The mediating effect of job satisfaction between inclusive leadership and commitment to change: evidence from Brazil and Spain

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Abstract

Purpose – In the current context of change, leadership is significant in developing employees' commitment to change. In this work, the authors analysed the relationship between inclusive leadership and commitment to change and the mediating effect of job satisfaction between inclusive leadership and commitment to change.

Design/methodology/approach – Through a questionnaire, 256 employees from Brazil and Spain were interviewed. The hypotheses were tested through structural equations.

Findings – The results indicated that inclusive leadership is related to individuals' commitment to change and that job satisfaction mediates the relationship between leadership and commitment to change.

Originality/value – This research contributes to the literature on organisational change behaviour and the relationship between two critical contents – leadership and commitment to change – and points out the role of job satisfaction in this relationship. In addition, this work incorporates the variable country culture into the analysis model; however, it is not found to be statistically significant.

Keywords Inclusive leadership, Change commitment, Job satisfaction, Brazil, Spain

Paper type Research paper

1. Introduction

In the global economy, change has become necessary for an organisation to prosper (Carter *et al.*, 2013). In organisations, managers propose the change, but employees implement it. Therefore, the attitude of employees is critical to the success of the change (Lamm and Gordon, 2010). Thus, employees' commitment to change – which represents a psychological alignment with or an attachment to change that goes beyond reflecting a favourable situation or simple acceptance of the change (Herold *et al.*, 2008) – is the key to making change and represents a

permanent strategy of searching for new opportunities. For this reason, organisations aim to stimulate employee commitment to change. In this sense, Oreg *et al.* (2011) pointed out that how employees perceive the change situation is critical to successful change development. Therefore, given their influential position, the literature has paid particular attention to organisational leaders and how they can guide followers towards attitudes and behaviours that support change initiatives (Bormann and Rowold, 2016). However, it would remain to analyse the style of leadership most linked to the change (Heine *et al.*, 2023). In other words, what qualities of an effective leader are positively related to the commitment to change, and how are the employees' attitudes related to leadership and change (Bommer *et al.*, 2005).

Going deeper into the above challenge, researchers have pointed out that a relational leadership style called *inclusive leadership* is associated with the successful promotion of change in organisations (Javed *et al.*, 2019). According to Younas *et al.* (2021), in the presence of inclusive leadership, employees are treated uniquely and their access to decision making is ensured, facilitating their specific contribution to change. In addition, this type of leadership encourages inclusion, inviting employees to participate more actively in organisational change (Katsaros, 2022).

Continuing with the importance of employee attitudes in accepting organisational change, it has been pointed out that job satisfaction is positively related to commitment to change (Yousef, 2000). As highlighted by Shah *et al.* (2017), if employees have positive feelings towards the job during the organisation of the change, they will accept the organisational change. In this sense, Solinger *et al.* (2021) indicated that job satisfaction is critical in the development of an environment that facilitates employees' commitment to change. Job satisfaction is connected to employees' well-being, which affects their behaviour (Wright *et al.*, 2007). Satisfied employees feel safe in their organisation and are willing to take on challenges. In addition, satisfied employees have more expectations of the organisation, leading to a more significant commitment to change development. Furthermore, leadership is related to job satisfaction. Implicit leadership theories (Epitropaki and Martin, 2005) assume a relationship between leadership and job satisfaction, organisational commitment and well-being. In addition, the most appropriate leadership behaviours oriented towards people management are supporting, developing, recognising and empowering employees (Yukl, 2012).

Therefore, inclusive leadership and job satisfaction are related to commitment to change and inclusive leadership is related to job satisfaction, leading us to consider the relationships between these three constructs. Thus, this work has two research objectives. The first objective is to analyse the relationship between inclusive leadership and employees' commitment to change. The second is to analyse the mediating effect of job satisfaction between inclusive leadership and commitment to change.

The literature has proposed that maintaining successful change depends directly on the employees (Armenakis and Bedeian, 1999). This work contributes to the literature on organisational change and the relationship between a group-integrating leadership style, such as inclusive leadership, in supporting employees during change and the role of job satisfaction in involvement in change. In addition, country culture is considered as a control variable, allowing the expansion of this research's scope. Thus, this paper considers commitment to change as a dependent variable, inclusive leadership as an independent variable, job satisfaction as a mediating variable and country culture as a control variable. Therefore, the participants in this study are 256 employees from Brazil and Spain (131 from Brazil and 125 from Spain). According to "Global leadership and organizational behaviour effectiveness" (Javidan *et al.*, 2015), these two countries represent Latin American and Latin European clusters, respectively.

2. Theoretical approach and development of the hypotheses

2.1 Attitude towards change and commitment to change

Dunham *et al.* (1989) asserted that one's attitude towards change is composed of an affective component (feelings), a cognitive component (thoughts) and a behavioural component. Individuals' attitudes towards organisational change are critical for the successful implementation of change (Oreg *et al.*, 2011) because organisations adopt long-term changes through their members. Attitudes towards change can be positive or negative and can be described, respectively, as readiness for change and resistance to change (Bouckenooghe, 2010). Positive attitudes towards change have been defined and operationalised using constructs such as acceptance of change, openness to change, change readiness and affective commitment to change (Albrecht *et al.*, 2020). Commitment to change symbolises an individual's acceptance of and psychological alignment with or attachment to change (Choi, 2011). Herscovitch and Meyer (2002) defined commitment to change as "a mindset that binds an individual to a course of action deemed necessary for the successful implementation of a change initiative" (p. 475).

2.1.1 Inclusive leadership and commitment to change. Formal leadership has evolved to support the collaborative improvement of organisations (McCauley and Palus, 2021), which allows them to face the challenges of change in the current globalised economy and with constant technological innovation. Specifically, inclusive leadership, as "leaders who exhibit visibility, accessibility, and availability in their interactions with followers" (Carmeli *et al.*, 2010, p. 250), plays an essential role in ensuring that differences do not generate conflict and that adverse outcomes are mitigated through positive relationships and the valuing of diverse identities (Sugiyama *et al.*, 2016), which contributes to the development of change.

Inclusive leaders guarantee employees access to the decision-making process and are available to answer queries that can resolve change-oriented problems (Carmeli *et al.*, 2010). As a result, inclusive leaders create a good working environment (Hollander, 2012) in which their employees' opinions are genuinely valued. This situation encourages employees to engage in change-oriented behaviours (Choi, 2007).

The literature has pointed out other characteristics of inclusive leadership that contribute to change. For example, this leadership style influences the equity experience of employees and drives the activities necessary to establish perceptions of inclusion (Chrobot-Mason *et al.*, 2016). In addition, when making decisions, the inclusive leader listens to ideas, respects opinions and helps employees solve problems (Choi *et al.*, 2017). Furthermore, inclusive leaders take full responsibility for results, especially in failure, encouraging employees to initiate change without fearing negative consequences (Javed *et al.*, 2019). Fatima *et al.* (2021) and Younas *et al.* (2021) found that inclusive leadership positively affects change behaviour. Therefore, we proposed the following hypothesis:

H1. Inclusive leadership is positively related to employees' commitment to change.

2.2 The mediating effect of job satisfaction

Job satisfaction is associated with the feelings and emotions that employees experience in relation to their roles in an organisation and is an important psychological indicator of the quality of their professional life. A widely accepted definition of job satisfaction in the academic literature is the "pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experience" (Locke, 1976, p. 1300).

Inclusive leaders provide employees with emotional support, thereby gaining their trust (Nembhard and Edmondson, 2006). This is associated with the development of job satisfaction (Doerwald *et al.*, 2021). Bin and China (2019) found that inclusive leaders could positively influence employee work attitudes and behaviours, thus positively affecting job satisfaction. In addition, some traits that identify an inclusive leader, such as supporting

people as members of the group and fairness (Randel *et al.*, 2018), are positively related to job satisfaction (Jiang *et al.*, 2020).

The relationship between job satisfaction and organisational change has been analysed in different studies. Gonzalez *et al.* (2022) examined the attitudes of individuals – as related to, for example, job satisfaction – during organisational change and found that those attitudes are associated with change, especially in terms of risk tolerance. Wanberg and Banas (2000) determined that lower levels of change acceptance are linked with less job satisfaction. Chiaburu *et al.* (2022) indicated that job satisfaction is a driver of change-oriented citizenship behaviours but to a lesser extent than affect.

Based on the above, job satisfaction behaves as a mediating variable between leadership and change. The reason for considering job satisfaction as a mediating variable is that, although inclusive leadership involves the behaviour of employees towards the achievement of goals, job satisfaction is considered a broad relationship between the individual and the company, in which the individual values whether the environment satisfies their needs (Lofquist and Dawis, 1991), which would indicate that inclusive leadership would affect organisational results to the extent that the individual positively values their link in the business environment. Furthermore, job satisfaction could moderate the ambiguous situation that change could generate for employees between maintaining the status quo and facing a changing situation and, therefore, heading towards the unknown (Yousef, 2002).

In addition, various studies have found that job satisfaction moderates other variables, including employee attitudes. For example, Wirawan *et al.* (2020) noted that the impact of psychological capital on job engagement is partially mediated by job satisfaction. Nguyen and Tran (2022) found that job satisfaction is a mediating mechanism in the relationship between procedural justice and citizen behaviour at the individual level. In regard to leadership and commitment to change, Yang (2011) reported that job satisfaction plays a mediating and moderating role that could improve the relationship between leadership and commitment to change. Therefore, we formulated the following hypothesis:

H2. Job satisfaction moderates the relationship between inclusive leadership and employees' commitment to change.

2.3 Control variables

Some scholars have pointed out that national culture determines leadership style (Gerstner and Day, 1997). As Lee *et al.* (2014) stated, current meta-analytic research on culture and leadership indicates that national culture and cultural orientations are essential in understanding employees' leadership perceptions and leadership outcomes. Therefore, the country of the employees was proposed as a control variable that, as research has indicated, affects commitment to change (Newman and Scheikh, 2012) and job satisfaction (Nazarian *et al.*, 2022).

We selected two Latin countries: Brazil, from the American cluster, and Spain, from the European cluster (House *et al.*, 2004). The two countries have similarities in terms of the perception of leaders; however, there are some significant differences. Thus, the traits that most identify the leader in Brazil are "team oriented" and "charismatic", and the least-weighted characteristic is "autonomous". The traits that most identify the leader in Spain are also "team oriented" and "charismatic", and the least-weighted characteristic is "self-protective". The research model is shown in Figure 1.

3. Method

3.1 Data collection and participants

The research team recruited an incidental sample of employees from companies in Brazil and Spain. The sample (256 employees) was diverse in terms of demographic characteristics (see Table 1).
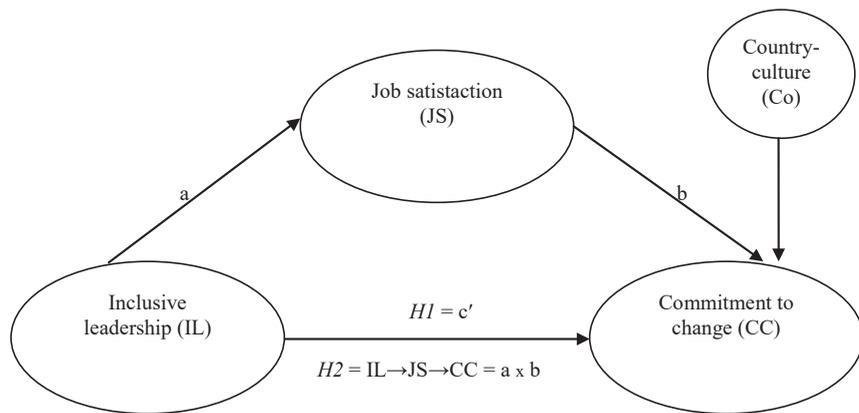
Source(s): Authors' own

Variables	Sample N	Sample %
Country		
Brazil	131	51.2
Spain	125	48.8
Firm Sector		
Industry	72	28.1
Services	184	71.9
Firm Size		
Micro and Small (less than or equal to 99 employees)	115	44.9
Medium and Large (over 99 employees)	141	55.1
Sex		
Men	102	39.8
Women	154	60.2
Job category		
Manager	62	24.2
Middle manager	83	32.4
Employee	111	43.4
N	256	100

Source(s): Original table – created by authors of this article from data

As shown in Table 1, 51.2% of the employees were from Brazil and 48.8% were from Spain. Just over 28% (28.1%) of the employees were from the industrial sector, and 71.9% belonged to the services sector. In regard to firm size, 44.9% worked at a micro or small company (fewer than 99 employees) and 55.1% worked at a company with more than 99 employees. Just under half of the sample employees (39.1%) were male and 60.2% were female. Regarding their job category, 24.2% had a managerial position, 32.4% were middle managers and 43.4% were employees. The mean age of the participants was 36.82 years. They had, on average, spent 7.84 years at the organisation where they currently worked, and the average length of their work experience was 14.88 years.

3.2 Measurement scales

To formulate each of the constructs, we analysed the literature. The items had a scale that ranged from 1 to 7 (Kunin, 1955), where 1 represents a minor agreement with the sentence and 7 is the most significant agreement with it.

Commitment to change is a force that binds an individual to a course of action that allows the successful implementation of a change initiative. The mental effect of this course of action means that the employee assumes the costs associated with the change and desires to provide support because they believe in the inherent benefits of the change (Herscovitch and Meyer, 2002). In this study, commitment to change was measured with four items: (1) whether the respondent analyses situations before addressing a change, (2) whether they examine the possible consequences of actions they have taken, (3) whether they receive training related to the processes of change and (4) how they cope with change. These four items address the three components of commitment that have been described in the literature (Meyer and Allen, 1991): (1) affective commitment (desire to stay), (2) continuity commitment (perceived cost of leaving) and (3) normative commitment (perceived obligation to stay).

The second construct addressed job satisfaction. Researchers have measured job satisfaction using different theoretical approaches. Some studies have analysed satisfaction with a single item (Ghetta et al., 2020), although most have evaluated it with several items (Judge et al., 1998). For this reason, there is no consensus when considering the most appropriate number of items to use to measure job satisfaction. In this study, we used four items that address different facets of satisfaction in organisations (Smith et al., 1969): (1) the work environment, (2) coworkers, (3) the supervisor and (4) organisational satisfaction.

Randel et al. (2018, p. 195) described four behaviours that characterise inclusive leadership: (1) supporting individuals as group members, (2) ensuring justice and equity within the group, (3) promoting individuals' diverse contributions to the group and (4) helping individuals to make a full contribution to the work of the group based on their unique perspectives and abilities.

3.3 Data analyses

We tested the research model with a partial least squares structural equation model (PLS path modelling), using the third version of the SMARTPLS technique (Ringle et al., 2015). Researchers have put forward critical arguments for using the PLS-SEM method (Rigdon, 2016); among other circumstances, the use of PLS has been advocated for complex models and with small samples.

4. Results

4.1 Results of the measurement model

We estimated our model in Mode A using correlation weights (Table 2; Rigdon, 2016). The type of indicator that we used is a manifestation of constructs in which each indicator reflects the essence of the construct that it is intended to define (Diamantopoulos and Siguaw, 2006). Following an analysis of this type of model, the measures of internal consistency, reliability and validity for all the elements involved in the model are determined (Henseler et al., 2016). In our case, the load for all the indicators was more significant than 0.7, so these indicators were conserved in the model (Hair et al., 2012, Table 2).

Furthermore, all the components achieved a composite reliability greater than 0.7 (Table 2), and therefore these variables achieved satisfactory construct reliability (Chin, 1998). The average variance extracted was then applied to assess the convergent validity (Henseler et al., 2009). All the compounds met this criterion because their average variance extracted exceeded the level of 0.5 (Table 2).

Finally, we analysed the discriminant validity (Table 3). This validity was evaluated through two criteria: (1) the Fornell and Larcker (1981) criterion and (2) the

Construct/Dimension	Loading	α cronbach	CR	AVE
Commitment to change		0.797	0.868	0.623
Coping with changes	0.719			
Analysis of change consequence	0.799			
Analysis of change situation	0.833			
Training for change	0.796			
Inclusive leadership		0.919	0.943	0.805
Supporting individuals as group members	0.893			
Ensuring justice and equity within the group	0.898			
Promoting individuals' diverse contributions to the group	0.899			
Helping individuals fully provide their perspectives, and abilities to group work	0.899			
Job satisfaction		0.793	0.866	0.620
Environment	0.718			
Colleagues	0.713			
Managers	0.829			
Company	0.877			

Note(s): CR: Composite Reliability; AVE: Average Variance Extracted. Convergent validity
Source(s): Original table – created by authors of this article from data

Table 2.
Measurement model
results

	Fornell-larcker Criterion					Heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT)			
	CC	Co	IL	JS		CC	Co	IL	JS
CC	0.789				CC				
Co	0.080	1.000			Co	0.106			
IL	0.442	0.000	0.897		IL	0.514	0.060		
JS	0.461	−0.077	0.782	0.787	JS	0.579	0.099	0.890	

Note(s): CC: Commitment for change, Co: Country-culture, IL: Inclusive leadership, JS: Job satisfaction. Discriminant validity
Source(s): Original table – created by authors of this article from data

Table 3.
Measurement model

heterotrait–monotrait relationship, with the criterion of 0.9 (Henseler *et al.*, 2015). All the variables attained discriminant validity.

4.2 Structural model analysis
To determine the statistical significance of the coefficient paths, we used the bootstrapping technique with 5,000 subsamples (Hair *et al.*, 2011). Table 4 shows the main parameters obtained from the three study models related to the structural evaluation. Model 1 presents the total effect of inclusive leadership on commitment to change, which was shown to be significant ($c = 0.447^{***}$). Model 2 shows how the effect of inclusive leadership on commitment to change became less significant when job satisfaction intervened ($c' = 0.194^{**}$). Routes a and b were significant. Therefore, both the apparent decrease in the direct effect that ceased to be significant (c') and the importance of the regression coefficients of a and b indicated the potential indirect effect of inclusive leadership on commitment to change, with job satisfaction as a mediator (Hypothesis 2). The critical condition for determining the mediating effect, however, was to prove the result of a × b (Hayes, 2009).

To examine the previous proposal, we obtained the value of the indirect effect ($a \times b = 0.248^{***}$) using Smart PLS, and it proved to be significant (see Table 5). Hypothesis 2 was therefore confirmed. Innovation culture partially mediated the relationship between

Relationships	Model 1	Model 2	Support
		$R^2 JS = 0.612$	
	$R^2 CC = 0.206$	$R^2 CC = 0.240$	
H1: IL→JS	c = 0.447*** (9.070) [0.372; 0.535]	c′ = 0.194** (2.235) [0.050; 0.332]	Yes
IL→JS = a		0.782*** (33.330) [0.745; 0.822]	
JS→CC = b		0.317*** (3.292) [0.167; 0.480]	
Control variable			
Co	0.078 (1.330) [-0.018; 0.174]	0.104 (1.797) [-0.010; 0.216]	

Note(s): IL: Inclusive leadership; JS: Job satisfaction; CC: Commitment for change, Co: Country-culture, (based on t(4,999), one-tailed test) t(0.05; 4,999) = 1.645; t(0.01, 4,999) = 2.327; t(0.001, 4,999) = 3.092; (based on t(4,999), two-tailed test); t(0.05, 4,999) = 1.960, t(0.01, 4,999) = 2.577; t(0.001, 4,999) = 3.292. *$p < 0.05$; **$p < 0.01$; ***$p < 0.001$
Source(s): Original table – created by authors of this article from data

collaborative climate and innovation capacity because the direct effect had lower significance (Hypothesis 1 = c′) and the indirect effect (Hypothesis 2 = a × b) was significant (Hayes and Scharkow, 2013).

We also calculated the variance accounted for (Hair *et al.*, 2014), which determined the size of the indirect effect (a × b) in relation to the total effect (c). When the variance accounted for is greater than 20% (in the present case, the variance accounted for was 56.2%; see Table 5), there is said to be partial mediation (Hair *et al.*, 2014). Furthermore, the control variable relationships were not significant (0.078; see Table 4).

5. Discussion

This work had two objectives: (1) to analyse the relationship between inclusive leadership and employee commitment to change and (2) to analyse the mediating effect of job satisfaction between inclusive leadership and commitment to change. Regarding the first objective, based on the causal attribution mechanism (Weiner, 1986), it has been argued that employees' behaviour and attitude towards their leaders result from their attributions regarding the perceived causes of their leaders' behaviour (Younas *et al.*, 2021), so, in this study, we analysed the relationships between inclusive leadership and employees' attitude towards change. Attitude towards change is a multifaceted concept that captures feelings, cognitions and intentions concerning the change (Elizur and Guttman, 1976). The construct of "commitment to change" (Herscovitch and Meyer, 2002) has been studied because this could have a significant relationship with inclusive leadership. Research has highlighted the importance of leaders' commitment to organisational change (Stouten *et al.*, 2018); however, the mechanism through which leaders commit to change has not always been described (Heine *et al.*, 2023). The present study has shown that inclusive leadership relates positively to commitment to change. This proves that the characteristics that identify this leadership style, such as openness, accessibility, support and availability (Carmeli *et al.*, 2010), encourage followers to change.

Concerning the second objective, to determine the mediating effect of job satisfaction between inclusive leadership and commitment to change, the data indicate a partial moderation effect. This would mean that leaders would need employees to have a high level of job satisfaction to encourage their involvement in change. In addition to the influence of leadership, an employee's commitment to change requires a positive attitude towards work. In other words, leadership supports organisational changes, but feeling satisfied with one's job is a reasonable condition to empower oneself and dedicate more energy to change. This inference can be explained because the level of employees' satisfaction depends on the treatment that they receive from their organisation (positive or negative leadership) and to which they

Total effect on CC (model 1)				Direct effect on CC (model 2)					Indirect effect on CC (model 2)					
		BCCI					BCCI					BCCI			
Path	t	Lower	Upper		Path	t	Lower	Upper		Point estimate	t	Lower	Upper	Sig	VAF
IL (c) 0.447***	9.070	0.379	0.524	H1: IL (c')	0.194**	2.239	0.048	0.333	H2: (via JS)	0.248***	3.218	0.379	0.130	Yes	56.2%

Note(s): IL: Inclusive leadership; JS: Job satisfaction; CC: Commitment for change; Co: Country-culture, BCCI: Bias corrected confidence interval. Bootstrapping, (based on $n = 5,000$ subsamples). VAF: Variance accounted for, (based on t(4,999), one-tailed test) t(0.05; 4,999) = 1.645; t(0.01, 4,999) = 2.327; t(0.001, 4,999) = 3.092; (based on t(4,999), two-tailed test); t(0.01, 4,999) = 1.960, t(0.01, 4,999) = 2.577; t(0.001, 4,999) = 3.292. *$p < 0.05$, **$p < 0.05$; **$p < 0.01$; ***$p < 0.001$

Source(s): Original table – created by authors of this article from data

Table 5.
Summary of mediating
effect tests

correspond accordingly (Islam *et al.*, 2022). These results are consistent with those of Xiu *et al.* (2022), who found that teachers' job satisfaction mediated the relationship between distributed leadership and involvement in change. Job satisfaction is a general attitude towards work that indirectly affects more specific attitudes, such as commitment to change.

The "country culture" control variable, which identifies national culture, was not significant for either commitment to change or job satisfaction. This could mean that specific leader attributes have the same significance in two cultures that share similar identities despite belonging to different clusters (Javidan *et al.*, 2015). Moreover, as has been found in other work comparing leadership types (Liang *et al.*, 2021), there may be culturally implicit perceptions of leaders' behaviour, such as respectability or charisma, that remain constant across cultures.

5.1 Theoretical implications

In line with other works (Hinduan *et al.*, 2009), this study investigated whether leadership is associated with employees' commitment to change. As stated in the hypotheses, this inclusive leadership was positively related to employees' commitment to change. Thus, this work advances the notion of the social identity of leadership (Hogg, 2001), which considers leadership as a group process in which the leader's influence is exerted through depersonalised processes of social attraction that make followers subscribe to the leader. In addition, it delves into the essence of the Relational Leadership Theory (RLT) (Uhl-Bien, 2006), which points out that leadership is a social process of influence towards change.

Job satisfaction mediates the influence between leadership and commitment to change. This situation is consistent with role ambiguity (Rizzo *et al.*, 1970), which describes an individual's need for clarification about the direction of their actions and expectations related to their work. Somehow, job satisfaction helps to assume certain risks associated with change and supports the leader's influence on employees' commitment to change.

5.2 Practical implications

The success of change in organisations mainly depends on their employees because organisations only announce the change; the implementation is carried out by the employees (Shah *et al.*, 2017). Thus, for a change to be implemented successfully, in addition to informing or monitoring its employees, an organisation needs to encourage its employees to design the proposed change to fit in with their preferences and daily work (Demerouti *et al.*, 2020). The data from this research show that an inclusive leadership, characterised by the inclusion of the person in the group, is related to the commitment to change of employees. Therefore, organisations installed in the difference should commit to including people in the group. In other words, manage diversity. Diversity management starts with recruitment and continues with training and development. It is about having teams with a vast repertoire of skills and experiences and with a greater awareness of the importance of linguistic and cultural richness.

Furthermore, organisational change is a double-edged sword; it is necessary for organisational viability (Day *et al.*, 2017) but sometimes has a negative impact on the workforce and is met with resistance (Oreg, 2006). Because of this, it is common for planned organisational change to prove unsuccessful (Werkman, 2009). Therefore, as part of ensuring that the circumstances are favourable to a proposed change, it is recommended that managers implement a change only when they have established that the employees are effectively or normatively committed to that change (Al-Shamali *et al.*, 2021).

5.3 Limitations and future lines of research

Some limitations of this work should be noted. First, in terms of internal validity, this study avoids systematic errors of the common method, particularly errors inserted by the context of

the measurement. It was found that the respondents did not, despite all the procedures and efforts to minimise and control them, for example, by trying to eliminate obvious overlap of items on measurement scales (Podsakoff and Organ, 1986). Second, perceptual data were used because leaders' influence ultimately rests on what subordinates perceive their leaders to be doing or to be like (Bandura, 1989), even if such perceptions do not always match reality. Nevertheless, future research could investigate the relationship between leadership behaviours and the drive for change, using data from multiple sources. Third, the data were taken from individuals of two nationalities through a questionnaire that showed good reliability and validity. However, statements about the generalisability of the results should await studies with different samples and samples from other cultures. In addition, the country culture variable could be analysed as a moderator variable to analyse for changes in effects between leadership and commitment to change. To identify causality fully, a definitive study could sample new employees and track their attitude towards change. Because this investigation tested a limited number of hypotheses, it could be helpful to delve deeper into critical aspects of leadership (Robinson and Kerr, 2009) that show positive and negative aspects of different leadership styles. Fourth, the constructs were measured at a particular point in time. It could be helpful to apply the suggested model longitudinally to consider the dynamics of employees' perception.

6. Conclusion

Organisational members' acceptance of and support for change are considered essential for planned organisational change (Herold *et al.*, 2007). Given this importance, in this study, we analysed the most appropriate leadership style for developing employees' commitment to change. The traits that identify this type of leadership, as critical aspects of a leader's ethical behaviour, such as supporting individuals and groups, stimulating justice and equality, promoting diversity and supporting people individually within a group, are vital in generating a positive attitude towards change without omitting the development of job satisfaction.

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