as a mediator. The results from the 2024 study confirm that while there is a significant relationship between transformational leadership and reactions to change, as well as commitment, similarly as in the study of Peng et al. (2020), the data do not support transformational leadership's influence on intention to support the change. The contradicting results of various studies show that there is still no firm consensus on the transformational leadership significance on response or employees support to change, hence the relationship needs to be further studied.

In recent years, there have been many studies done to examine the link between transformational leadership and trust in leadership or leaders. The study by Nie et al. (2022) demonstrates that trust in leadership mediates the relationship between leadership style and employees' behavioral support for change. Yuan et al. (2022) confirmed through their research that employees who work with transformational leaders have a higher level of trust in their leadership. In their study, it was confirmed that 1) employees who are led by transformational leaders show higher trust in the leadership team; 2) trust in leadership positively mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and employee commitment. Other studies show similar results, for example, the study by Islam et al. (2021b) revealed that organisations that implement transformational leadership practices during organisational change, with higher trust in leadership, can expect closer relationships between leaders and followers. This relationship is observed and researched in various fields. For instance, Mughal (2023), after conducting a study of 100 nurses working in healthcare centers in Saudi Arabia, concluded that applying transformational leadership in the healthcare field, it can strengthen the bond between medical staff and leadership, as well as increase employees' trust. The positive relation between transformational leadership and trust in the leader was found in the paper of Lee et al. (2024) too. Generally, in the older study of Men et al. (2020) it was suggested that trust in leadership is one of the main enablers, positively influencing the followers attitudes towards the change. The study by Cao and Le (2024), based on the findings of Men et al. (2020), hypothesizes and examines the effect of transformational leadership on organisational change capacity, with the two-path mediating role of employee trust in leadership, including both disclosure-based and reliance-based aspects. Their study concludes that transformational leadership has a strong impact on both kinds of trust in leaders, positively influencing change capacity, too. The significant mediating effect

of trust in leadership on the relationship between transformational leadership and employee performance is also supported by data gathered and analysed in the study of Utomo et al. (2025).

There are significantly fewer studies done to examine the relationship between empowering leadership and employees' response to change compared to the transformational leadership style. In the study conducted by Awan et al. (2023), it was confirmed that empowering leadership has a significant positive impact on change behaviours, and psychological empowerment mediates this relationship. Despite the growing interest in empowering leadership style, the number of studies conducted is very limited. There is also a recent study done by Eryanto et al. (2025) that examines the relationship between empowering leadership, technology readiness, organisational commitment, and readiness for a change. It was confirmed that empowering leadership has a significant positive influence on organisational commitment, thus resulting in higher employee's connection to the organisation and commitment. The same study confirmed empowering leadership's influence on readiness for a change. However, the study itself does not focus on the emotional aspect of employee's response to change, and the authors highlight that other organisational factors, including resistance to the change, are not taken into account (Eryanto et al., 2025).

Throughout the past several years, the relationship between empowering leadership and trust in leadership has been rarely studied. The recent scientific papers mostly cover similar constructs. The study of Raziq et al. (2025) examines the association between empowering leadership and trust in the leader. The data supports this association, confirming the positive influence of empowering leadership on trust, also, it proves that trust in leader mediates the relationship between empowering leadership and employee commitment, however, employees trust in higher leadership team is not taken into account here. The strengthening effects of trust through various leadership styles were examined in the research paper by Legood et al. (2020), where the results showed that empowering leadership increases the trust in the leader, while transformational leadership does not. The most recent study that could be related to trust in leadership was done by Atik and Celik (2020), where empowering leadership was examined in the educational field. Authors of this study built a hypothesis that trust in the principal (higher-rank leader) has a mediating role between empowering leadership style of the principal and the employee's job satisfaction, and this hypothesis was confirmed. Nevertheless, at the moment of writing this master's thesis, there is no recent study done on examining trust in leadership as an organisational unit, direct, indirect, or mediating effects on empowering leadership and its relationship with other constructs. Taking into account that there are significantly more studies done

for transformational leadership style, the lack of studies for empowering leadership can be perceived as a gap in scientific literature.

The perceived organisational support as a moderator is common in many scientific papers that examine employees behaviours, commitment, job satisfaction, etc. Nevertheless, there are rather few studies done in the context of the effect of leadership style on employees' response or readiness to change. Eisenberger et al. (2020) mention in their research that transformational and other leadership styles are positively linked to POS, since leaders can be perceived as the embodiment of organisational values and culture. Srivastava and Agrawal (2020) examine the moderating effect of perceived organisational support on the relationship between resistance to change and turnover intentions, and their study finds this effect to be significant, as stronger organisational support results in lower turnover rates. Kumar et al. (2022) explore employee empowerment and its effect on taking charge behaviour, with perceived organisational support as a moderator. The study of Kumar et al. (2022) was done based on the responses submitted by 290 employees and 56 supervisors in China, and the results concluded that 1) both employee empowerment and perceived organisational support have a significant positive effect on followers' pro-active behaviour, and 2) perceived organisational support has a significant moderate effect on the latter relationships. As an independent variable, the perceived organisational support was examined in the recent research paper shared by Mumtaz et al. (2024), where the results show that there is no significant relationship between perceived organisational support and readiness to change, implying that this is not a key factor for employees to accept the change. However, the recent study of Huang (2025) reveals the opposite, showing that the moderating effect of perceived organisational support between attitudes towards change and participation in change is confirmed to be significant and one of the main factors to achieve a successful change implementation. The moderating effect of perceived organisational support is examined in a few other studies that have one of the constructs of this thesis involved; however, over the last five years, there has been minimal research done, particularly focusing on the moderating effect on the relationship between leadership style and response to change.

2. METHODOLOGY OF THE IMPACT OF TRANSFORMATIONAL AND EMPOWERING LEADERSHIP ON EMPLOYEE RESPONSE TO CHANGE: MEDIATING ROLE OF TRUST IN LEADERSHIP AND MODERATING ROLE OF PERCEIVED ORGANISATIONAL SUPPORT

2.1. Research purpose, research objectives, model of empirical research, and hypothesis

The first chapter of this master's thesis describes each construct that is studied and analysed in this work. Subchapter 1.6 discussed the links between these constructs, and recent study papers reveal a positive relationship between transformational leadership, employee response to change, and trust in leadership. However, the links between empowering leadership and other constructs are much less studied. Perceived organisational support is also rarely studied as a moderator. Moreover, it is worth noting that a gap exists in the scientific literature regarding the examination of these five constructs together. Considering the research question, purpose, and objectives, the model of empirical research, hypotheses, and data collection methods is formulated below.

The research question is the following: “How can transformational and empowering leadership impact employees’ response to change, while trust in leadership acts as a mediator and perceived organisational support acts as a moderator?”

The purpose of the empirical research is to identify the impact of transformational leadership and empowering leadership on employees' responses to change, analysing the mediating role of trust in leadership, and the moderating role of perceived organisational support.

Research objectives are the following:

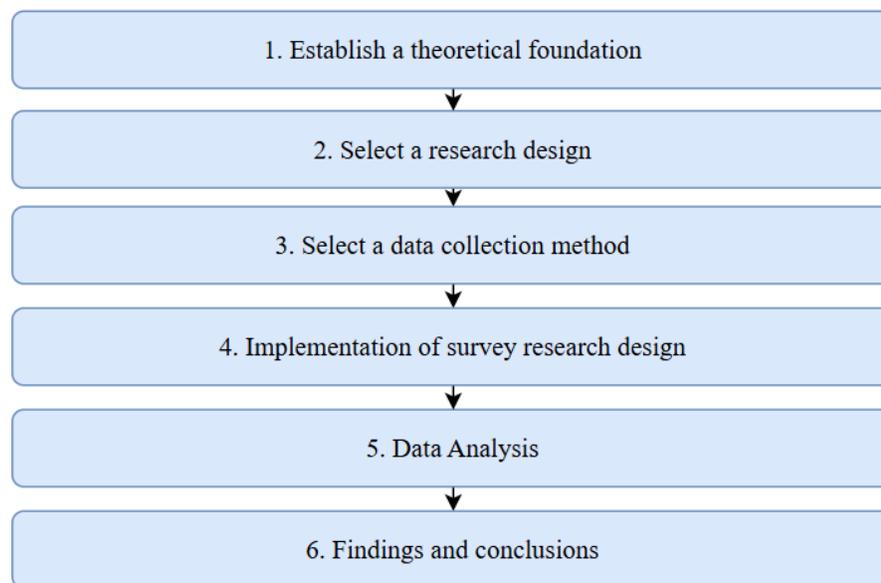
1. After reviewing scientific literature and research papers, construct a framework for examining how transformational leadership and empowering leadership impact employees’ responses to change, while trust in leadership is moderating and perceived organisational support is mediating this relationship.
2. To examine the direct effects of transformational leadership and empowering leadership on employees’ responses to organisational change.
3. To investigate the mediating role of trust in leadership in the relationship between transformational leadership and employees’ response to change.

4. To investigate the mediating role of trust in leadership in the relationship between empowering leadership and employees' responses to change.
5. To assess the moderating effect of perceived organisational support on the relationship between transformational leadership and employees' response to change.
6. To assess the moderating effect of perceived organisational support on the relationship between empowering leadership and trust in leadership.
7. To share conclusions and recommendations for organisations based on the research results.

In this master's thesis, the research follows the stages presented in Figure 3:

Figure 3

Empirical research stages



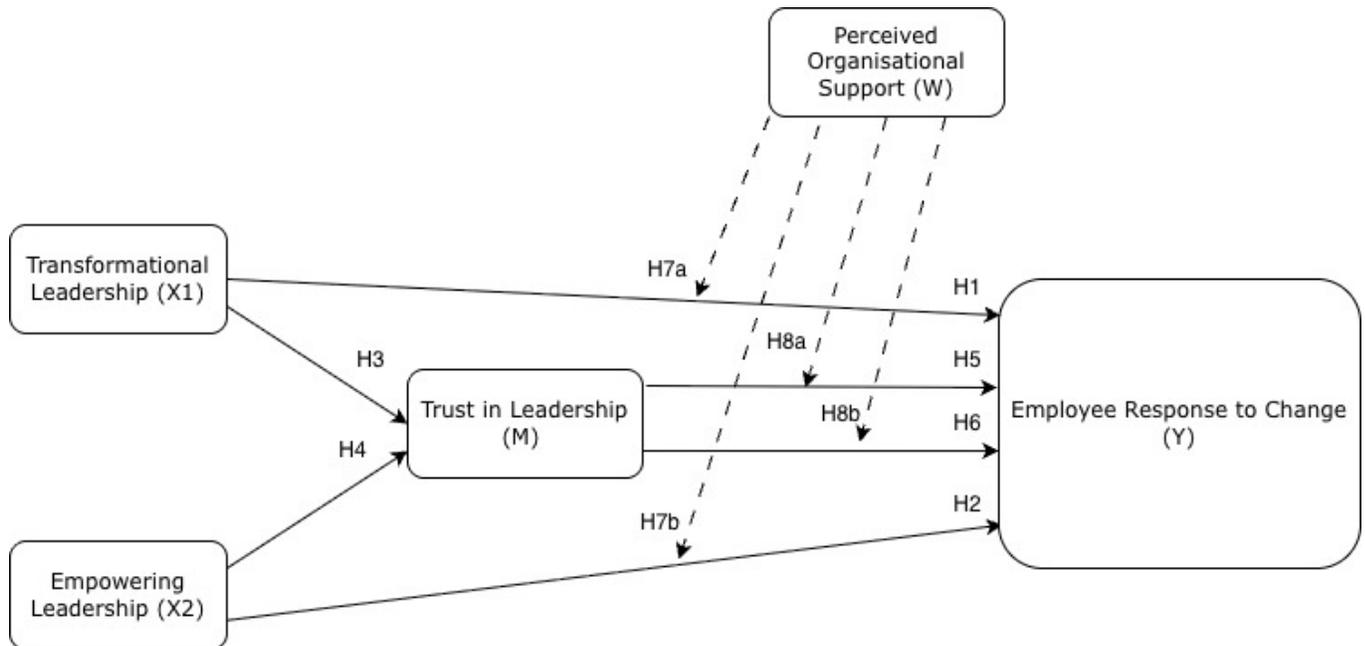
Source: compiled by the author based on Soni and Kodali, 2012

This research will adopt a quantitative research methodology, using a questionnaire-based survey design as the primary data collection instrument. To assess the impact of transformational leadership on employee response to changes, the impact of empowering leadership on employee response to changes, with the role of trust in leadership as mediator and perceived organisational support as moderator, a conceptual research model was drawn (see Figure 4).

- X1 – Transformational Leadership;
- X2 – Empowering Leadership;
- Y – Employee Response to Change;
- M – Trust in Leadership;
- W – Perceived Organisational Support.

Figure 4

Research model



Source: author’s own work

Together with the empirical research model, the following hypotheses were formed:

The relationship between transformational leadership and employees’ response to change is examined in the previous scientific studies. The research paper by Khadija et al. (2022) supports the presumption that transformational leadership has a positive influence on follower’s intentions to support the change. The previous research paper of Oreg and Berson (2011) examined and concluded that the transformational leadership approach can minimize negative emotions in employees, such as cynicism

and resistance to change, and shape long-term positive perceptions and emotional responses to changes. Therefore, the following hypothesis was outlined:

H1: Transformational Leadership (X1) has a positive impact on Employee Response to Change (Y).

Similar to the H1 outlined above, the relationship between empowering leadership and employees' response to change is also discussed among researchers. The study of Cheong et al. (2016) showed that enabling empowering leadership positively affects employee voice and confidence during organisational change. Another study by Jung et al. (2020) also showed that empowering leadership influences employees' commitment to organisational change, revealing that it encourages employees to take risks, thereby strengthening their commitment and positive response to the change. Muafi et al. (2019) argue in their study that empowering leadership increases employees' readiness for organisational changes. Hence, the following hypothesis can be built:

H2: Empowering Leadership (X2) has a positive impact on Employee Response to Change (Y).

As mentioned in the previous chapter 1.6, the study by Yuan et al. (2022) concluded that leaders who follow transformational leadership principles have a positive influence on employees' trust in leadership. The studies conducted by Islam et al. (2021b) and the older study by Podsakoff et al. (1990), where it was discussed how idealized influence and individualized consideration enhance trust in leaders, support this assumption. The recent research of Park and Byon (2025) confirms the significant influence of transformational leadership on trust in leadership, discussed and examined from sports perspective. Based on findings from these scientific research papers, the following hypothesis can be built:

H3: Transformational Leadership (X1) has a positive impact on Trust in Leadership (M).

In the study of Cheong et al. (2019), the effects of empowering leadership were broadly discussed, including the followers' trust in leadership, which was also confirmed and concluded by other researchers in the past; therefore, the following hypothesis can be built:

H4: Empowering Leadership (X2) has a positive impact on Trust in Leadership (M).

There are numerous studies linked to transformational leadership, where trust as leadership acts as a mediator. The study of Goodwin et al. (2011) examined trust as a potential mediator or moderator in the transformational leadership paradigm, and the findings there confirmed that trust acts confidently as a mediator, especially between transformational leadership and employees' organisational citizenship behaviour, performance, and commitment. The research paper of Altunoğlu et al. (2019)

supports this statement too, strengthening the role of trust as a mediator. However, there is a gap in scientific knowledge when examining the role of trust as a mediator between transformational leadership and employee response to change. Considering this, the following hypothesis can be built:

H5: Trust in Leadership (M) mediates the relationship between Transformational Leadership (X1) and Employee Response to Change (Y).

Similar to H5 outlined above, the relationship between empowering leadership and employee response to change, while trust acts as a mediator, is not widely researched. However, in the study of Haque et al. (2020), researchers agree that trust and empowerment directly influence readiness for change, and this statement is supported by many previous studies. Therefore, the following hypothesis can be built:

H6: Trust in Leadership (M) mediates the relationship between Empowering Leadership (X2) and Employee Response to Change (Y).

Perceived organisational support is not widely researched in empirical studies, especially as a moderator, so it can be stated that there is a gap in scientific literature when assessing the POS moderating role between leadership style and employee's response to change. Hence, the following hypotheses are defined:

H7a: Perceived Organisational Support (W) positively moderates the relationship between Transformational Leadership (X1) and Employee Response to Change (Y): the higher the Perceived Organisational Support, the stronger is the impact of Transformational Leadership on Employee Response to Change.

H7b: Perceived Organisational Support (W) moderates the indirect of Transformational Leadership (X1) on Employee Response to Change (Y) via Trust in Leadership (M): the higher the Perceived Organisational Support, the stronger is the indirect effect of Transformational Leadership (X1) on Employee Response to Change via Trust in Leadership (M).

H8a: Perceived Organisational Support (W) positively moderates the relationship between Empowering Leadership (X2) and Employee Response to Change (Y): the higher the Perceived Organisational Support, the stronger is the impact of Empowering Leadership on Employee Response to Change.

H8b: Perceived Organisational Support (W) moderates the indirect effect of Empowering Leadership (X2) on Employee Response to Change (Y) via Trust in Leadership (M): the higher the Perceived

Organisational Support, the stronger is the indirect effect of Empowering Leadership (X2) on Employee Response to Change via Trust in Leadership (M).

2.2. Research method and structure

As a research method, a **survey questionnaire** and **quantitative analysis** were chosen to be applied in this study in order to examine hypotheses 1-8. To evaluate the impact of transformational leadership and empowering leadership on employees' responses to change, with trust in leadership as a mediator and perceived organisational support as a moderator, a structured questionnaire was developed. The questionnaire is composed of six parts; the first five parts cover and evaluate the constructs examined in this study (see Table 2), and the last part includes demographic questions.

Table 2

Measurement scales for constructs of this thesis

Construct	Scale	Author	Items
Transformational Leadership	Global Transformational Leadership Scale (GTLS), 5-point Likert scale	Carless et. al (2000)	7
Empowering Leadership	Leadership Empowering Behaviour (LEB) Scale, 5-point Likert scale	Ahearne et. al (2005)	12
Response to Change	Change Recipients' Reactions to Organizational Change (CRRE), 5-point Likert scale	Tsaousis and Vakola (2018)	20
Trust in Leadership	Measures of Trust, 5-point Likert scale	Mayer and Davis (1999)	7
Perceived Organisational Support	Survey of Perceived Organizational Support, 7-point Likert scale	Eisenberger et al. (1997)	8

Source: compiled by the author

Transformational leadership is measured using the 7-item Global Transformational Leadership Scale (GTLS), developed by Carless et al. (2020), with Cronbach Alpha coefficient of .93. It is a well-known measurement scale used in many previous scientific studies. It adapts a 5-point Likert scale; the participants need to respond to the given question or statement by choosing from 1 to 5, where 1 is “rarely/never” and 5 is “always”. It includes questions like: “My leader communicates a clear and positive vision of the future”, “My leader gives me encouragement and recognition”, etc. For the questionnaire, the Lithuanian version of the GTLS scale was utilized, which was previously prepared

and used by Stelmokienė and Endriulaitienė (2009). The Lithuanian version of the questionnaire was translated by a professional translator and compared to its original; its reliability was confirmed by measuring the Cronbach Alpha coefficient, which was .925.

Empowering leadership is measured using Empowering Leadership Behaviour (LEB) Scale, developed by Ahearne et al. (2005). The 5-point Likert scale ranges from 1 “strongly disagree” to 5 “strongly agree”. This measurement scale has four sub-scales that Ahearne et al. defined: 1. The meaningfulness of work; 2. Fostering employee participation in decision-making; 3. Expressing confidence in an employee’s competence; 4. Autonomy in the workplace. Each sub-scale is supported by 3 questions that sum up to 12 items. In the study of Ahearne et al. (2005), the average Cronbach Alpha coefficient of the four scale scores is .88.

Employee’s Response to Change is measured on a scale developed by Tsaousis and Vakola (2018). This scale is a psychometric instrument named Change Recipients’ Reactions to Organizational Change (CRRE). This scale is explicitly designed to capture the three attitudinal components: affective, cognitive, and behavioral - as suggested by the Oreg et al. (2011) framework. The CRRE includes 20 items in a 5-point Likert scale covering three dimensions. Compared to the other scales, such as Holt et al. (2007), this scale is more suitable for testing hypotheses built in this study, as it focuses on the emotional employee’s response, and not on the openness to accept the change or commitment to it, as in the previous studies.

Due to the limitations of the convenience sampling and the nature of this study, it is not possible to evaluate one particular ongoing or completed change, as the participants are from different organisations. Therefore, additional guidelines for the participants of the study are submitted before this questionnaire part: *Think about one specific organisational change you experienced most recently (within the last 12 months) that meaningfully affected your work (e.g., restructuring, new system/process, leadership change). For the next questions, keep only this one change in mind.* Consistent with prior research (Lines et al., 2005), participants were instructed to anchor their responses to their most recent organisational change experience that had a meaningful impact on their work. Following the guidance of Tsaousis and Vakola (2018), CRRE items were adapted to reflect the specific context of an already implemented change, and the wording of several items was adapted from future/ongoing tense to past tense to align with the survey instruction. This scale includes questions like “I am happy with this change”, “I am willing to help this change be successful”;

however, it also has reversed items like “This change is unpleasant for me”, “The change makes me emotionally tired”, etc. The overall Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient for this scale is .93.

To measure employees’ trust in leadership, this study employed the Trust in Management scale developed by Mayer and Davis (1999). The instrument is built referencing the model of organisational trust proposed by Mayer et al. (1995), which conceptualizes trust as the willingness to be vulnerable based on positive expectations of another’s actions. The scale captures three antecedents of trust - ability, benevolence, and integrity - as well as employees’ overall willingness to be vulnerable to leadership. Originally, this scale consisted of 15 items, rated on a 5-point Likert scale, with Cronbach’s alpha values between .80 and .90 across the dimensions; however, many later studies (e.g., Colquitt et al. 2007; Burke et al. 2007) adopted or proved that a shorter version of this scale can be used without losing reliability, hence in this study 7 items are used.

Perceived Organisational Support is measured on a scale developed by Eisenberger et. al (1997). The original scale contained 36 items that Eisenberger et al. (1997) minimized to 8 that were proven to be applicable for the majority of fields. The 7-point Likert scale was adopted, and the Cronbach’s alpha was confirmed to be .90. Items typically include statements such as “*My organization values my contributions to its well-being*” and “*My organization really cares about my well-being*”.

Lastly, 5 demographic questions were included in the questionnaire, including Age, Gender, Educational Level, Current Job Level, and Job Tenure.

2.3. Sampling method, sample characteristics, and size

The research targets employees working in Lithuania. As the study examines two leadership styles and trust in leadership as a construct, certain criteria are applied for sample characteristics. Participants were selected based on accessibility and willingness to participate, while certain groups, such as C-level executives and self-employed individuals, were deliberately excluded to ensure the sample reflected the targeted employee population relevant to the research objectives and research problem. Although there is no screening question, responses that have Current Job Level equal to “Self-Employed” or “C-Level” will be removed from further analysis. While there are certain criteria applied, the majority of the workforce in Lithuania meets the requirements to be valid participants of the study. Hence, this study employed a **non-probability convenience sampling method**. Convenience sampling also allows for gathering the data faster and requires less time consumption.

The sample size was calculated according to the method proposed by Pakalniškienė (2012), which introduces a 5:1 proportion rule. This means that there must be at least five respondents for each research statement. The total number of questions in the survey is 54 (without demographic questions, as they do not have a direct linkage to the built hypotheses), and multiplied by 5, it gives a minimum sample size of 270 respondents that this study aims to have.

2.4. Data collection and analysis methods

Data for this study were collected through an online questionnaire administered via Microsoft Forms. The questionnaire was shared in the Lithuanian language. An invitation containing the survey link was distributed through “LinkedIn”, “Facebook”, and other social media platforms to reach a diverse pool of employees across the industries and organisational levels. Respondents were informed about the research purpose and the expected duration to complete the questionnaire. They were assured of the confidentiality of their data and that their answers were used for research purposes only.

For the data cleanup and analysis, statistical analysis software IBM SPSS package with Hayes PROCESS model package will be used. Descriptive statistics will be computed to reveal and summarize sample demographics; the reliability of each scale will be measured using Cronbach’s Alpha; linear regression analysis will be used to examine the relationships among study variables. Additionally, other statistical techniques, e.g., mediation and moderation analysis using Hayes PROCESS model plug-in, will be employed.

3. THE RESULTS OF RESEARCH OF THE IMPACT OF TRANSFORMATIONAL AND EMPOWERING LEADERSHIP ON EMPLOYEE RESPONSE TO CHANGE: MEDIATING ROLE OF TRUST IN LEADERSHIP AND MODERATING ROLE OF PERCEIVED ORGANISATIONAL SUPPORT

3.1. Demographic overview of research participants

The survey was prepared using “Microsoft Forms” tools and published early September 2025. The questionnaire was prepared in Lithuanian and was distributed to the various Lithuanian-speaking groups in “LinkedIn”, “Facebook”, and other social platforms. As mentioned in the 2.3 paragraph, given the number of questions in the questionnaire, the aim was to collect data from at least 270 respondents. In total, **311** responses were collected. The questionnaire was split into two main parts – the first one contains 55 questions to measure five variables, presented in this research; the second part contains five questions to gather demographic data about respondents, including age group, gender, educational levels, current job level, and job tenure. In order to check whether the respondent meets the acceptance requirements for this research, demographic data is reviewed first.

The respondents were asked to choose which age group they fall into. Half of the respondents fall into the age group from 18 to 29 years old (50,48 %), then almost a third being from 30 to 39 years old (32,15 %), and the rest are older than 39 years old, from 40 to 49 (13,83 %), from 50 to 59 (3,22 %). Only one respondent was more than 60 years old (0,32 %). While looking at the distribution of gender, more respondents confirmed that they were female (69,13 %), the rest were male (28,94 %). 6 respondents (1,93 %) chose “Other” or to not disclose their gender. Another question the respondents were given to answer was about their level of education, and more than a half of the research participants (55,95 %) had university degree (bachelor’s, master’s or higher), then one fifth had secondary education (18,65 %), non-university/college degree (14,57 %), other 10,29 % of respondents finished their vocational studies. Two respondents (0,64 %) chose “Other” and informed that they are still studying at the university, but didn’t specify their current education level.

The distribution and demographic data about the respondents are illustrated in the Table 3 below.

Table 3*The variance of respondents and their demographic factors*

Demographic factors and employment details		Frequency	Percentage
Age	18 – 29 years	157	50,48 %
	30 – 39 years	100	32,15 %
	40 – 49 years	43	13,83 %
	50 – 59 years	10	3,22 %
	60+ years	1	0,32 %
Gender	Female	215	69,13 %
	Male	90	28,94 %
	Other / Don't want to disclose	6	1,93 %
Current Education Level	Secondary Education	58	18,65 %
	Vocational Education	32	10,29 %
	Non-university/College Degree	45	14,57 %
	University Degree	174	55,95 %
	Other	2	0,64 %
Current Job Level	Freelancer/Contractor	27	8,68%
	Employee in a non-managerial position	229	73,63%
	Employee in a managerial position	52	16,72 %
	C-level manager	2	0,64 %
	Other	1	0,32 %
Current Job Tenure	Less than a year	67	14,47 %
	1 – 2 years	92	29,59 %
	3 – 5 years	80	25,72 %
	5 – 10 years	45	21,54 %
	10+ years	27	8,68 %

Source: compiled by the author of this thesis, based on the data analysis done in SPSS

The next two questions were given to review respondents' employment position and job tenure ("How long have you been working in your current organization?"). 229 respondents answered that

they are employed in a non-managerial position (73,63%), the 2nd biggest group are the employees in managerial positions (16,72 %), then come 27 responses from freelancers/contractors (8,68%). Two respondents answered that they are C-level managers (0,64 %), and one chose option “Other – not working at the moment” (0,32 %). The last question aimed to find out how long the employee is working in the current position (job tenure). The respondents could choose from several options, such as “less than a year”, “ 1-2 years”, “3-5 years”, “5-10 years”, or “more than 10 years”. The results show quite even distribution between these groups, as highest number of respondents shared there are working between 1 to 2 years (29,59 %) or 3 to 5 years (25,72 %). There were quite a lot of respondents who have been working for less than a year too (21,54 %). 14,47 % respondents have been working between 5 and 10 years in their current organisation, while 8,68 % are working more than 10 years.

Given the constructs of this research, it was decided to exclude the responses given by the respondents who are either Freelancer/Contractor, C-level Managers, as their experiences might be biased and not fully reflect leadership’s and the organisation’s attitudes towards employees. Freelancers and/or contractors usually don’t receive the same benefits as employees; they work for a fixed pre-agreed period of time and can contribute to a few organisations at once, therefore their relationship with the manager or the person they report to is different compared to a regular employee. For C-level managers, the mediating impact of trust in leadership can not be measured, as they are part of the highest-ranking leadership team. The one response that chose “Other” does not give the details about the position either. Hence, to ensure the gathered data is reliable, these three groups were excluded from further analysis. This means that in total **281 responses meet the acceptance criteria and will be used for further analysis.**

3.2. Reliability and normality analysis

Before analysing the data further, it’s important to check whether the questionnaire and measurement scales are reliable. Cronbach’s Alpha test is specifically applicable when a questionnaire is designed using a Likert scale (Pakalniškienė, 2012). Cronbach’s Alpha is used to evaluate whether items that are intended to measure the construct produce logical and consistent scores within the given sample (Zakariya, 2022). If Cronbach’s Alpha for the tested construct is below 0,7, the reliability of the questionnaire is already poor or very questionable, so any number higher than 0,7 shows acceptable reliability. All five constructs were measured using the scales that were detailed in paragraph 2.2, and for each scale, Cronbach’s Alpha test was performed to prove reliability.

Table 4*Scale reliability analysis (Cronbach's Alpha test)*

Construct	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient
Transformational Leadership (TL)	7	0,937
Empowering Leadership (EL)	12	0,912
Employee's Response to Change (ERC)	20	0,915
Trust in Leadership (TiL)	7	0,917
Perceived Organisational Support (POS)	8	0,896

Source: compiled by the author of this thesis, based on the data analysis done in SPSS

The test of Cronbach's Alpha returned these results: Transformational Leadership's Scale – 0,937, Empowering Leadership - 0,912, Employee's Response to Change – 0,915, Trust in Leadership – 0,917, Perceived Organisational Support – 0,896. The result for all five constructs showed Cronbach's Alpha to be almost or higher than 0,9, meaning that the questionnaires used in this research are highly reliable and consistent.

To check the normality of data distribution, it is useful to conduct the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests on the researched constructs. For each construct, a MEAN was composited of its items.

Table 5*Normality test*

Variable	Kolmogorov-Smirnov Significance		Shapiro-Wilk significance	
	Statistic	Significance	Statistic	Significance
Transformational Leadership (TL)	0,077	<0,001	0,972	<0,001
Empowering Leadership (EL)	0,055	0,038	0,038	0,003
Employee's Response to Change (ERC)	0,052	0,060	0,992	0,116
Trust in Leadership (TiL)	0,078	<0,001	0,982	0,001
Perceived Organisational Support (POS)	0,077	<0,001	0,975	<0,001

Source: compiled by the author of this thesis, based on the data analysis done in SPSS

Skewness and Kurtosis were also checked for the following variables:

Table 6

Test for data distribution

Variable	Skewness	Kurtosis
Transformational Leadership (TL)	-0,239	-0,783
Empowering Leadership (EL)	-0,256	-0,422
Employee's Response to Change (ERC)	-0,139	-0,478
Trust in Leadership (TiL)	-0,320	-0,368
Perceived Organisational Support (POS)	-0,517	-0,168

Source: compiled by the author of this thesis, based on the data analysis done in SPSS

The results of the tests above show that four out of five variables are statistically not normally distributed, as both Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests return significance $p < 0,05$. However, Skewness and Kurtosis for these four variables fall between -1 and 1, so it is safe to assume that there are only slight deviations and the distribution is close to normal. Employee's Response to Change was the only variable that passed both Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests showing normal distribution, with values $p = 0,060$ and $p = 0,116$ respectively.

3.3. Descriptive statistics of variables

To summarize the sample and its distribution, descriptive statistics were calculated for all five variables. The analysis includes checking mean, median, min-max, standard deviation, and variance. For the TL, EL, ERC, TiL questionnaires were based on a 5-point Likert scale, so the minimum value cannot be less than 1 and the maximum value cannot be more than 5. The POS questionnaire was designed using a 7-point Likert scale, so the minimum value cannot be less than 1 and the maximum value cannot be more than 7.

Table 7*Descriptive statistics of research variables*

Variable	Mean	Median	Min-Max	Std. Deviation	Variance
Transformational Leadership (TL)	3,365	3,429	1,000 – 5,000	1,000	1,010
Empowering Leadership (EL)	3,544	3,583	1,080 – 5,000	0,818	0,670
Employee's Response to Change (ERC)	3,099	3,100	1,400 – 4,850	0,704	0,495
Trust in Leadership (TiL)	3,242	3,286	1,000 – 5,000	0,895	0,801
Perceived Organisational Support (POS)	4,719	4,875	1,250 – 7,000	1,197	1,432

Source: compiled by the author of this thesis, based on the data analysis done in SPSS

Descriptive statistics indicate moderate levels across all five variables. As for all variables, medians are a bit higher than means, consistent with the negative skewness shared in the 3.3 paragraph. This means that some low values pull the means down, while other scores are relatively higher. It is notable that no respondent gave the lowest scoring possible for EL, ERC, and POS, as well as no respondent gave the highest scoring possible for ERC. POS uses a Likert scale from 1-7, so the mean of 4,719 also shows a slightly positive level.

3.4. Correlation of research variables

Correlations among TL, EL, ERC, TiL, and POS were calculated using Spearman's rank correlations due to non-normality in distribution for four of five variables, and data being ordinal.

Table 8*Correlation test*

Variable	Spearman's rho	TL	EL	ERC	TiL	POS
TL	Correlation Coefficient	-	0,805	0,374	0,596	0,684
	Sig. (2-tailed)	-	<0,001	<0,001	<0,001	<0,001
EL	Correlation Coefficient	0,805	-	0,457	0,585	0,638
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<0,001	-	<0,001	<0,001	<0,001
ERC	Correlation Coefficient	0,375	0,457	-	0,461	0,556
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<0,001	<0,001	-	<0,001	<0,001
TiL	Correlation Coefficient	0,596	0,585	0,461	-	0,688
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<0,001	<0,001	<0,001	-	<0,001
POS	Correlation Coefficient	0,648	0,638	0,556	0,688	-
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<0,001	<0,001	<0,001	<0,001	-

Source: compiled by the author of this thesis, based on the data analysis done in SPSS

Spearman correlations show that all constructs significantly positively correlate, as all $p < 0,001$. The strongest correlation is between TL and EL with $p=0,805$, but it is not relevant for this research as these are two independent variables and the constructs are similar, so the further relationship between these two is not examined. POS correlated strongly and positively with all variables, the correlation coefficients for TL and EL with POS are similar. This means that when one increases, another one increases as well, or vice versa. The same can be said about TiL and TL/EL level of correlation, both showing significant more than moderate positive correlation. A weaker correlation, but still significantly positive is between TL and ERC.

3.5. The impact of transformational and empowering leadership on employee response to change

In the paragraph 3.2 reliability and normality tests showed that all variables, except ERC are statistically not normally distributed, as both Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests return significance $p < 0,05$. However, given that the skewness is minimal (-1 to 0 for all variables) and the number of respondents is 281, linear regression can be run to examine how the independent variable influences the dependent variable in a bivariate relationship. The first two hypotheses of this research states that:

H1: Transformational Leadership (X1) has a positive impact on Employee Response to Change (Y).

H2: Empowering Leadership (X2) has a positive impact on Employee Response to Change (Y).

The results of ANOVA test are provided in Table 9 and 10.

Table 9

Anova test results for Transformational Leadership (TL) → Employee Response to Change (ERC)

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	20,604	1	20,604	48,703	<0,001
Residual	118,035	279	0,423		
Total	138,640	280			

Source: compiled by the author of this thesis, based on the data analysis done in SPSS

Table 10

Anova test results for Empowering Leadership (EL) → Employee Response to Change (ERC)

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	30,600	1	30,600	79,021	<0,001
Residual	108,040	279	0,387		
Total	138,640	280			

Source: compiled by the author of this thesis, based on the data analysis done in SPSS

The results from ANOVA test show that regression models for both independent variables and dependent variable are significant, with $F=48,704$ and $p<0,001$ for TL and $F=79,021$ and $p<0,001$ for EL accordingly, thus, the results from the linear regression analysis are consistent and reliable.

Table 11

Single linear regression model summary for Transformational Leadership (TL) → Employee Response to Change (ERC)

Model	R	R ²	Adj. R ²	Std. Error of Estimate
Regression	0,386	0,149	0,146	0,65043

Source: compiled by the author of this thesis, based on the data analysis done in SPSS

Table 12

Single linear regression model summary for Empowering Leadership (EL) → Employee Response to Change (ERC)

Model	R	R ²	Adj. R ²	Std. Error of Estimate
Regression	0,470	0,221	0,218	0,62229

Source: compiled by the author of this thesis, based on the data analysis done in SPSS

After running the regression analysis results show $R=0,386$, confirming that there is positive low-to-moderate correlation between TL and ERC, also, $R^2=0,149$ and adjusted $R^2=0,146$ show that TL explains 14,9% of the variance in ERC, and has a medium effect. For EL, the results showed higher correlation coefficient ($R=0,470$) than for TL, the $R^2=0,221$ and adjusted $R^2=0,218$ show that EL explains 22,1% of the variance in ERC. The $R=0,470$ shows that between EL and ERC there is a moderate correlation. Next, the results of regression coefficient analysis were checked in the output. The results are provided in Table 13 and 14.

Table 13

Regression coefficient analysis for Transformational Leadership (TL) → Employee's Response to Change (ERC)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Constant	2,191	0,136	-	16,127	<0,001
Transformational Leadership (TL)	0,270	0,039	0,386	6,979	<0,001

Source: compiled by the author of this thesis, based on the data analysis done in SPSS

Table 14

Regression coefficient analysis for Empowering Leadership (EL) → Employee's Response to Change (ERC)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Constant	1,667	0,165	-	10,089	<0,001
Empowering Leadership (TL)	0,404	0,046	0,470	8,889	<0,001

Source: compiled by the author of this thesis, based on the data analysis done in SPSS

To predict a dependent variable, which in this hypothesis is Employee's Response to Change (ERC), the regression equation is used. Given the results gathered from regression coefficient analysis, the equation shows that for each 1-point increase in Transformational Leadership (TL), the Employee Response to Change is predicted to increase by 0,270, while for each 1-point increase in Empowering Leadership (EL) the Employee Response to Change increase by 0,404:

$$\text{ERC (dependent variable)} = 2,191 + 0,270 * (\text{Transformational Leadership}) + \varepsilon$$

$$\text{ERC (dependent variable)} = 1,667 + 0,404 * (\text{Empowering Leadership}) + \varepsilon$$

Since the research model presented in 2.1 paragraph includes **two independent variables** (Transformational leadership as X1 and Empowering Leadership as X2), it is also important to check how these two variables affect Employee Response to Change (Y) both individually and collectively

in this model. Therefore, the multiple regression analysis was run to gather more insights on how these two independent variables impact the dependent variable while being in one model.

Table 15

Anova test results for Transformational Leadership (TL)+ Empowering Leadership (EL) → Employee Response to Change (ERC)

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	30,615	2	15,307	39,393	<0,001
Residual	108,025	278	0,389		
Total	138,640	280			

Source: compiled by the author of this thesis, based on the data analysis done in SPSS

The results from ANOVA test show that multiple regression model including two independent variables and dependent variable is significant, with $F=39,393$ and $p<0,00$, so the results from multiple regression regression analysis are consistent and reliable. The model summary shows R square = 0,221, this means that Transformational and Empowering Leadership styles together explain 22,1% of variance of Employee Response to Change. Durbin-Watson test with the result of 1,769 show that there is almost no autocorrelation in the residuals of the given multiple regression model, so this test re-checks and confirms the reliability of this model.

Table 16

Multiple linear regression model summary for Transformational Leadership + Empowering Leadership (EL) → Employee Response to Change (ERC)

Model	R	R ²	Adj. R ²	Std. Error of Estimate	Durbin-Watson
Regression	0,470	0,221	0,215	0,62336	1,769

Source: compiled by the author of this thesis, based on the data analysis done in SPSS

The results of multiple linear regression coefficient analysis are provided in Table 17.

Table 17

Regression coefficient analysis for Transformational Leadership (TL) + Empowering Leadership (EL) → Employee's Response to Change (ERC)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
Constant	1,669	0,166	-	10,067	<0,001		
Transformational Leadership (TL)	0,012	0,063	0,456	0,017	0,847	0,348	2,877
Empowering Leadership (EL)	0,392	0,077	0,456	5,076	<0,001	0,348	2,877

Source: compiled by the author of this thesis, based on the data analysis done in SPSS

The results of multiple linear regression coefficient analysis show that the relationship between Empowering Leadership and Employee Response to Change is still significant ($p < 0,001$), while another independent variable is in the model. However, the association between Transformational Leadership and Employee Response to Change is not proven to be significant ($p = 0,847$) in the model. The collinearity test shows the VIF to be less than 5 ($VIF = 2,877$), so multicollinearity is not supported. The equation based on the results of coefficient analysis can be build in the following way, keeping in mind that TL is non-significant and doesn't have an effect in this model:

$$ERC \text{ (dependent variable)} = 1,669 + 0,012 * (\text{Transformational Leadership}) + 0,392 * (\text{Empowering Leadership}) + \varepsilon$$

Single linear and multiple linear regression results for the two independent and one dependent variables show that transformational leadership has a significant relationship with employee response to change only in bivariate model, as when empowering leadership is included, the transformational leadership becomes non-significant. Together they explain around 22,1% of variance in employee response to change. Empowering Leadership alone has a medium positive association with employee response to change, and it stays at the same level when TL is in model, confirming the TL doesn't have any impact on EL positive association with ERC. Based on the results, **H1 is rejected, as the significance in the model of sharing variance with EL is not supported, and H2 is confirmed.**

3.6. The impact of transformational and empowering leadership on trust in leadership

The next two hypotheses (H3 and H4) of this research examine how different leadership styles influence the Trust in Leadership. It is hypothesized that:

H3: Transformational Leadership (X1) has a positive impact on Trust in Leadership (M).

H4: Empowering Leadership (X2) has a positive impact on Trust in Leadership (M).

Table 18

Anova test results for Transformational Leadership (TL) → Trust in Leadership (TiL)

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	86,447	1	86,447	175,035	<0,001
Residual	137,843	279	0,494		
Total	224,320	280			

Source: compiled by the author of this thesis, based on the data analysis done in SPSS

Table 19

Anova test results for Empowering Leadership (EL) → Trust in Leadership (TiL)

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	89,572	1	89,572	185,463	<0,001
Residual	134,748	279	0,483		
Total	224,320	280			

Source: compiled by the author of this thesis, based on the data analysis done in SPSS

The results from ANOVA test show that regression models for both independent variables and dependent variable are significant, with $F=175,035$ and $p<0,001$ for TL and $F=185,463$ and $p<0,001$ for EL accordingly, thus, the results from regression are consistent and reliable.

Table 20

Single regression model summary for Transformational Leadership (TL) → Trust in Leadership (TiL)

Model	R	R ²	Adj. R ²	Std. Error of Estimate
Regression	0,621	0,386	0,383	0,70289

Source: compiled by the author of this thesis, based on the data analysis done in SPSS

Table 21

Single regression model summary for Empowering Leadership (EL) → Trust in Leadership (TiL)

Model	R	R ²	Adj. R ²	Std. Error of Estimate
Regression	0,632	0,399	0,397	0,69496

Source: compiled by the author of this thesis, based on the data analysis done in SPSS

After running the regression analysis results for both relationships, the results are very similar. For TL analysis show R=0,621, and for EL R=0,632, confirming that there is positive moderate to high correlation between TL and TiL variable, the same conclusion can be drawn for EL and TiL. R²=0,386 and adjusted R²=0,383 show that TL explains 38,6% of the variance in TiL, and has an above- medium effect. For EL, the results the R²=0,399 and adjusted R²=0,397 show that EL explains 39,9% of the variance in ERC.

Table 22

Regression coefficient analysis for Transformational Leadership (TL) → Trust in Leadership (TiL)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Constant	1,381	0,147	-	9,408	<0,001
Transformational Leadership (TL)	0,553	0,042	0,621	13,230	<0,001

Source: compiled by the author of this thesis, based on the data analysis done in SPSS

Table 23

Regression coefficient analysis for Empowering Leadership (EL) → Trust in Leadership (TiL)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Constant	0,793	0,185	-	4,295	<0,001
Transformational Leadership (TL)	0,691	0,051	0,632	13,618	<0,001

Source: compiled by the author of this thesis, based on the data analysis done in SPSS

Given the results gathered from regression coefficient analysis, the equation shows that for each 1-point increase in Transformational Leadership (TL), the Trust in Leadership is predicted to increase by 0,553, while for each 1-point increase in Empowering Leadership (EL), the Trust in Leadership increases by 0,691:

$$\text{TiL (dependent variable)} = 1,381 + 0,553 * (\text{Transformational Leadership}) + \varepsilon$$

$$\text{TiL (dependent variable)} = 0,793 + 0,691 * (\text{Empowering Leadership}) + \varepsilon$$

Same as with the first two hypotheses, the multiple linear regression analysis was run to check the unique contribution of each independent variable of this model.

Table 24

Anova test results for Transformational Leadership (TL) + Empowering Leadership (EL) → Trust in Leadership (TiL)

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	97,451	2	48,726	106,770	<0,001
Residual	126,869	278	0,456		
Total	224,320	280			

Source: compiled by the author of this thesis, based on the data analysis done in SPSS

The results from ANOVA test support the reliability of this multiple regression model as $F=106,393$ and $p<0,00$, meaning the test results are consistent and reliable.

Table 25

Multiple regression model summary for Transformational Leadership (TL) + Empowering Leadership (EL) → Trust in Leadership (TiL)

Model	R	R ²	Adj. R ²	Std. Error of Estimate	Durbin-Watson
Regression	0,659	0,434	0,430	0,67555	2,350

Source: compiled by the author of this thesis, based on the data analysis done in SPSS

Based on the results shown in Model Summary, Transformational and Empowering Leadership styles together explain 43,4% of variance of Trust in Leadership. Durbin-Watson test with the result of 2,350 show that there is almost no autocorrelation in the residuals of the given multiple regression model, so this test re-checks and confirms the reliability of this model.

Table 26

Multiple regression coefficient analysis for Transformational Leadership (TL) + Empowering Leadership (EL) → Trust in Leadership (TiL)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
Constant	0,835	0,180	-	4,647	<0,001		
Transformational Leadership (TL)	0,283	0,068	0,318	4,155	<0,001	0,348	2,877
Empowering Leadership (EL)	0,410	0,084	0,375	4,904	<0,001	0,348	2,877

Source: compiled by the author of this thesis, based on the data analysis done in SPSS

The results of multiple regression coefficient analysis show that the relationship between Empowering Leadership and Employee Response to Change is still significant ($p < 0,001$), while another independent variable is in the model. The significance of the relationship between Transformational Leadership (TL) and Trust in Leadership is also supported ($p < 0,001$). The final equation, based on the results of multiple coefficient analysis, is the following:

$$\text{TiL (dependent variable)} = 0,835 + 0,283 * (\text{Transformational Leadership}) + 0,410 * (\text{Empowering Leadership}) + \varepsilon$$

To summarize the findings, both single linear regression tests and multiple linear regression tests confirm the significance of Transformational Leadership and Empowering Leadership in relation to Employee Response to Change. Together, these two leadership styles explain 43,4% of the variance of Employee Response to Change. Empowering leadership predicts more Trust in Leadership, both at the bivariate level and also when being in the model with Transformational Leadership. Therefore, the data support the hypotheses, **so H3 and H4 are confirmed.**

3.7. The impact of trust in leadership as a mediator on the relationship between transformational leadership or empowering leadership and employee response to change

The next two hypotheses of this research make presumptions that:

H5: Trust in Leadership (M) mediates the relationship between Transformational Leadership (X1) and Employee Response to Change (Y).

H6: Trust in Leadership (M) mediates the relationship between Empowering Leadership (X2) and Employee Response to Change (Y).

To test the significance of Trust in Leadership as a mediator between leadership styles and Employee Response to Change, the most relevant test to conduct is Hayes Process Model 4, which can examine the mediating effect of Trust in Leadership.

Table 27a

Hayes 4 Model Summary, when X – Transformational Leadership, Y - Employee Response Change, and M – Trust in Leadership

Model Summary	R	R ²	F	Sig. (p)
	0,4837	0,2339	42,4434	<0,001

Source: compiled by the author of this thesis, based on the data analysis done in SPSS

Table 27b

Coefficients for mediation model, when X – Transformational Leadership, Y - Employee Response Change, and M – Trust in Leadership

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficients		t	Sig. (p)	LLCI	ULCI
	B	Std. Error				
Constant	1,7860	0,1481	12,0560	<0,001	1,4944	2,0776
Transformational Leadership (TL)	0,1080	0,0469	2,3023	0,0221	0,0157	0,2003
Trust in Leadership (TiL)	0,2929	0,0526	5,5637	<0,001	0,1893	0,3965

Source: compiled by the author of this thesis, based on the data analysis done in SPSS

First of all, the results of this model analysis, available in Annex 6, confirmed the regression coefficient and results provided in 3.5 paragraph, showing that with each 1-point increase in Transformational Leadership, the Trust in Leadership is supposed to increase by 0,553 and that TL explains 38,6% of the variance in TiL.

Based on the results received by running Hayes Process Model 4, TiL significantly mediates the relationship between TL and ERC, with every 1-point increase in TiL, ERC is predicted to increase by 0,293 (B=0,2929, $p < 0,001$). The effect of the TL through TiL is weaker, but still significant (B=0,1080, $p = 0,0221$). The direct and indirect effects of the TL on ERC when TiL acts as a mediator are illustrated in Table 27c below:

Table 27c

Direct and Indirect Effect, when X – Transformational Leadership, Y - Employee Response Change and M – Trust in Leadership

Model	Effect	se	t	Sig. (p)	LLCI	ULCI
Direct Effect	0,1080	0,0469	2,3023	0,0221	0,0157	0,2003
Indirect Effect	0,1620	0,0349 (boot)	-	-	0,0977 (boot)	0,2348 (boot)

Source: compiled by the author of this thesis, based on the data analysis done in SPSS

The indirect effect is 0,162, and the values of LLCI and ULCI (bootstrapped) exclude zero, meaning that the mediation of TiL is significant. As stated above, the direct effect of TL on ERC is weaker, but still positive. The total effect is calculated by adding both direct and indirect effects, which in this case equals 0,2700. As the indirect effect is calculated to be stronger than indirect, it shows that mediator plays a great role in the relationship between TL and ERC. When dividing indirect effect by the total effect, the result shows that 60% (0,6) of the TL effect goes via TiL. As both indirect and direct effects are significant, the results confirm partial mediation. In conclusion, **Hypothesis 5 is confirmed.**

The same Hayes Process Model 4 analysis was run to check the mediating effect of TiL on the relationship between EL and ERC.

Table 28a

Hayes 4 Model Summary, when X – Empowering Leadership, Y - Employee Response Change, and M – Trust in Leadership

Model Summary	R	R ²	F	Sig. (p)
	0,5193	0,2696	51,3181	<0,001

Source: compiled by the author of this thesis, based on the data analysis done in SPSS

Table 28b

Coefficients for mediation model, when X – Empowering Leadership, Y - Employee Response Change, and M – Trust in Leadership

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficients		t	Sig. (p)	LLCI	ULCI
	B	Std. Error				
Constant	1,4895	0,1655	9,0005	<0,001	1,1637	1,8153
Empowering Leadership (EL)	0,2489	0,0569	4,3769	<0,001	0,1370	0,3608
Trust in Leadership (TiL)	0,2244	0,0520	4,3155	<0,001	0,1220	0,3267

Source: compiled by the author of this thesis, based on the data analysis done in SPSS

Based on the results received by running Hayes Process Model 4, TiL significantly mediates the relationship between EL and ERC, with every 1-point increase in TiL, ERC is predicted to increase by 0,2244 (B=0,2244, p<0,001).

Table 28c

Direct and Indirect Effect, when X – Empowering Leadership, Y - Employee Response Change and M – Trust in Leadership

Model	Effect	se	t	Sig. (p)	LLCI	ULCI
Direct Effect	0,2489	0,0569	4,3769	<0,001	0,1379	0,3608
Indirect Effect	0,1551	0,0445(boot)	-	-	0,0717 (boot)	0,2457 (boot)

Source: compiled by the author of this thesis, based on the data analysis done in SPSS

The direct and indirect effects of the TL on ERC when TiL acts as a mediator are illustrated in the Table 28c above. The indirect effect is 0,1551 and the values of LLCI and ULCI (bootstrapped) exclude zero, meaning that the mediation of TiL is significant. Unlike the TL, the direct effect of EL is stronger than the indirect effect. The total effect is calculated by adding both direct and indirect effects, which in this case equals 0,4040. When dividing the indirect effect by the total effect, the result shows that 38% (0,3839) of the EL effect goes via TiL, while the remaining 62% comes directly

or via other means. As both indirect and direct effects are significant, the results confirm partial mediation. **Hypothesis 6 is confirmed.**

The results show that Trust in Leadership significantly mediates the relationship between Transformational Leadership and Employee Response to Change, as well as between Empowering Leadership and Employee Response to Change. It is noteworthy that the results show a stronger indirect effect of TiL for the TL-ERC relationship, highlighting the importance of the trust factor in not only the follower-leader relationship, but also between the follower and the higher leadership team or executives. The EL total effect on ERC is greater than that of TL, and the direct EL effect on ERC is bigger. Both Hypotheses 5 and 6 are confirmed.

3.8. The impact of perceived organisational support as a moderator on the relationship between leadership styles and employee response to change

The next two hypotheses of this thesis make presumptions that:

H7a: Perceived Organisational Support (W) moderates the relationship between Transformational (X1) Leadership and Employee Response to Change (Y).

H7b: Perceived Organisational Support (W) moderates the relationship between Empowering Leadership (X2) and Employee Response to Change (Y).

To test the significance of Perceived Organisational Support as a moderator between leadership styles and Employee Response to Change, the most relevant test to conduct is Hayes Process Model 1, which can examine the moderating effect of Perceived Organisational Support. The analysis was conducted to see whether there is a moderating effect of Perceived Organisational Support on the relationship between Transformational Leadership and Employee Response to change.

Table 29a

Hayes 1 Model Summary, when X – Transformational Leadership, Y - Employee Response Change, and W – Perceived Organisational Support

Model Summary	R	R ²	F	Sig. (p)
	0,5640	0,3181	43,0774	<0,001

Source: compiled by the author of this thesis, based on the data analysis done in SPSS

Table 29b

Coefficients for moderation model, when X – Transformational Leadership, Y - Employee Response Change, and M – Trust in Leadership

Variable	Coefficient	se	t	Sig. (p)	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	3,1080	0,0412	75,3921	<0,001	3,0269	3,1892
TL	0,0209	0,0459	0,4541	0,6501	-0,0696	0,1113
POS	0,3161	0,0395	8,0011	<0,001	0,2384	0,3939
Int_1 (TL x POS)	-0,0116	0,0281	-0,4119	0,6807	-0,0669	0,0437

Source: compiled by the author of this thesis, based on the data analysis done in SPSS

The results show that the interaction term between TL and POS is not significant (B=-0,0116, p=0,6807, the interval between LLCI and ULCI includes zero). However, the higher POS relates to the higher ERC, as with each 1-point increase in POS, the ERC increases by 0,3161, and this relationship is significant (p<0,001). Additionally, the effect of TL when the model includes POS is not significant (p=0,6501). The results of the moderation analysis do not confirm that Perceived Organisational Support moderates the relationship between Transformational Leadership and Employee Response to Change. **The Hypothesis H7a is rejected.**

The Hayes Process 1 analysis was conducted to see whether there is a moderating effect of Perceived Organisational Support on the relationship between Empowering Leadership and Employee Response to change.

Table 30a

Hayes 1 Model Summary, when X – Empowering Leadership, Y - Employee Response Change, and W – Perceived Organisational Support

Model Summary	R	R ²	F	Sig. (p)
	0,5784	0,3345	46,4094	<0,001

Source: compiled by the author of this thesis, based on the data analysis done in SPSS

Table 30b

Coefficients for moderation model, when X – Empowering Leadership, Y - Employee Response Change, and M – Trust in Leadership

Variable	Coefficient	se	t	Sig. (p)	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	3,1051	0,0404	76,8224	<0,001	3,0255	3,1847
EL	0,1477	0,0565	2,6136	0,0094	0,0364	0,2589
POS	0,2619	0,0389	6,7370	<0,001	0,1853	0,3384
Int_1 (EL x POS)	-0,0096	0,0329	-0,2905	0,7717	-0,0743	0,0552

Source: compiled by the author of this thesis, based on the data analysis done in SPSS

The results from this analysis are similar to the ones that were examined to check hypothesis 7. The interaction term between EL and POS is not significant (B=-0,0096, p=0,7717, the interval between LLCI and ULCI includes zero). The higher POS relates to the higher ERC, as with each 1-point increase in POS, the ERC increases by 0,2619, and this relationship is significant (p<0,001). It is also noteworthy that the effect of EL when the model includes POS also significant (p=0,0094). While both the Empowering Leadership and Perceived Organisational Support directly have a significant relationship with Employee Response to Change, the results of moderation analysis does not confirm that Perceived Organisational Support moderates the relationship between Empowering Leadership and Employee Response to Change, as it is not significant. **The H7b is rejected.**

The last two hypotheses incorporate all variables of this model, and are built on the assumption that Perceived Organisational Support might moderate the indirect effect of leadership styles on employee response to change, while trust in leadership acts as a mediator in this relationship. The following hypotheses were built:

H7b: Perceived Organisational Support (W) moderates the indirect effect of Transformational Leadership (X1) on Employee Response to Change (Y) via Trust in Leadership (M): the higher the Perceived Organisational Support, the stronger is the indirect effect of Transformational Leadership (X1) on Employee Response to Change via Trust in Leadership (M).

H8b: Perceived Organisational Support (W) moderates the indirect effect of Empowering Leadership (X2) on Employee Response to Change (Y) via Trust in Leadership (M): the higher the Perceived

Organisational Support, the stronger is the indirect effect of Empowering Leadership (X2) on Employee Response to Change via Trust in Leadership (M).

Hayes PROCESS model 14 was run to perform moderated mediation analysis for the given variables. The first analysis was run to test H8a. The moderated mediation model was confirmed to be significant and relevant ($p < 0,001$), and the results are shown in the **Table 31a** below:

Table 31a

Hayes 14 Model Summary, when X – Transformational Leadership, Y - Employee Response Change, M – Trust in Leadership, and W – Perceived Organisational Support

Variable	Coefficient	se	t	Sig. (p)	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	3,1014	0,1653	18,7617	<0,001	2,2760	3,4268
TL	-0,0040	0,0478	-0,0832	0,9338	-0,0980	0,0900
TiL	0,1038	0,0584	1,7778	0,0765	-0,0111	0,2187
POS	0,2833	0,0470	6,0316	<0,001	0,1980	0,3758
Int_1 (TiL x POS)	0,0142	0,0286	0,4964	0,6200	-0,0421	0,0706

Source: compiled by the author of this thesis, based on the data analysis done in SPSS

The results from the moderated mediation analysis show that the relationship between TiL and POS is not significant and the ($p = 0,6200$, the interval between LLCI and ULCI includes zero). This means that POS does not have a significant indirect effect on the relationship between TL and ERC. The better overview of its indirect effect is shown in the following Table 31b.

Table 31b

Indirect effect in moderated mediation analysis, when X – Transformational Leadership, Y - Employee Response Change, M – Trust in Leadership, and W – Perceived Organisational Support

Effect	LLCI (boot)	ULCI (boot)
Low (0,0478)	-0,0251	0,1248
Mean (0,0586)	-0,0116	0,1389
High (0,0665)	-0,0139	0,1609

Source: compiled by the author of this thesis, based on the data analysis done in SPSS

At all three effect levels, the interval between LLCI and ULCI includes zero, therefore, the moderated mediation is not supported. Based on the results, **H8a is rejected**. The same test was run

to check H8b. The results show no significant association between TiL and POS when it acts as a moderator ($p=0,5254$, the interval between LLCI and ULCI includes zero).

Table 32a

Hayes 14 Model Summary, when X – Empowering Leadership, Y - Employee Response Change, M – Trust in Leadership, and W – Perceived Organisational Support

Variable	Coefficient	se	t	Sig. (p)	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	2,6157	0,2138	12,2318	<0,001	2,1948	3,0367
EL	0,1324	0,0589	2,2498	0,0252	0,0166	0,2483
POS	0,2450	0,0462	5,3068	<0,001	0,1541	0,3359
Int_1 (TiL x POS)	0,0181	0,0284	0,6359	0,5254	-0,0379	0,0740

Source: compiled by the author of this thesis, based on the data analysis done in SPSS

Table 32b

Indirect effect in moderated mediation analysis, when X – Empowering Leadership, Y - Employee Response Change, M – Trust in Leadership, and W – Perceived Organisational Support

Effect	LLCI (boot)	ULCI (boot)
Low (0,0282)	-0,0664	0,1229
Mean (0,0454)	-0,0414	0,1454
High (0,0578)	-0,0395	0,1761

Source: compiled by the author of this thesis, based on the data analysis done in SPSS

The indirect effect of POS at all three levels does not have a significant impact on the relationship between TiL x POS, and the moderated mediation is not supported. In conclusion, **H8b is rejected**.

Both moderation and mediated moderation analyses were run to see the impact of Perceived Organisational Support as a variable on the independent, dependent variables, and mediator. Across two moderation models, and two moderated-mediation tests (each for every independent variable), no relationships were proven to be significant. From the results, it is evident that POS has a direct effect on ERC, but moderation is not supported, so it has no effect on changing the positive/negative impact of transformational or empowering leadership on employee's response to change, as well as no effect on the mediating effect of trust in leadership on employee's response to change.

3.9. Research discussion

The purpose of this research was to examine what impact transformational leadership and empowering leadership as two independent variables have on employee's response to change as a dependent variable, while trust in leadership acts as a mediator and perceived organisational support acts as a moderator and whether there are significant associations between these variables. The previous research done looked into the relationships between some of the variables, but they were not examined in one model that is proposed in this thesis. In total, eight hypotheses were built as the scope of this research; hypotheses 7 and 8 were split into two parts to better examine the effect of Perceived Organisational Support as a mediator. Hypotheses 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 were confirmed, while hypotheses 1, 7a, 7b, 8a, 8b were rejected, as the relationship was not significant.

The hypothesis that transformational leadership has a significant positive impact on employee response to change (H1) was not confirmed. The results show that while at the bivariate level, where no other independent variable is involved, transformational leadership does have a significant low to medium positive impact on employee response to change, once there is empowering leadership to share the variance with, the transformational leadership loses this impact, as it does not have a unique effect on employee response to change. This observation aligns with the critique shared by various scholars (Knippenberg and Sitkin 2013, Stock et al., 2023; Fischer et al., 2024) towards transformational leadership as a concept, which, as argued by these scholars, does not provide clear guidance on a leader's behaviour that can be understood as transformational, or does not have a clear measurement. The concepts of transformational leadership and empowering leadership are in some parts similar, and correlation analysis supports that with a high correlation level for these two variables ($p=0,805$). The non-significant relationship between these two variables was also partly confirmed in the previous meta-analysis done by Peng et al. (2020), where the TL's influence over support for change was not confirmed; the same conclusion was met in the study of Khadija et al. (2024). Also, the study of Hamza et al. (2024) did not find any significant association between TL and affective commitment or intention to support the change. In contrast to this, the results of the analysis confirm the significant positive impact of empowering leadership on employee response to change, which was also supported in the previous studies (Awan et al., 2023).

It was confirmed by the results of this thesis that both transformational and empowering leadership styles have a significant positive impact on Trust in Leadership. This finding is supported by the recent research done by Men et al. (2020) and Raziq et al. (2025), and partially supported by

the research findings shared by Legood et al. (2020), as in their study, the relationship between TL and TiL was not found to be significant.

Both hypotheses 5 and 6, which examined the mediating effect of Trust in Leadership on the relationship between Transformational Leadership/Empowering Leadership and Employee Response to Change, were confirmed. In this thesis, it was found that 60% of Transformational Leadership's effect goes via Trust in Leadership. It aligns well with the study of Islam et al. (2021b) where the study concluded that the effect of Transformational Leadership is significantly delivered via trust. There is another similar study done by Hamza et al. (2022), although in that study, the focus was on organisational trust as a mediator, it was proven that organisational trust has a positive effect on the relationship between transformational leadership and employees' response to change. The mediating effect of trust is also supported, and the results align with the findings from the previous study done by Atik and Celik (2020).

The moderating effect of Perceived Organisational Support, neither directly, nor through moderated mediation, was not supported by the results of the analysis run in this thesis (H7a,b and H8a,b). There is almost no recent research examining the moderating effect of POS on the relationship between leadership styles and employees' responses to change. Previous studies, e.g., done by Mumtaz et al. (2024), question the direct POS effect on employee response to change or readiness to change, and the results vary. In this thesis, based on the results, it is confirmed that the direct effect of POS on ERC is significant, but the moderating effect is not supported.

3.10. Limitations of this research

There are a few limitations of this research that were identified while gathering the data from respondents and during analysis to test the model. They should be considered while reading this thesis.

It is noteworthy to mention that non-probability convenience sampling can lead to some bias. As in this research, the significant part (50,48 %) were respondents under 30 years old, and almost 70% identify as women. The equal distribution of responses between gender, age, and job level groups was not entirely met, so future research could use different sampling methods to reduce bias and ensure a more balanced distribution across gender, age, and job level.

Secondly, since this is not a case study, respondents were asked to assess any change they were part of or affected by within the last 12 months. This means that respondents were evaluating different types of changes, and their assessments could also be biased, as typically, some changes can have more negative outcomes than positives.

Scientific literature and theory on Perceived Organisational Support as a construct suggests that one of the key elements of POS is pay level satisfaction and organisational rewards and benefits. As these benefits are often different for non-managerial and managerial employees, without pay level satisfaction and benefit details, the objective interpretation of results is limited. Also, as the results of this research rejected the moderating effect of POS, future research could focus on the specific elements of POS, as work-life balance, as it could give more detailed insights into how it moderates or does not moderate the relationship between certain leadership styles and employees' responses to change.

In this research, the items from the measurement scale for Trust in Leadership refer to *leadership* as a group of people at the executive level. The respondents were given clear instructions to assess their top management team while assessing the statements given in the questionnaire. Many existing scales to measure trust do not specify whether the respondents should assess their direct supervisors, top management team, or *leadership* as a general construct, so a clear differentiation should be suggested in future research.

CONCLUSIONS

1. Transformational leadership is one of the most examined and discussed leadership styles in scientific research. Many studies have been done to examine the effect of transformational leadership on various organizational factors. Nevertheless, some scholars argue that the dimensions of transformational leadership overlap with other leadership styles, making transformational leadership behaviour difficult to distinguish from other leadership styles.
2. The results from previous scientific studies show that empowering leadership behaviours can be impactful, enhance trust and employee authority, however, it can also add additional stress to employees when they are given more authority than they are ready to handle, thus it needs to be applied cautiously.
3. Scientific literature suggests that employee response to change is a key element for organisational change success, and highlights that changes are more likely to fail when not supported. It is important to consider both positive and negative reactions towards the change, and understand 1) the reasoning or root cause behind the specific response; 2) factors that can eliminate or minimize negative responses towards the change. Scholars agree that both transformational and empowering leadership styles can have a positive impact employees' responses to change.
4. The empirical research of this master's thesis revealed that both transformational leadership has a direct positive impact on employee response to change, but only at the bivariate level, when no shared variance with other leadership styles, in this case, empowering leadership. This suggests that empowering leadership style has a more unique effect on employee response to change, also at the bivariate level, the effect was shown to be stronger than TL, so empowering leadership should be highly considered for application in practice.
5. Both leadership styles have a significant moderate to high impact on trust in leadership, together explaining almost 44% of the variance of trust in leadership. However, similarly to the previous observation, when both leadership styles are in the same model, empowering leadership has a more unique effect on trust.

6. After analysing the results revealed that a large part of the impact of transformational leadership largely goes via trust, so this factor is vital for transformational leadership to be effective.
7. The results from the moderation analysis do not confirm that perceived organisational support moderates the relationship between leadership styles and employee response to change, nor does it have any effect on the mediating effect of trust in leadership. However, POS is proven to affect employee response to change directly; therefore, although the moderation is not supported, effective and extensive organisational support helps improve employees' attitudes towards organizational change.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Future research could use different sampling methods to reduce bias, increase reliability, and ensure a more balanced distribution across gender, age, job level, etc. As the geography of this research was limited to respondents in Lithuania, future studies could cover a wider geographical area. In this research, some demographic data was also not gathered and taken into account, such as industry/work sector, salary range, etc.
2. As transformational leadership's effect was found to be not significant when sharing variance with empowering leadership in the scope of this research, future research could focus on examining other leadership styles and their combinations to see which leadership styles have the more substantial influence on employee's response to change.
3. To better understand how leadership style affects one type of change, future research could focus on assessing employee's reactions towards particular change, e.g. corporate restructuring, new process implementation, etc. A case study would be a recommended research approach, allowing for the gathering of more in-depth insights for a particular change.
4. As the results of this research rejected the moderating effect of perceived organisational support, future research could take into account other possible moderators that might influence the relationship between leadership style and employee response to change. Since perceived organisational support incorporates many different factors (work-life balance, organisational rewards, or even career opportunities), future research could focus on one specific element of POS, as it could give more insights into how organisational factors can influence both the leadership outcomes and attitudes towards change.

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**THE IMPACT OF TRANSFORMATIONAL AND EMPOWERING LEADERSHIP ON
EMPLOYEE RESPONSE TO CHANGE: MEDIATING ROLE OF TRUST IN
LEADERSHIP AND MODERATING ROLE OF PERCEIVED ORGANISATIONAL
SUPPORT**

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Master thesis

Business process management

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SUMMARY

112 pages, 32 tables, 4 figures, 140 references

The aim of this master's thesis is to evaluate the influence of transformational and empowering leadership styles on employee response to change, while trust in leadership is mediating and perceived organisational support is moderating this relationship.

This master's thesis consists of four main parts: scientific literature review of relevant constructs, research methodology, the research and discussion of its results, and conclusions with recommendations.

Scientific literature analysis is done to review the main transformational leadership (TL) and empowering leadership (EL) principles and characteristics, and their relevance in the business. The literature review also identified different employee responses to change (ERC), provides more insights about trust in leadership (TiL), and explains the common elements of perceived organisational support (POS).

Following the scientific literature analysis, the author of this thesis carried out research into the relationships between TL, EL, ERC, TiL and POS. A quantitative study was conducted, and a total of 311 participants submitted the data via an online questionnaire. After the initial review, 281 responses were confirmed to meet acceptance criteria. The results were analysed using IBM SPSS software with PROCESS macro plug-in.

The performed research revealed that when transformational and empowering leadership are one model and share the variance, transformational leadership does not have a significant impact on employee response to change, while empowering leadership does. Both leadership styles have a significant, positive, moderate impact on trust in leadership; also, the results reveal that a significant part of the impact of transformational leadership goes via trust. The mediation of trust in leadership in the relationship between leadership styles and employee response to change is supported as well. The conducted moderation and moderation mediation analyses revealed that perceived organisational support does not have any moderating impact on this relationship, neither directly, nor indirectly, however, the direct effect of perceived organisational support on employee response to change is supported.

The conclusions and recommendations section summarises the main findings of scientific literature analysis and the results from the conducted research. The author of this thesis shares some suggestions for future research and believes that, despite some limitations, this research gives valuable insights into how leadership styles and surrounding organisational elements can influence organisational change management in general.

**TRANSFORMACINĖS IR ĮGALINANČIOS LYDERYSTĖS ĮTAKA DARBUOTOJŲ
ATSAKUI Į POKYČIUS MEDIJUOJANT PASITIKĖJIMUI LYDERIAIS IR
MODERUOJANT SUVOKIAMAM ORGANIZACINIAM PALAIKYMUI**

Magistro baigiamasis darbas

Verslo procesų valdymas

Ekonomikos ir verslo administravimo fakultetas, Vilniaus universitetas

Darbo vadovė – Doc. Dr. Rasa Paulienė

Vilnius, 2025

SANTRAUKA

112 puslapiai, 32 lentelės, 4 paveikslai, 140 references

Pagrindinis šio magistrinio darbo tikslas yra įvertinti transformacinio ir įgalinančiojo lyderystės stilių įtaką darbuotojų atsakui į pokyčius, taip pat įvertinant pasitikėjimo lyderiais mediacinį poveikį bei suvokiamo organizacinio palaikymo moderacinį poveikį šiam ryšiui.

Magistro baigiamąjį darbą sudaro keturios pagrindinės dalys: mokslinės literatūros apžvalga, tyrimo metodologija, empirinio tyrimo atlikimas ir jo rezultatų aptarimas bei išvados su rekomendacijomis.

Mokslinės literatūros analizė buvo atlikta siekiant apžvelgti pagrindinius transformacinės ir įgalinančios lyderystės principus bei ypatumus, taip pat jų reikšmę verslo kontekste. Literatūros apžvalgoje taip pat buvo identifikuotos skirtingos darbuotojų reakcijos į pokyčius, pateikta daugiau išvalgų apie pasitikėjimą lyderiais bei paaiškinti pagrindiniai suvokiamo organizacinio palaikymo elementai.

Atlikusi literatūros analizę, darbo autorė atliko tyrimą, kuriuo siekė išnagrinėti ryšius tarp minėtų konstruktyvų. Buvo atliktas kiekybinis tyrimas, kurio duomenys buvo surinkti naudojant internetinę anketą, kurią iš viso užpildė 311 respondentų. Po pirminės duomenų analizės buvo nustatyta, jog 281 atsakymas atitinka nustatytus kriterijus. Gauti rezultatai buvo analizuojami naudojant IBM SPSS programinę įrangą su PROCESS macro įskiepiu.

Atliktas tyrimas atskleidė, kad kai transformacinis ir įgalinantis lyderystės stiliai yra vertinami viename modelyje ir dalijasi dispersija, transformacinė lyderystė neturi reikšmingos įtakos darbuotojų atsakui į pokyčius, kai tuo tarpu įgalinanti lyderystė šią įtaką turi. Abu lyderystės stiliai turi reikšmingą

ir teigiamą įtaką darbuotojų pasitikėjimui lyderiais, taip pat, rezultatai rodo, kad reikšminga transformacinės lyderystės poveikio darbuotojų atsakui į pokyčius dalis yra perduodama per pasitikėjimą. Pasitikėjimo lyderiais mediacinis vaidmuo ryšyje tarp vadovavimo stilių ir darbuotojų reakcijos į pokyčius taip pat buvo patvirtintas. Atliktos moderacijos ir moderuojančios mediacijos analizės atskleidė, kad suvokiamas organizacinis palaikymas neturi jokio moderuojančio poveikio šiam ryšiui nei tiesiogiai, nei netiesiogiai, tačiau tiesioginis suvokiamo organizacinio palaikymo poveikis darbuotojų atsakui į pokyčius buvo patvirtintas.

Išvadų ir rekomendacijų dalyje apibendrinami pagrindiniai mokslinės literatūros analizės rezultatai ir atlikto tyrimo išvados. Šio darbo autorė pateikia keletą pasiūlymų tyrimams ateityje ir mano, kad nepaisant tam tikrų apribojimų, šis tyrimas suteikia vertingų įžvalgų apie tai, kaip vadovavimo stiliai ir jų supantys organizaciniai veiksniai gali daryti įtaką pokyčių valdymui organizacijoje.

ANNEXES

Annex 1. Questionnaire in Lithuanian

Brangus tyrimo dalyvi/dalyve,

Mano vardas Karolina Smyrnova, ir as esu Vilniaus Universiteto procesų valdymo magistrantūros II kurso studentė. Šiuo metu atlieku tyrimą, kurio metu analizuoju dviejų skirtingų lyderystės stilių - transformacinio ir įgalinančio – įtaką darbuotojų atsakui į pokyčius, tuo pačiu metu įvertinant pasitikėjimo lyderiais ir suvokiamo organizacinio palaikymo įtaką šiai sąsajai.

Apklauso trukmė yra apie 15 - 20 minučių. Apklausa yra pildoma anonimiškai, visi apklauso metu surinkti duomenys bus panaudoti griežtai tik tyrimo tikslams. Iš anksto dėkoju už atsakymus.

Kilus klausimams, prašome kreiptis el.paštu karolina.smyrnova@evaf.stud.vu.lt.

Pirma dalis. Įvertinkite savo dabartinio vadovo bruožus ir jo ryšį su darbuotojais įvertindami teiginius, nurodytus apačioje. Teiginiai yra parengti atsižvelgiant į transformacinės lyderystės bruožus. Vertinimas vyksta penktabalėje sistemoje, kur 1 reiškia – „labai retai/niekada“, o 5 – „visada“.

Nr.	Mano vadovas... {teiginys apačioje}	1	2	3	4	5
1	perteikia aiškią ir pozityvią ateities viziją					
2	darbuotojus vertina kaip asmenybes, paremia ir padrąsina jų tobulėjimą					
3	darbuotojus padrąsina ir pripažįsta jų pasiekimus					
4	skatina pasitikėjimą, įsitraukimą ir bendradarbiavimą komandoje					
5	padrąsina analizuoti problemas naujais būdais ir kelia klausimus dėl prielaidų					
6	turi tvirtas vertybines nuostatas, kurias išsako, ir elgiasi vadovaudamasis jomis					

7	būdamas labai kompetetinga(s), įkvepia mane ir skatina kitų darbuotojų didžiavimąsi bei pagarbą jam/jai					
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Antra dalis. Įvertinkite savo dabartinio vadovo bruožus ir jo ryšį su jumis ir kitais darbuotojais įvertindami teiginius, nurodytus apačioje. Teiginiai yra parengti atsižvelgiant į įgalinančios lyderystės bruožus. Vertinimas vyksta penktabalėje sistemoje, kur 1 reiškia – „visiškai nesutinku“, o 5 – „visiškai sutinku“.

Nr.	Mano vadovas... {teiginys apačioje}	1	2	3	4	5
8	padeda man suprasti, kaip mano tikslai ir uždaviniai yra susieti su įmonės tikslais					
9	padeda man suprasti mano darbo svarbą bendram įmonės efektyvumui					
10	padeda man suprasti, kaip mano darbas įsilieja į platesnį organizacinį kontekstą ir procesus					
11	kartu su manimi priima daug sprendimų					
12	konsultuoja mane strateginiais klausimais					
13	atsiklausia mano nuomonės dėl sprendimų, galinčių mane paveikti					
14	tiki, jog galiu atlikti sudėtingas užduotis					
15	tiki, jog galiu tobulėti net ir tada, kai darau klaidas					
16	pasitiki mano gebėjimu gerai atlikti darbą					
17	leidžia man atlikti darbą mano nuožiūra					
18	leidžia man dirbti efektyviau, nesunkindama(s) taisyklių ir nurodymų					
19	suteikia man galimybę greitai priimti svarbius sprendimus, jog būtų patenkinti klientų poreikiai					

Trečia dalis. Pagalvokite apie vieną konkretų organizacinį pokytį, kurį patyrėte neseniai (per pastaruosius 12 mėnesių) ir kuris reikšmingai paveikė jūsų darbą (pvz., restruktūrizacija, naujai

įdiegta sistema / įvestas procesas, vadovybės pasikeitimas). Įvertinkite teiginius turėdami omenyje tik vieną konkretų pokytį. Vertinimas vyksta penktabalėje sistemoje, kur 1 reiškia – „visiškai nesutinku“, o 5 – „visiškai sutinku“.

Nr.	Teiginys	1	2	3	4	5
20	Jaučiausi nepatogiai dėl pokyčio, kurį įgyvendino organizacija					
21	Tikiu, kad šis pokytis davė naudos mano organizacijai					
22	Šis pokytis buvo man nemalonus					
23	Šis pokytis nepadėjo organizacijos vystymuisi					
24	Šis pokytis buvo tinkamas organizacijai					
25	Aš dalinausi turimomis žiniomis ar informacija tam, kad prisidėčiau prie šio pokyčio sėkmės					
26	Aš buvau pasirengęs/pasirengusi padėti, jog šis pokytis būtų sėkmingas					
27	Aš buvau skepiška(s) dėl šio pokyčio rezultatų					
28	Dėl šio pokyčio nebesijaučiu patenkinta(s) savo darbu					
29	Aš stengiausi paskatinti savo kolegas priimti šį pokytį					
30	Šis pokytis man sukėlė rūpesčių					
31	Aš stipriai palaikiau šio pokyčio įgyvendinimą					
32	Aš esu patenkinta(s) šiuo pokyčiu					
33	Manau, jog šis pokytis pasiekė savo tikslus					
34	Aš stengiausi įtikinti kitus dėl šio pokyčio privalumų					
35	Šis pokytis mane emociškai išvargino					
36	Ilgai dirbau, jog sėkmingai įgyvendinčiau šį pokytį					
37	Šis pokytis turėjo teigiamą poveikį organizacijai					

38	Atkakliai stengiausi, kad šis pokytis būtų sėkmingas					
39	Man nepatiko šitas pokytis					

Ketvirta dalis. Įvertinkite savo aukščiausio lygio lyderių komandą dabartinėje darbovietėje įvertindami teiginius, nurodytus apačioje. Teiginiai yra parengti atsižvelgiant į lyderių komandos bruožus. Vertinimas vyksta penktabalėje sistemoje, kur 1 reiškia – „visiškai nesutinku“, o 5 – „visiškai sutinku“.

Nr.	Teiginys	1	2	3	4	5
41	Aukščiausio lygio lyderių komanda yra labai pajėgi atlikti savo darbą					
42	Aukščiausio lygio lyderių komanda yra žinoma kaip sėkmingai įgyvendinanti tai, ką siekia					
43	Aukščiausio lygio lyderių komanda labai rūpinasi mano gerove					
44	Mano poreikiai ir pageidavimai yra labai svarbūs aukščiausio lygio lyderių komandai					
45	Aukščiausio lygio lyderių komanda pasižymi stipriu teisingumo jausmu					
46	Aukščiausio lygio lyderių komanda deda pastangas elgtis sąžiningai su visais					
47	Aukščiausio lygio lyderių komandos elgesys grindžiamas tvirtais nustatytais principais					

Penkta dalis. Įvertinkite suvokiamą organizacinį palaikymą dabartinėje darbovietėje įvertindami teiginius, nurodytus apačioje. Teiginiai yra parengti atsižvelgiant į organizacinio palaikymo bruožus. Vertinimas vyksta septynbalėje sistemoje, kur 1 reiškia – „visiškai nesutinku“, o 7 – „visiškai sutinku“.

Nr.	Teiginys	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
48	Mano organizacija atsižvelgia į mano nuomonę							

49	Mano organizacija iš tiesų rūpinasi mano gerove							
50	Mano organizacija rimtai vertina mano tikslus ir vertybes							
51	Iškylus problemai, mano organizacija man suteikia prieinamą pagalbą							
52	Mano organizacija manęs nebaustų už netyčinę klaidą							
53	Esant galimybei, mano organizacija pasinaudotų manimi							
54	Mano organizacija nesirūpina manimi							
55	Mano organizacija pasirengusi padėti man esant neilinei situacijai							

Demografiniai klausimai:

Jūsų amžius:

- a) 18 – 29
- b) 30 – 39
- c) 40 – 49
- d) 50 – 59
- e) 60 +

Lytis:

- a) Moteris
- b) Vyras
- c) Nenoriu atskleisti / Kita

Išsilavinimas:

- a) Vidurinis
- b) Profesinis (aukštesnysis)
- c) Aukštasis neuniversitetinis

d) Aukštasis universitetinis

Dabartinis pareigų lygis:

- a) Laisvai samdomas darbuotojas (ang. freelancer / contractor)
- b) Darbuotojas nevadovaujančioje pozicijoje
- c) Darbuotojas vadovaujančioje pozicijoje
- d) Aukščiausio lygio direktorius ar įmonės vadovas

Darbo stažas dabartinėje organizacijoje:

- a) Mažiau nei metai
- b) 1 – 2 metai
- c) 3 – 5 metai
- d) 5 -10 metų
- e) 10 + metų

Annex 2. Reliability analysis of all variables

Transformational Leadership

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.937	.937	9

Inter-Item Correlation Matrix

	Q1 (numeric)	Q2 (numeric)	Q3 (numeric)	Q4 (numeric)	Q5 (numeric)	Q6 (numeric)	Q7 (numeric)	Q8 (numeric)	Q9 (numeric)
Q1 (numeric)	1.000	.665	.617	.582	.646	.637	.668	.576	.561
Q2 (numeric)	.665	1.000	.789	.713	.634	.663	.713	.585	.581
Q3 (numeric)	.617	.789	1.000	.672	.624	.635	.660	.581	.588
Q4 (numeric)	.582	.713	.672	1.000	.633	.594	.638	.530	.517
Q5 (numeric)	.646	.634	.624	.633	1.000	.626	.706	.570	.514
Q6 (numeric)	.637	.663	.635	.594	.626	1.000	.724	.552	.586
Q7 (numeric)	.668	.713	.660	.638	.706	.724	1.000	.610	.564
Q8 (numeric)	.576	.585	.581	.530	.570	.552	.610	1.000	.664
Q9 (numeric)	.561	.581	.588	.517	.514	.586	.564	.664	1.000

Empowering Leadership

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.912	.915	10

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Q10 (numeric)	32.31	56.256	.682	.541	.903
Q11 (numeric)	32.70	54.646	.681	.570	.904
Q12 (numeric)	32.44	54.226	.687	.567	.903
Q13 (numeric)	32.56	53.369	.709	.550	.902
Q14 (numeric)	31.83	58.085	.668	.546	.904
Q15 (numeric)	31.85	57.425	.678	.522	.904
Q16 (numeric)	31.71	58.734	.697	.605	.904
Q17 (numeric)	31.87	57.705	.657	.553	.905
Q18 (numeric)	32.07	55.559	.703	.522	.902
Q19 (numeric)	31.96	56.384	.686	.546	.903

Employee's Response to Change

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.915	.915	20

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
(Q20_reverse-coded)	58.92	216.540	-.620	.571	.935
Q21 (numeric)	58.61	174.796	.765	.673	.907
(Q22_reverse-coded)	58.98	176.021	.659	.695	.909
(Q23_reverse-coded)	58.87	181.665	.481	.361	.913
Q24 (numeric)	58.59	176.607	.737	.679	.908
Q25 (numeric)	58.77	182.141	.488	.527	.913
Q26 (numeric)	58.57	180.625	.544	.527	.912
Q27 (numeric)	58.81	173.580	.790	.738	.906
(Q28_reverse-coded)	59.10	177.079	.636	.577	.910
(Q29_reverse-coded)	58.63	177.469	.616	.641	.910
Q30 (numeric)	59.05	179.279	.588	.576	.911
(Q31_reverse-coded)	59.06	182.696	.464	.562	.914
Q32 (numeric)	58.95	173.159	.808	.693	.906
Q33 (numeric)	58.89	171.446	.830	.763	.905
Q34 (numeric)	59.19	176.332	.666	.646	.909
(Q35_reverse-coded)	58.91	182.364	.447	.594	.914
Q36 (numeric)	59.15	183.528	.399	.488	.916
Q37 (numeric)	58.62	175.051	.772	.727	.907
Q38 (numeric)	58.98	177.110	.646	.650	.910
(Q39_reverse-coded)	58.92	173.344	.729	.722	.907

Trust in Leadership

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.917	.917	7

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Q40 (numeric)	19.13	29.284	.744	.677	.904
Q41 (numeric)	19.21	29.690	.701	.647	.909
Q42 (numeric)	19.71	28.465	.794	.756	.899
Q43 (numeric)	19.83	29.378	.730	.724	.906
Q44 (numeric)	19.50	29.051	.775	.625	.901
Q45 (numeric)	19.44	29.184	.738	.577	.905
Q46 (numeric)	19.34	29.632	.728	.561	.906

Perceived Organizational Support

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.893	.896	8

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Q47 (numeric)	33.21	69.650	.724	.684	.874
Q48 (numeric)	33.22	68.832	.798	.725	.867
Q49 (numeric)	33.37	68.384	.777	.711	.869
Q50 (numeric)	32.67	69.959	.769	.665	.870
Q51 (numeric)	32.63	74.676	.567	.347	.889
(reverse-coded)	33.59	74.285	.452	.395	.903
(reverse-coded)	32.87	72.329	.619	.482	.884
Q54 (numeric)	32.72	71.753	.707	.571	.876

Annex 3. Tests of normality

Tests of Normality

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Transformational Leadership (mean)	.077	281	<.001	.972	281	<.001
Empowering Leadership (mean)	.055	281	.038	.984	281	.003
Employee Response to Change (MEAN)	.052	281	.060	.992	281	.116
Trust in Leadership (mean)	.078	281	<.001	.982	281	.001
Perceived Organisational Support (mean)	.077	281	<.001	.975	281	<.001

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Annex 4. Correlation analysis

Correlations

			Transformational Leadership (mean)	Empowering Leadership (mean)	Employee Response to Change (MEAN)	Trust in Leadership (mean)	Perceived Organisational Support (mean)
Spearman's rho	Transformational Leadership (mean)	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.805**	.374**	.596**	.648**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001
		N	281	281	281	281	281
	Empowering Leadership (mean)	Correlation Coefficient	.805**	1.000	.457**	.585**	.638**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	.	<.001	<.001	<.001
		N	281	281	281	281	281
	Employee Response to Change (MEAN)	Correlation Coefficient	.374**	.457**	1.000	.461**	.556**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001	.	<.001	<.001
		N	281	281	281	281	281
	Trust in Leadership (mean)	Correlation Coefficient	.596**	.585**	.461**	1.000	.688**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001	<.001	.	<.001
		N	281	281	281	281	281
	Perceived Organisational Support (mean)	Correlation Coefficient	.648**	.638**	.556**	.688**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	.
		N	281	281	281	281	281

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Annex 5. Single and multiple regression analysis for testing H1-H4

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	20.604	1	20.604	48.703	<.001 ^b
	Residual	118.035	279	.423		
	Total	138.640	280			

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Response to Change (MEAN)

b. Predictors: (Constant), Transformational Leadership (mean)

Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	Change Statistics			Sig. F Change
						F Change	df1	df2	
1	.386 ^a	.149	.146	.65043	.149	48.703	1	279	<.001

a. Predictors: (Constant), Transformational Leadership (mean)

b. Dependent Variable: Employee Response to Change (MEAN)

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error			
1	(Constant)	2.191	.136		16.127	<.001
	Transformational Leadership (mean)	.270	.039	.386	6.979	<.001

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Response to Change (MEAN)

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	30.600	1	30.600	79.021	<.001 ^b
	Residual	108.040	279	.387		
	Total	138.640	280			

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Response to Change (MEAN)

b. Predictors: (Constant), Empowering Leadership (mean)

Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	Change Statistics			Sig. F Change
						F Change	df1	df2	
1	.470 ^a	.221	.218	.62229	.221	79.021	1	279	<.001

a. Predictors: (Constant), Empowering Leadership (mean)

b. Dependent Variable: Employee Response to Change (MEAN)

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error			
1	(Constant)	1.667	.165		10.089	<.001
	Empowering Leadership (mean)	.404	.045	.470	8.889	<.001

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Response to Change (MEAN)

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	30.615	2	15.307	39.393	<.001 ^b
	Residual	108.025	278	.389		
	Total	138.640	280			

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Response to Change (MEAN)

b. Predictors: (Constant), Empowering Leadership (mean), Transformational Leadership (mean)

Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.470 ^a	.221	.215	.62336	1.796

a. Predictors: (Constant), Empowering Leadership (mean), Transformational Leadership (mean)

b. Dependent Variable: Employee Response to Change (MEAN)

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B		Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	1.669	.166		10.067	<.001	1.343	1.996		
	Transformational Leadership (mean)	.012	.063	.017	.194	.847	-.112	.136	.348	2.877
	Empowering Leadership (mean)	.392	.077	.456	5.076	<.001	.240	.544	.348	2.877

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Response to Change (MEAN)

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	86.477	1	86.477	175.035	<.001 ^b
	Residual	137.843	279	.494		
	Total	224.320	280			

a. Dependent Variable: Trust in Leadership (mean)

b. Predictors: (Constant), Transformational Leadership (mean)

Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	Change Statistics			
						F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.621 ^a	.386	.383	.70289	.386	175.035	1	279	<.001

a. Predictors: (Constant), Transformational Leadership (mean)

b. Dependent Variable: Trust in Leadership (mean)

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.381	.147		9.408	<.001
	Transformational Leadership (mean)	.553	.042	.621	13.230	<.001

a. Dependent Variable: Trust in Leadership (mean)

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	89.572	1	89.572	185.463	<.001 ^b
	Residual	134.748	279	.483		
	Total	224.320	280			

a. Dependent Variable: Trust in Leadership (mean)

b. Predictors: (Constant), Empowering Leadership (mean)

Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	Change Statistics			
						F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.632 ^a	.399	.397	.69496	.399	185.463	1	279	<.001

a. Predictors: (Constant), Empowering Leadership (mean)

b. Dependent Variable: Trust in Leadership (mean)

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.793	.185		4.295	<.001
	Empowering Leadership (mean)	.691	.051	.632	13.618	<.001

a. Dependent Variable: Trust in Leadership (mean)

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	97.451	2	48.726	106.770	<.001 ^b
	Residual	126.869	278	.456		
	Total	224.320	280			

a. Dependent Variable: Trust in Leadership (mean)

b. Predictors: (Constant), Empowering Leadership (mean), Transformational Leadership (mean)

Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.659 ^a	.434	.430	.67555	2.350

a. Predictors: (Constant), Empowering Leadership (mean), Transformational Leadership (mean)

b. Dependent Variable: Trust in Leadership (mean)

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B		Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error				Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	.835	.180		4.647	<.001	.481	1.189		
	Transformational Leadership (mean)	.283	.068	.318	4.155	<.001	.149	.417	.348	2.877
	Empowering Leadership (mean)	.410	.084	.375	4.904	<.001	.246	.575	.348	2.877

a. Dependent Variable: Trust in Leadership (mean)

Annex 6. Mediation analysis for testing H5-H6

Run MATRIX procedure:

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 This version of PROCESS requires SPSS version 26 or later
 Workshop schedule available at haskayne.ucalgary.ca/CCRAM
 In SPSS 29 and later, change default output font to Courier New for tidier output. More information about PROCESS at processmacro.org/faq.html.
 This beta release has not been completely tested. Use at your own risk.

***** PROCESS Procedure for SPSS Version 5.0 *****

Written by Andrew F. Hayes, Ph.D. www.afhayes.com
 Documentation available in Hayes (2022). www.guilford.com/p/hayes3

Model: 4
 Y: ERC
 X: TL
 M: TiL

Sample
 Size: 281

OUTCOME VARIABLE:
 TiL

Model Summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.6209	.3855	.4941	175.0346	1.0000	279.0000	.0000

Model	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	1.3809	.1468	9.4079	.0000	1.0920	1.6699
TL	.5531	.0418	13.2301	.0000	.4708	.6353

OUTCOME VARIABLE:
ERC

Model Summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.4837	.2339	.3820	42.4434	2.0000	278.0000	.0000

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	1.7860	.1481	12.0560	.0000	1.4944	2.0776
TL	.1080	.0469	2.3023	.0221	.0157	.2003
TiL	.2929	.0526	5.5637	.0000	.1893	.3965

***** DIRECT AND INDIRECT EFFECTS OF X ON Y *****

Direct effect of X on Y

Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
.1080	.0469	2.3023	.0221	.0157	.2003

Indirect effect(s) of X on Y:

	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
TiL	.1620	.0349	.0977	.2348

***** ANALYSIS NOTES AND ERRORS *****

Level of confidence for all confidence intervals in output:
95.0000

Number of bootstrap samples for percentile bootstrap confidence intervals:
5000

----- END MATRIX -----

Annex 6. Moderation and moderated mediation analysis for testing H7a, H7b, H8a, H8b

Mediation analysis (EL)

Run MATRIX procedure:

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Workshop schedule available at haskayne.ucalgary.ca/CCRAM
In SPSS 29 and later, change default output font to Courier New for tidier
output. More information about PROCESS at processmacro.org/faq.html.
This beta release has not been completely tested. Use at your own risk.

***** PROCESS Procedure for SPSS Version 5.0 *****

Written by Andrew F. Hayes, Ph.D. www.afhayes.com
Documentation available in Hayes (2022). www.guilford.com/p/hayes3

Model: 4
Y: ERC
X: EL
M: TiL

Sample
Size: 281

OUTCOME VARIABLE:
TiL

Model Summary

	R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
	.6319	.3993	.4830	185.4632	1.0000	279.0000	.0000

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	.7928	.1846	4.2954	.0000	.4294	1.1561
EL	.6912	.0508	13.6185	.0000	.5913	.7911

OUTCOME VARIABLE:
ERC

Model Summary

	R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
	.5193	.2696	.3642	51.3181	2.0000	278.0000	.0000

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	1.4895	.1655	9.0005	.0000	1.1637	1.8153
EL	.2489	.0569	4.3769	.0000	.1370	.3608
TiL	.2244	.0520	4.3155	.0000	.1220	.3267

***** DIRECT AND INDIRECT EFFECTS OF X ON Y *****

Direct effect of X on Y

Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
.2489	.0569	4.3769	.0000	.1370	.3608

Indirect effect(s) of X on Y:

	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
TiL	.1551	.0445	.0717	.2457

***** ANALYSIS NOTES AND ERRORS *****

Level of confidence for all confidence intervals in output:
95.0000

Number of bootstrap samples for percentile bootstrap confidence intervals:
5000

----- END MATRIX -----

Moderation analysis:

Run MATRIX procedure:

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In SPSS 29 and later, change default output font to Courier New for tidier
output. More information about PROCESS at processmacro.org/faq.html.
This beta release has not been completely tested. Use at your own risk.

***** PROCESS Procedure for SPSS Version 5.0 *****

Written by Andrew F. Hayes, Ph.D. www.afhayes.com
Documentation available in Hayes (2022). www.guilford.com/p/hayes3

Model: 1
Y: ERC
X: TL
W: POS

Sample
Size: 281

OUTCOME VARIABLE:
ERC

Model Summary

	R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
	.5640	.3181	.3413	43.0774	3.0000	277.0000	.0000

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	3.1080	.0412	75.3921	.0000	3.0269	3.1892
TL	.0209	.0459	.4541	.6501	-.0696	.1113
POS	.3161	.0395	8.0011	.0000	.2384	.3939
Int_1	-.0116	.0281	-.4119	.6807	-.0669	.0437

Product terms key:

Int_1 : TL x POS

Test(s) of highest order unconditional interaction(s):

	R2-chng	F	df1	df2	p
X*W	.0004	.1697	1.0000	277.0000	.6807

 Focal predict: TL (X)
 Mod var: POS (W)

Data for visualizing the conditional effect of the focal predictor:
 Paste text below into a SPSS syntax window and execute to produce plot.

```
DATA LIST FREE/
  TL POS ERC .
BEGIN DATA.
  -1.0793 -1.2193 2.6848
   .0635 -1.2193 2.7248
   1.0635 -1.2193 2.7597
  -1.0793 .1557 3.1367
   .0635 .1557 3.1584
   1.0635 .1557 3.1775
  -1.0793 1.1557 3.4653
   .0635 1.1557 3.4738
   1.0635 1.1557 3.4813
```

```
END DATA.
GRAPH/SCATTERPLOT=
  TL WITH ERC BY POS .
```

***** ANALYSIS NOTES AND ERRORS *****

Level of confidence for all confidence intervals in output:
 95.0000

NOTE: The following variables were mean centered prior to analysis:
 POS TL

----- END MATRIX -----

Run MATRIX procedure:

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 In SPSS 29 and later, change default output font to Courier New for tidier
 output. More information about PROCESS at processmacro.org/faq.html.
 This beta release has not been completely tested. Use at your own risk.

***** PROCESS Procedure for SPSS Version 5.0 *****

Written by Andrew F. Hayes, Ph.D. www.afhayes.com
 Documentation available in Hayes (2022). www.guilford.com/p/hayes3

```
Model: 1
  Y: ERC
  X: EL
```

W: POS

Sample
Size: 281

OUTCOME VARIABLE:

ERC

Model Summary

	R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
	.5784	.3345	.3331	46.4094	3.0000	277.0000	.0000

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	3.1051	.0404	76.8224	.0000	3.0255	3.1847
EL	.1477	.0565	2.6136	.0094	.0364	.2589
POS	.2619	.0389	6.7370	.0000	.1853	.3384
Int_1	-.0096	.0329	-.2905	.7717	-.0743	.0552

Product terms key:

Int_1 : EL x POS

Test(s) of highest order unconditional interaction(s):

	R2-chng	F	df1	df2	p
X*W	.0002	.0844	1.0000	277.0000	.7717

Focal predict: EL (X)
Mod var: POS (W)

Data for visualizing the conditional effect of the focal predictor:
Paste text below into a SPSS syntax window and execute to produce plot.

DATA LIST FREE/

EL	POS	ERC	.
BEGIN DATA.			
-.8769	-1.2193	2.6461	
.0397	-1.2193	2.7921	
.7897	-1.2193	2.9116	
-.8769	.1557	3.0177	
.0397	.1557	3.1517	
.7897	.1557	3.2613	
-.8769	1.1557	3.2879	
.0397	1.1557	3.4131	
.7897	1.1557	3.5156	

END DATA.

GRAPH/SCATTERPLOT=

EL WITH ERC BY POS .

***** ANALYSIS NOTES AND ERRORS *****

Level of confidence for all confidence intervals in output:
95.0000

NOTE: The following variables were mean centered prior to analysis:
POS EL

----- END MATRIX -----

Run MATRIX procedure:

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This version of PROCESS requires SPSS version 26 or later
Workshop schedule available at haskayne.ucalgary.ca/CCRAM
In SPSS 29 and later, change default output font to Courier New for tidier
output. More information about PROCESS at processmacro.org/faq.html.
This beta release has not been completely tested. Use at your own risk.

***** PROCESS Procedure for SPSS Version 5.0 *****

Written by Andrew F. Hayes, Ph.D. www.afhayes.com
Documentation available in Hayes (2022). www.guilford.com/p/hayes3

Model: 14
Y: ERC
X: TL
M: TiL
W: POS

Sample
Size: 281

OUTCOME VARIABLE:
TiL

Model Summary	R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
	.6209	.3855	.4941	175.0346	1.0000	279.0000	.0000

Model	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	-1.8611	.1468	-12.6788	.0000	-2.1500	-1.5721
TL	.5531	.0418	13.2301	.0000	.4708	.6353

OUTCOME VARIABLE:
ERC

Model Summary	R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
	.5710	.3261	.3385	33.3818	4.0000	276.0000	.0000

Model	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	3.1014	.1653	18.7617	.0000	2.7760	3.4268
TL	-.0040	.0478	-.0832	.9338	-.0980	.0900
TiL	.1038	.0584	1.7778	.0765	-.0111	.2187
POS	.2833	.0470	6.0316	.0000	.1908	.3758
Int_1	.0142	.0286	.4964	.6200	-.0421	.0706

Product terms key:

Int_1 : TiL x POS

Test(s) of highest order unconditional interaction(s):

	R2-chng	F	df1	df2	p
M*W	.0006	.2465	1.0000	276.0000	.6200

Focal predict: TiL (M)
Mod var: POS (W)

Data for visualizing the conditional effect of the focal predictor:
Paste text below into a SPSS syntax window and execute to produce plot.

DATA LIST FREE/

TiL	POS	ERC	.
-.9563	-1.2193	2.6599	
.0437	-1.2193	2.7464	
.9009	-1.2193	2.8205	
-.9563	.1557	3.0308	
.0437	.1557	3.1368	
.9009	.1557	3.2276	
-.9563	1.1557	3.3005	
.0437	1.1557	3.4207	
.9009	1.1557	3.5237	

END DATA.

GRAPH/SCATTERPLOT=

TiL WITH ERC BY POS .

***** DIRECT AND INDIRECT EFFECTS OF X ON Y *****

Direct effect of X on Y

Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
-.0040	.0478	-.0832	.9338	-.0980	.0900

Conditional indirect effects of X on Y:

INDIRECT EFFECT:

TL	->	TiL	->	ERC		
	POS	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI	
	-1.2193	.0478	.0381	-.0251	.1246	
	.1557	.0586	.0383	-.0116	.1389	
	1.1557	.0665	.0450	-.0139	.1609	

Index of moderated mediation:

	Index	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
POS	.0079	.0152	-.0210	.0386

***** ANALYSIS NOTES AND ERRORS *****

Level of confidence for all confidence intervals in output:

95.0000

Number of bootstrap samples for percentile bootstrap confidence intervals:

5000

W values in conditional tables are the 16th, 50th, and 84th percentiles.

NOTE: The following variables were mean centered prior to analysis:

POS TiL

----- END MATRIX -----

Run MATRIX procedure:

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This version of PROCESS requires SPSS version 26 or later
Workshop schedule available at haskayne.ucalgary.ca/CCRAM
In SPSS 29 and later, change default output font to Courier New for tidier
output. More information about PROCESS at processmacro.org/faq.html.
This beta release has not been completely tested. Use at your own risk.

***** PROCESS Procedure for SPSS Version 5.0 *****

Written by Andrew F. Hayes, Ph.D. www.afhayes.com
Documentation available in Hayes (2022). www.guilford.com/p/hayes3

Model: 14
Y: ERC
X: EL
M: TiL
W: POS

Sample
Size: 281

OUTCOME VARIABLE:
TiL

Model Summary							
	R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
	.6319	.3993	.4830	185.4632	1.0000	279.0000	.0000

Model						
	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	-2.4492	.1846	-13.2705	.0000	-2.8125	-2.0859
EL	.6912	.0508	13.6185	.0000	.5913	.7911

OUTCOME VARIABLE:
ERC

Model Summary							
	R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p

.5815 .3382 .3324 35.2568 4.0000 276.0000 .0000

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	2.6157	.2138	12.2318	.0000	2.1948	3.0367
EL	.1324	.0589	2.2498	.0252	.0166	.2483
TiL	.0628	.0582	1.0798	.2812	-.0517	.1773
POS	.2450	.0462	5.3068	.0000	.1541	.3359
Int_1	.0181	.0284	.6359	.5254	-.0379	.0740

Product terms key:

Int_1 : TiL x POS

Test(s) of highest order unconditional interaction(s):

	R2-chng	F	df1	df2	p
M*W	.0010	.4044	1.0000	276.0000	.5254

Focal predict: TiL (M)
Mod var: POS (W)

Data for visualizing the conditional effect of the focal predictor:
Paste text below into a SPSS syntax window and execute to produce plot.

DATA LIST FREE/

```

TiL      POS      ERC      .
BEGIN DATA.
-.9563   -1.2193   2.7473
.0437    -1.2193   2.7881
.9009    -1.2193   2.8230
-.9563    .1557     3.0605
.0437     .1557     3.1261
.9009     .1557     3.1823
-.9563    1.1557    3.2882
.0437     1.1557    3.3719
.9009     1.1557    3.4436

```

END DATA.

GRAPH/SCATTERPLOT=

TiL WITH ERC BY POS .

***** DIRECT AND INDIRECT EFFECTS OF X ON Y *****

Direct effect of X on Y

Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
.1324	.0589	2.2498	.0252	.0166	.2483

Conditional indirect effects of X on Y:

INDIRECT EFFECT:

EL	->	TiL	->	ERC	
	POS	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
	-1.2193	.0282	.0487	-.0664	.1229
	.1557	.0454	.0479	-.0414	.1454
	1.1557	.0578	.0552	-.0395	.1761

Index of moderated mediation:

	Index	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
POS	.0125	.0185	-.0233	.0511

***** ANALYSIS NOTES AND ERRORS *****

Level of confidence for all confidence intervals in output:
95.0000

Number of bootstrap samples for percentile bootstrap confidence intervals:
5000

W values in conditional tables are the 16th, 50th, and 84th percentiles.

NOTE: The following variables were mean centered prior to analysis:
POS TiL

----- END MATRIX -----