IMPACT OF GENERAL SELF-EFFICACY AND INNOVATIVENESS ON ATTITUDES TOWARD ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

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Abstract
Attitudes toward organizational change play a critical role in the success of change initiatives. Although extensive research efforts have been devoted to exploring the antecedents of attitudes toward organizational change, studies examining the relationships between individual differences and attitudes about organizational change remain relatively limited. This study investigates the impact of general self-efficacy and innovativeness on attitudes toward organizational change. Additionally, demographic factors such as gender, age, and education are included in the research to assess their potential influence. The research sample comprised 100 respondents from three companies in Serbia. Data were collected using three research instruments: the Attitude Toward Organizational Change scale, the Generalized Self-Efficacy scale, and an innovativeness scale adapted from the Jackson Personality Inventory. Spearman's correlation coefficient was used to test the hypotheses. The results revealed strong positive correlations between both general self-efficacy and innovativeness with attitudes toward organizational change. Multiple regression analysis further confirmed that general self-efficacy and innovativeness are significant predictors of attitudes toward change, with self-efficacy emerging as the stronger predictor. Demographic variables showed no significant associations with attitudes toward change. These findings offer practical implications for identifying suitable candidates for change agents and other key roles in organizational change and provide a theoretical contribution to understanding the role of personality-related individual differences in shaping change-related attitudes.
Keywords: Organizational Change, Attitudes toward Change, General Self-Efficacy, Innovativeness, Change Agent Selection

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1. INTRODUCTION

Organizations today are changing more frequently, rapidly, and significantly than in the past as they confront new challenges and adapt to the demands of the external environment (St-Pierre et al., 2023; Kupiek, 2024). The ability to manage change is becoming one of the key competencies of modern organizations. However, many organizations struggle to successfully implement change, often encountering resistance and unforeseen obstacles (Jacobs et al., 2013). Although multiple factors contribute to the success or failure of organizational change efforts, there is a consensus in the literature that securing employee support is necessary for successful implementation (Piderit, 2000). Positive employee attitudes toward organizational change are widely regarded as essential for the success of such initiatives (Albrecht et al., 2020). Conversely, negative attitudes toward change have the opposite effect, increasing the likelihood of failure (Neiva et al., 2005).

Researchers have investigated various antecedents of attitudes toward organizational change, including personality traits and other individual difference constructs. Vakola et al. (2004) found significant relationships between elements of the Five-Factor Model and attitudes toward change. Their findings suggest that members of an organization who are extroverted, conscientious, open to new experiences, and agreeable tend to have more positive attitudes toward organizational change. Similarly, Verdú-Jover et al. (2023) found that managers who scored high in extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness, or low in neuroticism, were more

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receptive to change and exhibited lower resistance. Other studies have identified individual psychological characteristics such as personal resilience (Wanberg & Banas, 2000), dispositional resistance to change (Oreg, 2003; Oreg, 2018), locus of control (Chen & Wang, 2007), and intolerance for ambiguity (Harden et al., 2021) as significant factors influencing attitudes toward change. As noted by Vakola et al. (2004), these individual differences have important implications for selecting change agents and other key roles in managing change, ultimately contributing to more effective organizational change efforts.

Within this stream of research, resistance to change has been conceptualized as a relatively stable individual disposition. Oreg (2003) introduced the concept of dispositional resistance to change, defining it as a personality-based tendency to resist or avoid change across situations. This approach emphasizes that individuals differ systematically in how they respond to change, beyond situational or contextual influences (Oreg, 2018). By framing resistance as a dispositional orientation, this line of research highlights the importance of individual-level psychological predispositions in shaping attitudes toward organizational change.

The motivation for this research stems from the growing recognition of the importance of employee attitudes in successful organizational change, yet a need remains for a deeper understanding of the individual differences that shape these attitudes. While previous research has explored broad personality dimensions, less is known about the role of general self-efficacy and innovativeness, two constructs that are especially relevant in dynamic, change-intensive work environments. Understanding how these dispositions influence attitudes toward organizational change can offer valuable insights for identifying and developing effective change agents, as well as other key individuals responsible for supporting and facilitating change within the organization.

To fulfill these research purposes, the study used a survey of employees from three companies in Serbia and applied established instruments to measure attitudes toward organizational change, general self-efficacy, and innovativeness. The data were analyzed using Spearman's rank correlation and multiple regression analysis to examine the proposed relationships.

Therefore, the aim of this study is to examine whether general self-efficacy and innovativeness are positively associated with attitudes toward organizational change, and whether these dispositional factors serve as significant antecedents of such attitudes. If confirmed, these findings could inform a set of criteria for selecting change agents and other key roles involved in organizational change initiatives. The remainder of the paper is structured as follows: Section 2 reviews the relevant literature and presents the research hypotheses, Section 3 outlines the research methodology, Section 4 presents the results, Section 5 discusses the findings and implications, and Section 6 provides the conclusion.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

This study contributes to the discussion on the relationship between individual differences and change-related attitudes by examining how general self-efficacy and innovativeness influence attitudes toward organizational change. While innovativeness as a predictor of attitudes toward change remains underexplored, general self-efficacy has also received limited attention in this context (Judge et al., 1999; Rafferty & Jimmieson, 2018).

To address this gap, this chapter reviews relevant literature, provides theoretical insights, and summarizes empirical findings related to attitudes toward organizational change, general self-efficacy, and innovativeness, thereby setting the foundation for the presentation of the study's hypotheses.

2.1. Attitudes toward change

The term "attitude" is traditionally defined as a positive or negative evaluative response to an object (Priester & Fleming, 1997). According to another definition, attitude is an overall evaluation of an object that is based on cognitive, emotional, and behavioral information (Maio & Haddock, 2010). Attitudes have been described in terms of association between an attitude object and evaluative category, such as favorable or unfavorable, like or dislike, good or bad (Albarracin et al., 2005). The object of an attitude can be concrete or abstract and may refer to inanimate things, people, or groups, as well as to information that carries evaluative implications (Bohner & Wanke, 2002). The tripartite model of attitude structure includes affective, behavioral, and cognitive components (Rosenberg & Hovland, 1960; Breckler, 1984).

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Attitudes toward organizational change follow this tripartite model. They encompass cognitive perceptions of change, emotional reactions, and behavioral tendencies toward change (Dunham et al., 1989). The affective component refers to feelings about change, the cognitive component involves beliefs and information about change, and the behavioral component reflects intentions or actions in response to change (Dunham et al., 1989; Neiva et al., 2022).

Employee attitudes toward change are one of the key factors in determining the success or failure of organizational change efforts (Heim & Sardar-Drenda, 2020). Employees with positive attitudes toward change tend to persistently support and facilitate change efforts, conversely, those with negative attitudes are more likely to resist, obstruct, or even sabotage change (Lines, 2005; Elias, 2009). The literature presents a wide range of views on change, spanning a continuum from strictly negative to strictly positive attitudes (Bouckenooghe, 2010).

Antecedents of attitudes toward organizational change include individual, group, and organizational factors, as well as factors related to the change itself (Bouckenooghe, 2010; Rafferty et al., 2013). Individual factors encompass personal characteristics, situational states, and demographics. Personality traits refer to relatively stable patterns of feelings, thoughts, and behaviors that differentiate individuals (Roberts, 2009). In addition to broad personality traits, there are a number of relatively enduring individual difference constructs that reflect individuals' general orientations, self-evaluations, and habitual coping tendencies across situations (e.g., general self-efficacy). Situational states, on the other hand, are transient and vary across situations over shorter periods (e.g., task-specific self-efficacy). Demographics such as gender, age, and education are population characteristics commonly included in studies on organizational change.

Research has shown that individual differences significantly influence attitudes toward organizational change (Judge et al., 1999; Oreg, 2003; Vakola et al., 2004; Chen & Wang, 2007; Shin et al., 2012; Vakola, 2014; Fugate & Soenen, 2018; Sverdlik & Oreg, 2023). Judge et al. (1999) found that differences in personality-related characteristics affect work attitudes and can predict individuals' ability to cope with change. Similarly, Vakola (2014) observed that individuals whose personality traits align positively with change perceive it more favorably and exhibit greater readiness for change.

Integrative work by Armenakis and Bedeian (1999) highlights the central role of employees' affective and behavioral reactions in organizational change processes. Their review demonstrates that change initiatives often succeed or fail depending on how organizational members emotionally respond to change and whether they enact behaviors that support or resist implementation. By emphasizing the monitoring of affective responses (e.g., stress, satisfaction, commitment) and behavioral reactions (e.g., adoption, avoidance, or withdrawal), Armenakis and Bedeian (1999) establish individual reactions to change as a critical domain of organizational change research. This perspective provides an important foundation for subsequent studies examining how individual-level psychological characteristics shape employees' responses to change.

Examining the influence of individual differences on attitudes toward organizational change contributes to the body of knowledge on organizational change and has important practical implications. In today's dynamic environment, organizations must develop the capabilities to manage change effectively, including selecting and developing the right personnel. The identification and development of change agents and other key organizational members play a critical role in the successful implementation of change. Assessing relevant individual differences can aid in selecting individuals for these roles, enhancing their capacity to cope with change, learn from new experiences, and further develop, thereby increasing the likelihood of successful organizational change.

2.2. General self-efficacy and innovativeness

Prior research has identified a range of personality-related predictors of attitudes toward organizational change, such as openness to experience, tolerance for ambiguity, and dispositional resistance to change (see, for comprehensive reviews, Oreg et al., 2011; Vakola et al., 2013). However, the present study focuses on general self-efficacy and innovativeness because these constructs capture core motivational and action-oriented mechanisms underlying individual responses to change. Whereas preference-based traits (e.g., openness to experience) describe individuals' general inclinations, and affective dispositions (e.g., resistance to change)

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reflect emotional reactions, general self-efficacy refers to individuals' beliefs about their capability to cope with and master novel, demanding situations. Such beliefs are central to organizational change processes, which typically require learning new skills, abandoning established routines, and dealing with uncertainty. Similarly, innovativeness represents a dispositional tendency to engage proactively with novelty, encompassing exploration, experimentation, and initiative. In contrast to constructs that emphasize tolerance of uncertainty, innovativeness reflects an approach-oriented stance toward change as an opportunity rather than a threat.

Taken together, general self-efficacy and innovativeness align closely with key mechanisms emphasized in contemporary change frameworks, including readiness for change (Armenakis et al., 1999; Holt et al., 2007) and individual appraisal processes underlying resistance and acceptance of change (Oreg, 2003; Oreg et al., 2018). These individual differences address both the perceived ability to cope with change (general self-efficacy) and the motivational inclination to engage with novelty (innovativeness), making them theoretically grounded predictors of attitudes toward organizational change.

As originally proposed by Bandura (1977), self-efficacy refers to a person's belief in her or his ability to successfully perform a given task or behavior to achieve a desired outcome. According to Wood and Bandura (1989), self-efficacy is defined as a belief in one's capability to mobilize motivation, cognitive resources, and courses of action necessary to meet situational demands. Another school of thought conceptualizes general self-efficacy as a broad and relatively enduring sense of personal competence to work effectively across different circumstances (Sherer et al., 1982; Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1995).

The literature on self-efficacy has distinguished between different levels based on specificity, identifying self-efficacy as general, domain-specific, or task-specific (Siefer et al., 2021). General self-efficacy reflects individuals' generalized beliefs about their capacity to successfully cope with a wide range of challenging, demanding, or stressful situations across different domains of functioning (Luszczynska et al., 2005). Domain-specific self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their ability to perform a range of tasks and activities within a particular domain of functioning. In the context of organizational change, this is often referred to as change-specific or change-related self-efficacy. Task-specific self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their capacity to successfully execute a particular task under specific conditions (Gärtner & Hertel, 2020). While general, domain-specific, and task-specific self-efficacy all describe an individual's perceived ability to achieve outcomes, they are conceptually distinct: general self-efficacy represents a relatively enduring dispositional belief, while domain and task-specific self-efficacy function as context-dependent states. According to Mishra et al. (2016), self-efficacy as a psychological resource of individual employees can be the source of the competitive advantage of an organization.

Consistent with this conceptualization, general self-efficacy is widely regarded as a relatively stable, cross-situational construct. Armenakis et al. (1999) suggest that perceptions of self-efficacy influence readiness for organizational change, as individuals with higher self-efficacy are more likely to perceive proposed changes as achievable. Conversely, resistance to change can emerge if individuals believe that the demands of change exceed their coping capabilities. Judge et al. (1999) argue that general self-efficacy is a precursor to positive attitudes toward critical career-related events, including organizational changes, and they find that it is positively correlated with individuals' ability to cope with change. Rafferty and Jimmieson (2018) report that general self-efficacy is significantly and positively associated with perceived principal support for change. Other studies focus on change-specific (or change-related) self-efficacy. Herold et al. (2007) and Kromah et al. (2024) find a positive relationship between self-efficacy and commitment to change, while Caldwell (2011) reports that self-efficacy can contribute to positive readiness in all phases of change.

It is important to acknowledge that general self-efficacy is conceptually and empirically related to other self-evaluative personality constructs, such as self-esteem, locus of control, and emotional stability. Prior research has documented moderate to strong correlations between these constructs, reflecting their shared grounding in individuals' general perceptions of competence and control (Judge et al., 2001; Vaughan-Johnston and Jacobson, 2020). However, general self-efficacy remains conceptually distinct in that it focuses specifically on perceived capability to mobilize motivation and resources to meet situational demands, rather than on global self-worth (self-esteem), generalized beliefs about control over outcomes (locus of control), or emotional reactivity (emotional stability). This distinction is particularly relevant in the context of organizational change. Change initiatives typically confront employees with new tasks, altered roles, and unfamiliar expectations,

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making perceived capability to cope with and master these demands a central psychological mechanism shaping attitudes toward change. From this perspective, general self-efficacy captures a functional belief system that directly informs how individuals evaluate the feasibility and personal impact of change, thereby offering explanatory value beyond personality-related constructs.

Based on the above literature, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: General self-efficacy is positively correlated with attitudes toward organizational change.

The concept of innovativeness refers to inter-individual differences that characterize how people respond to new things (Goldsmith & Foxall, 2003). Over the past decades, two main approaches to innovativeness have emerged: consumer behavior research and personality research (Menold et al., 2014). The consumer behavior approach focuses on the adoption (or non-adoption) of innovations by consumers and the timing of their adoption. Rogers and Shoemaker (1971) defined innovativeness as the degree to which an individual adopts innovations earlier than other members of the same social system. In contrast, this paper adopts the personality-based approach, which treats innovativeness as an underlying personality trait that shapes an individual's disposition toward novelty and persists across different forms and domains of innovation (Aldahdouh et al., 2018). This perspective explores the broader characteristics of individuals, extending beyond the mere adoption of new products to include creativity, innovative problem-solving, and initiative (Mueller & Thomas, 2001).

The relationship between innovativeness and attitudes toward organizational change remains underexplored. However, the literature contains more studies on the relationships between innovativeness and entrepreneurship, as well as between attitudes toward change and entrepreneurship. Mueller and Thomas (2001) argue that entrepreneurs, particularly successful ones, tend to be more innovative than non-entrepreneurs. Similarly, Palmer et al. (2019) emphasize that innovativeness is a key factor for the success of both newly established and long-standing firms. According to Marcati et al. (2008), entrepreneurs with a creative cognitive style and a predisposition for change tend to be more innovative. Research also suggests that individuals with positive attitudes toward change are more likely to pursue entrepreneurship (Schwarz et al., 2009; Murugesan & Dominic, 2013). Likewise, Zivdar and Imanipour (2017) identify positive attitudes toward change as a key precursor to the decision to establish an entrepreneurial venture.

Innovativeness can be understood as a latent, personality-based dispositional orientation toward novelty and change, reflecting a relatively enduring tendency to generate and accept new ideas across different contexts (Aldahdouh et al., 2019; Genari et al., 2024). In organizational contexts, this dispositional orientation manifests as a consistent tendency to support, explore, and psychologically engage with new ideas, processes, or approaches at work, even before such ideas are formally implemented. According to most studies, openness to experience, extraversion, and conscientiousness are positively and significantly associated with individual innovativeness, whereas neuroticism exhibits a significant negative relationship (Hsieh et al., 2011; Ali, 2019; Nguyen et al., 2023). The literature highlights that a company's success is closely tied to its ability to attract and retain innovative employees (Vajner et al., 2023).

It should be noted that empirical research directly examining the relationship between innovativeness and attitudes toward organizational change remains limited. Much of the existing evidence linking innovativeness to positive evaluations of change originates from entrepreneurship and innovation research rather than from the organizational change literature per se. This raises the question of whether such findings can be meaningfully extended to organizational change contexts. However, this theoretical extension is conceptually justified given that both entrepreneurial activity and organizational change processes involve engagement with novelty, experimentation, learning, and the adaptation or creation of new routines. In this sense, both contexts require individuals to move beyond established practices and to actively participate in processes of organizational development. Consistent with this view, research on growing new ventures shows that such development is characterized by experimentation with structures and routines, through which new patterns of action are gradually established (Hubner, 2022).

In the context of organizational change, innovativeness primarily shapes how individuals cognitively frame and evaluate change-related situations. These tendencies are not confined to entrepreneurial contexts but are equally relevant in organizations undergoing transformation, where employees must move beyond established

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routines while contributing to the development of new ones. Consequently, individuals high in innovativeness are more likely to appraise organizational change as an opportunity for exploration and improvement rather than as a threat, thereby fostering more positive attitudes toward change. In this sense, the present study extends insights from entrepreneurship research into the domain of organizational change, treating the hypothesized relationship as theoretically grounded yet empirically underexplored.

Given that innovative individuals tend to embrace novelty, change, and experimentation, and are more likely to see change as an opportunity, it is reasonable to expect a positive association between innovativeness and attitudes toward organizational change.

Accordingly, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: Innovativeness is positively correlated with attitudes toward organizational change.

Figure 1 gives the model used in the research. The attitudes toward change are dependent variables, and general self-efficacy and innovativeness are independent variables.

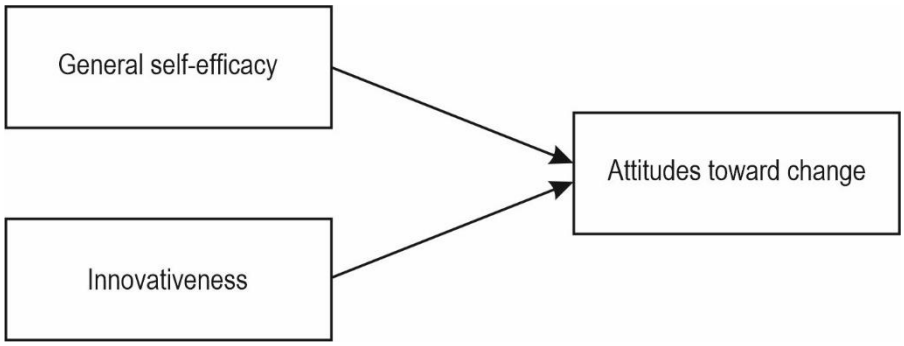

FIGURE 1 – THE MODEL USED IN THE RESEARCH

3. METHODOLOGY

The study included a total of 100 respondents employed in three companies in Serbia: two from the manufacturing sector (with 36 and 32 respondents, respectively) and one from the service sector (32 respondents). In the manufacturing sector, one company, founded in the 1990s, specializes in the production of corrugated paper and cardboard, while the other, established in the post-transition period of the 2000s, produces construction joinery and plasticized aluminum. The service sector company is a long-established hotel operating since before World War II. All three companies are classified as medium-sized enterprises.

The sample consisted of 36 women and 64 men. In terms of age, 16% of participants were between 18 and 25 years old, 39% were between 26 and 35, 20% were between 36 and 45, 15% were between 46 and 55, and 10% were older than 55 years. Regarding educational background, 6% of participants had completed primary school, 17% had a three-year secondary school education, 32% had completed a four-year secondary school, and 15% were highly qualified workers (upper-secondary vocational level). Additionally, 19% had completed a College of Applied Studies or Higher Vocational School, 9% held a Bachelor of Science degree, and 2% held a Master of Science degree.

The survey questionnaire included demographic variables (gender, age, and education) and measured attitudes toward organizational change (affective, cognitive, and behavioral components), general self-efficacy, and innovativeness.

Attitudes toward organizational change were assessed using the instrument developed by Dunham et al. (1989), which consists of 18 items. Responses were recorded on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree). Yousef (2000) reported a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .77 for this scale. The final score for each respondent was obtained by averaging their responses across all 18 items.

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General self-efficacy was measured using the Generalized Self-Efficacy Scale developed by Schwarzer and Jerusalem (1995). This scale consists of 10 items, with response options ranging from 1 (Not at all true) to 4 (Exactly true). According to Scholz et al. (2002), this instrument has been widely used in research, with reported Cronbach's alpha values ranging between .75 and .91.

Innovativeness was assessed using an 8-item scale adapted by Mueller and Thomas (2001) from the Jackson Personality Inventory (Jackson, 1994). Participants rated their agreement on a 5-point Likert scale. Mueller and Thomas (2001) reported Cronbach's alpha values for this scale ranging from .66 to .82.

The collected data were analyzed using SPSS for Windows statistical software.

4. RESULTS

The Spearman's rank correlation method was used to assess the strength of relationships between variables. Spearman's rho (ρ) coefficient is suitable for ranked data and measures the degree of association between two variables. One of the widely accepted interpretations of correlation strength, based on Cohen's (1988) classification, is as follows: (1) Small: ρ = .10 to .29; (2) Medium: ρ = .30 to .49; and (3) High: ρ = .50 to 1.00. Table 1 presents the intercorrelation matrix of all variables included in the study.

TABLE 1. INTERCORRELATION MATRIX OF VARIABLES

Variable		Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
ATC	A	3.11	0.81	(.)							
	C	3.11	0.75	**.891****	(.)						
	B	3.08	0.90	**.890****	**.828****	(.)					
SE		2.97	0.77	**.845****	**.828****	**.812****	(.)				
INN		2.77	0.72	**.777****	**.768****	**.767****	**.853****	(.)			
GEN		1.35	0.48	-.079	-.025	-.055	.034	-.049	(.)		
AG		2.64	1.21	.012	.067	-.001	.014	.011	.043	(.)	
ED		3.68	1.66	.014	.036	.008	.023	-.014	.299	.164	(.)

Note. **Correlation is significant at the .01 level (p < .01); ATC - Attitude toward organizational change, A - Affective, C - Cognitive, B – Behavioral; SE - Self-efficacy; INN - Innovativeness; GEN - Gender; AG - Age; ED – Education

From Table 1, it can be observed that the correlations between self-efficacy and all three components of attitudes toward organizational change are high (ρ > .50). Although the correlation coefficients for innovativeness are slightly lower than those for self-efficacy, they still exceed .50, indicating strong positive relations with attitudes toward change. Additionally, the three components of attitudes toward organizational change, affective, cognitive, and behavioral, exhibited strong positive intercorrelations, with Spearman's rho values of .891 between affective and cognitive, .890 between affective and behavioral, and .828 between cognitive and behavioral components.

Since demographic data were also collected, the study examined whether gender, age, and education influence attitudes toward organizational change. Table 1 indicates that gender, age, and education are not significantly correlated with attitudes toward organizational change.

A multiple regression analysis was conducted to assess how well two independent variables, General Self-Efficacy (SE) and Innovativeness (INN) predict the dependent variable Attitudes Toward Change (ATC). The ATC variable is a composite variable composed of three aggregated and averaged variables: Affective Component (A), Cognitive Component (C) and Behavioral Component (B). Preliminary analyses were performed to confirm that the assumptions underlying multiple regression were not violated. As shown in Table 1, the regression variables demonstrated strong, positive, and significant correlations. The diagnostic values for multicollinearity, represented by the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF), stand at 4.084, which is below the critical level of 5, signifying that multicollinearity is not a concern. Analysis of the Normal Probability Plot (P-P) of the

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Regression Standardized Residual and the Scatter Plot indicates no significant departure from normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity assumptions. The highest observed Mahalanobis distance (8.508) was below the critical threshold of 13.82 for two predictors, indicating the absence of multivariate outliers. Furthermore, the maximum Cook's Distance value of 0.83 is below the critical level of 1, indicating the absence of influential outliers among the predictor variables.

The overall multiple regression was statistically significant (R^2 = .751, $F(2, 97)$ = 146.430, p < .001). An R^2 of .751 reveals that 75.1% of the variance in the dependent variable is explained by the independent variables. Both standardized beta coefficients of the final model were also statistically significant, as illustrated in Table 2.

TABLE 2. REGRESSION COEFFICIENTS

Coefficients[a]													
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			95.0% Confid. Interval for B		Correlations			Collinearity Statistics	
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Zero-order	Partial	Part	Tole-rance	VIF
1	(Constant)	.399	.164		2.432	.017	.073	.724					
	SE	.695	.105	.680	6.641	.000	.488	.903	.861	.559	.336	.245	4.084
	INN	.228	.112	.208	2.034	.045	.006	.451	.799	.202	.103	.245	4.084

Note. a Dependent variable: Attitudes toward change (ATC)

The variable SE (M =2.974, SD = 0.769) had the most pronounced direct influence on the ATC (M = 3.098, SD = 0.787) variable, with a significant p-value of less than .001 and a beta coefficient of β = .680. This indicates that a one standard deviation increase in SE leads to an increase of .68 standard deviation in ATC. Moreover, the variable INN (M = 2.755, SD = 0.717) also showed a statistically significant result, p = .045, with a lower beta value, β = .208. This indicates that a one standard deviation increase in INN leads to an increase of .208 standard deviation in ATC.

5. DISCUSSIONS

The study confirms that general self-efficacy is strongly positively correlated with all three components of attitudes toward organizational change, supporting the first hypothesis (H1). This finding is consistent with previous research in different cultural contexts. Judge et al. (1999) found that high self-efficacy is a predictor of positive attitudes toward organizational change, as individuals with high self-efficacy feel more capable of adapting to new circumstances. Employees with high self-efficacy are likely more willing to embrace and adapt to change, while those with low self-efficacy tend to avoid action and change due to a lack of confidence in their ability to perform in new situations (Schyns, 2004; Ashforth & Lee, 1990). Similarly, innovativeness is strongly positively correlated with all three components of attitudes toward organizational change. The findings support the second hypothesis (H2), indicating that innovativeness significantly and positively predicts attitudes toward organizational change, although to a lesser extent than general self-efficacy. Although no prior studies directly examined the relationship between innovativeness and attitudes toward organizational change, research in entrepreneurial contexts supports this outcome (Mueller & Thomas, 2001; Peljko et al., 2016).

The strong effect of general self-efficacy suggests that attitudes toward organizational change are shaped less by general preferences for novelty and more by employees' beliefs about their capacity to cope with change-related demands. This finding supports appraisal-based models of change, which emphasize perceived feasibility and personal control as central determinants of change acceptance (Armenakis et al., 1999; Oreg, 2003). Employees who believe they can master new requirements are more likely to evaluate change positively across affective, cognitive, and behavioral dimensions, as change is perceived as manageable rather than threatening. In this sense, general self-efficacy functions as a key psychological mechanism through which individuals assess their ability to meet the demands imposed by organizational change.

The positive, though comparatively weaker, effect of innovativeness indicates that attitudes toward organizational change are also shaped by individuals' dispositional orientation toward novelty and

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experimentation. Innovativeness reflects a relatively stable dispositional tendency to approach new situations with curiosity, initiative, persistence, and a readiness to process and engage with new information (Mueller & Thomas, 2001; Genari et al., 2024), which predisposes individuals to interpret organizational change as an opportunity rather than a disruption. In this sense, innovativeness influences the initial framing of change, biasing individuals toward more positive cognitive and affective evaluations of change-related novelty. However, the weaker predictive strength of innovativeness compared to general self-efficacy suggests that openness to novelty alone is insufficient for sustaining positive attitudes toward organizational change. While innovativeness may foster interest and willingness to engage with change, it does not necessarily address concerns related to feasibility, competence, and personal coping capacity. As a result, innovativeness appears to function as an approach-oriented predisposition that facilitates openness to change, whereas general self-efficacy plays a more decisive role in shaping stable and enduring attitudes by influencing individuals' confidence in their ability to manage change demands across cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions.

Taken together, the findings suggest that attitudes toward organizational change are shaped by two complementary psychological mechanisms: perceived coping capacity and approach orientation toward novelty. General self-efficacy primarily informs employees' appraisals of feasibility and personal control, which are critical for sustaining positive attitudes across affective, cognitive, and behavioral dimensions. Innovativeness, by contrast, influences the initial framing of change by biasing individuals toward exploration and opportunity recognition. This distinction helps clarify why general self-efficacy emerges as the stronger predictor of change-related attitudes, while innovativeness contributes independently, though to a lesser extent.

The results show that that employees in the surveyed companies exhibit a mildly positive attitude toward organizational change across all three attitude components. The prevailing positive attitudes toward change may stem from multiple factors, including broader economic conditions in Serbia. While the global financial crisis of 2008–2009 and the COVID-19 pandemic crisis in 2020 affected many economies worldwide, Serbia had already experienced several economic crises since 1991. Three major crisis periods can be identified: (1) the early 1990s, when UN sanctions paralyzed the economy, (2) 1999, when military intervention devastated infrastructure and key industries, and (3) the post-2001 period, when many companies failed to survive economic transition. Although Serbia experienced economic growth between 2004 and 2007, this progress was disrupted by the 2008 financial crisis. In recent years, however, the economy has shown steady growth. These crises and transitional changes may have increased receptiveness to change, as many individuals have had to adapt to evolving circumstances, reducing the likelihood of inherently negative attitudes toward change.

The analysis of demographic factors revealed that gender, age, and education do not significantly impact attitudes toward change. This finding aligns with numerous studies in the literature, although some conflicting results exist. For instance, Vakola and Nikolaou (2005) reported that men are more resistant to change than women, while education has a minor positive effect on attitudes toward change. Samaranayake and Takemura (2017) found that education level was positively and significantly associated with employees' readiness for change, whereas gender and age showed no significant relationship. Sánchez et al. (2023) demonstrated that age was negatively and significantly related to resistance to change, whereas gender and education showed no significant relationships. On the other hand, Madsen et al. (2005) found no significant relationships between demographic factors (gender, age, and education) and readiness for change. Similarly, Devos et al. (2007) reported that there was no correlation between demographic variables and openness to change. Schulz-Knappe et al. (2019) did not observe statistically significant relationships between demographic factors and either attitudes toward change or resistance to change. Furthermore, Kromah et al. (2024) found that gender, age, and education do not have a statistically significant effect on commitment to change.

The findings highlight important managerial implications. A critical factor for successful organizational change is the selection of effective change agents. Cawsey et al. (2016) emphasize that change agents play a crucial role in organizational change, requiring a combination of personal characteristics, skills, and knowledge. Having employees serve as change agents can be advantageous over external consultants, as peers are often more trusted and perceived as having a deeper understanding of organizational challenges, while also reducing consulting costs (Nielsen et al., 2021). To drive adoption and build momentum, organizations should identify influential employees as change agents, as their support, encouragement, and key personal and professional traits can facilitate the change process (Koch & Fortkord, 2024). Moreover, organizations may benefit from

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considering employees' confidence in their abilities and dispositional readiness for change when selecting individuals for roles that involve or drive organizational transformation (Vakola, 2014). Therefore, evaluating and selecting employees for change agent roles and other key positions is a critical stage in the change process (Nikolaou et al., 2007). The results suggest that general self-efficacy and innovativeness can inform the development of selection criteria for change agents and other key roles in organizational change.

It is important to note that attitudes toward organizational change are shaped by both individual dispositions and contextual factors, including organizational culture, leadership practices, communication quality, and prior experiences with change. Empirical research demonstrates that such contextual conditions can influence and moderate the relationship between individual differences and change-related attitudes. For example, Vakola (2014) shows that contextual variables and employees' perceptions of change impact shape individual readiness to change, while Marchalina et al. (2021) demonstrate that organizational culture moderates the relationship between personality traits and employees' commitment to change.

The present study does not deny the relevance of these contextual influences; rather, it intentionally focuses on relatively stable individual dispositions that shape how employees interpret and evaluate change within a shared organizational context. By examining employees within the same organizations, the study implicitly holds key contextual conditions relatively constant, thereby allowing a clearer observation of individual differences in attitudes toward organizational change. Future research should extend this approach by explicitly incorporating contextual moderators to examine how organizational environments interact with individual difference constructs such as general self-efficacy and innovativeness in shaping responses to change.

It is also necessary to acknowledge the specific limitations of the study. First, because the data were collected using self-report measures, responses may have been affected by social desirability bias, particularly in the context of personnel-related evaluations and attitudes toward organizational change. Although established instruments were used, future studies could strengthen measurement validity by incorporating multi-source data or behavioral indicators. Second, the study focused on two dispositional factors, general self-efficacy and innovativeness, while other personality characteristics and psychological resources may also play a role in shaping attitudes toward organizational change. Third, the sample was drawn from three companies operating within a single national context, which limits the generalizability of the findings. These limitations should be taken into account when interpreting the results and suggest directions for future research.

6. CONCLUSIONS

The current study examined the relationships between two dispositional factors, general self-efficacy and innovativeness, and attitudes toward organizational change. Using two hypotheses and three research instruments, the results demonstrate that both general self-efficacy and innovativeness are significantly and positively associated with attitudes toward organizational change. Multiple regression analysis further confirms that both factors predict attitudes toward change, with general self-efficacy emerging as the stronger predictor and innovativeness making a meaningful, though comparatively smaller, contribution. These findings indicate that individuals with higher levels of general self-efficacy and innovativeness are more likely to display positive attitudes when organizational change occurs.

From a practical standpoint, organizations may benefit from considering general self-efficacy and innovativeness when selecting employees to serve as change agents and in other critical roles in organizational change. Because organizational change places substantial demands on employees' capacity to cope with uncertainty, learn new skills, and engage proactively with new requirements, individuals possessing both high levels of self-efficacy and a dispositional inclination toward novelty are particularly well positioned to support and sustain change initiatives.

From a theoretical perspective, the study contributes to the growing body of research on individual differences in organizational change by empirically examining the role of general self-efficacy and innovativeness as predictors of attitudes toward change. To the best of our knowledge, the relationship between innovativeness and attitudes toward organizational change has not been systematically examined in prior research, and the relationship between general self-efficacy and attitudes toward organizational change has not previously been

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investigated in Serbian companies. To further strengthen the generalizability of these findings, future research should replicate the study in different organizational, cultural, and national contexts.

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