

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN IDENTIFICATION, TRUST, AND PERCEIVED ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT IN READINESS FOR CHANGE

RELAÇÃO ENTRE IDENTIFICAÇÃO, CONFIANÇA E PERCEPÇÃO DE APOIO ORGANIZACIONAL NA PRONTIDÃO PARA A MUDANÇA

Jefferson Lopes La Falce

Fundação Osvaldo Cruz e Universidade FUMEC

jefferson.la.falce@gmail.com

Tania Cristine Remigio Madeira Mendes

Universidade FUMEC

taniamadeiramendes@gmail.com

Mário Teixeira Reis Neto

Universidade FUMEC

reisnetomario@gmail.com

Jair Nascimento Santos

Universidade Salvador – BA

jair.santos@unifacs.br

Cristiana Fernandes De Muylder

Universidade FUMEC

cristiana.muylder@fumec.br

Submissão: 08/07/2025

Aprovação: 03/02/2026

ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the relationships among organizational trust, organizational identification, perceived organizational support, and individual readiness for change in a Brazilian private company operating globally in the commodities sector. The research adopts a descriptive and quantitative approach, using exploratory factor analysis and structural equation modeling. The findings confirm all proposed hypotheses, revealing positive and significant relationships among the investigated constructs. The results suggest that promoting organizational trust, identification, and support enhances employees' readiness for organizational change. This highlights the importance of fostering a supportive and trustworthy organizational environment to facilitate change processes. The study addresses a gap in the literature by empirically testing a model that integrates these constructs, offering theoretical and practical contributions. It emphasizes the relevance of understanding psychological and social mechanisms that influence employees' openness to change, providing insights for more effective change management strategies in organizational contexts.

Keywords: organizational trust; organizational identification; perceived organizational support; readiness for change; structural equation modeling

RESUMO

Este estudo tem como objetivo analisar as relações entre confiança organizacional, identificação organizacional, suporte organizacional percebido e prontidão individual para a mudança em uma empresa privada brasileira com atuação global no setor de commodities. A pesquisa adota uma abordagem descritiva e quantitativa, utilizando análise fatorial exploratória e modelagem de equações estruturais. Os resultados confirmam todas as hipóteses propostas, revelando relações positivas e significativas entre os construtos investigados. Os achados sugerem que a promoção da confiança, identificação e suporte organizacional contribui para aumentar a prontidão dos colaboradores para mudanças organizacionais. Isso destaca a importância de fomentar um ambiente organizacional de apoio e confiança para facilitar os processos de mudança. O estudo preenche uma lacuna na literatura ao testar empiricamente um modelo que integra esses construtos, oferecendo contribuições teóricas e práticas. Enfatiza-se a relevância de compreender os mecanismos psicológicos e sociais que influenciam a abertura dos colaboradores à mudança, fornecendo insights para estratégias mais eficazes de gestão da mudança.

Palavras-chave: confiança organizacional; identificação organizacional; suporte organizacional percebido; prontidão para a mudança; modelagem de equações estruturais.

1. INTRODUCTION

Innovations, fluctuating markets, and policies are driving constant changes and technological transformations in organizations today. It's important for companies to be prepared for changes and adaptations that can help them grow or survive in this situation. Managers must be aware of the factors that prepare companies for change (Sreenivasan & Suresh, 2023).

Human beings seek answers to everyday issues and supporting or resisting change is inherent to the human condition, more than 70% of efforts fail (Arnéguy et al., 2018), and the main cause of failure is related to people's attitudes (Fadzil et al., 2019). Managers and organizations face a constant challenge in comprehending the phenomena and processes that determine these reactions. However, readiness for change, a psychological state that precedes support or resistance to change (Zagenczyk et al., 2011) does not arise naturally (Thakur & Srivastava, 2018). Academics and companies may be interested in expanding their knowledge of the influences on this behavioural variable, such as perceived organizational support, organizational trust, and organizational identification.

Attitudes and behaviours at work are influenced by the perception of organizational support. When employees feel valued and supported by their employer, they feel a sense of reciprocal obligations (Rhoades et al., 2001; Zagenczyk et al., 2011). Their behaviour and work are rewarded with both economic and non-economic rewards (Giorgi et al., 2016). At this point, it is important to consider that, as discussed by Graminho et al. (2014) in their application of game theory to performance management, relationships between employees and employers involve strategic interactions in which each party evaluates expected gains and possible losses. Thus, the perception of being valued not only activates a sense of reciprocity but also compõe um processo no qual empregados e empregadores ajustam seus comportamentos com base em incentivos, recompensas e expectativas mútuas. This dynamic reinforces the idea that supportive practices strengthen cooperative behaviours and reduce the risk of opportunistic actions, aligning individual and organizational interests. Organizational support that is perceived has an impact on readiness for change (Gigliotti et al., 2018).

Organizational trust is promoted in this supportive environment (Barzoki & Rezaei, 2017), and this variable may impact the readiness for change. Social relationships are influenced by organizational trust, particularly in ambiguous change scenarios. The concept is about making oneself vulnerable to others, hoping for something positive to happen (Mayer et al., 1995). Employees who have optimism and trust in leadership, peers, or institutions tend to support changes (Behazad, 2020). The more people feel supported and trusted, the more they identify with the organization (Ates et al., 2017).

Organizational identification is a variable that influences work behaviours, encourages (Rousseau, 1998) or discourages change (Bouchikhi & Kimberly, 2003). In this study, it is considered that individuals identified with the organization absorb characteristics of the institution into their own identity, take on company goals for themselves, and desire to contribute to the organization, likely demonstrating greater readiness for change (Hameed et al., 2013).

This paper examines the relationship between organizational identification, trust, perceived organizational support, and readiness for change, grounded in identity and social exchange theories. The study was conducted in a Brazilian global commodities company with approximately 70,000 employees across five continents. Its academic contribution lies in investigating a model not yet described in the literature.

Most prior studies addressing the link between organizational identification and readiness for change focus on mergers and acquisitions (Drzensky et al., 2012), and few have

explored the relationship empirically (Hameed et al., 2013; Sreenivasan & Suresh, 2023). There is also a need for broader research on the effects of perceived organizational support and trust on organizational identification (Ates et al., 2017), as well as clarification of the causal relationship between perceived organizational support and organizational trust (Barzoki & Rezaei, 2017). Moreover, few empirical studies have examined how organizational trust and perceived organizational support influence readiness for change (Gigliotti et al., 2018). Akmal et al. (2022) further highlight the importance of quantitative approaches to deepen understanding of readiness for change as a construct. Finally, bibliometric searches conducted in the academic databases Scielo, Spell, Web of Science, Ebsco, and Scopus, during January 2025, with the descriptors organizational identification; perceived organizational support, organizational trust and readiness for change, did not return any papers that treat the relationships between the four variables jointly, demonstrating that the model of this research is unprecedented in the literature, justifying the study.

This study also has practical implications. By analysing relationships, managers can find new ways to encourage readiness for change. The perception of organizational support can be improved by understanding how organizations can adopt trust-encouraging practices. The success of future changes can be significantly impacted by the daily implementation of these actions, and proposing a framework of actions has practical implications as well.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Perceived organizational support

Perceived organizational support is defined as general beliefs regarding the degree to which the organization values, acknowledges contributions, and is committed to the well-being of individuals (Eisenberger et al., 1986). The organization demands performance standards, behavioural norms, and outcomes, while employees expect conditions and rewards to complete tasks (Diógenes et al., 2016).

Performance management, workload, social and material support, career opportunities, management style (Oliveira-Castro et al., 1999), resources availability, training, information, rewards, fair treatment, respect, trust, encouragement, autonomy, and people development (Feng & Zhou, 2019), are factors that make up perceived organizational support.

Positive attitudes can be cultivated through perceived organizational support, such as increased organizational commitment, citizenship behaviours, improved performance, and a reduction in intention to quit (Zagenczyk et al. 2011). Work attitudes and behaviours are also promoted by it (Rockstuhl et al., 2020).

2.2 Organizational trust

Trust has been described as a multidimensional construct, with competence, openness, concern for employees, reliability, and identification as formative dimensions (Schocley-Zalabak et al., 2000). Dimensions of organizational trust are lateral trust (developed among peers), vertical trust (established between leaders and employees), and institutional trust established when employees believe in the company's vision, strategy, policies, and reputation (Ellonen et al., 2008). The ability to be integrated with values, fulfil its mission, and be benevolent is what guides organizational trust (Gillespie & Dietz, 2009).

Academic studies have investigated the positive effects of organizational trust on cooperation and effectiveness (Searle et al., 2011) and turnover intention (Barzoki & Rezaei, 2017). In environments with high levels of trust, people are more collaborative, expend more

energy, perform better at work and greater organizational effectiveness is observed (Sadq et al., 2020). According to the studies referenced, organizational trust facilitates the understanding of social bonds and supports social interactions that have been established over time.

2.3 Organizational identification

Organizational identification is how individuals connect the organization's identity with their own identity, attributing typical characteristics of the organization to themselves (Kong and Weng, 2019).

Self-categorization theory states that individuals stop seeing themselves as unique to conform to social group stereotypes, resulting in organizational identification. (Bergami and Bagozzi, 2000). Social identity theory suggests that organizational identification is influenced by factors such as self-worth or prestige, self-definition or individual distinction, and self-continuity or consistency of self-concept (Elstak and Van Riel, 2005).

Identification happens by incorporating organizational essence into personal self-definition (I am, I value, I feel) and by adding value, goals, beliefs, traits, and skills into self-definition, equating to the statements I matter/want/believe/do/can do (Ashforth et al., 2008). Individuals who feel like they belong are more likely to have a good self-concept, as they assume and align with organizational interests (Ashforth et al., 2008; Niu et al., 2018).

Understanding power, control, and resistance relationships can be explained by organizational identification, which can improve organizational effectiveness (Brown, 2018). High levels of performance are encouraged by it (Schwarz, 2017) and turnover intention is negative (Ekmekcioglu and Aydogan, 2019).

2.4 Readiness for change

An individual's psychological and behavioural readiness to captain and champion change, which includes determination and confidence in implementing change effectively, is known as readiness for change (Weiner, 2020). Self-efficacy, personal valence, management support for change, organizational valence, and discrepancy all has an impact on this variable (Holt et al., 2007). The definition of it is multidimensional, taking into account cognitive, emotional, and intentional dimensions (Bouckennooghe et al., 2009). Cognition is characterized by an evaluation, perception, understanding, and support for change. Support, resistance, neutrality, and intention are all components of the emotional dimension that relate to predisposition, willingness, energy, and engagement (Bouckennooghe et al., 2009). Readiness for change can be predicted by positive beliefs and emotions, along with individual, procedural, and contextual factors (Rafferty and Minbashian, 2018; Soumyaja et al., 2018).

The readiness for change is a state that is prone to fluctuating degrees of agreement with a given initiative, which changes over time and context (Hemme et al., 2018). It depends on the neutrality of threats to self-interest, which signals beneficial outcomes (Arnéguy et al., 2018), and psychological safety (Uyan and Aslan, 2019).

2.5 Hypotesis

This research's constructs have a direct relationship and mediate some of the constructs that will be trained on the job, as indicated by the literature. Perceived organizational support is positively and significantly associated with organizational identification (Fatma et al., 2019; Subba, 2019). The authors suggest a higher likelihood of identification with the company when one believes in the care for the well-being and meets the needs for approval, self-esteem,

recognition, and emotional support (Hypothesis 1 - perceived organizational support has a positive and significant relationship with organizational identification (H1)).

Perceived organizational support shapes responses to change (Kirrane et al., 2016), impacts readiness for change through the effect on psychological capital (Jabbarian & Chegini, 2016), and is positively related to readiness for change (Gigliotti et al., 2018; Thakur & Srivastava, 2018). The higher the perceived organizational support, the higher the support for change initiatives (Mehboob & Othman, 2020; Wulandari et al., 2020) (Hypothesis 2 - perceived organizational support has positive and significant relationship in readiness for change (H2)).

Social exchange theory suggests that when people feel supported by an organization, they will reciprocate the support with favourable behaviours (Arnéguy et al., 2020). Perceived organizational support has been shown by multiple academic studies to have a significant and positive impact on organizational trust (Gigliotti et al., 2018; Kurtessis et al., 2017). By perceiving that the company strives to improve the employment experience, people raise their trust in the organization and improve their performance (Guinot & Chiva, 2019) (Hypothesis 3 - perceived organizational support has a positive and significant relationship with organizational trust (H3)).

Organizational identification is created by psychological bonds established between individuals and the organization (Edwards & Cable, 2009) and is characterized by the integration of organizational image with self-concept (NG, 2015). In the organization, organizational trust is characterized by the willingness to take risks (NG, 2015). These variables have common characteristics and are affected by the importance of social interactions within the organization (Ates et al., 2017). Organizational trust explains the connections between personal and corporate values (Edwards & Cable, 2009). The relation between it and organizational identification is sign. The higher the vertical trust, the higher the organizational identification (Lisbona et al., 2020) (Hypothesis 4 - Organizational trust has a positive and significant relationship with organizational identification (H4)).

Trusted environments are characterized by openness to dialogue and psychological safety, which positively impact readiness for change (Rafferty & Minbashian, 2018). High trust in peers, leadership, or the firm reduces uncertainty and insecurity, shapes favourable responses to change, and relates positively to one or all dimensions of readiness for change: cognitive, emotional, and intentional (Memon et al., 2020; Yue et al., 2019) (Hypothesis 5 - Organizational trust has a positive and significant relationship with readiness for change – (H5)).

Organizational identification affects change processes by creating a favourable attitude towards organizational interests and readiness for change (Rousseau, 1998). People who are more identified with the organization perceive congruence between personal and organizational goals, values, and ambitions and, consequently, are more likely to support organizational change (Arnéguy et al., 2018; Van Knippenberg, 2000; Hameed et al., 2013). In another perspective, some authors argue that organizational change can threaten individuals' identity and this feeling translates into resistance to change (Elstak & Van Riel, 2005) (Hypothesis 6 - Organizational identification has a positive and significant relationship with readiness for change (H6)).

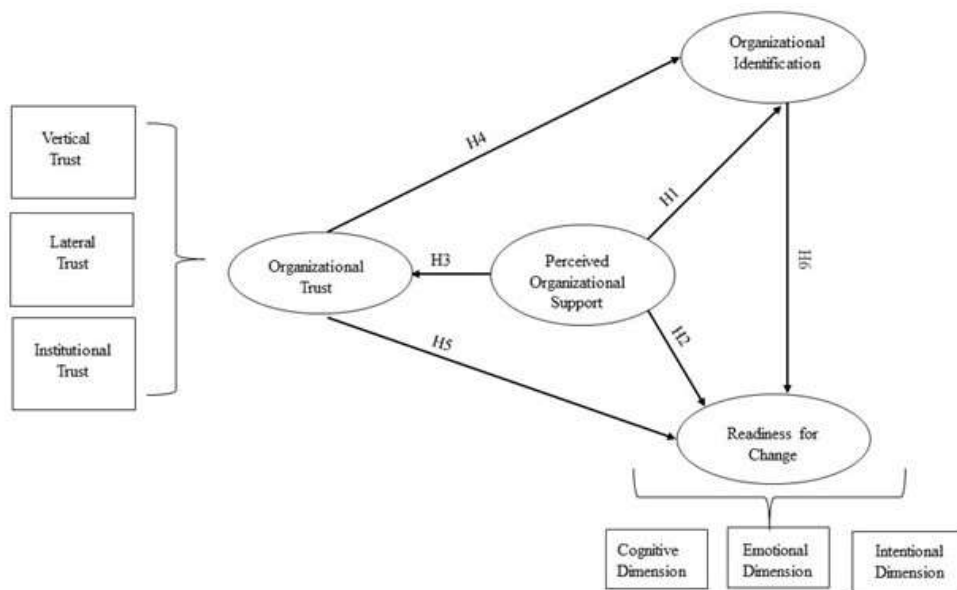
In addition to the direct relationships mentioned in the literature, mediated pathways were examined as theorized in the literature. Possible moderating effects of the constructs examined in this work are also described in the literature. Some authors highlight that organizational identification acts as a mediator of the relationships between readiness for change and perceived organizational support (Thakur & Srivastava, 2018; Subba, 2019; Zagenczyk et al., 2020) and between readiness for change and organizational trust (Thakur &

Srivastava, 2018), indicating that organizational identification is extremely important for achieving change.

Still, as a mediating construct, organizational trust is also reported to mediate the relationships between perceived organizational support and organizational identification (Kurtessis et al., 2017; Shukla & Rai 2015) and perceived organizational support and readiness for change (Gigliotti et al., 2018; Jabbering & Chegini, 2016). This highlights the importance of the study in knowing the relationships and mediations to gain a comprehensive understanding of the constructs and their implications.

Figure 1 illustrates how the theoretical model was developed from the hypotheses and literature discussed.

Figure 1. Theoretical conceptual model



Source: Prepared by the authors

3. METHODOLOGY

This paper presents a descriptive and quantitative study conducted in a private global Brazilian company operating in the commodities sector with approximately 70,000 employees. The sample selection was non-probabilistic and intentional; the research was carried out with individuals from the information technology and human resources sectors, occupying positions in the technical, managerial, or administrative group, who worked in Brazil or other countries, and had an organizational e-mail address.

The research was carried out in accordance with appropriate guidelines and regulations. The first step was to obtain permission from the organization to carry out the research. The company has given permission for the study to be disclosed and collected data through the author's private email. Then the second step was to send an email message to potential respondents, containing the presentation of the research, information about the study, a link to access the instrument and the guarantee of anonymity and confidentiality of the participants' data and consent was obtained from all respondents.

We follow Resolution No. 510/2016 of the National Health Council ethics/ Brazil (Conselho Nacional de Saúde/ Brasil, 2016), which determines specific ethical guidelines for

the human and social sciences in this country. Procedures were taken to ensure participants that any liability caused by the research would be avoided for them. In addition, we guarantee the confidentiality of all information provided by the interviewees as well as their identity protection through the signature of a formal agreement term. In addition, this research is based on the resolution of the Brazilian Resolution 510, article 1, sole paragraph, item 1, which informs that public opinion research that does not contain the identification of those involved in the research and that does not involve physical or psychological risks do not need to be approved by an ethics committee.

The SurveyMonkey® platform was used to conduct the survey, which included information about the research's purpose and assured respondents that their personal data would not be identified or collected, as per the national research ethics committee. The online consent was selected by those who agreed and proceeded to fill out the questionnaire on their own.

The organization authorized the research through email but did not allow disclosure of the organization's name in the research. The organization was de-characterized to disseminate the results and this commitment was maintained.

A structured questionnaire with a Likert scale of 07 points was utilized to collect the data on a digital platform. The instrument was composed of 44 questions, being 06 questions about perceived organizational support created by Eisenberger et al. (1986), 06 questions about organizational identification created by Mael and Ashforth (1992), 18 organizational trust questions proposed by Ellonen et al. (2008) and 13 items of readiness for change, proposed by Kirrane et al. (2016), initially described by Bouckennooghe et al. (2009). The country of assignment of the respondent was defined by one question. The scales utilized were the most highly cited and recommended in the literature and the most up-to-date, which was verified through bibliometric research using those constructs in the Scielo database (December 2023).

The exploratory factor analysis and structural equation modeling in the PLS approach (Vinzi et al., 2010) were the data analysis techniques used. Missing data was checked for, and questionnaires with 15% or more blank items were excluded. Outliers were defined as observations with standardized values outside the range of 4.00. The use of Spearman's correlation matrix to analyze pairwise correlations of variables was used to verify data linearity. Bartlett's test was utilized to test the linearity of every construct (Hair et al., 2009).

Organizational trust and readiness for change were considered second-order constructs. These constructs were evaluated for validity and quality through factor loadings, weights and commonalities, dimensionality, reliability, and convergent validity analysis. The measurement model was verified using the same criteria (Hair et al., 2009).

The structural model analysis showed how the constructs interacted, taking into account the strength of one variable's influence on the others. The model's fit was evaluated using R² and the GoF. The R² means the percentage by which the independent constructs explain the dependent ones (Hair et al., 2009). The GoF is a measure calculated by the geometric mean of the AVE's (Average Variance Extracted) of the constructs and the R² of the model and represents an alternative to validate models that use PLS (Hair et al., 2009). Sobel's test was also used (Sobel, 1982). The analysis was performed using R (version 3.6.1) software.

4. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

A total of 1776 employees were invited to participate in the survey, and the accessible population was 1652 people, with a return of 320 respondents (19.4%). We excluded from the analysis 34 respondents whose questionnaires contained 15% or more blank items (lost data). The final sample in this situation contained 286 responses.

No outliers related to data tabulation errors were found. There were 33 (0.27%) univariate outliers (standardized values outside the range of $|\pm 4.00|$). Mahalanobis' D^2 measure returned 14 (4.90%) multivariate atypical responses. Because we believe that these were valid cases, no outlier was excluded.

The linearity of correlations considering pairwise variables returned 764 significant relationships at the level of five percent, representing about 85 percent of possible correlations. Bartlett's test (Hair et al., 2009) indicated p - values less than 0.05 in each construct, indicating significant evidence of linearity within them.

Table 1 summarizes the level of agreement for each construct using Median and Interquartile Range (IQR), which are more appropriate for ordinal Likert-type data. All constructs demonstrated median values equal to or greater than 5, indicating a general tendency toward agreement among respondents. The vertical trust dimension showed the lowest central tendency (Median = 5; IQR = 4–6), whereas the intentional readiness for change dimension presented the highest level of agreement (Median = 7; IQR = 6–7).

Table 1. Descriptive analysis of the indicators

Construct	Median	Interquartile Range (IQR)
Perceived organizational support	5	4–6
Organizational identification	6	5–6
Organizational trust (global)	5	4–6
Readiness for change (global)	6	4–6
Vertical trust dimension	5	4–6
Lateral trust dimension	5	4–6
Institutional trust dimension	6	5–6
Emotional dimension	6	5–6
Cognitive dimension	5	3–6
Intentional dimension	7	6–7

Source: Research Data

The comparison across constructs shows that the intentional dimension demonstrates consistently higher agreement than all other dimensions, as indicated by both its elevated median and the narrow, high-end IQR. Perceived organizational support presented a median level of agreement of 5 (IQR = 4–6), which is higher than the overall level reported by Tabak and Hendy (2016), who found substantially lower agreement in their sample. Likewise, the median readiness for change score (Median = 6; IQR = 4–6) exceeds the results reported by Kirrane et al. (2016), whose participants expressed lower readiness for change.

Organizational trust and readiness for change are second-order constructs, formed respectively by the dimensions: lateral, vertical, and institutional trust and cognitive, emotional, and intentional dimensions. These constructs were validated by factor analysis.

One item of the cognitive dimension and one item of the emotional dimension of readiness for change had a factor loading lower than 0.50 and were removed. One item of the

emotional dimension of readiness for change had a factor loading lower than 0.50 (C.F. = 0.45) but it was kept because it did not affect the construct validation. Table 2 summarizes the results of the validity and quality of the first-order constructs.

Table 2. Validation of first-order constructs related to organizational trust and readiness for change

Construct	Dimension	Itens	AVE ^a	A.C. ^b	C.C. ^c	KMO ^d	Dim. ^e
Organizational trust	Vertical trust	6	0,69	0,91	0,89	0,90	1
	Lateral trust	6	0,68	0,90	0,88	0,87	1
	Institutional trust	6	0,65	0,89	0,87	0,88	1
Readiness for change	Emotional dimension	5	0,56	0,76	0,81	0,73	1
	Cognitive dimension	4	0,52	0,66	0,74	0,60	1
	Intentional dimension	3	0,84	0,90	0,90	0,71	1

Source: Research Data

^a Average variance extracted; ^b Cronbach's alpha; ^c Composite reliability; ^d Sample adequacy; and ^e Dimensionality.

All first-order constructs presented convergent validation, having AVEs higher than 0.40; reached required levels of reliability - Cronbach's alpha or Composite Reliability above 0.60; presented KMO (Kayser-Meyer-Olkin tests the adequacy of the sample) greater than or equal to 0.50 and are unidimensional. The model proved valid for measuring the second-order constructs.

In the investigative factor analysis of the measurement model, one item was removed from the organizational identification, which presented a factor load lower than 0.50 (C.F. = 0.23). The other results proved the relevance of the statements to form the respective construct. Table 3 illustrates the dimensionality, convergent validity, discriminant validity, and reliability data.

Table 3. General measurement model

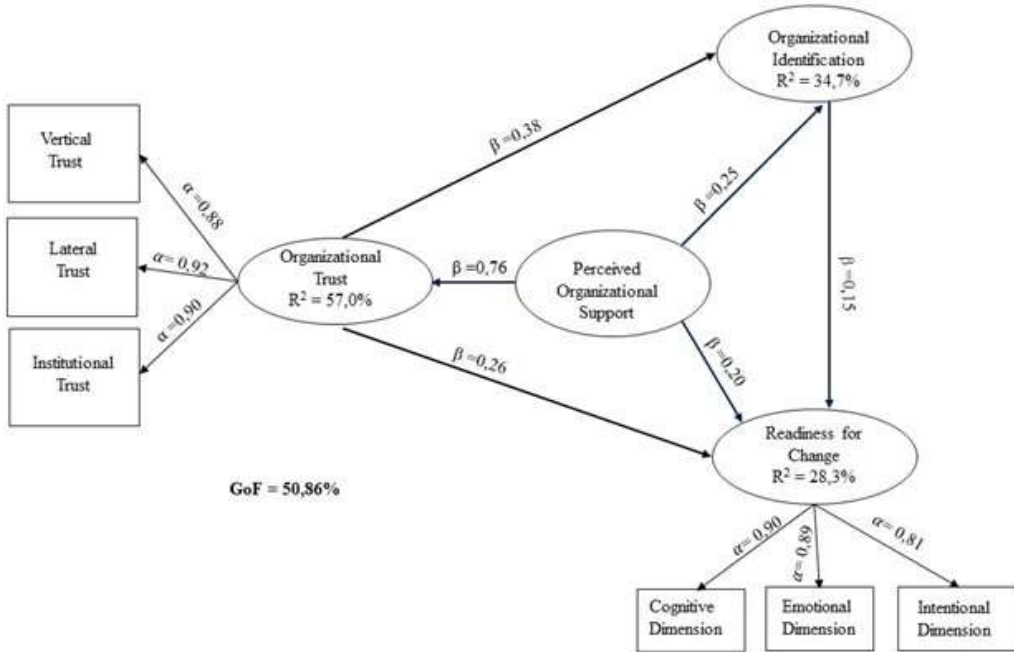
Construct	Item	Factorial Load	Communality	Weight
Perceived organizational support	SOP1	0,84	0,70	0,24
	SOP2	0,80	0,65	0,23
	SOP3	0,82	0,68	0,23
	SOP4	0,54	0,29	0,13
	SOP5	0,84	0,70	0,22
	SOP6	0,81	0,65	0,22
Organizational trust	Vertical	0,92	0,84	0,38
	Lateral	0,88	0,77	0,31
	Institutional	0,90	0,81	0,42
Organizational identification	IO1	0,67	0,45	0,23

	IO2	0,54	0,29	0,17
	IO3	0,77	0,59	0,32
	IO4	0,79	0,62	0,33
	IO5	0,85	0,72	0,29
	IO6	-	-	-
Readiness for change	Emotional	0,90	0,81	0,45
	Cognitive	0,89	0,79	0,42
	Intentional	0,81	0,65	0,29

Source: Research Data

The maximum shared variance of each item was lower than the respective AVE, confirming discriminant validation. The reliability indexes were higher than 0.60, and all constructs proved to be unidimensional. All relationships of the measurement model were rated as satisfactory, and the evaluation of the structural model followed, illustrated in Figure 2.

Figure 2. General structural model



Source: Prepared by the authors

Each of the hypotheses was statistically analyzed. The model had a GoF of 50.86% and the results found via the *p* - value are consistent with confidence intervals obtained via bootstrap, indicating valid data. The results of the structural model are reflected in Table 4.

Table 4. General structural model

Endogenous	Exogenous	B	Standard Error(β)	Trust Interval 95% ^a	P -value
Organizational trust	Perceived organizational support	0,76	0,04	[0,69; 0,82]	*
Organizational identification	Perceived organizational support	0,25	0,07	[0,08; 0,43]	**
	Organizational trust	0,38	0,07	[0,18; 0,54]	*
Readiness for change	Perceived organizational support	0,20	0,08	[0,00; 0,42]	***
	Organizational trust	0,26	0,08	[0,06; 0,42]	+
	Organizational identification	0,15	0,06	[0,03; 0,28]	++

Source: Research Data

^a Bootstrap Interval; * $p < 0,001$; ** $p = 0,001$; *** $p = 0,01$; + $p = 0,002$; ++ $p = 0,017$

All variables correlate with each other, and the significance values are all less than 0.05. The relationship between perceived organizational support and organizational trust has the highest strength ($\beta = 0.76$). Organizational trust is the variable with the highest contribution to readiness for change. Perceived organizational support obtained the coefficient of ($\beta = 0.20$), representing the second-highest relationship to readiness for change. Organizational identification appears as the variable with the weakest association with readiness for change ($\beta = 0.15$).

It is observed from the results expressed in Table 4, a significant ($p = 0.001$) and positive ($\beta = 0.25$ [0.08; 0.43]) effect of perceived organizational support on organizational identification. Therefore, the higher the perceived organizational support, the higher the organizational identification (H1). These findings corroborate Subba's (2019) studies supported by social exchange theory. When individuals perceive high support in the workplace, they tend to connect with the organization acquiring higher organizational identification.

Following this, a significant ($p = 0.0010$) and positive ($\beta = 0.20$ [0.00; 0.42]) influence of perceived organizational support on readiness for change was observed. Therefore, the higher the perceived organizational support, the higher the readiness for change (H2). These results are consistent with the studies by Thakur and Srivastava (2018), demonstrating a significant and positive relationship between the two constructs. These findings align with previous studies that concluded similar results (Gigliotti et al., 2018; Jabbarian and Chegini, 2016).

The findings revealed a significant ($p < 0.001$) and positive relationship ($\beta = 0.76$ [0.69; 0.82]) between perceived organizational support and organizational trust, indicating that the higher the perceived organizational support, the higher the organizational trust (H3). This path had the highest strength (β) and the highest R2 in the model, having the highest explanatory capacity of the endogenous variable. This result is consistent with analyses by other researchers (Gigliotti et al., 2018; Guinot and Chiva, 2019; Kurtessis et al., 2017). When employees perceive the organization's efforts to provide good employment experience, they tend to trust the relationships experienced more. Repeated patterns of support and previous experiences of exchange and reciprocity create the certainty of continuity and trigger personal or institutional trust (Gigliotti et al., 2018).

A significant ($p < 0.001$) and positive influence ($\beta = 0.38$, [0.18; 0.54]) between organizational trust and organizational identification was shown, confirming hypothesis 4. It can be stated that the higher the organizational trust, the higher the organizational identification. This relationship confirms the findings of Sirin (2016), reporting a positive impact of organizational trust on organizational identification, while more recent research by Lisbona et al. (2020) proved that managerial support increases vertical trust, reflecting in higher organizational identification. These data align with previous studies showing that employees experiencing trust tend to identify with the organization (Ates et al., 2017).

Organizational identification has been noted as a predictor of positive organizational behaviors: interest in achieving organizational goals (Van Knippenberg, 2000), higher levels of performance (Schwarz, 2017), and reduced intention to leave (Ekmekcioglu and Aydogan, 2019). The suggestion is to enhance organizational trust across all dimensions, promoting organizational identification and positive performance outcomes.

A significant ($p = 0.002$) and positive ($\beta = 0.26$ [0.06; 0.42]) influence of organizational trust on readiness for change was observed. Therefore, the higher the organizational trust, the higher the readiness for change (H5). These results confirm the research of Austin et al. (2020), who found that trust in management is predictive of readiness for change. Organizational trust has been stressed by several authors to encourage readiness for change (Rafferty and Minbashian, 2018; Thakur and Srivastava, 2018).

The results confirm the benefit of including change management plans that promote and reinforce organizational trust. Trust promotes individuals' comprehension of the need for change and the value of the process for themselves, which alleviates anxiety, fear, and ambiguity caused by proposed changes. Organizational trust has a positive impact on readiness for change (Yue et al., 2019).

The data showed a significant ($p = 0.017$) and positive influence ($\beta = 0.15$ [0.03; 0.28]) between organizational identification and readiness for change. The higher the organizational identification, the higher the readiness for change tends to be (H6). Despite the confirmation of the hypothesis, the beta coefficient of this relationship suggests a weak association between the constructs. These findings align with authors such as Arnéguy et al. (2018) and Hameed et al. (2013). These scholars demonstrated that there is a positive relationship between organizational identification and readiness for change. It is suggested that appropriate conditions are established that create consistent and lasting psychological bonds with employees. Individuals become prepared for change by realizing the benefits of belonging to the organization and identifying and embracing their own goals.

Confirmation that organizational trust and perceived organizational support have the most significant influence on readiness for change suggests fostering actions that enable people to believe in the organization's good intentions, the firm's ability to drive change and fulfill commitments following initiatives. Since organizational identification had the smallest influence on readiness for change ($\beta = 0.15$) it is suggested that identity components (self-worth, self-distinction, and self-concept; Elstak and Van Riel, 2005) reinforce the need for protection of one's own identity, resulting in less openness to change.

Finally, this study analyzed the existence of mediating variables in the structural model. The data are summarized in table 5.

Table 5. Testing for the existence of the mediator effect in the model

Mediator	Independent Construct	Dependent Construct	P - Value
Organizational identification	Perceived organizational support	Readiness for change	0,002
Organizational identification	Organizational trust	Readiness for change	0,005
Organizational trust	Perceived organizational support	Readiness for change	0,001
Organizational trust	Perceived organizational support	Organizational identification	0,001

Source: Research Data

A mediating effect of organizational identification is observed in the relationship between perceived organizational support and readiness for change ($p = 0.002$) as proposed by Thakur e Srivastava, (2018), Subba, (2019) and Zagencyk et al., (2020). It was also shown that organizational identification mediates the relationship between organizational trust and readiness for change ($p = 0.005$) (Thakur e Srivastava, 2018). There was a significant mediating effect ($p < 0.001$) of organizational trust on the relationship between perceived organizational support and readiness for change (Kurtessis et al., 2017; Ng, 2015; Shukla e Rai 2015) and the relationship between perceived organizational support and organizational identification (Gigliotti et al., 2018; Jabbarian e Chegini, 2016). In other words, as organizational trust grows, the direct effect of perceived organizational support or organizational identification on readiness for change tends to be smaller. This confirms the assertion made in the literature. It is also demonstrated that trust and organizational identification have significant implications for organizations and can influence strategies and changes.

The six hypotheses were validated, and the perception of organizational support, trust, and organizational identification were responsible for 28.3% of the variability in readiness for change.

Understanding how individuals perceive organizational support, trust in people, and the institution contributes to the definition of the focus of action of companies and strengthens successful implementations of organizational change while strengthening psychological bonds established with employees. Companies can benefit by taking action to promote employee well-being, according to the results.

Organizations should promote and emphasize organizational support actions to increase confidence and improve performance and efficiency. Managerial attitudes and organizational practices that reveal adequate performance management, recognition of new ideas, modernization of processes, qualification programs, competitive compensation programs (Oliveira-Castro *et al.*, 1999); fair and meritocratic treatment, development possibilities and adequate benefits (Giorgi *et al.*, 2016); respect, encouragement, autonomy, direct, open and transparent communication efforts, availability of resources to perform work, incentive and reward systems (Feng and Zhou, 2019) are examples of initiatives that can make up this range of actions, improving the perception of organizational support and promoting trust.

Moreover, as the perception of organizational support is built by the history of experiences within the organization, these supportive actions in the management routine tend to have consequences throughout the employee's life in the institution, ensuring successful implementations of future organizational changes.

5. THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

As for the theoretical implications, this study demonstrated the relationship between organizational identification, organizational trust, perceived organizational support, and readiness for change, inserting a model for analyzing the relationship between these constructs, still lacking in the literature. The significant findings indicated that social relationships are internalized, which backs up the assumption that the other three constructs influence readiness for change. The possibility of understanding antecedents of readiness for change in different cultural contexts expands the specialized theoretical discussion on change management processes.

The empirical demonstration can lead to another theoretical implication that the existing relationship between organizational identification and readiness for change is weak (Arnéguy et al., 2018; Drzensky et al., 2012). In addition, evidence of the relationships that perceived organizational support and organizational trust establish with organizational identification broadens the scope of study and suggests new exploratory mechanisms for the latter topic (Gigliotti et al., 2018; Guinot and Chiva, 2019).

The consistency of the results also contributes to the literature by empirically proving the strong influence of perceived organizational support on organizational trust ($\beta = 0.76$, p -value < 0.001), confirming previous work by Guinot and Chiva (2019).

This study demonstrated how identity and social exchange theories are complementary and help in understanding readiness for change. In addition to maintaining a structure of support and trust, the construction of an identity and image that favor the organizational identification is essential, as this variable can also influence readiness for change (Arnéguy et al., 2018).

In practical terms, this study is helpful by providing subsidies to managers to assess the antecedents or predictors of readiness for change. The study suggests that policies and practices in people management that promote perceived organizational support and trust also promote readiness for change.

Also, as practical implications, points for observation are suggested when organizations prepare for the challenges of implementing change: (a) highlight valuing the individual's contribution, experience, and well-being; strengthen psychological bonds (Subba, 2019); (b) encourage transformational leadership, inspiring trust (Behazad, 2020); (c) offer support and autonomy for people; establish open, transparent communication and active listening (Memon et al., 2020); (d) declare organizational values and purpose (Arnéguy et al., 2018); (e) create development and training opportunities; implement meritocracy (Feng and Zhou, 2019); (f) implement quality of life-work balance programs; encourage knowledge transfer (Guinot and Chiva, 2019); (g) set specific goals; give employee voice and create psychological safety (Searle et al., 2011); (h) recognize new ideas, modernize processes (Oliveira-Castro et al.); (i) demonstrate the plans of the organization (Gillespie and Dietz, 2009).

Finally, this study highlights that both organizational identification and organizational trust mediate the relationship between perceived organizational support and readiness for change. This research suggests that promoting reciprocal connections and identity congruence facilitates readiness for change in practical terms.

6. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This study analyzed the relationship between perceived organizational support, organizational trust, organizational identification, and readiness for change in a privately held global commodities company. Human attitudes are often cited as a leading cause of failure in change

initiatives, which motivated the investigation. Structural equation modeling was used to achieve the proposed objective.

This work expands the understanding of the constructs by treating them as antecedents and, at the same time, as mediators. The results pointed to an internal perspective of social relations, supporting the investigated hypotheses: there is a significant and positive relationship of organizational trust with organizational identification and readiness for change; a positive and significant effect of perceived organizational support on organizational identification, organizational trust, and readiness for change, and a positive and significant relationship between organizational identification and readiness for change. It was possible to demonstrate that organizations should seek the best of the favorable exchange relationship and invest in practices that promote perceived organizational support, organizational trust, and organizational identification, contributing to increasing the level of readiness for change.

It is suggested that predecessor actions to perceived organizational support, listed throughout the study based on the theoretical framework, should compose the framework of initiatives to be communicated, valued, or implemented before initiating more significant organizational changes. The initiatives need to be broad enough to cover the entire group but flexible enough to adapt to individual and local needs. These efforts must generate in employees the confidence that the treatment offered will continue to benefit them in the future and reinforce vertical trust, which was the dimension that presented the greatest contribution in the formation of the second-order construct.

The proposed model is supported by the results, which have practical implications for managing change in organizations and have implications for the literature on readiness for change. The data were collected in a single organization; the sample was non-probabilistic and intentional, indicating that the results should not be used broadly in other organizations and do not represent all areas of human resources or information technology. This research did not analyze some demographic elements that may influence people's attitudes toward the variables analyzed, such as ethnicity, length of time in the company, and age. Other researchers may incorporate these aspects in future studies. Future investigation of hypotheses in different cultures requires repeating the research by broadening the sample of countries.

REFERENCES

- Akmal, A., Podgorodnichenko, N., Greatbanks, R. and Zhang, J.A. (2022), Does organizational readiness matter in lean thinking practices? *International Journal of Operations & Production Management*, 42 (11), 1760-1792.
- Arnéguy, E., Ohana, M., & Stinglhamber, F. (2018), Organizational justice and readiness for change: a concomitant examination of the mediating role of perceived organizational support and identification, *Frontiers in Psychology*, 9, 1–13.
- Arnéguy, E., Ohana, M., & Stinglhamber, F. (2020), Overall justice perceived organizational support and readiness for change: the moderating role of perceived organizational, *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 33(05), 765–777.
- Ashforth, B. E., Harrison, S. H., & Corley, K. G. (2008), Identification in organizations: an examination of four fundamental questions, *Journal of Management*, 34(3), 325–374.
- Ates, M. F., Mert, I.S., & Turgut, H. (2017), The indirect effect of organizational prestige on the effect of organizational trust and organizational support on organizational identification, *European Journal of Business and Management*, 09(18), 103–117.
- Austin, T., Chreim, S., & Grudniewicz, A. (2020), Examining health care providers' and middle-level managers' readiness for change, *BMC Health Services Research*, 20(1), 1–14.
- Barzoki, A. S. and Rezaei, A. (2017), Relationship between perceived organisational support, organisational citizenship behaviour, organisational trust and turnover intentions, *International Journal of Productivity and Quality Management*, 21(3), 273–299.
- Behazad, T. (2020), Employee cynicism and organizational change, *Market Forces Research Journal*, 15(1), 16–40.
- Bergami, M. and Bagozzi, R. P. (2000), Self-categorization and commitment as distinct aspects of social identity in the organization: measurement, relation to antecedents and consequences, *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 39(4), 555–577.
- Bouchikhi, H. and Kimberly, J. R. (2003), Escaping the identity trap, *MIT Sloan Management Review*, 44(3), 20–26.
- Bouckenoghe, D., Devos, G., & Van Den Broeck, H. (2009), Organizational change questionnaire-climate of change, processes, and readiness: development a new instrument, *The Journal of Psychology*, 143(6), 559-599.
- Brown, A. D. (2018), Identities in organization studies, *Organization Studies*, 40(1), 7–22.
- Conselho Nacional de Saúde. (2016). Resolução nº 510/2016. Recuperado de <<http://conselho.saude.gov.br/resolucoes/2016/Reso510.pdf>>
- Diógenes, L. C., Paschoal, T., Neiva, E. R., & Meneses, P. P. M. (2016), Intenção de rotatividade e percepção de suporte organizacional, *Revista do Serviço Público*, 67(2), 147–172.

- Drzensky, F., Egold, N., & Van Dick, R. (2012), Ready for a change? A longitudinal study of antecedents, consequences, and contingencies of readiness for change, *Journal of Change Management*, 12(1), 95–111.
- Edwards, J. R. and Cable, D. M. (2009), The value of value congruence, *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 94(3), 654–677.
- Eisenberger, R., Huntington, R., Hutchison, S., & Sowa, D. (1986), Perceived organizational support, *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 71(3), 500–507.
- Ekmekcioglu, E. B. & Aydogan, E. (2019), A moderated mediation model of the relationship between organizational justice and turnover intention, *International Journal of Organizational Analysis*, 27(4), 1073–1092.
- Ellonen, R., Blomqvist, K., & Puumalainen, K. (2008), The role of trust in organisational innovativeness, *European Journal of Innovation Management*, 11(2), 160–181.
- Elstak, M. N. and Van Riel, C. B. M. (2005), Organizational identity change: an alliance between organizational identity and identification, in *Academy of Management 2005 Annual Meeting: Vision of Management in the 21st Century*.
- Fadzil, A. S. A, Hassan, R., Abdul, S., Mohamad, N. S., Zainudin, M. I., & Ali, A. E. R. (2019), Towards a successful organizational change: the role of dialogic communication, *International Journal of Asian Social Science*, 9(1), 86–95.
- Fatma, M., Khan, I., & Rahman, Z. (2019), Striving for legitimacy through CSR: an exploration of employees' responses in controversial industry sector, *Social Responsibility Journal*, 15(07), 924-938.
- Feng, Y. & Zhou, J. (2019), Organizational support and managers' ambidexterity in social enterprise: the mediating role of emotional intelligence, *Open Journal of Social Sciences*, 07(5), 259–275.
- Gigliotti, R., Vardaman, J., Marshall, D. R., & Gonzalez, K. (2018), The role of perceived organizational support in individual change readiness, *Journal of Change Management*, 19(2), 86-100.
- Gillespie, N. & Dietz, G. (2009), Trust repair after organization-level failure, *Academy of Management Review*, 34 (1), 127-145.
- Giorgi, G., Dubin, D., & Perez, J. F. (2016), Perceived organizational support for enhancing welfare at work: a regression tree model, *Frontiers in Psychology*, 7, 1–9.
- Graminho, J. M. J., Amorim, M. C. S., & Morgado, F. (2014). Contribuições da Teoria dos Jogos à gestão de desempenho . *Revista Economia & Gestão*, 14(37), 4-27.
- Guinot, J. & Chiva, R. (2019), Vertical trust within organizations and performance: a systematic review, *Human Resource Development Review*, 18(2), 196–227.

- Hair Jr., J. F., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J., Anderson, R. E., & Tatham, R. L. (2009). *Análise multivariada de dados* (6th ed.), Bookman, Porto Alegre, Brasil.
- Hameed, I., Roques, O., & Ali Arain, G. (2013), Nonlinear moderating effect of tenure on organizational identification (OID) and the subsequent role of OID in fostering readiness for change, *Group & Organization Management*, 38(1), 101–127.
- Hemme, F., Bowers, M. T., & Todd, J. S. (2018), Change readiness as fluid trajectories: a longitudinal multiple-case study, *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 31(5), 1153–1175.
- Holt, D. T., Armenakis, A. A., Feild, H. S., & Harris, S. G. (2007), Readiness for organizational change: the systematic development of a scale, *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 43(2), 232–255.
- Jabbarian, J. and Chegini, M. G. (2016), The effect of perceived organizational support on employee resistance to change: a study on Guilan municipal staff, *Journal of History Culture and Art Research*, 5(4), 642–654.
- Kirrane, M., Lennon, M., O'Connor, C., & Fu, N. (2016), Linking perceived management support with employees' readiness for change: the mediating role of psychological capital, *Journal of Change Management*, 17(1), 47–66.
- Kong, F. and Weng, J. (2019), A review on asymmetries in workgroup and organizational identifications, *Social Behavior and Personality*, 47(5), 1–8.
- Kurtessis, J. N., Eisenberger, R., Ford, M. T., Buffardi, L. C., Stewart, K. A., & Adis, C. S. (2017), Perceived organizational support: a meta-analytic evaluation of organizational support theory, *Journal of Management*, 43(6), 1854–1884.
- Lisbona, A. M., Bernabé, M., & Palací, F. J. (2020), Lactation and work: managers' support for breastfeeding enhance vertical trust and organizational identification, *Frontiers in Psychology*, 11, 1–9.
- Mael, F. and Ashforth, B. E. (1992), Alumni and their alma mater: partial test of reformulated model of organizational identification, *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 13(2), 103–123.
- Mayer, R. C., Davis, J. H., & Schoorman, F. D. (1995), An interactive model of organizational trust, *Academy of Management Review*, 20(3), 709–734.
- Mehboob, F. and Othman, N. (2020), Role of perceived management support and personal valence in promoting behavioral support for change: a social exchange theory perspective, *Jurnal Aplikasi Manajemen*, 5(1): 67-76.
- Memon, F. A., Shah, S., & Khoso, I.U. (2020), Role of leadership communication in creating change readiness: revisiting Kurt Lewin's model in telecommunication sector of Pakistan, *Indian Journal of Science and Technology*, 13(26), 2625-2632.

- Niu, W., Yuan, Q., Qian, S., & Liu, Z. (2018), Authentic leadership and employee job behaviors: the mediating role of relational and organizational identification and the moderating role of LMX, *Current Psychology*, 37(4), 982–994.
- Oliveira-Castro, G. A., Pilati, R., & Borges-Andrade, J. E. (1999), Percepção de suporte organizacional: desenvolvimento e validação de um questionário, *Revista de Administração Contemporânea*, 3(2), 29–51.
- Rafferty, A. E. and Minbashian, A. (2018), Cognitive beliefs and positive emotions about change: relationships with employee change readiness and change-supportive behaviors, *Human Relations*, 72(10), 1623–1650.
- Rhoades, L., Eisenberger, R., & Armeli, S. (2001), Affective commitment to the organization: the contribution of perceived organizational support, *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 86(5), 825–836.
- Rockstuhl, T., Eisenberger, R., Shore, L. M., Kurtessis, J. N., Ford, M. T., Buffardi, L. C., & Mesdaghinia, S. (2020), Perceived organizational support (POS) across 54 nations: a cross-cultural meta-analysis, *Journal of International Business Studies*, 51(6), 933-962.
- Rousseau, D. M. (1998), Why workers still identify with organizations, *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 19(3), 217–233.
- Sadq, Z. M., Sardar, B., Sulaiman, V., Saeed, H., Othman, B., & Mohammed, H. O. (2020), The relationship between intellectual capital and organizational trust and its impact on achieving the requirements of entrepreneurship strategy, *International Journal of Advanced Science and Technology*, 29(02), 2639–2653.
- Schocley-Zalabak, P., Elis, K., & Winograd, G. (2000), Organização trust: what it means, why it matters, *Organization Development Journal*, 18(4), 35–48.
- Schwarz, G. (2017), Transformational leadership and job performance: the role of organizational identification, Muenjohn, N., & McMurray, A. (Eds.), *The palgrave handbook of leadership in transforming*, Palgrave Macmillan, UK, pp. 519-539.
- Searle, R., Den Hartog, D. N., Weibel, A., Gillespie, N., Six, F., Hatzakis, T., & Skinner, D. (2011), Trust in the employer: the role of high-involvement work practices and procedural justice in European organizations, *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 22(5), 1069–1092.
- Sirin, Y. (2016), Organizational justice, organizational trust, and organization identification perceptions of physical education teachers, *International Journal of Business and Social Science*, 7(2), 126-133.
- Sreenivasan, A. and Suresh, M. (2023), Modelling of factors influencing organizational readiness for change in start-ups during the COVID-19, *Journal of Modelling in Management*, 18 (4), 1228-1249.
- Sobel, M. E. (1982), Asymptotic confidence intervals for indirect effects in structural equation

models, *Sociological Methodology*, 13(1982), 290-312.

- Soumyaja, D., Kamalanabhan, T. J., & Bhattacharyya, S. (2018), Antecedents of employee readiness for change in the IT sector and the manufacturing sector, *International Journal of Human Resources Development and Management*, 18(3-4), 237-256.
- Subba, D. (2019), Antecedent and consequences of organizational identification: a study in the tourism sector of Sikkim, *Future Business Journal*, 5(1), 1-9.
- Tabak, F. and Hendy, N. T. (2016), Work engagement: trust as a mediator of the impact of organizational job embeddedness and perceived organizational support, *Organization Management Journal*, 13(1), 21-31.
- Thakur, R. R. & Srivastava, S. (2018), From resistance to readiness: the role of mediating variables, *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 31(1), 230-247.
- Uyan, U. & Aslan, A. (2019), Promoting readiness for change: a systematic review of positive psychology in organizational change context, *Journal of Administrative Sciences*, 17(34), 349-370.
- Van Knippenberg, D. (2000), Work motivation and performance: a social identity perspective, *Applied Psychology: An International Review*, 49(3), 357-371.
- Vinzi, E. V., Chin, W. W., Henseler, J., & Wang, H. (Eds.). (2010), *Handbook of partial least squares: Concepts, methods, and applications*, Springer, Berlin.
- Weiner, B. J. (2020), A theory of organizational readiness for change, Nielsen, P., & Birken, S. A. (Eds.), *Handbook on implementation science*, Edward Elgar Limited, Cheltenham, UK, pp. 215-233.
- Wulandari, B., Ginting, E. D. J., & Hasnida, H. (2020), The effect of perceived organizational support on employee engagement on readiness to change, *International Journal of Progressive Sciences and Technologies*, 23(2), 24-27.
- Yue, C. A., Men, L. R., & Ferguson, M.A. (2019), Bridging transformational leadership, transparent communication, and employee openness to change: the mediating role of trust, *Public Relations Review*, 45(3), 2-13.
- Zagenczyk, T.J., Gibney, R., Few, W.T. & Scott, K. L. (2011), Psychological Contracts and Organizational Identification: The Mediating Effect of Perceived Organizational Support. *J Labor Res* 32, 254-281.