



## The Impact of Transformational Leadership Communication on Personal Leadership of Administrative Staff in Higher Education: A Case Study

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### ABSTRACT

**Purpose** - The aim of this study is to investigate how communication styles of transformational leaders affect the personal leadership of administrative employees.

**Aim** - The paper aims to identify aspects of transformational leader communication that enhance personal leadership among administrative employees in higher education.

**Methodology** - Research data was collected by a survey. The study sample consists of administrative staff from state University operating in Lithuania (N=115). Statistical data analysis, including the chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) test, Student's t-test, ANOVA, Smirnov-Kolmogorov test, Shapiro-Wilk test, and Spearman correlation ( $r$ ) was conducted using SPSS Statistics 20.

**Findings** - The study findings indicate that communication characteristic of transformational leadership promotes personal leadership, loyalty, job satisfaction, and positively impact organizational climate. Some aspects of transformational leadership differ by demographic factors such as gender, age and position

**Limitations of the study** - The study acknowledges certain limitations, including the subjective nature of survey responses and the focus on a single organization's administrative staff, which may limit the generalizability of the results.

**Originality/value** - This study is among the few exploring the impact of transformational leader communication on administrative employees' personal leadership, particularly within the context of Lithuanian organizations, and by analyzing demographic differences in this regard. It provides new insights into the importance of transformational leadership and its practical benefits in organizations. The research outcomes can assist organizational leaders in understanding how their communication can influence employees' personal leadership qualities. This understanding may lead to practical outcomes such as improved organizational structure, enhanced teamwork, and increased productivity.

### KEY WORDS

transformational leadership, leader communication, personal leadership, administrative employees, organizational structure, teamwork, work efficiency.

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

In today's dynamic global environment, organizations require effective communicative leaders who can understand challenges and swiftly adapt to changes. Leaders directly shape an organization's direction, enhance its ability to adapt, and influence employee productivity. Supporting this perspective, Judge and Piccolo's meta-analysis in 2004 examined the impact of transformational and transactional leadership styles on employee outcomes and organizational effectiveness across various industries and contexts. Their study established that transformational leadership positively affects employee satisfaction, personal expression, motivation, and performance.

Alongside the influence of leaders on organizational success, personal employee leadership is gaining increasing importance. This encompasses individual capabilities to take responsibility, self-direct, achieve results, and initiate change. These qualities are crucial for organizational growth and adaptation to

constantly changing conditions. Effective leader communication involves continuous information sharing, motivational speeches, organizing individual discussions with employees, emphasizing institutional values, goals, and changes during communication, and promoting collaboration. Leaders whose management practices promote personal leadership empower employees to recognize their value within the organization, thereby enhancing motivation and job satisfaction. Thus, communication between leaders and employees becomes a key factor in creating an effective culture of personal leadership within an organization.

Studies on leadership communication and its effects have confirmed various ways how communication can impact personal employee expression, tackle emerging communication challenges, and promote personal employee leadership. Avolio and Gardner (2005) extensively examined how leader communication impacts personal employee leadership, revealing that inadequate, unclear, or inappropriate communication methods can lead to conflicts or worsen interpersonal communication, negatively impacting work outcomes and personal employee expression. Friedrich et al. (2009) explored further aspects of collective leadership and communication among involved individuals, finding that leader communication with the team can either promote or inhibit collective leadership and collaboration. Effectively communicating leaders was found to influence personal employee expression within the organization and to enhance work outcomes as a result. Scholars highlighted how an appropriate communication style can promote the integration of various individual and collective attributes, contributing to beneficial team functioning.

More recent scientific literature frequently emphasizes the importance of organizational leaders not only communicating effectively with their teams, but also leveraging their communication skills to cultivate and nurture the personal leadership of their employees. Breevaart et al. (2015) revealed in their study that the transformational leadership style and its associated leader communication encourage task performance and initiative-taking among employees. Similarly, Shafi et al. (2020) examined the impact of transformational leadership on employee creativity and motivation. Their study demonstrated that leaders practicing transformational leadership had a positive influence on employees' ability to innovate within the organization. The research indicated that transformational leadership may be utilized as a strategic tool to promote employee creativity and personal leadership. Further insights into the impact of leader communication on employee personal leadership are provided by Zhang and Bednall (2018). Their study broadened the perspective by exploring how leaders who incorporate humor into their communication can help employees reveal their leadership qualities and take initiative. The research demonstrated that an informal and inclusive communication style by leaders significantly impacts employees' perceptions of their roles within the organization and their ability to assume leadership.

Effective leader communication becomes a crucial factor in achieving successful organizational change and competitive advantage (Mansaray, 2019). The effectiveness and innovativeness of organizations often depend on the personal leadership expression of employees. In this context, leader communication serves as a significant tool that fosters the development of employees' personal leadership.

Based on these studies, it can be argued that leaders who actively use communication as a tool to encourage employee initiative, creativity, and emotional engagement may enhance organizational efficiency and foster employees' personal leadership. Despite the wealth of studies conducted globally, there remains a significant gap in research exploring the relationship between leadership styles and communication within the realm of public higher education, particularly in the context of administrative roles. The administrative field is distinct due to its unique organizational structure, hierarchy, and communication subtleties. By scrutinizing leadership communication within this specific context, we can identify key factors that influence the personal leadership styles of administrative employees. Furthermore, there is also a gap in research conducted within the context of Lithuania. Židonis and Andriuškevičienė (2019) have examined effects of transformational leadership on employee empowerment and innovative managerial approach within vocational training centers revealing innovation in organization structure is not necessarily linked to modern managerial behavior and its expected benefits on employees. Though conceptually related to our study, this paper addresses innovations and their effects on organizational change rather than evaluates existing managerial and communicational practices.

The paper aims to better understand how communication by transformational leaders affects their staff personal leadership. The study employs a quantitative method, allowing for a detailed evaluation of the

relationships between leader communication and personal leadership in the context of administrative work. The findings and conclusions of this study could be highly beneficial for administration leaders and personnel in several ways. Firstly, by highlighting the strong correlation between effective communication and employee satisfaction, the study provides evidence that improving communication strategies can lead to enhanced job satisfaction and overall employee engagement. Leaders can use these insights to refine their communication practices, ensuring they are not only clear and effective but also inspirational and supportive.

Furthermore, the study underscores the importance of transformational leadership attributes such as Inspirational Motivation, Idealized Influence, Intellectual Stimulation, and Individualized Consideration. By adopting these traits, leaders can foster a more motivating and supportive work environment, which is crucial for promoting employees' personal leadership and development. For instance, leaders who actively engage in Intellectual Stimulation can encourage innovation and creative problem-solving among their teams, while those practicing Individualized Consideration can better support the personal and professional growth of their employees.

The study employed a quantitative survey, conducted via questionnaires distributed to administrative staff of one of the state universities in Lithuania. This approach was designed to explore employees' perceptions of personal leadership and to determine the impact of transformational leadership communication on the development of their leadership abilities.

Statistical data analysis was conducted using SPSS Statistics 20. Descriptive statistics assessed variable distribution with absolute frequencies (N) and percentages (%). Mean and standard deviation computations described quantitative variables. Cross-tabulation tables examined variable relationships, evaluated using the chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) test. Student's t-test compared means of independent samples, and ANOVA analyzed more than two sample means. Normality was tested using Smirnov-Kolmogorov and Shapiro-Wilk tests. Spearman correlation (r) evaluated ordinal or binomial variable strength. Statistical significance was set at  $p < 0.05$ , revealing significant links between supervisor communication styles, employee job satisfaction, personal leadership expression, and the organizational work climate within the selected organization.

The article consists of an introduction, a theoretical part encompassing an overview of leader communication, transformational leadership, and its impact on personal leadership, followed by the presentation of research results and conclusions.

## 2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

### 2.1 THE ROLE OF LEADER COMMUNICATION IN ORGANIZATIONS

According to Mações and Román-Portas (2022), communication in organizations is still a subject of significant academic and practical attention. Organizations often face challenges related to the lack of employees' personal leadership, as they are not precisely familiar with effective leader communication, its channels, and skills at individual, team, and organizational levels. Effective communication is a vital element that can have long-term consequences for organizational climate and collaboration (Rizvi & Popli, 2021).

As highlighted by Nirmala (2021), leadership communication is a process through which a leader, as a communicator, engages with the organization's employees. Poor or ineffective communication and leadership styles that do not meet employees' needs can worsen organizational management and work outcomes (Kalogiannidis, 2020). Prayogi and Lesmana (2021) further explored this concept, revealing that leaders who communicate effectively and use leadership methods that combine instruction with motivation for collaborative problem-solving foster an effective work environment, leading to proper organizational management and strong work outcomes. Understanding the role of language in the context of leadership has been insufficiently developed so far, leading to increasing challenges in organizations related to work efficiency, employee motivation, loyalty, job satisfaction, and conflict resolution. Structurality is important for organizational communication, where agreement is closely related to responsibilities and delegated authority. A significant characteristic of organizational communication is

the obligatory compliance with rules or standards on which organizational communication is based (Saputra, 2021).

The workplace is where various individuals gather to satisfy their own and organizational needs. Social diversity can pose communication challenges that disrupt work productivity and efficiency. At the communication level, these challenges can lead to conflicts, misunderstandings, cynicism, disrespect, diminish trust, and create an unfavorable work atmosphere. Effective communication, often unnoticed or underestimated, is a crucial action that helps address these challenges. Increasing employee diversity has brought new standards of better leadership. Today's leaders face the challenge of creating an environment where diverse employees can lead, collaborate, learn, and inspire each other. Empowering diverse employees requires nurturing "new type" leaders – leaders who are inclusive, communicative, flexible, conscious, attentive, and capable of fostering long-term trust-based relationships (Adams et al., 2020).

Competent and qualified communicators take responsibility for creating communication messages in the organization, and their impact in various contexts, including media, interpersonal, intercultural, professional, and public domains (Abdikarimova, 2021).

According to Rizvi and Popli (2021), leadership is a collaborative communication process between a leader and an employee, where leader dialogues are crucial as they open new possibilities. Effective communication assists leaders in achieving interpersonal and organizational goals by building rapport, and guiding and training employees, from motivation to feedback. Scientific literature emphasizes the importance of specific (individual) conversations, where attention is given to communicating with employees in a way that goes beyond mere directives or commands. It is important to highlight that leaders influence employees' thoughts, feelings, creativity, and actions, and simultaneously impact organizational processes and profit, especially in business organizations. This leadership influence was further analyzed in detail in the study by Zeb et al. (2020), whose results showed that sharing knowledge and influencing employee thinking, behavior, and creativity are roles of a leader in ensuring a positive organizational climate. When leaders create an environment where team members feel psychological safety and mutual trust, they willingly share knowledge with colleagues, strive for common goals, and improve their work outcomes.

In summary, effective communication is an essential tool for leaders to influence employees and create a positive organizational climate. Scientific literature emphasizes that communication is multifaceted, encompassing both individual and group relationship aspects, and plays a crucial role in organizational activities. Elements of the communication process include information transmission, personal disclosure, expression of desires and preferences, and demonstrating rapport with the listener. It is also emphasized that the success of the communication process depends not only on the sender but also on the recipient's perception and interpretation.

## 2.2 TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND ITS IMPACT ON PERSONAL LEADERSHIP

Transformational leaders encourage, inspire, and motivate their employees (Bass, 1999). Transformational leadership is often applied in situations where an organization needs revitalization, major changes are underway, or a new direction is necessary. Moreover, transformational leaders encourage followers to pursue their goals independently and initiate changes. While logical processes are not ignored, it is emphasized that emotions and values are also important parts of the leadership process. A transformational leader strives to improve organizational performance and to create a unifying mission and vision for the organization. Moreover, they seek to encourage personal development and leadership of their employees. By creating a compelling vision that prioritizes collective interests over personal ones, such leaders demonstrate and motivate by example (Greimel et al., 2023).

Transformational leadership is associated with effective change management and with benefits for employees and organizations. Research has shown its positive effects on employee well-being, strengthening their motivation, self-esteem, and desire to grow. Feeling valued, employees see themselves as part of the organization and willingly contribute to achieving organizational goals (Ausat et al., 2024). According to Sürücü et al. (2022), the positive impact of transformational leadership on job outcomes is mediated by employees' self-efficacy, thus linking this style with personal leadership.

Characteristic communication of transformational leaders aims to change and improve the organization or team by inspiring and motivating them. This leadership style is highly inspiring, sensitive,

often involving emotional connections, and guided by a shared vision that fosters communication. When organizing work processes, positive psychology practices are often applied, emphasizing employees' strengths, motivational speeches, values, goals, and active concern for employees (Cinnioğlu, 2020). Transformational leaders use their communication skills to build rapport with employees, motivate and educate them, and effectively share ideas and decisions, thereby leading their teams to success. Within the context of this study, transformational leadership oriented towards relationships and change is examined. Such leadership behavior emphasizes aspects of employee well-being and collaboration, adaptation to change, and organizational innovations, which are particularly critical in modern organizations. Effective communication helps to establish and maintain harmonious relationships with employees, motivate them for work, and strengthen their personal leadership. This is particularly crucial during periods of continuous change, crises, and challenges to maintain organizational competitiveness and employee job satisfaction.

Organizations striving to remain competitive face numerous challenges related to economics, technology, law, society, and the environment, characterized by complexity, uncertainty, and volatility. Employees play a crucial role, as they are expected to demonstrate personal leadership competencies in implementing changes or processes beyond fulfilling their daily tasks. In this context, active behavior, flexibility, and continuous improvement are grounded in personal initiative (Glombik & Walters, 2020). Researchers define personal leadership as a form of initiative existing between active engagement, behavioral changes, and interaction with environmental dynamics. Characteristics of personal leadership include autonomy in pursuing personal goals, initiative (the ability to anticipate problems and opportunities to change the environment by initiating changes), and perseverance in overcoming obstacles. These qualities are beneficial to organizations when aligned with their goals, mission, and values. Individuals using personal initiative act as modifiers of their environment. Personal leadership is defined as the leader's action based on personal values, feelings, and beliefs. In the case of employees, it is a process through which they control their behavior themselves. These skills are developed in three stages: psychological (emotional), competence, and assessment (reward). All of them are strongly related to leadership communication.

Recommended methods for developing personal leadership include specific feedback practices that allow for a comprehensive and objective view of leadership, individually oriented coaching focused on personal improvement, action learning, job rotation, networking, and mentoring (Men, 2014). These provide opportunities to effectively develop new skills and to reflect on them by building relationships and sharing knowledge with others. Psychological and emotional aspects are also important. It is noted that feelings of joy, happiness, excitement, love, attachment, and warmth can satisfy employees' psychological needs for mutual respect, care, relationship, and interdependence in organizations and strengthen employees' feelings of trust and commitment to the organization (Rizvi & Popli, 2021). According to Frémeaux and Pavageau (2022), one of the most important factors in promoting personal leadership is the sense of meaningful work. Transformational leadership communication can strengthen a sense of meaningful work as it emphasizes spiritual qualities such as belonging, fairness, attention, conscience, and empathy. Values, mission, vision, and their relationship with employee identity also strengthen meaningfulness. Another way to promote employees' personal leadership is to apply the concept of symmetrical communication about ethical worldview, which organizations adopt when communicating with their stakeholders. This worldview emphasizes openness, responsiveness, mutual understanding, mutual adaptation, interdependence, and balance of interests and power. The main motive for applying the symmetrical model is to negotiate, adjust, and encourage ideas and behavior to be respected and accepted by all participating parties. It opposes manipulative, one-way, top-down, and is considered the most ethical and effective communication system (Yue, 2021) which fosters personal leadership and engagement of employees. A leader who actively shares knowledge and encourages employees' skills development fosters their personal leadership and simultaneously creates an environment promoting collective learning. Such a leader becomes a catalyst, promoting knowledge exchange among different groups of employees and the source of knowledge for their employees. Commitment to organizational learning makes the organization more dynamic. Employees feel safe to make mistakes and learn from them and perceive their efforts are being noticed and appreciated. This is the most effective way to develop and nurture personal leaders (Yeboah, 2023).

Encouragement, support, and attention of managers to fostering personal employee leadership are also important for the success of the organization, as it encourages and supports the best achievements. Finally, work motivation, influenced by organizational culture and work environment, is a critical factor. A favorable environment that values collaboration, recognition, and participation foster high employee motivation, which is directly related to better organizational outcomes. Multiple studies have confirmed benefits of positive and transformational leadership for employee well-being, work engagement and results. The study by Adams et al. (2020), conducted in Germany, Iceland, Indonesia, the Netherlands, and South Africa, revealed that positive effects of an authentic, inclusive, and respectful leadership approach were largely consistent across different countries and cultures. However, limited research has focused on the perception, let alone the effects, of transformational leadership among a diverse workforce. Some papers suggest that demographic studies may be crucial not only for scientific understanding but also for practical implications and the successful application of these leadership models. Limited research from recent years have evidenced demographic disparities in the perception and outcomes of transformational leadership: a study by Kim & Cruz (2022) found that the transformational leadership of coaches has significantly greater positive effects on female players satisfaction and commitment than on their male counterparts. Emery (2022) examined chief enrollment management officers at state universities in the USA focusing on the relationship between demographic and work-life factors and their impact on job satisfaction, morale, and retention in the context of transformational leadership. The study revealed that female officers reported higher levels of job satisfaction, morale, and loyalty, but also faced discrimination, which led to lower salaries and slower careers.

Based on these findings it is evident that sociodemographic factors may impact transformational leadership dynamics and outcomes. Therefore, we hypothesize the following:

H1: Sociodemographic characteristics, including gender, age, tenure, and position, significantly impact how employees perceive their transformational leaders.

### 3 EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

#### 3.1 METHODOLOGY

The study sought to explore how employees describe their supervisors and assess the prevalence of transformational leadership within the organization.

To test H1, a quantitative approach was employed through an online survey. This method allowed the study to assess the impact of transformational leadership communication on personal leadership among administrative staff. The survey was distributed at one of the state universities in Lithuania using snowball sampling, which was chosen for its effectiveness in reaching administrative staff members through their networks when direct access to a complete list was unavailable. While snowball sampling provided valuable insights into social networks and work dynamics, its reach was somewhat limited.

The statistical analysis of the data from the questionnaires was expected to reveal the following:

- Employees' attitudes towards their organization management's leadership style.
- The relationship between the manager's communication with employees and the prevailing leadership style.
- The relationship between the leader's communication, employees' job satisfaction, and employees' personal leadership.
- The impact of sociodemographic characteristics, such as gender, age, tenure, and position on perceptions of leader communication, employee job satisfaction, and personal leadership.

The selected organization employs a total of 1,537 individuals, including 1,000 academic staff and 537 administrative staff. The research was conducted between February 12 and April 28, 2024. Out of the 537 administrative staff, 115 responses were collected, resulting in a response rate of 21.42%. The final sample, though representing a small portion of the total administrative staff, included randomly selected employees from various departments or divisions, with a focus on those involved in management and operational efficiency processes. The sociodemographic characteristics of the respondents are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Sociodemographic Characteristics of Participants in the Study

	Characteristic	N	%
Gender	Male	66	57
	Female	49	43
Age	18-35 years old	30	26
	35-55 years old	30	26
	55-65 years old	35	30
	Over 65 years old	20	17
Tenure	Up to 6 months	12	10
	6 months - 1 year	14	12
	1-5 years	28	24
	5-10 years	30	26
	Over 10 years	31	27
Position	Administrative leaders	14	12
	Administrative staff	80	70
	Operational staff	21	18
Total		115	100

source: compiled by the authors

To compare the research results by positions and to assess the relationships of the research results with positions, administrative and operational employees were merged into a non-managerial employee category. Leaders who did not meet the basic attributes of transformational leadership were excluded from the main analysis. To compare the research results by positions and to assess the relationships of the research results with positions, administrative and operational employees were merged into a non-managerial employee category. Leaders who did not meet the basic attributes of transformational leadership were excluded from the main analysis. These key attributes include Inspirational Motivation, where leaders inspire and motivate their followers to strive for ambitious goals while fostering a sense of optimism and shared vision. Additionally, Idealized Influence is critical, as leaders must serve as ethical role models, earning the trust and respect of their teams through integrity and strong values. Intellectual Stimulation requires leaders to encourage innovation and critical thinking, challenging followers to question traditional approaches and pursue creative solutions. Finally, Individualized Consideration involves leaders focusing on the unique needs of each team member, providing support and guidance for their personal and professional development. By excluding leaders who did not demonstrate these essential transformational leadership traits, the analysis could focus on those who were truly aligned with this leadership model.

Spearman's rank correlation coefficient ( $\rho$ ) was employed to evaluate the monotonic relationships between variables in our study. This coefficient helps determine how different aspects of leadership communication correlate with employee commitment, job satisfaction, and other factors. A high correlation coefficient (e.g.,  $\rho = 0.802$ ) indicates a strong relationship; for example, a strong positive correlation between effective leader communication and employee satisfaction suggests that improved communication is generally linked to greater employee satisfaction. T-Tests and ANOVA tests compared the means of two groups (e.g., gender differences), while ANOVA assessed differences across three or more groups (e.g., age groups). The p-values obtained from these tests indicate whether observed differences are statistically significant. For example, a significant p-value ( $p = 0.003$ ) for job satisfaction between leaders and non-leaders suggests that leaders typically report higher job satisfaction compared to non-leaders.

## 3.2 RESULTS

### 3.2.1 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Descriptive statistics, including absolute frequencies (N) and percentage frequencies (%), were employed to assess the distribution of the analyzed variables within the sample. Means and standard deviations were computed to describe variables on a quantitative scale. Tables were constructed to examine relationships among variables. The chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) test was used to determine the dependency between

categorical variables, and the equality of proportions was assessed using the z-test. The independent samples t-test was applied to compare the means of two independent samples that conformed to a normal distribution, while ANOVA was used for comparing means across three or more independent samples. Normality of variable distributions was assessed using the Smirnov-Kolmogorov and Shapiro-Wilk tests. The strength of relationships between ordinal and/or binomial variables was evaluated using the Spearman correlation coefficient ( $r$ ). Correlation strength was categorized as follows:  $0 < |r| \leq 0.3$  indicates a weak correlation;  $0.3 < |r| \leq 0.7$  indicates a moderate correlation; and  $0.7 < |r| \leq 1$  indicates a strong correlation. A positive correlation coefficient signifies that as one variable increases, the other also increases, whereas a negative correlation coefficient indicates that as one variable increases, the other decreases. A significance level of  $p < 0.05$  was used to determine statistical significance for differences between the groups.

### 3.2.2 ESTABLISHMENT OF LEADERSHIP PERCEPTIONS

The analysis commenced with the first step, targeting employees' attitudes towards their organization management's leadership style. The respondents were asked to select statements that best described their direct supervisors. The results revealed that the leader was most frequently described as a communication specialist, whose interactions are based on the exchange between the idea presenter and the receiver (51%), or as an inspirer who motivates others to pursue organizational goals (50%). Less commonly, the leader was characterized as someone whose opinion holds significant value to their team and area specialists (47%), and as a person who is feared, thus commanding respect (33%).

Spearman's correlation analysis revealed a strong positive relationship between effective communication and transformational leadership traits such as inspiring organizational goals ( $\rho = 0.729$ ) and promoting personal leadership ( $\rho = 0.682$ ). These findings confirmed that effective communication is a crucial element of transformational leadership. Leaders who communicate well are more likely to inspire and engage their teams. The statistical tests corroborate the hypothesis that better leader communication is associated with higher job satisfaction among employees. The strong correlation between effective communication and increased employee satisfaction and commitment underscores the importance of communication in enhancing job satisfaction.

These findings suggest that transformational leadership is predominant in the organization, as evidenced by the high percentage of employees who described their leaders as inspiring and motivating. Transformational leadership is defined by the ability to inspire and elevate employees to achieve higher goals, which is reflected in the high ratings of leaders as motivators. The data showed that employees more frequently described their leaders as communicators and motivators rather than as feared figures. Specifically, transformational characteristics such as inspiring and motivating were highlighted as prevalent among the leaders. This aligns with the hypothesis that employees would predominantly describe their leaders in positive, transformational terms.

We then proceeded to the second step, focusing on Hypothesis 1, which posited that sociodemographic characteristics would influence leadership perceptions. The results revealed mixed support for H1. On the one hand, gender and position emerged as a significant factor in leadership perceptions, with females and managerial respondents more frequently describing their leaders as figures who command respect through fear, in contrast to their male and non-managerial counterparts, respectively. On the other hand, gender emerged as a significant factor in leadership perceptions. Females significantly more often described their leaders as individuals who are feared, thus commanding respect, compared to their male counterparts. Chi-square tests indicated that age and length of service did not significantly influence leadership perceptions, suggesting these factors were not major determinants in this context.

The study's findings support the presence of transformational leadership within the organization, with notable variations in perceptions based on gender and position. Leaders were predominantly seen as communicators and motivators. However, the influence of sociodemographic factors, while significant for gender and position, did not extend to age and tenure, providing partial support for H1.

To gain deeper insights into the distribution of leadership characteristics by demographic factors, we conducted a Chi-square test, see Table 1.2.



Table 1.2. Distribution of statements describing the leader by sociodemographic characteristics

Characteristic			This is a person whose opinion is important to their team and area specialists	Communication specialist, whose communication is based on the interaction between the idea presenter and the receiver	This is a person who is feared, thus expressing respect	Inspirer, able to motivate others to pursue organizational goals
Gender	Male	N	34	34	17	38
		%	51,5	51,5	25,8	57,6
	Female	N	19	24	21*	19
		%	39,6	50	43,8	39,6
	$\chi^2$		1,59	0,026	4,048	3,598
	lls		1	1	1	1
p		0,207	0,873	0,044	0,058	
Age	18-35 years old	N	18	17	12	15
		%	60	56,7	40	50
	35-55 years old	N	16	16	9	16
		%	51,6	51,6	29	51,6
	55-65 years old	N	13	17	9	18
		%	37,1	48,6	25,7	51,4
	Over 65 years old	N	7	9	8	9
		%	36,8	47,4	42,1	47,4
$\chi^2$		4,453	0,569	2,437	0,105	
lls		3	3	3	3	
p		0,217	0,904	0,487	0,991	
Tenure	Up to 6 months	N	6	9	6	5
		%	54,5	81,8	54,5	45,5
	6 months to 1 year	N	8	8	7	7
		%	53,3	53,3	46,7	46,7
	1-5 years	N	15	11	6	17
		%	55,6	40,7	22,2	63
	5-10 years	N	9	14	11	14
		%	30	46,7	36,7	46,7
	Over 10 years	N	16	17	8	14
		%	51,6	54,8	25,8	45,2
$\chi^2$		5,021	5,738	5,868	2,396	
lls		4	4	4	4	
p		0,285	0,22	0,209	0,663	
Position	Leader	N	9	7	0	10**
		%	69,2	53,8	0	76,9
	Non-leaders	N	44	51	38	47
		%	43,6	50,5	37,6	46,5
	$\chi^2$		3,05	0,052	7,337	4,254
	lls		1	1	1	1
p		0,081	0,82	0,007	0,039	

$\chi^2$  - Chi-square test value, lls - degrees of freedom for the test, p - statistical significance.

\* Statistically significant differences (when  $p < 0.05$ ) are highlighted.

\*\*  $p < 0.05$ , compared to males.

\*\*\*  $p < 0.05$ , compared to non-leader employees.

source: compiled by the authors

The Chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) tests and additional z-tests identified statistically significant differences ( $p < 0.05$ ), particularly highlighting that females were more likely to describe their leaders as feared figures, while leaders themselves were more likely to view their leaders as inspirers. In contrast, sociodemographic factors such as age and tenure did not show significant effects on leadership descriptions. This comprehensive analysis reaffirms the prominence of transformational leadership within the organization and provides nuanced insights into how different sociodemographic factors influence leadership perceptions.

Overall, the findings support the presence of transformational leadership within the organization, with notable variations in perceptions based on gender and position. Leaders were predominantly seen as

communicators and motivators. The influence of sociodemographic factors, while significant for gender and position, did not extend to age and tenure, providing partial support for Hypothesis 1. These insights contribute to a deeper understanding of how sociodemographic variables impact leadership perceptions and underscore the prominence of transformational leadership traits in motivating and inspiring employees.

### 3.2.3 ASSESSMENT OF LEADER-EMPLOYEE COMMUNICATION

To examine the relationship between the manager's communication with employees and the prevailing leadership style, the next step of the analysis aimed to determine the effectiveness of organizational leaders' communication with employees. The participants of the study were asked to respond to a questionnaire consisting of 13 statements, each rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from "Strongly Disagree" (score of 1) to "Strongly Agree" (score of 5). The total effectiveness score of leader-employee communication was calculated by summing the scores of all statements, with the scores of four negatively worded statements reversed. Scores could range from 13 to 65 points (higher scores indicating more effective communication with employees). Upon analysis of the results, it was found that the communication of organizational leaders is quite effective, as the calculated average score was relatively high at  $47.6 \pm 8.2$  points.

Next, we compared the communication scores of leaders based on sociodemographic characteristics of the respondents (Table 1.3).

Table 1.3. Assessment scores of Leader-Employee Communication Effectiveness by respondents' sociodemographics

Characteristic		Effectiveness of Leader's Communication		Test	p
		Mean	SN		
Gender	Male	48,21	7,23	t=1.066	0.289
	Female	46,56	9,29		
Age	18-35 years old	47,17	8,80	F=0.170	0.916
	35-55 years old	48,48	8,07		
	55-65 years old	47,49	7,55		
	Over 65 years old	47,11	9,04		
Tenure	Up to 6 months	46,64	6,27	F=0.662	0.620
	6 months to 1 year	49,20	8,03		
	1-5 years	49,11	8,18		
	5-10 years	46,20	8,64		
	Over 10 years	47,00	8,58		
Position	Leader	51,38	4,75	t=1,813	0.072
	Non-leaders	47,05	8,43		

t - Student's t-test value, F - ANOVA test value, p - statistical significance  
source: compiled by the authors

Having calculated parametric Student's t-tests (for two independent samples) and ANOVA tests (for three or more independent samples), no statistically significant differences were found ( $p > 0.05$ ). This indicates that the overall assessment of organizational leaders' communication effectiveness does not significantly differ across sociodemographic characteristics.

Further analysis of the collected data examined how respondents evaluate their leaders' communication. It was found that employees most agreed that effective leaders share information (*strongly agree* and *agree*: 83%), provide feedback on performance (*strongly agree* and *agree*: 81%), care about the organization's psychological climate (*strongly agree* and *agree*: 73%), and inspire them to pursue organizational goals (*strongly agree* and *agree*: 78%).

On the other hand, the least agreement was observed in the statements that effective leaders do not share information (*strongly agree* and *agree*: only 17%), make decisions without considering employees'

opinions (*strongly agree* and *agree*: only 24%), and base their communication on manipulation (*strongly agree* and *agree*: only 28%). The distribution of ratings revealed that most administrative employees emphasized qualities of an effective leader, such as the ability to share information, provide feedback, and care about the organization's psychological climate. The study results indicate that transformational leadership predominates within the organization, characterized by essential traits such as long-term vision formation, empathy, building relationships, and fostering inspiration.

These findings are significant not only for theoretical scientific discourse on transformational leadership but also have practical implications for organizational leaders and human resource management specialists. Understanding how transformational leadership and its characteristic communication influence employee behavior and organizational performance can help in forming leadership strategies more effectively, aiming for long-term organizational success and promoting employee well-being.

During the study, efforts were also made to identify associations between ratings of statements describing leaders' communication with employees and the sociodemographic characteristics of the employees participating in the study (Table 1.4).

Table 1.4. Associations between Ratings of Statements Describing Leaders' Communication with Employees and Sociodemographic Characteristics of the respondents (Spearman's Correlations)

Statements		Gender	Age	Tenure	Position
My leader is always ready to provide assistance	<i>r</i>	0.026	<b>-0.249</b>	-0.150	-0.069
	<i>p</i>	0.780	<b>0.007</b>	0.112	0.468
My leader does not share information	<i>r</i>	-0.058	0.081	0.075	0.052
	<i>p</i>	0.540	0.390	0.427	0.581
My leader does not consider my opinion when making decisions	<i>r</i>	-0.009	0.124	0.026	<b>0.206</b>
	<i>p</i>	0.922	0.186	0.786	<b>0.028</b>
My leader is strict	<i>r</i>	-0.034	0.055	0.144	0.007
	<i>p</i>	0.718	0.558	0.127	0.937
My leader communicates clearly	<i>r</i>	-0.003	-0.006	-0.107	0.002
	<i>p</i>	0.971	0.949	0.259	0.981
My leader bases their communication on manipulation	<i>r</i>	-0.050	<b>0.200</b>	0.099	0.173
	<i>p</i>	0.599	<b>0.032</b>	0.293	0.066
My leader shares information	<i>r</i>	-0.050	-0.046	-0.113	-0.155
	<i>p</i>	0.598	0.623	0.230	0.099
My leader provides feedback on my work	<i>r</i>	-0.062	0.008	0.018	-0.107
	<i>p</i>	0.511	0.934	0.851	0.258
My leader inspires me to pursue organizational goals	<i>r</i>	-0.006	-0.044	-0.039	<b>-0.251</b>
	<i>p</i>	0.951	0.644	0.684	<b>0.007</b>
My leader is controlling	<i>r</i>	0.109	-0.089	-0.046	0.010
	<i>p</i>	0.247	0.342	0.626	0.912
My leader gives motivational speeches	<i>r</i>	-0.078	0.056	0.046	-0.153
	<i>p</i>	0.409	0.552	0.624	0.105
My leader encourages my personal leadership	<i>r</i>	-0.020	-0.001	0.066	<b>-0.190</b>
	<i>p</i>	0.835	0.989	0.484	<b>0.043</b>
My leader cares about the psychological climate of the organization	<i>r</i>	-0.091	0.055	0.049	-0.180
	<i>p</i>	0.334	0.557	0.604	0.055

*r* – Spearman's correlation coefficient,  
*p* – statistical significance.

\*Statistically significant associations (when  $p < 0.05$ ) are highlighted.  
source: compiled by the authors

Considering that the study variables are ordinal and binary (dichotomous), Spearman's correlation coefficients were calculated to determine statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ) albeit weak ( $r < 0.3$ ) associations, which indicated the following:

- Younger members of staff were significantly more likely to agree that their manager was always willing to help them.
- Individuals in non-managerial positions were significantly more likely to agree that the manager did not take their opinion into account when making decisions.

- c) Older employees were significantly more likely to agree that their manager's communication was based on manipulation.
- d) Employees in managerial positions were significantly more likely to agree that their manager inspired them to pursue the organization's goals.
- e) Managerial employees were significantly more likely to agree that the manager encouraged personal leadership.

In other cases, no statistically significant associations were found ( $p > 0.05$ ), indicating that the ratings of the remaining statements did not differ significantly based on socio-demographic factors. To assess ties between leadership style and leader communication, correlations between these two phenomena were calculated (Table 1.5).

Table 1.5. Associations between statements describing leaders' communication with employees and respondents' sociodemographic characteristics (Spearman's correlation)

Statements on leadership communication		Transformational leadership
<b>Overall effectiveness of leader's communication</b>	<i>r</i>	<b>0.499</b>
	<i>p</i>	<b>0.000</b>
<i>My leader is always ready to provide assistance</i>	<i>r</i>	<b>0.295</b>
	<i>p</i>	<b>0.001</b>
<i>My leader does not share information</i>	<i>r</i>	<b>-0.442</b>
	<i>p</i>	<b>0.000</b>
<i>My leader makes decisions without considering my opinion</i>	<i>r</i>	<b>-0.412</b>
	<i>p</i>	<b>0.000</b>
<i>My leader is strict</i>	<i>r</i>	<b>-0.185</b>
	<i>p</i>	<b>0.048</b>
<i>My leader communicates clearly/understandably</i>	<i>r</i>	<b>0.398</b>
	<i>p</i>	<b>0.000</b>
<i>My leader bases their communication on manipulation</i>	<i>r</i>	<b>-0.313</b>
	<i>p</i>	<b>0.001</b>
<i>My leader shares information</i>	<i>r</i>	<b>0.381</b>
	<i>p</i>	<b>0.000</b>
<i>My leader provides feedback on tasks completed</i>	<i>r</i>	<b>0.363</b>
	<i>p</i>	<b>0.000</b>
<i>My leader inspires me to pursue organizational goals</i>	<i>r</i>	<b>0.392</b>
	<i>p</i>	<b>0.000</b>
<i>My leader is controlling</i>	<i>r</i>	0.035
	<i>p</i>	0.707
<i>My leader gives motivational speeches</i>	<i>r</i>	<b>0.405</b>
	<i>p</i>	<b>0.000</b>
<i>My leader encourages my personal leadership</i>	<i>r</i>	<b>0.449</b>
	<i>p</i>	<b>0.000</b>
<i>My leader cares about the organizational psychological climate</i>	<i>r</i>	<b>0.447</b>
	<i>p</i>	<b>0.000</b>

*r* - Spearman correlation coefficient, *p* - statistical significance.  
 \*Statistically significant associations are highlighted (when  $p < 0.05$ ).  
 source: compiled by the authors

### 3.2.4 CORRELATIONS BETWEEN COMMUNICATION STYLE, EMPLOYEE JOB SATISFACTION AND THEIR PERSONAL LEADERSHIP

To evaluate job satisfaction levels, respondents were asked to evaluate five satisfaction-related aspects on a five-point Likert scale ranging from "Negative" (score 1) to "Positive" (score 5). The results analysis indicates that most respondents rated their job satisfaction neutrally or positively. Ratings across different aspects were quite similar, with 61-69% of employees rating all aspects partially positively or positively.

Additionally, efforts were made to identify associations between the ratings of individual factors related to employee satisfaction and their sociodemographic disparities (Table 1.6).

Table 1.6. Associations between Ratings of Factors Related to Employee Satisfaction and Sociodemographics of the Respondents (Spearman's Correlation)

Indicator		Gender	Age	Tenure	Position
Commitment	<i>r</i>	0.015	-0.083	-0.057	<b>-0.253</b>
	<i>p</i>	0.875	0.376	0.546	<b>0.007</b>
Job satisfaction	<i>r</i>	-0.017	0.006	-0.036	<b>-0.228</b>
	<i>p</i>	0.859	0.946	0.707	<b>0.015</b>
Work performance	<i>r</i>	0.037	-0.099	-0.059	<b>-0.226</b>
	<i>p</i>	0.695	0.291	0.534	<b>0.016</b>
Personal leadership	<i>r</i>	0.014	0.010	0.031	<b>-0.287</b>
	<i>p</i>	0.883	0.912	0.745	<b>0.002</b>
Organizational climate	<i>r</i>	-0.075	0.006	-0.019	<b>-0.291</b>
	<i>p</i>	0.429	0.946	0.839	<b>0.002</b>
Organizational reputation	<i>r</i>	-0.058	-0.063	-0.052	<b>-0.315</b>
	<i>p</i>	0.541	0.503	0.582	<b>0.001</b>

*r* – Spearman correlation coefficient,  
*p* – statistical significance.

\*Statistically significant associations (when  $p < 0.05$ ) are highlighted.

source: compiled by the authors

Considering that the study variables are ordinal and binary, Spearman correlation coefficients were calculated, and statistically significant associations ( $p < 0.05$ ) were identified, albeit weak ( $r < 0.3$ ), indicating that all aspects of satisfaction are significantly related to employee positions, i. e., employees in managerial positions rate each aspect more positively. However, no significant associations were found between the ratings of aspects and employees' gender, age, or tenure ( $p > 0.05$ ). By summing up the scores of individual aspect ratings, a total job satisfaction score was calculated, ranging from 6 to 30 points (a higher score indicating higher job satisfaction). Analysis of the results revealed that overall satisfaction is quite good, with a calculated mean of  $22.9 \pm 6.1$  points. Furthermore, we compared job satisfaction scores across socio-demographic characteristics of participating employees (Table 1.7).

Table 1.7. Ratings of Leader's Communication Effectiveness with Employees by Employees' Sociodemographic Characteristics

Characteristic		Overall satisfaction		Test	p
		Mean.	SN		
Gender	Male	23.06	5.61	t=0.463	0.644
	Female	22.52	6.81		
Age	18-35 years old	23.13	6.23	F=0.084	0.969
	35-55 years old	23.00	6.08		
	55-65 years old	22.94	5.40		
	Over 65 years old	22.26	7.64		
Tenure	Up to 6 months	21.82	5.95	F=0.718	0.581
	6 months - 1 year	23.20	6.54		
	1-5 years	24.37	5.92		
	5-10 years	21.80	6.17		
	Over 10 years	22.74	6.27		
Position	Leader	<b>27.69*</b>	<b>2.63</b>	t=3.090	0.003
	Non-leader	22.29	6.22		

t – Student's t-test value, F – ANOVA test value, p – statistical significance.

\*Statistically significant differences (when  $p < 0.05$ ) are highlighted.

\*\*  $p < 0.05$ , compared to non-managerial employees.

source: compiled by the authors

After calculating parametric Student's t-tests (for two independent samples) and ANOVA tests (for three or more independent samples), one statistically significant difference ( $p < 0.05$ ) was found, indicating that organizational managers exhibit significantly higher job satisfaction compared to non-managerial employees. However, overall job satisfaction did not significantly differ across employee gender, age, and tenure ( $p > 0.05$ ).

Finally, an in-depth analysis was conducted seeking to examine links between the leader's communication style with employees and their job satisfaction. Considering that the variables in the study are ordinal and dichotomous, Spearman's correlation coefficients were calculated. Statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ), moderately strong ( $0.3 < r < 0.7$ ), and strong correlations ( $r > 0.7$ ) were identified (Table 1.8).

Table 1.8. Relationships between Leader's Communication Style with Employees and Job Satisfaction (Spearman's correlation)

		Overall satisfaction	Commitment	Job satisfaction	Job performance	Personal leadership	Organizational climate	Organizational reputation
<b>Effectiveness of leader communication</b>	<i>r</i>	<b>0.802</b>	<b>0.763</b>	<b>0.777</b>	<b>0.699</b>	<b>0.717</b>	<b>0.753</b>	<b>0.745</b>
	<i>p</i>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>
<i>My leader is always ready to provide assistance</i>	<i>r</i>	<b>0.512</b>	<b>0.559</b>	<b>0.507</b>	<b>0.478</b>	<b>0.455</b>	<b>0.442</b>	<b>0.459</b>
	<i>p</i>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>
<i>My leader does not share information</i>	<i>r</i>	<b>-0.485</b>	<b>-0.457</b>	<b>-0.453</b>	<b>-0.432</b>	<b>-0.383</b>	<b>-0.436</b>	<b>-0.476</b>
	<i>p</i>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>
<i>My leader makes decisions without considering my opinion</i>	<i>r</i>	<b>-0.571</b>	<b>-0.535</b>	<b>-0.562</b>	<b>-0.492</b>	<b>-0.496</b>	<b>-0.518</b>	<b>-0.497</b>
	<i>p</i>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>
<i>My leader is strict</i>	<i>r</i>	<b>-0.357</b>	<b>-0.297</b>	<b>-0.373</b>	<b>-0.247</b>	<b>-0.306</b>	<b>-0.381</b>	<b>-0.352</b>
	<i>p</i>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.001</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.008</b>	<b>0.001</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>
<i>My leader communicates clearly/understandably</i>	<i>r</i>	<b>0.541</b>	<b>0.560</b>	<b>0.530</b>	<b>0.476</b>	<b>0.495</b>	<b>0.490</b>	<b>0.503</b>
	<i>p</i>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>
<i>My leader bases their communication on manipulation</i>	<i>r</i>	<b>-0.538</b>	<b>-0.523</b>	<b>-0.500</b>	<b>-0.465</b>	<b>-0.451</b>	<b>-0.494</b>	<b>-0.523</b>
	<i>p</i>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>
<i>My leader shares information</i>	<i>r</i>	<b>0.602</b>	<b>0.613</b>	<b>0.575</b>	<b>0.547</b>	<b>0.582</b>	<b>0.564</b>	<b>0.556</b>
	<i>p</i>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>
<i>My leader provides feedback on completed tasks.</i>	<i>r</i>	<b>0.648</b>	<b>0.615</b>	<b>0.633</b>	<b>0.570</b>	<b>0.600</b>	<b>0.631</b>	<b>0.580</b>
	<i>p</i>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>
<i>My leader inspires me to pursue organizational goals</i>	<i>r</i>	<b>0.729</b>	<b>0.722</b>	<b>0.688</b>	<b>0.662</b>	<b>0.649</b>	<b>0.685</b>	<b>0.658</b>
	<i>p</i>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>
<i>My leader is controlling</i>	<i>r</i>	<b>-0.298</b>	<b>-0.229</b>	<b>-0.256</b>	<b>-0.190</b>	<b>-0.242</b>	<b>-0.291</b>	<b>-0.352</b>
	<i>p</i>	<b>0.001</b>	<b>0.015</b>	<b>0.006</b>	<b>0.042</b>	<b>0.009</b>	<b>0.002</b>	<b>0.000</b>
<i>My leader gives motivational speeches</i>	<i>r</i>	<b>0.570</b>	<b>0.557</b>	<b>0.575</b>	<b>0.473</b>	<b>0.497</b>	<b>0.541</b>	<b>0.522</b>
	<i>p</i>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>
<i>My leader encourages my personal leadership</i>	<i>r</i>	<b>0.682</b>	<b>0.669</b>	<b>0.647</b>	<b>0.621</b>	<b>0.615</b>	<b>0.626</b>	<b>0.615</b>
	<i>p</i>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>
<i>My leader cares about the organizational psychological climate.</i>	<i>r</i>	<b>0.664</b>	<b>0.644</b>	<b>0.625</b>	<b>0.590</b>	<b>0.608</b>	<b>0.622</b>	<b>0.612</b>
	<i>p</i>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>

*r* - Spearman correlation coefficient, *p* - statistical significance.

\*Statistically significant associations (when  $p < 0.05$ ) are highlighted.

source: compiled by the authors

The analysis revealed a significant and strong association between overall leader communication effectiveness and overall job satisfaction, indicating that more effective leader communication is

significantly associated with higher employee satisfaction. Significant associations have also been found between individual statements of leader communication and specific aspects of job satisfaction, showing that agreement (positive Spearman correlation coefficient,  $r$ ) or disagreement (negative  $r$ ) with specific leader communication statements correlates significantly with higher ratings in respective job satisfaction aspects.

Further, Spearman correlation coefficients between leader communication style and other variables including personal leadership were analyzed to evaluate relations of leader communication style with employees and the expression of personal leadership. According to the study data, leader communication effectiveness shows a strong positive correlation with personal leadership ( $r = 0.699$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). This indicates that leaders who communicate effectively also tend to demonstrate personal leadership more frequently, supporting the assumption that leader communication style and personal leadership are indeed related. Additionally, strong correlations were observed between leader communication with employees and aspects of personal leadership: leader communication with employees is associated with job satisfaction ( $r = 0.777$ ), organizational climate ( $r = 0.717$ ), organizational reputation ( $r = 0.753$ ), and other variables. This demonstrates that leader communication style is an important factor associated with various aspects, including personal leadership. Based on the obtained data, nexuses between leadership communication style and expression of personal leadership could be confirmed.

Considering correlations between leader communication with employees and their commitment data presented in Table 1.8 affirmed that leader communication with employees is associated with higher employee commitment to work. The Spearman correlation coefficient ( $r = 0.763$ ) indicates a strong positive relationship between leader communication effectiveness and employee commitment. This means that better communication by leaders correlates with greater commitment among employees. This could be explained by the fact that good communication with a leader makes employees feel understood, valued, and engaged, thereby increasing their commitment to the organization and its goals. Therefore, this assumption can be confirmed.

Lastly, leader communication with employees was found to be related to a positive organizational climate. According to the data from the table, leader communication effectiveness also shows a strong positive correlation with organizational climate ( $r = 0.753$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). This suggests that leaders who communicate effectively with their employees more frequently create a favorable organizational climate.

Summarizing the results of the sociodemographic analysis, it can be concluded that females statistically more often describe leaders as figures to be respected and feared compared to males. Conversely, leaders are more often described as inspirers who can motivate others to achieve organizational goals compared to non-leaders. Overall, communication by organizational leaders with employees is considered effective. However, the study found that sociodemographic characteristics such as gender, age, tenure, and position do not significantly influence leader communication effectiveness.

Employees largely agree that effective leader communication, consisting of sharing information and providing feedback on performance, has the greatest impact on job satisfaction. There was less agreement with the statement that effective leader communication involves not sharing information and making decisions without considering employees' opinions. Several weak but statistically significant associations were found between the ratings of specific statements and employee sociodemographic characteristics. For example, younger employees were more likely to agree that their leader is always ready to help. Transformational leadership style was most frequently attributed to organizational leaders (as indicated by 48% of respondents).

At the conclusion of the statistical analysis, it was determined that employees in leadership positions, particularly those from 6 months to 1 year and 1-5 years tenure, were most frequently attributed to transformational leadership style compared to other employees. Additionally, leaders were more commonly associated with transformational leadership style when compared to non-leaders. Analyzing leader communication with employees revealed that overall leader communication effectiveness correlates with transformational leadership. This indicates that leaders who communicate effectively were more likely to be associated with this leadership style.

The study also identified a relatively high level of job satisfaction among employees, with an average score of  $22.9 \pm 6.1$ . This suggests that most employees feel somewhat positive or positive about their work environment.

Importantly, the research demonstrated that effective communication with immediate supervisors has a strong correlation with employee job satisfaction, loyalty, and personal leadership. This suggests that a good communication process with supervisors can positively impact employee mood, personal outcomes, expression, and satisfaction. Specific aspects of leader communication such as readiness to help, sharing information, inspiring towards organizational goals, among others, were most frequently attributed to transformational leadership. Therefore, it can be concluded that the communicative characteristics of transformational leadership positively influence employee personal leadership, loyalty, organizational climate, and job satisfaction.

Overall job satisfaction did not differ significantly based on employees' gender, age, or tenure. These characteristics had minimal impact on employee satisfaction. The assumption that leader communication with employees' effectiveness is related to employee job satisfaction was confirmed based on the analysis. By fostering open communication, collaboration, and motivation, leaders can encourage employees to aspire to leadership roles in the future and create a favorable work environment where everyone feels valued and can fulfill their potential.

## 4 DISCUSSION AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

### Connection to Theoretical Framework

Our study's findings on leader communication effectiveness revealed that most respondents described their leader as an effective communicator, emphasizing authentic, inclusive, and respectful communication. This observation aligns with the theoretical model presented by Adams, Meyers, & Sekaja (2020), which highlights the significance of transformational leadership. Transformational leadership is characterized by positive and effective communication that strengthens leader-follower relationships, promoting higher levels of engagement and satisfaction. Furthermore, our study showed that effective communication directly contributes to personal leadership effectiveness, reinforcing these theoretical insights.

In terms of Transformational Leadership, the work of Sürücü, Maslakçi, & Sesen (2022) suggests that transformational leadership has a positive impact on organizational performance, a conclusion that is consistent with our own findings. In our study, the ability of leaders to clearly communicate and involve their followers in decision-making processes was emphasized. This finding directly correlates with the theoretical perspective that transformational leaders use inclusive communication to boost follower motivation and productivity.

Regarding Engagement and Team Spirit, theoretical sources such as Tkalac Verčič (2021) emphasize the positive relationship between leadership engagement and team engagement. This aligns with our study's results, where data showed that effective leader communication significantly enhances the team atmosphere, encourages collaboration, and increases motivation. In a Croatian context, the link between engaged leadership and higher employee engagement was observed, and our findings similarly confirm that leader communication plays a crucial role in fostering a productive and cohesive team environment.

In conclusion, the findings from our study closely align with existing theoretical frameworks on leadership communication, particularly in the context of transformational leadership. Effective communication emerged as a critical component of personal leadership effectiveness, directly influencing follower engagement, motivation, and team cohesion. Our results underscore the importance of authentic, inclusive, and clear communication in fostering strong leader-follower relationships and enhancing overall organizational performance. These insights not only support existing theories but also highlight the practical significance of communication as a tool for leaders to inspire, motivate, and create a positive team environment.

By validating theoretical models with empirical data, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of how leader communication effectiveness is fundamental to successful leadership and organizational outcomes. Future research could further explore these dynamics across different contexts to expand the generalizability of the findings.

Regarding demographic disparities, the scientific literature to date is insufficient for a comprehensive discussion. Existing studies suggest demographic factors, such as gender, may influence perceptions and



effects of transformational leadership, aligning with the findings of this study. However, due to the scarcity of similar studies and the mixed results observed in our study in this regard, further research is required to explore this aspect.

### **Practical Implications**

The results suggest that improving leader communication can enhance employee satisfaction and organizational commitment within higher education institutions. Practical applications of these findings include training leaders in effective communication, actively seeking employee feedback, and improving information-sharing practices. These findings may be relevant to other cultural settings with similar organizational structures. Understanding the impact of effective communication on employee satisfaction and commitment can help tailor leadership strategies and best practices to diverse cultural contexts.

Demographic analysis revealed that employees of different genders, age groups and positions may have varying perceptions of transformational leadership. This finding is particularly important in terms of diversity inclusion. While transformational leadership is associated with numerous benefits for employees and organizations, varying perceptions may suggest that leaders treat employees differently based on demographic factors, as suggested by Emery (2022), or that these differences stem from employees' expectations and perceptions being shaped by their demographics. Future research with diverse populations and larger samples would be needed to explore this issue further.

### **Limitations of the Study**

While this study provides some valuable insights into the impact of leaders' communication on the personal leadership of the employees, the study acknowledges several limitations.

The study's sample of 115 respondents may be insufficient for broad generalizations, and the use of snowball sampling could introduce selection bias, limiting the representativeness of the findings. While snowball sampling facilitated access to participants and provided insights into their perspectives, the limited sample size underscores the need for future research involving larger and more diverse samples to enhance representativeness and accuracy. The original larger sample was reduced by excluding responses that were not related to transformational leadership. Additionally, the research was confined to a single university in Lithuania, which restricts the applicability of the results to other institutions or cultural settings. This focus on one institution may reduce the generalizability of the findings to broader contexts or countries. Future research could benefit from employing diverse sampling methods and larger sample sizes to mitigate these limitations and enhance the broader applicability of the results, particularly beyond the Lithuanian higher education context.

Given that Spearman's correlation analysis revealed a strong positive relationship between effective communication and transformational leadership traits, such as inspiring organizational goals ( $\rho = 0.729$ ) and promoting personal leadership ( $\rho = 0.682$ ), these findings highlight the crucial role of communication in transformational leadership. The significant correlations support the hypothesis that leaders who excel in communication are more likely to inspire and engage their teams effectively.

Moreover, the statistical tests corroborate the hypothesis that improved leader communication is associated with higher job satisfaction among employees. The robust correlation between effective communication and increased employee satisfaction and commitment emphasizes the importance of communication in enhancing job satisfaction. To build on these findings, future research could include longitudinal studies to investigate how changes in leadership communication over time influence employee outcomes such as commitment and job satisfaction. Examining the interplay between leadership styles and organizational culture could provide additional insights into these relationships.

Further analyses could incorporate multiple regression techniques to control for potential confounding variables and better understand the predictive power of communication on employee satisfaction. Structural equation modeling (SEM) might be used to explore complex relationships between leadership traits and employee outcomes. Hierarchical regression analyses could shed light on the incremental impact of communication beyond other factors. Additionally, moderation analysis could explore how sociodemographic characteristics interact with leadership styles to affect employee perceptions. Finally, qualitative methods such as interviews or focus groups could offer deeper, nuanced perspectives on how communication influences leadership effectiveness and employee experiences.

## 5 CONCLUSIONS

This study has provided valuable insights into the role of transformational leadership and its impact on employee perceptions of personal leadership within the higher education context. However, it is important to interpret the findings with consideration of the study's limitations.

Firstly, our research highlights that a leader's communication skills are crucial for their effectiveness within an organization. The ability to communicate clearly, listen, motivate, and inform employees significantly influences organizational culture, operational outcomes, and employee satisfaction. The empirical data suggest that effective communication—encompassing clear information sharing, constructive feedback, and supportive interactions—shapes employees' perceptions of leadership and their expression of personal leadership.

Secondly, the study confirms that communication skills and characteristics of leaders affect the expression of personal leadership among employees. While most respondents found their leaders' communication to be effective, valuing their ability to share information, provide feedback, and encourage dialogue, it is essential to note that the study was conducted at a single university in Lithuania. This context-specific nature limits the generalizability of these findings to other institutions or cultural settings. Future research should consider broader contexts to verify whether these patterns hold true in different environments.

The analysis also showed that transformational leaders, who inspire others and are open to collaboration, are viewed as more effective. These leaders foster an atmosphere of support, encourage employee autonomy, and promote organizational goals through effective communication. However, the study's reliance on a relatively small sample size and snowball sampling introduces potential biases that may affect the results. To address these issues, future research should utilize larger and more diverse samples to enhance the generalizability of the findings.

Finally, the study suggests that transformational leadership promotes a collaborative work environment where employees feel valued and integral to organizational success. Despite these insights, the limitations regarding sample size, context-specificity, and potential sampling biases should be acknowledged. Further research could build upon these findings by exploring the impact of transformational leadership in varied settings and with larger sample sizes to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how leadership communication influences personal leadership in different contexts.

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