

# The Effect of Transformational Leadership on Individual Readiness to Change: The Mediating Roles of Work Engagement and Organizational Justice (A Study of UAE Construction Industry)

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## Abstract

This study aims to investigate the relationship between transformational leadership and individual readiness to change along with the mediators of organizational justice and work engagement in the construction industry of the UAE. The research applies quantitative analysis via PLS-SEM to determine the structural relationships among study constructs. The sample size consisted of 813 respondents from seven emirates. The proportion of respondents from each emirate in the sample is based on their relative representation in the UAE construction sector. The findings of the structural model indicate a statistically significant effect of transformational leadership on individual readiness to change. Moreover, the two mediating effects of work engagement and organizational justice are statistically significant. Further research may incorporate the role of moderators like culture to investigate the interaction effect of culture and transformational leadership on individual readiness to change. This study will help construction managers and policymakers shift to transformational leadership to make change eminent in the organizational structure.

**Keywords:** Transformational Leadership, Construction Industry, Readiness to Change, UAE, PLS-SEM, Work Engagement, Organizational Justice.

## Introduction

Change is considered a phenomenon that includes perceptual, inspirational, and behavioral factors. The transition demonstrates what the people imagine about the change (sensory perception), what the development can (affective) add to the entity, and whether the event is supposed to contribute to the intuitive activity (Oreg et al., 2011). Transformative management has been one of the main influential managerial styles during the last three decades. It is significant as leaders encourage the involvement of workers by enhancing their knowledge regarding the importance of company ideals and results compared to other forms of management, which focus on human benefits and the sharing of rewards (Wright et al., 2001). Transformative managers promote a healthy view of transformation, which should be

pursued and inspired by their generous character. They also suggest new issue resolution and regard workers as looking for opportunities to develop individually (Bass, 1985, 1999). Corporate transformation is the transformational procedure in organizations' behaviors, systems, strategies, or results (Chaghari et al., 2012).

A general understanding among research groups is that dedicated workers are deeply involved and motivated in the workplace (Macey et al., 2009), are glad concerning their task (Mathews, 2010), and are working hard (Hay Group, 2010). Where workplace involvement genuinely gives companies a strategic edge (Macey et al., 2009), it is vital that organizations and administrators first learn how to facilitate participation on a single-worker basis. According to (Nadiri & Tanova, 2010), the role of organizational justice is deemed more valuable than work fulfillment or inspiration; leaders feel that it would have a more considerable influence on the company's change if workers were involved in discussions and treated impartially. Equality awareness is essential for citizens to determine whether or not to collaborate with corporate institutions.

Transformational leadership has been shown to affect change readiness in the literature (e.g., Abbasi, 2017; Al-Tahitiah et al., 2016). However, these studies do not use hierarchical component modeling, which treats readiness for change as a second-order reflective formative construct. Transformational leadership has also been studied in the literature (e.g., Radian & Mangundjaya, 2019) in relation to readiness to change. Nevertheless, in these studies, readiness to change served as a mediator rather than an outcome, allowing for future investigation.

In further studies (such as Hayati et al., 2014), transformative leadership has been investigated to see how it affects work engagement and relates to other aspects of work engagement. However, the research has not tested the role of work engagement as a mediator between transformative leadership and individual preparedness to change. The mediating effect of organizational identity and the role of organizational justice on readiness for change have been explored simultaneously (e.g., Arneguy et al., 2018). There is, however, very little research on the direct link between organizational fairness and change readiness. Individual dimensions of organizational justice have been studied (e.g., Shah, 2011) to see how they affect individual readiness to change. Nevertheless, the second-order reflective-formative model used in these investigations does not employ organizational justice as a hierarchy component.

Research (e.g., Drzensky et al., 2012) suggests that highly identified personnel should be more open to change if they consider it helpful to the organization. According to the findings, there is a correlation between an organization's sense of self and its openness to change. As a result, human adaptability needs to be examined as an outcome variable rather than a mediator in organizations. According to Basar and Basim (2015), job happiness is linked to organizational identity. Numerous researches have found a link between job happiness and willingness to adapt (e.g., Pandey, 2017). Several studies have determined job satisfaction as a mediator between employee identification with an organization and readiness for change. Transformative leadership's impact on employees' willingness to adapt is explored in this research on the UAE construction industry. After Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) is the second-largest Arab country. Crude oil remained the primary focus of the economy, accounting for one-third of total output. Since different technological, economic, working, and social advances have occurred in the UAE, the construction sector has constantly been evolving. This study poses the following research questions

RQ1: Does transformational leadership significantly affect individual readiness to change?

RQ2: Do work engagement and organizational justice mediate the relationship between transformational leadership and individual readiness to change?

This study can guide future researchers and academics, highlighting the relevance of transformational leadership and other factors that haven't been highlighted in previous research. In addition, new avenues for academics and researchers in construction worker preparation for change are opened by analyzing the functions of work engagement, job engagement, and information management in a novel research design.

### **Research Objectives**

- Evaluate the relationship between transformational leadership and individual readiness to change
- Investigate if Work Engagement mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and individual readiness to change
- Determine the influence of Organizational justice between transformational leadership and individual readiness to change

### **Literature Review**

#### **Transformational Leadership**

Burns (1978) described transformational leadership as a leadership style in which leaders with clear motivations and goals organize resources to motivate, engage and fulfill their followers' motives. This management style happens when one or more employees in the workplace behave in such a way that their actions increase morale and morality among the leaders and the followers. Transformational leadership eventually becomes moral because it improves both the leaders' and leadership's human nature and ethical aspirations and thus affects both (Green, 2017).

Bass and Avolio (2000) brought together four dimensions of transformational leadership: (1) Idealized influence, which refers to certain leaders who influence the workers to obey them and serve as role models. (2) Authenticity refers to a leader's ability to connect with the people he or she is leading. Inspirational leadership is characterized by leaders who challenge their employees to think beyond the box to attain corporate and personal goals. (3) An example of an intellectually stimulating leader is one who encourages his or her employees to think outside the box and come up with new solutions to challenges. To (Gilmore et al., 2013), intellectual stimulation encourages employees to be more creative and ingenious. When managers pay close attention to their employees, they demonstrate personalized consideration (Dionne et al., 2004).

#### **Individual Readiness to Change**

Organizational change has long been viewed as an impediment because of people's reluctance to accept new ways of working (Dent & Goldberg, 1999; Jermier et al., 1994). On the other hand, scholars are beginning to question the ubiquitous belief in resistance and present a more complicated perspective of people's attitudes toward organizational change. According to some experts, the imposition of change or how change is imposed on people may be the root of people's reluctance to adapt (Fuegen & Brehm, 2004; Knowles, 2004). In this regard, people's adverse reactions to change are not intrinsically unstable hurdles or liabilities to meaningful progress. So instead of being a bad source of information on how to

implement change, they can be useful (Ford & Ford, 2008; Knowles, 2004; Piderit, 2000; Waddell & Sohal, 1998).

Ninety percent of the peer-reviewed studies on organizational change attitudes focused on either preparing for or resisting change, whether state-like or trait-like (Bouckenooghe, 2010). There are several ways to describe positive attitudes, including readiness for change, responsiveness, absorptive capacity, change assessments, innovation ambidexterity, and organizational commitment to change (Armenakis and Bedeian, 1999; Rafferty and Restubog, 2017). (Bouckenooghe, 2010). In addition, positive attitudes have been labeled as resistance to change, skepticism, intent to oppose change, and organizational inertia (Oreg et al., 2011; Dean Jr et al., 1998; Jones & Van de Ven, 2016).

A person's awareness of organizational change is compelling and significant. Bridges (2003) concluded that it is important to consider why change is necessary to plan for change. His work also addressed why a company replaces old routines and systems, whether workers can coexist during the adjustment process, which is full of challenges and uncertainties, and how they communicate with the new system. Many scholars have deduced that when people undergo organizational change, they are prepared to respond in some ways (Herold et al., 2007; Oreg et al., 2011; Vakola et al., 2013). For example, some workers support organizational change, seeing it as an opportunity to profit and advance their careers, while others are disturbed by it and prefer to hold to their old ways of working or see it as a challenge, forming negative attitudes toward it (Judge et al., 1999). Moreover, people who aren't confident in their abilities are less likely to succeed in reform efforts (Armenakis et al., 1993; Oreg et al., 2011; Vakola et al., 2013). Lau and Woodman (1995) linked internal control locus, which is the perception of an individual that he or she can control their environment and personal achievement, with increased openness to change and increased job satisfaction following organizational change (Nelson et al., 1995).

People are not passively affected by perplexity and ambiguity. The opposite is true; they are enraged by everything that transpires in the workplace (Tsirikas et al., 2012). Thus, employees' readiness to change is described as the degree to which employees believe in the benefits of a planned change initiative or the extent to which people are emotionally, psychologically or physically prepared to participate in organizational transformation efforts (Jones et al., 2005). Individuals and organizations must examine their ability to successfully execute change and the benefits that would result from such a change (Stevens, 2013). It refers to the process of changing employees' attitudes such that they see the change as necessary and likely to be effective, but this is a more specific definition: (Eby et al., 2000). According to Spreitzer (1995), the ability to manage change may be affected by leadership and can eventually prepare people to participate effectively in attempts at change. Personal benefit, managerial support, and individual faith in the effectiveness of change all contribute to employee readiness to change (Holt et al., 2007). Many assume that advancement cannot occur in a vacuum, although this isn't entirely accurate. To better grasp the proposed change, employees' self-efficacy (their conviction in their abilities to understand it) and personal valence were assessed (i.e., the belief of employees that the change will help them personally). Personal involvement in the change effort, communication, information diffusion, participation (Wanberg & Banas, 2000), and creativity are all linked to the ability of workers to adapt (Jundt et al., 2015; Rogers, 2003). Employer change preparedness has been shown to have a favorable impact on the performance of companies, as well as their financial and organizational outcomes (Lehman, 2002; Matthysen & Harris, 2018; Katsaros et al., 2014).

### **Transformational Leadership and Individual Readiness to Change**

Leaders can persuade others to change their behavior to attain a goal (Armstrong, 2016). According to Buchanan & Huczynski (2019), leaders influence the actions of an organized group to achieve specific goals. Transformative leaders have a significant impact on businesses, according to Grant (2012), who established the transformational leadership paradigm. Several studies have examined the effects of TL on employees, including creativity, commitment, and performance (Judge & Piccolo, 2004; Lowe et al., 1996). Their research findings also contributed to a better understanding of motivating and inspiring employees to be creative and innovative. TL manages the internal and external changes that employees must make to attain corporate goals. This type of leadership puts the interests of the company's employees, the organization, and society ahead of personal gain. This leadership style encourages people to work longer hours and produce more than expected (Bass & Avolio, 1996). Multicollinearity of its scales, lower than desired reliability under some circumstances for active management-by-exception, and questions regarding the universality of its component structure were some issues raised in (Bass, 1999).

Similarly, in Andriani et al (2018), the answers were interpreted using a descriptive manner. Researchers employ the descriptive analysis method to characterize the features of a population or phenomenon under investigation. It was found that just PLS-Sem software was used in Eliyana et al (2019); Buil et al (2019), and several other studies, and they did not conduct longitudinal studies. When you employ a long-term study method, it is easier to see how things have changed over time.

Organizational transformation efforts frequently fail because the organization cannot persuade its members to endorse and commit to the change (Armenakis et al., 1993). Anger, cynicism, and exhaustion are common reactions to the news of a change in an organization (Prochaska et al., 2001). Therefore, the emotional nature of the responses has been discussed as resistance, as if management-proposed changes (which are the vast majority) should be considered the sole, optimal response (Kiefer, 2002). As opposed to asking why people oppose a change, we should focus on the link between the individual and the change itself. What are the reasons why the individual would be on board with the project? Is the person ready to make a change? Since less than 20% of people in businesses are willing to implement new ideas, this subject is particularly relevant (Fox & Amichai-Hamburger, 2001). As a result, the following hypothesis is put forth:

*H1: There is a positive relationship between transformational leadership and individual readiness to change*

### **Theoretical Framework**

#### **Transformational Leadership Theory**

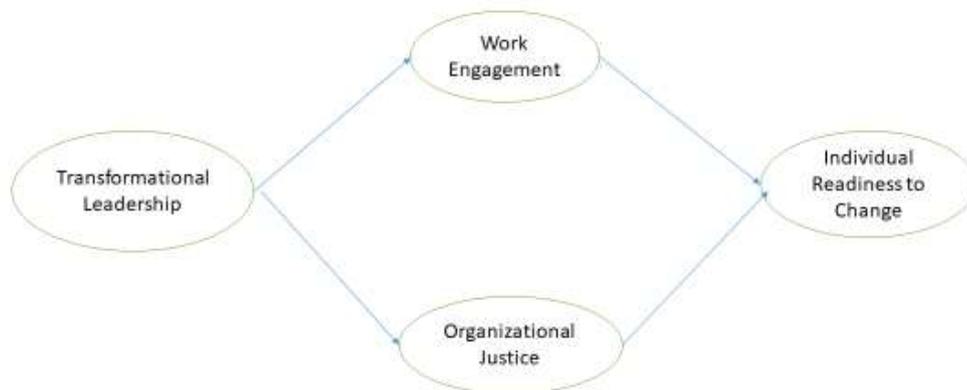
When leaders inspire their followers to take care of each other and act in the group's best interest, they practice transformational leadership (Warrilow, 2012). Burns (1978) established the concept of transformative leadership as part of his studies on political leaders. However, with Bass and Avolio's (1993) improvements, it is also widely used in organizational psychology and management. To motivate their team members and instill a sense of urgency, transformational leaders draw on the ideas and morals held by the people under their leadership (Farahnak et al., 2019). Workers are more concerned with the company's success than their own. Therefore, they may boost their incremental contributions if transformative leadership signals motivate them to go above and beyond their typical responsibilities.

The above discussion links the two constructs of this study's conceptual model to the transformational leadership theory. These constructs are transformational leadership (exogenous variable) and individual readiness to change (endogenous variable). The derivation of individual readiness to change from the transformational leadership theory is a significant theoretical contribution of this study. To immerse the trickle-down effect of transformational leadership into the methodology, five dimensions of transformational leadership, that is, intellectual stimulation, idealistic influence-attributed, idealistic influence-behavior, inspirational motivation, and individualized consideration as explained by Al-Farhan (2018), are added in the scale to measure and operationalize transformational leadership. For operationalization of individual readiness to change, four dimensions, namely appropriateness, management support, change efficacy, and personally beneficial, as explained by Holt et al (2007), are added to the scale. This results in a second-order measurement of the construct of individual readiness to change to help add the construct to the transformational leadership theory.

### **Fairness Heuristic Theory**

Researchers in this study used the fairness heuristic theory of Lind (2001) as a starting point for their findings. The impact of distributive and procedural justice as a second-order model on individuals ready to change has been shown in one study (Shah, 2011), but further research is needed to evaluate the impact of total justice on individual readiness to change. The fairness heuristic theory proposes that employees develop a long-term, stable sense of fairness in general and in the beginning. This perception of fairness is crucial because it affects how employees react to future occurrences and direct their behavior (Lind, 2001). Scholars of justice have made a similar argument, urging a further investigation of justice as a whole (Greenberg, 2001; Shapiro, 2001; Ambrose and Schminke, 2009). Unfortunately, there has been a dearth of research on the impact of overall justice on change (Rodell and Colquitt, 2009; Marzucco et al., 2014). For this reason, this study intends to investigate how overall justice affects an individual's willingness to change.

Employees use a cognitive shortcut or heuristic, referred to as a worldwide perception of fair treatment, according to the Fairness Heuristic Theory (FHT) (Lind and van den Bos, 2002). An overall sense of fairness in the workplace can help employees through workplace changes, according to FHT's conceptual framework. This justice perception is a central tenet of FHT. It allows individuals to decide whether or not to cooperate with organizational authorities because it helps them resolve a fundamental social dilemma. They either cooperate with the authorities at the risk of being exploited, or they do not and renounce any benefit that may arise from cooperation. During times of uncertainty, such as when an organization undergoes a significant shift, this challenge becomes even more acute (Lind, 2001; Lind and van den Bos, 2002). With little certainty of what lies ahead, workers must decide whether or not to cooperate. As a result, their reactions to the upcoming change will be guided mostly by their opinion of justice in general. Consequently, the fairness heuristic theory explains two key concepts in this research: organizational justice and individual readiness to change.



## Conceptual Model

### Work Engagement as Mediator

Kahn (1990) defines work engagement as a work attitude marked by vigor, passion, and absorption in one's work (Schaufeli et al., 2002). Dedication, on the other hand, is defined as a strong attachment to one's position at work, according to (Schaufeli and colleagues, 2002) (Schaufeli and colleagues, 2002). Finally, when someone is entirely involved in their work, they are said to be in absorption, which is also known as flow. Employees who approach their work positively are more motivated and happier. One of the strongest predictors of transformational leadership is an individual's level of personal commitment, according to research by Zhu et al. (2013). Followers are more likely to develop a staunch attachment to a company if it makes them feel they are contributing something to the firm (Sosik, 2006).

To better understand the leadership model required to positively influence the model of engagement, the researcher consulted the literature on the impact of leadership on engagement (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). It has been found that various leadership styles have a favorable impact on employee commitment. According to the findings of (Mitonga-Monga et al., 2016) and (Giallonardo et al., 2010), ethical leadership favors employee engagement. Furthermore, it is exhibited that the more inclusive the leadership, the more engaged the employees will be (Choi et al., 2015). Work engagement is linked to transformational leadership, according to studies (Aw & Ayoko, 2017; Bui et al., 2017; El Badawy & Bassiouny, 2014; Hawkes et al., 2017; Kovjanic et al., 2013; Schmitt et al., 2016; Tims et al., 2011; Wang et al., 2017). Other organizational benefits of transformational leadership include reduced turnover or a desire to quit, as well as an increase in associate contributions to the company (El Badawy & Bassiouny, 2014).

Involvement in the workplace is positively connected with transformational leadership skills. In addition, research shows that employment and happiness are linked (Babcoc-Roberson & Strickland, 2010; Buckman et al., 2012; Cenkci & Ozcelik, 2015; Figueroa-Gonzales, 2011; Lorente, et al., 2011; Zhu, Avolio, & Walumbwa, 2009). However, according to the research, there is not much of a link between workplace change and employee conditions. As a result, this leadership style is unsuitable for a situation where employee participation is essential. Furthermore, there were no cross-cultural

interferences in the findings of researchers like Amor et al (2019); Faupel et al (2018); Breevart et al (2018) who employed self-reported questionnaires.

Employee retention and performance can be improved by prolonged involvement in organizational change, according to (Bhola, 2010). To guarantee that the change process is successful before, during, and after the change has taken place, change agents must view work involvement as an intrinsic aspect of the change process (Bhola, 2010). According to Gallup's global workplace survey findings, employees actively engaged in their work are less likely to be fired by organizational changes (Gallup, 2013). For organizational transformation programs to succeed, more employees and managers must be involved (Gallup, 2013). Hence, we propose the following hypothesis:

*H2: Work Engagement mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and individual readiness to change*

### **Organizational Justice as Mediator**

Almost all employees are concerned about whether or not their efforts and awards align with their contributions to the company's mission and values of justice and fairness (Judge & Colquitt, 2004). According to McFarlin & Sweeney (1992); McFarlin & Sweeney (1992); Lemons & Jones (2001), a relationship between employees and supervisors emerges when there is perceived justice in the workplace. Studies show that people who work with transformative leaders feel more confident and capable of accomplishing their goals (Avolio, 1999; Walumbwa et al., 2004). Organizational justice and individual outcomes are linked to leadership (Pillai et al., 1999), but their study is in a western context, the USA. Transformation leaders allow their subordinates to express reasonable perspectives from their subordinates' perspectives. Leadership cannot be effective because leaders reject it if they don't focus on fairness as part of their leadership role (Pillai et al., 1999; Tyler & Blader, 2003). When assessing leadership, the findings of Greenberg (1990) suggest that fairness in the workplace is a critical factor. There has been an increase in opportunities to express their opinions to strengthen judgments of fairness of the subordinates (Pillai et al., 1999). Transformation leaders must treat subordinates fairly with individual considerations and dimensions of intellectual stimulation. Pillai and Williams (1996) found that transformative leadership influences proceeding justice rather than trust and job satisfaction (Pillai et al., 1999). McFarlin and Sweeney (1992) found positive links between transformational management and distributive and procedural justice.

This concept refers to how decisions are made as distributive justice (Adams, 1965; Leventhal, 1976). Inter-actional unfairness revolves around fairness when interacting with and obtaining information from one's boss (Bies & Moag, 1986; Greenberg, 1993). Organizational justice research has discovered a substantial connection between job outcomes and organizational citizen behavior, engagement, turnover intentions, and organizational reforms (e.g., Carr et al., 2010; van Dierendonck and Jacobs, 2012; Whitman et al., 2012). In addition, various psychological variables are positively associated with distributive and interactional fairness. Indicators include a sense of well-being, favorable outcomes, and a revelation of one's identity (e.g., Lam & Chen, 2012; Sabahi et al., 2010). Conversely, workplace stress, melancholy, and anxiety have been related to organizational justice (e.g., Kalimo et al., 2003; Spell and Arnold, 2007). Leadership and corporate citizenship conduct can be transformed through corporate justice as a mediator (e.g., Cho & Dansereau, 2010).

On Lewin's (1952) three-step model, the interaction between factors that push for change and those that resist it is what determines behavior. When all aspects are equal, the current state of affairs is nearly static. Behavior modification must first de-freeze before moving and then freezing again to be successful. Freezing is a critical first step in bringing about change in an organization. Change failures are believed to be widespread due to an insufficient freezing process prior to subsequent modifications. One's guilt or fear for survival, the reality of the current situation, and the establishment of psychological safety are all factors that might cause a person to freeze.

People will only respond to change if they think they have no choice but to accept their current situation. They need to know that ensuring the anticipated shift does not harm them. They will defend themselves by maintaining the status quo if a change is not made. In studies by Tran and Choi (2019); Alazmi et al (2020); Gillet et al (2019), causality and assumptions were established, but no longitudinal investigations were done (2013). Hence, they had a limited amount of candidates to select from. According to certain studies, organizational identity may positively influence other social interaction mechanisms. Focusing on the link between perceived organizational justice and employee satisfaction has been a critical tactic in recent years (Lipponen and colleagues, 2004). Justice in the workplace affects employee attitudes, feelings, behaviors, and their capacity to understand social circumstances (Cheung & Law, 2008). Researchers discovered a relationship between people's perceptions of corporate support and their sense of belonging to a group (Sluss et al., 2008). As a result, we propose the following hypotheses:

*H3: Organizational justice mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and individual readiness to change*

### **Methodology**

This study upholds the objectives of positivism: reliability of information obtained via measurement scale and quantifiable collected information. The researcher in this study ensured the information reliability by excluding all those responses either showing a straight-line pattern or where the answers to questions were self-contradictory. This study follows all the steps of the deductive approach delineated by (Shinder and Cross, 2008). In this study, the problem statement is formulated as the first step of the deduction process by looking into the extant literature to find theory, context, methodology, and practical problems. Next, data is collected via Google form to fulfill the requirements of positivist philosophy and minimize the researcher's interference in data collection. Then independent data analysis is performed with the help of statistical software, and the results are interpreted impartially. This study utilized quantitative methods: the data is collected using a rating on the Likert Scale to be statistically analyzed (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016) to establish a causal explanation inferred from the hypothesized model.

Since the cause-and-effect relationship between the independent and dependent variables is assessed, a causal-explanatory research design has been applied (Saunders et al., 2019; Sekaran & Bougie, 2016; Zikmund et al., 2013). The survey research method with cross-sectional data collection is adopted (Saunders et al., 2019).

The target audience comprises all current construction employees employed by construction companies in the United Arab Emirates to conduct this research. According to the Ministry of Human Resource and Emiratization and the UAE's official open data portal, approximately 64,362 construction enterprises were located throughout the seven emirates of the United

Arab Emirates in 2019 (see Table 1). The same source determined around 1,641,724 people working in the United Arab Emirates construction companies for 2019. (see Table 2). The total number of employees includes executives, managers, and non-managerial staff at various levels of responsibility. It is evident from Tables 3.1 and 3.2 that Dubai has the highest number of enterprises and the greatest number of people in the construction sector in the United Arab Emirates, with Abu Dhabi in second place.

Table 1  
*UAE Construction Companies (Emirate-Wise)- 2019*

Emirate	Number of Companies
Abu Dhabi	16,540
Dubai	23,226
Sharjah	10,560

Table 2  
*UAE Construction Sector Workers (Emirate-Wise)- 2019*

Emirate	Percentages	Number of Employees
Abu Dhabi	25.62%	420,654
Dubai	52.89%	868,433
Sharjah	11.42%	187,508
Ras Al-Khaimah	2.60%	42,808
Fujairah	1.71%	28,122
Ajman	4.93%	81,094
Umm Al Quwain	0.79%	13,105
Total	100%	1,641,724

Table 3 gives an approximation of the estimated population (1,641,724 approximate). Since it is not manageable given the time, resources, and confidentiality constraints to generate an exhaustive list of all construction workers' access details, a non-probability sampling method is used. Nevertheless, non-probability sampling is prevalent in studies, especially in market

analysis, where the research lacks a sample framework (Saunders et al., 2019). Therefore, a mix of quota and purposive sampling was used for this study, and the results were analyzed. Through quota sampling, it is ensured that representatives of all construction employees from across seven emirates participate in this investigation. While purposive sampling does guarantee the fulfillment of the sample unit's basic requirements, it also ensures that they are met. Table 3.3 shows the allocation of the total sample size to the seven emirates of UAE according to the respective percentages regarding the number of employees.

Table 3

*Quota Distribution of sample size in the Seven Emirates*

Emirate	Percentage	Number of Respondents
Abu Dhabi	25.62%	208
Dubai	52.89%	429
Sharjah	11.42%	93
Ras Al-Khaimah	2.60%	21
Fujairah	1.71%	14
Ajman	4.93%	40
Umm Al Quwain	0.79%	07
Total	100%	812

Kline (2016) uses sample size guidelines for exact sample size calculation, indicating that 5-10 subjects per item are required for structural equation modeling. The questionnaire for this study consisted of 85 items. Therefore, the final sample size is calculated by multiplying 85 items by 9 ( $85 \times 9 = 765$ ), reaching a final sample size of 765 respondents. Although in the final data collection stage, the total number of respondents crossed the threshold of 765 and bore 812.

**Measures**

The items used in the measurement scale are adopted and adapted. Twenty items for the five sub-dimensions of transformational leadership are adopted from the study of Al-Farhan (2018). Seventeen items for the three sub-dimensions of work engagement are adopted from the study of (Schaufeli et al., 2001). Sixteen questions for the three sub-dimensions of organizational justice are adopted from the studies of (Colquitt, 2001; Maela & Ashforth, 1992). Finally, twenty questions for the four sub-dimensions of individual readiness to change are adopted from the study of (Holt et al., 2007).

## Results and Discussion

Table 4 explains the demographic characteristics of the respondents. A close look into the frequency distribution pattern reveals the data set's genuineness. For example, of eight hundred and thirteen respondents, approximately seventy percent are married, and thirty percent are single. Almost forty-seven percent have either a bachelor's or master's degree. Eighty-one percent of respondents are between the ages of twenty-one and fifty. Sixty-five percent of those polled had worked in their current organization for nine to fourteen years, while twenty-four percent have only worked there for three to eight years. Almost every department of a construction-based company has a representation in the data set. Since Dubai has the largest proportion of construction companies in UAE, therefore almost forty-nine percent of respondents in the data set belong to Dubai

Table 4

### *Frequency Distribution of Demographic Variables*

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Marital Status</b>	Single	243	29.80
	Married	570	70.20
<b>Age</b>	21-30	189	23.25
	31-40	201	24.72
	41-50	269	33.08
	51-60	136	16.73
<b>Highest level of education:</b>	Above 60	18	2.21
	Diploma	234	28.78
	Bachelors	213	26.20
	Masters	169	20.78
	PhD	197	24.23
<b>Organizational Tenure</b>	3-8 Years	192	23.616
	9-14	295	36.28
	15-20	234	28.78
	21-26	92	11.31
<b>Department</b>	Admn & HR Contracts	36	4.428
	Admn.	61	7.50
	Finance	74	9.10
	IT	65	7.99
	Procurement	75	9.22
	Project Control	19	2.38
	Quality	77	9.47
	Stores	65	7.99
	Tender	69	8.49
	Resource	63	7.75
	Asset Management	99	12.18
	Engineering	94	11.56
<b>Designation</b>	HSE	16	1.97
	Non-Executive	445	54.73

	Executive	368	45.26
<b>Monthly Income (UAE Dirham)</b>	6,000 or below	115	14.14
	6,001-10,000	203	24.97
	10,001-14,000	198	24.35
	14,001-18000	162	19.93
	Above 18,000	135	16.60
<b>Company Location</b>	Abu Dhabi	169	20.79
	Sharjah	154	18.94
	Dubai	398	48.95
	Ajman	34	4.18
	Umm Al-Quwain	24	2.95
	Fujairah	14	1.72
	Ras Al Khaimah	20	2.46

The latent variables' multivariate skewness and kurtosis exhibit a high degree of skewness and kurtosis. Moreover, the null hypothesis that all the variables are not skewed and not kurtosis is rejected ( $p < 0.05$ ). The non-normality of the data set suggests that PLS-SEM is non-parametric; hence, the use of bootstrapping is justified in PLS-SEM. In table 5, the p values of skewness and kurtosis are less than 0.05. Therefore, the non-normality of the data is evident. Such non-normality has led the researcher to use PLS-SEM and employ bootstrapping procedures to achieve normality.

Table 5

*Mardia's Test of Multivariate Normality*

Mardia's multivariate skewness and kurtosis

<b>b</b>	<b>z</b>	<b>p-value</b>	
Skewness	129.3227	17523.2238	0.000
Kurtosis	793.8659	142.5952	0.000

**Common Method Bias (CMB)**

Since the data were gathered using a self-report survey questionnaire, CMB might infiltrate the data (Jordan & Troth, 2020). Therefore, a complete collinearity test was conducted to rule out the potential of CMB (Kock, 2015). The model's latent variables were all regressed on a random variable. All variables had a variance inflated factor (VIF) smaller than 3.3 (Hair et al., 2022), showing that CMB did not affect the data. The VIF values are acquired by executing the PLS algorithm in the measurement model and checking the inner variance inflation factor (VIF) values for all of the model's constructs.

**First-order Measurement Model**

Analysis of measurement models was conducted after demographic data were analyzed. PLS-SEM begins with an examination of the first-order measurement model. It necessitates the evaluation of internal factor reliability, internal consistency, convergent validity, and discriminant validity.

Outer loading is used to assess the structural integrity of the components. When the sample size exceeds 200, the outer loading of all manifest variables on their respective variables should be above 0.5 (Hair et al., 2010). Composite Reliability (CR) is used to assess the reliability of all model reflective constructs. Average variance is extracted to evaluate the

convergent validity of all model reflective constructs (AVE). CR must be at least 0.7, and AVE must be at least 0.5 to be considered above the threshold (Hair et al., 2017). In all cases, the values of CR and AVE are within the acceptable ranges for the outer loadings.

Table 6

*Outer Loadings, Composite Reliability and Average Variance Extracted*

Construct	Item Code	Outer Loading	Composite Reliability	Average variance Extracted
Appropriateness (AP)	AP1	0.778	0.794	0.636
	AP2	0.787		
	AP3	0.832		
	AP5	0.772		
	AP6	0.731		
Change Efficacy (CE)	CE1	0.716	0.710	0.556
	CE4	0.772		
	CE5	0.713		
Distributive Justice (DJ)	DJ2	0.643	0.711	0.537
	DJ3	0.873		
	DJ4	0.659		
Informational Justice (IJ)	IJ1	0.720	0.859	0.649
	IJ2	0.778		
	IJ3	0.795		
	IJ4	0.722		
	IJ5	0.684		
Management Support (MS)	MS1	0.841	0.814	0.594
	MS4	0.790		
	MS5	0.775		
Personally Beneficial (PB)	PB1	0.787	0.759	0.508
	PB2	0.671		
	PB3	0.394		
Procedural Justice (PJ)	PJ1	0.459	0.814	0.533
	PJ2	0.797		
	PJ3	0.782		
	PJ5	0.822		
Individualized Consideration (TLIC)	TLIC1	0.794	0.763	0.518
	TLIC3	0.798		
	TLIC4	0.535		
Idealistic Influence (Attributed) (TLIA)	TLIA 3	0.124	0.786	0.556
	TLIA1	0.842		
	TLIA2	0.803		
	TLIB 2	0.705		
Idealistic Influence (Behavior) (TLIB)	TLIB 2	0.705	0.708	0.581
	TLIB 3	0.618		
	TLIB 4	0.624		

		TLIB 5	0.505		
		TLIM1	0.779	0.816	0.598
		TLIM3	0.696		
		TLIM4	0.839		
Intellectual Stimulation (TLIS)		TLIS 2	0.282		
		TLIS 3	0.593		
		TLIS 4	0.849		
Absorption (WEAB)		WEAB1	0.758	0.839	0.568
		WEAB3	0.831		
		WEAB4	0.651		
		WEAB5	0.764		
Dedication (WEDE)		WEDE1	0.845	0.706	0.655
		WEDE2	0.590		
		WEDE3	0.552		
Vigor (VE)		WEVE1	0.580	0.676	0.523
		WEVE2	0.397		
		WEVE3	0.455		
		WEVE4	0.742		

There is discriminant validity if the HTMT ratio is smaller than 0.85. (Henseler et al., 2015). First-order reflective constructs in the model are all within the 0.85 criterion for discriminant validity in Table 7.

Table 7  
HTMT Ratios

	AP	CE	DJ	IJ	MS	PB	PJ	TLI A	TLI B	TLI C	TLI M	TLI S	WE AB	WE DE
	0.7													
CE	57													
	0.6	0.7												
DJ	31	86												
	0.1	0.5	0.6											
IJ	98	16	34											
	0.3	0.5	0.8	0.8										
JS	43	45	54	02										
	0.2	0.4	0.4	0.7										
MS	46	36	20	58										
	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.4	0.5									
OID	93	88	68	17	23									
	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.6									
PB	04	25	19	65	87									
	0.3	0.4	0.6	0.7	0.8	0.7								
PJ	29	32	26	96	58	17								
TLI	0.4	0.4	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.8	0.7							
A	24	60	77	77	87	64	62							
	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.7	0.6	0.5	0.7	0.4						
TLIB	76	82	12	89	73	04	87	69						

	0.5	0.9	0.5	0.7	0.2	0.5	0.7	0.9	0.7					
TLIC	03	28	19	19	96	06	77	22	80					
TLI	0.4	0.6	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8			
M	06	25	64	67	11	93	25	06	24	24				
	0.4	0.5	0.3	0.5	0.3	0.8	0.6	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.7			
TLIS	84	66	12	93	53	45	98	29	83	08	40			
WE	0.3	0.5	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.4		
AB	75	11	30	01	30	18	62	62	14	12	99	61		
WE	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.5	0.6	0.7	0.8	0.9	0.5	0.7	0.7	
DE	29	42	59	38	24	58	77	49	19	09	81	13	08	
WE	0.8	0.5	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.8	0.6	0.6
VE	57	4	0	85	41	21	98	26	16	17	16	31	42	88

**Second-Order Measurement Model**

A global item is used in redundancy analysis to check the convergent validity of second-order formative constructs. Scale development was used to create the global item for each second-order formative construct. Analytical results show that the first-order reflectively measured construct correlates more with the global item construction than 0.7. (Hair et al., 2017). Consequently, convergent validity has been established.

Table 8  
*Convergent Validity*

Path Relationship	Path Coefficient
IRC -> IRC_G	0.736
TL -> TL_G	0.717
WE -> WE_G	0.777
OJ -> OJ-G	0.718

First-order reflecting constructs indicate second-order formative constructs in a new path model created using latent variable scores. It is determined that all VIF values are within the predetermined threshold of 3.3 after PLS is applied to the data set (Ramayah et al., 2018). Table 9 lists the second-order formative constructions' collinearity diagnostics.

Table 9  
*Collinearity Diagnostics*

Constructs	VIF Values
AP	1.682
CE	1.486
DJ	1.348
IJ	2.442
MS	1.128
PB	1.340
PJ	2.348
TLIA	1.862
TLIB	2.773
TLIC	1.657

TLIM	1.800
TLIS	2.200
WEAB	3.213
WEDE	2.578
WEVE	1.713

The third step in the measurement model of formative constructs is checking the significance and relevance of outer weights via bootstrapping procedure and two-tail testing. Again, the outer weights were significant, as indicated by a p-value less than 0.05 (Hair et al., 2017).

Table 10

*Outer Weights Significance*

Indicators -> Constructs	Original Sample	Standard Deviation	T Statistics	P Values
AP -> IRC	0.149	0.052	2.865	0.035
CE -> IRC	0.182	0.080	2.264	0.012
DJ -> OJ	0.310	0.034	9.120	0.000
IJ -> OJ	0.124	0.060	2.070	0.019
MS -> IRC	0.580	0.050	11.618	0.000
PB -> IRC	0.614	0.066	9.364	0.000
PJ -> OJ	0.717	0.044	16.378	0.000
TLIA <- TL	0.259	0.009	27.938	0.000
TLIB <- TL	0.175	0.012	14.984	0.000
TLIC <- TL	0.274	0.012	23.371	0.000
TLIM <- TL	0.385	0.020	19.308	0.000
TLIS <- TL	0.174	0.011	15.237	0.000
WEAB -> WE	0.500	0.097	5.138	0.000
WEDE -> WE	0.436	0.093	4.700	0.000
WEVE -> WE	0.172	0.042	4.082	0.000

**Structural Model Assessment**

VIF values are used to determine the degree of collinearity. A value of VIF less than 5.0 is considered abnormal (Hair et al., 2016). Thus, demonstrating that there is no correlation between concepts. VIF values in the inner VIF are examined for collinearity checks. There are two sorts of structural relationships in this study's structural model. One type is direct, and the other is indirect or mediating effects. One direct effect hypothesis and two indirect effect hypotheses are listed in Table 11. There is no evidence to support three hypotheses at a 0.05 significance level, while the data support the others. Structural relationships are tested using one-tail testing because all hypotheses are directed.

Table 11

*Assessment of Structural Relationships*

	Original Sample	Standard Deviation	T Statistics	P Values	Decision
<b>Direct Effect</b>					
H1:TL -> IRC	0.235	0.065	3.598	0.000	Supported
<b>Specific Indirect Effects</b>					
H2: TL -> WE -> IRC	0.348	0.066	5.249	0.000	Supported
H3:TL -> OJ -> IRC	0.326	0.11	2.973	0.001	Supported

The coefficient of determination (R<sup>2</sup>) is the most often used metric for evaluating the structural model. The coefficient represents the sum of the external latent variables' effects on the endogenous latent variable. Exogenous and endogenous constructs work together to explain the variance in the endogenous constructs. There is a wide range of R<sup>2</sup> values, from zero to one. As a general rule, 0.75 is substantial, 0.50 is moderate, and 0.25 is poor in academic research (Chin, 1998; Henseler et al., 2009; Hair et al., 2012). Endogenous variables' R<sup>2</sup> values are shown in Table 12 (below). The majority of R<sup>2</sup> values fall within the range of moderate to significant. As a result, the model's in-sample predictive power has been demonstrated.

Table 12

*Assessment of R<sup>2</sup>*

	R Square	R Square Adjusted
IRC	0.516	0.513
OJ	0.581	0.581
WE	0.446	0.445

The model's R<sup>2</sup> value can be tweaked to account for its absence to see if an exogenous construct affects the endogenous ones. The two effect size is the name given to this metric. Cohen (1988) recommends that an impact size of 0.02 to 0.15 is deemed small, 0.15 to 0.35 is medium, and 0.35 or above is considered a large effect size, according to this criteria.

Table 13

*Effect Size f<sup>2</sup>*

	IRC	OJ	WE
OJ	0.079		
TL	0.037	0.387	0.804
WE	0.181		

Besides R<sup>2</sup> values, researchers typically use the cross-validated redundancy measure Q<sup>2</sup> (Stone – Geisser test) to examine the predictive validity of the exogenous latent variables, which may be computed using the blindfold approach. This metric shows how well a model can predict the future. In order to determine the Q<sup>2</sup> value, we must apply the blindfolding

technique to an omission distance  $D$  that we specify. The use of blindfolding is a sample reuse approach in which the endogenous construct's indicators are omitted, and the parameters are estimated using only those data points that remain (Chin, 1998; Henseler et al., 2009; Tenenhaus et al., 2005).

Table 14  
*Predictive Relevance  $Q^2$*

	SSO	SSE	$Q^2 (=1-SSE/SSO)$
IRC	3252	2623.257	0.193
OJ	2439	1376.512	0.436
WE	2439	1651.605	0.323

### Discussion

This study aimed to examine the influence of transformational leadership on the preparedness of UAE construction workers to change. This study determines a statistically significant relationship between transformational leadership and individual preparedness to change. Transformational leadership has impacted a group's willingness to change (e.g., Al-Tahitah et al., 2018; Groves, 2016). However, their focus is on the organization's preparedness to change or the magnitude of the organization's transformation. A review paper establishing the link between transformational leadership and readiness for change was noted above, but it still needs quantitative evidence.

According to the study's second major finding, work engagement has a statistically significant mediation function between transformational leadership and individual openness to change. As a first step, the researcher in this study uses existing literature (e.g., Ghadi et al., 2013) to establish the effect of transformational leadership on work engagement before seeking proof in the literature of the connection between work engagement and individual readiness to change (e.g., Matthysen & Harris, 2018). However, statistical inference in the study by Ghadi et al (2013) was based on co-variance-based SEM. In their study of structural links, Matthysen and Harris (2018) used work engagement as an exogenous variable instead of relying on AMOS. As a result of the conceptual model's formative constructs, this study relied on PLS-SEM as a statistical tool to bridge the gap between transformational leadership and individuals' readiness to change. Since job engagement serves as a mediator in the interaction between transformational leadership and individual preparedness to change, this study is unique. The study's final and most important finding is that the importance of organizational fairness moderates the relationship between transformational leadership and people's willingness to change. The literature shows that transformational leadership positively impacts organizational justice (e.g., Armagan & Erzen, 2015). According to other studies, organizational justice has influenced people's willingness to change (e.g., Arneguy et al., 2018). There has been a meta-analysis of quantitative studies on this topic by (Armagan and Erzen, 2017). An indirect link between organizational justice and readiness for change is established in the study of Arneguy et al (2018) via perceived organizational support and identity mediators.

### Conclusion

Transformative leadership, work engagement, and organizational justice are second-order constructs that this study explains and tests for statistical significance. Ghadi et al (2013) and Rianto & Basbeth (2021) have examined the impact of transformative leadership on employee

engagement using first-order reflective modeling. Since transformative leadership and work engagement are second-order reflective formative types, the theoretical contribution of this study is impending.

According to Zaman and colleagues, 2020, the role of readiness to change as a mediator rather than as an independent variable is evident in prior studies (e.g., Zaman and colleagues, 2020; Effiyanti and colleagues, 2021; Radian & Mangundjaya, 2019; Absari et al., 2021). In addition, many studies focus on how well people do at work or how committed they are to their job. Since the dependent variable was individual readiness to change, this study's contribution is significant. For the third time, research has focused on managing organizational change rather than the preparedness of individuals to change (e.g., Al-Qura'an, 2015; Al-sawalhah, 2015; Alqatawenh, 2018). As a result, this research makes a significant theoretical addition by examining willingness to change from a micro viewpoint, i.e., from the individual's perspective. According to Muafi et al (2019), individuals ready to change will engage in strategic behavior to help the firm achieve its objectives.

Primarily, the mediating effects described in this study constitute a major theoretical advance. Few studies have examined the link between transformational leadership characteristics and an individual's willingness to adapt (e.g., Al-Tahitah, 2018). Even if transformative leadership and readiness to change are linked, such studies do not include intervening factors. This model has two mediating effects, both of which are substantial. Transformational leadership and individual readiness to change are intertwined in the hypothesized model, but work engagement and organizational justice are mediating factors. This study's statistical significance and theoretical significance as mediator paths demonstrate the importance of these interdependent relationships in the hypothesized model. As a result, the transformational leadership paradigm is extended to include employees' individual readiness for change. Finally, this study will benefit change management theories that have been scientifically tested and proven.

### **Limitations and Future Research**

The theoretical and empirical limitations of this work are discussed here. Some potential study directions have been suggested as a result of the conversations. There are two ways to look at this: First, the individual's willingness to adapt, work engagement, and job happiness all change over time (Bhattacharjee & Premkumar, 2004). If the constructs and their correlations are constant across time, then future research should use them in longitudinal studies. Secondly, this study's research approach does not consider the influence of different leadership styles on an individual's willingness to adapt. The other leadership styles have not been examined; therefore, their potential impact on readiness to change remains undetermined. As a result, future studies should look at how willing people are to adapt to different leadership styles.

To round out the sample, the researchers used purposive and quota sampling to choose people currently employed in the UAE construction business. Retired or former employees are not included in this study. Finding out what this set of people thinks about the impact of transformational leadership on change readiness is worth doing. This research also takes place in the United Arab Emirates, where the construction industry is enormous. As a result, it is ambiguous whether the study's primary conclusions apply to other industries. Hence, more investigation into the validity of these results is highly recommended. Lastly, comparing the responses of different groups of respondents is an avenue for further exploration. This thesis focused on a small group of persons from the United Arab Emirates who were not

representative of a wide range of cultural backgrounds. Both MGA and FIMIX-PLS segmentation sample sizes were too small, resulting in a lack of statistical power for the analysis. Future research can address this issue by obtaining a bigger sample size and doing a comparative analysis of diverse groups of respondents from various ethnic backgrounds. PLS-Predict is an improved PLS technique that can be used to improve the prediction capacity of the research model created in this study.

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