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COMMUNICATION SATISFACTION AND ITS EFFECTS ON ORGANIZATIONAL
READINESS TO CHANGE: A QUANTITATIVE DISTRICT-WIDE STUDY OF
EMPLOYEES FROM A TECHNOLOGY CENTER

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Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to all my former students who I told to “dream big and aim high” and to all the teachers, professors, and staff who helped me along this educational path. I would not be here if it were not for you all. Every single day you inspired me, challenged me, and motivated me to become the educator that I am today. For that I am truly grateful.

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Abstract

Although literature establishes the importance of top-level executives' communication during times of change, there is a lack of empirical research focusing on Communication Satisfaction's role on Readiness for Organizational Change within a CTE (Career Tech Education) institution. Questions arise on how these two variables function during the change process. Within the context of change, this study demonstrated that Communication Satisfaction contributed to Job Satisfaction and Organizational Commitment by targeting both employees' attitudes and behaviors. Using Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) as the theoretical framework for the research, this study explored what the relationship of Communication Satisfaction has on Organizational Readiness to Change and how employees' thoughts and behaviors related to embracing new reforms that can affect the overall effectiveness of planned organizational change. Using several different survey instruments, employees reported on their level of Communication Satisfaction, Job Satisfaction, Organizational Commitment, and Organizational Readiness to Change. Structural equation modeling revealed Communication Satisfaction contributed to changes in both attitudes and behaviors suggesting that CTE institutions should emphasize incorporating various communication methods in their reform efforts to set the foundation for employees embracing change. This study focused on the role of both site/top level supervisors' communication in creating a high level of job satisfaction and organizational commitment through attitudes and behaviors of employees. The study concludes with implications for theory and practice along with recommendations for further research.

Keywords: communication satisfaction, organizational readiness to change

Chapter 1: Introduction

Receptiveness to change is vital to organizational growth and effectiveness (Argenti, 2007). Change readiness reduces employees' resistance to new expectations and circumstances, helping them commit to intended changes (Allan, 2014). Because the future is often uncertain, people may resist changes they view as unnecessary. People need trust, support, and cooperation to function effectively and be receptive to uncertain futures. If organizational members are unprepared for change, new reforms may be rejected via sabotage, absenteeism, and output restrictions (Bray & Williams, 2017; Oso et al., 2017). Thus, managers face the task of empowering employees to embrace new strategies and commitment during organizational change (Simsek, 2016; Wagner, et al., 2015).

Communication is one of the most important components of effective organizational change (Bennebroak-Gravenhorst et al., 2006; Elving, 2005; Elving & Hansma, 2008; Ngozi & Ifeoma, 2015). However, new initiatives are not always communicated successfully and employees may be unsatisfied with the communication strategies used to inform them of changes and desired goals (Burke, 2008; Fernandez & Rainey, 2006; Hargie et al., 1999). Communication is critical to behavioral change and goal attainment during strategic change initiatives (Saruhan, 2014). Without employee support, change efforts are unlikely to achieve deep and lasting transformation (Oso, et al., 2017).

A key to managing and planning effective change is the creation of environments that provide psychological safety that allows employees to risk vulnerability (Bouckenooghe et al., 2009). Supportive, cooperative, and trusting relationships help

foster employee readiness and commitment to change. Readiness can also be achieved by managing interpersonal relationships within organizations (Vakola, 2014). Change readiness reflects individuals' beliefs, feelings, and intentions about the necessity of changes and how capable individuals and organizations are to enact those changes (Vakola et al., 2013).

Communication is a catalyst for preparing individuals to perform in new ways. Poor communication can foster negative rumors and resistance to change (Van Dam et al., 2008), and undermine healthy corporate culture (Keyton, 2005). Accordingly, managers' use of effective communication strategies is essential to engaging employees in new practices associated with organizational change. Employees view managers as key decision makers (Simsek, 2016) and critical information sources about new strategies and performance (Hindi et al., 2004) during organizational change.

Information about change management comes from different sources. In fact, history reveals the necessity of embracing and proactively managing uncertainties in order to survive, much less stay ahead of the competition. Although change management is relatively straightforward, over 70% of reforms fail to produce meaningful and lasting improvements (Tobias, 2014). Effective implementation of new initiatives requires managers to leverage strategies to maintain existing investments while improving processes and outcomes. Communication is essential to preparing employees for change and motivating them toward organizational improvements (Shapira-Lishchinsky, 2012; Wagner et al., 2015).

Attempts to implement strategic initiatives, practices, or policies in organizations often fail because leaders do not establish sufficient organizational readiness for change

(Mrayyan, 2019; Rhodes et al., 2003). Organizational readiness refers to “the extent to which organizational members are psychologically and behaviorally prepared to implement organizational change” (Weiner et al., 2009, p. 298). When organizational readiness is high, members are more likely to initiate change, exert greater effort, exhibit greater persistence, and display more cooperative behavior; these behaviors result in more effective implementation of proposed changes (Weiner et al., 2009). Conversely, when organizational readiness is low, members are more likely to view changes as undesirable and subsequently avoid or resist changes (Weiner et al., 2009).

A major source of apprehension during organizational change is employees’ belief they lack control over decisions and strategies that affect them (Harp, 2011). Open and regular communication can counteract these apprehensions. Leaders who inform employees of the rationale behind changes and clearly communicate expected outcomes can keep workers engaged in the change process (Shapira-Lishchinsky, 2012; Von Treuer, et al., 2018). Maintaining ongoing dialog with employees through effective two-way communication allows leaders to communicate an understanding of employee concerns and interest in worker input (Shapira-Lishchinsky, 2012). In this way, communication can be a vehicle through which organizations move toward desired changes and outcomes (Shapira-Lishchinsky, 2012; Simsek, 2016).

The alignment between an organization’s communication strategy and its implementation of strategic initiatives is imperative to success. According to Kotter and Cohen (2002), effective communication strategy consists of seven key elements: clear and simple messaging; utilizing metaphors, analogies, and examples whenever possible; employing multiple forms of communication; making sure the same message is

transmitted through various mechanisms; repeating the message to ensure understanding; top management role modeling expected behavior; implementing two-way communication is the preferred method of communication flow. Establishing an appropriate communication approach, especially during strategic planning and plan implementation, helps ensure all employees understand the overall goals and their roles in realizing those goals (Kotter & Cohen, 2002). The importance of communication for activating social and psychological drivers for change provides the context for this study. As existing evidence makes clear, effective communication brings clarity to what is often an uncertain process (Ngozi & Ifeoma, 2015), and in doing so supports individuals in bringing about desired changes. This knowledge provides a foundation for the current study and the problem that the study seeks to address.

Statement of the Problem

As evidenced by the literature, a great deal of research exists on communication and organizational change (Rapert et al., 2002; Saunders et al., 2008; Spee & Jarzabkowski, 2011); however, existing scholarship does not fully account for the process by which communication facilitates or impedes one's willingness to change. Largely overlooked in the existing research is the relationship between communication and employees' organizational commitment. Moreover, organizational communication has not been examined within the technical education arena in the midst of new reforms. The current study addressed these gaps in the literature by examining the relationship between communication, satisfaction, and readiness to change in a career tech school that was in the initial stages of a strategic planning initiative.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study was to examine the connection between leadership communication and employees' willing to accept organizational change in a career tech organization. The following research questions guided the review of literature and informed the hypothesized model tested in this study:

RQ1: What is the relationship between communication satisfaction and organizational readiness to change in a career tech district implementing a new strategic plan?

RQ2: What factors may mediate the relationship between communication satisfaction and organizational readiness to change in a career tech district implementing a new strategic plan?

The above questions guided the review of literature in which communication satisfaction is defined and its effects on employee psychological states and behavior are described. Additionally, readiness to change is defined and individual and organizational conditions related to its formation are examined. Evidence related to the questions, along with social cognitive theory, establish support for a hypothesized path model that is tested in the empirical study.

Definition of Terms

Affective commitment. Affective commitment describes how much an employee actually likes or feels part of an organization (Saunders et al., 2008).

Career tech education. Career and technical education (CTE) is the practice of teaching specific career skills to students in middle school, high school, and post-secondary institutions (Stauffer, 2019).

Communication satisfaction. Communication satisfaction describes one's level of satisfaction with the various features of interpersonal and group communication within an organizational context (Downs & Hazen, 1977).

Continuance commitment. Continuance commitment describes the costs an employee associates with leaving an organization (Hartmann et al., 2014).

Job satisfaction. Job satisfaction is defined as the level of contentment and achievement an employee experiences with their job responsibilities and work environment (Tobias, 2014).

Normative commitment. Normative commitment is the degree to which employees stay with an organization out of a sense of duty and obligation (Hartmann et al., 2014).

Organizational commitment. Organizational commitment is the strength of attachment an employee feels towards and organization (Hartmann et al., 2014).

Organizational readiness to change. Organizational readiness to change refers to 'organizational members' shared resolved to implement a change (change commitment) and a shared belief in their collective capability to do so (Weiner, 2009).

Social cognitive theory. Social cognitive theory is used to describe learning and motivation that occurs in a social context, with a dynamic and reciprocal interactions of the person, environment, and behavior (Bandura, 1986).

Organization of the Dissertation

Chapter 1 explained the significance of this study in relation to addressing the importance of communication satisfaction for employees during organizational change. A problem statement, purpose of study, and definition of terms were also presented.

Chapter 2 provides a review of literature in which Social Cognitive Theory is the lens for presenting and explaining the hypotheses. Key concepts are defined and described, including communication satisfaction, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and organizational readiness to change. This theory and key concepts provide a framework for the current investigation.

Chapter 3 describes the hypotheses and rationale. Social cognitive theory is used to explain the hypothesized relationship between communication satisfaction and organizational readiness to change. Chapter 4 depicts the methods used to analyze the data. The research context, research design, and evaluation tools are explained. The data source and measures are described, and analytical techniques are explained and justified.

Study results are presented in Chapter 5, including findings from descriptive statistics, as well as findings from correlational analysis and multiple linear regressions. Finally, Chapter 6 provides a discussion and summary of the findings with a restatement of the hypothesis, explanation of data supporting each claim, whether the data supported or disputed each claim, along with an argument for the evidence. This chapter also provides an explanation for the findings based on theoretical and speculative analysis with key implication for practice and suggestions for further research.

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

Effective communication is critical to the overall success of an organization and vitally important to the strategic planning process (Kupritz & Cowell, 2011). To understand the effects of communication on employee behavior, it is necessary to explore the concept of communication satisfaction and examine evidence of its effects. It is also

necessary to define readiness to change and factors related to this condition. This review of literature accomplishes both of these tasks.

Communication Satisfaction

Communication satisfaction has been generally defined as an individual's or group's satisfaction with the information flow within the organization (Clampitt & Downs, 1993; Downs & Adrian, 2004; Nakra, 2006). Traditionally, communication satisfaction has been considered a one-dimensional construct, with employees expressing general satisfaction or dissatisfaction with organizational communication. However, recent research reveals communication satisfaction is multidimensional, encompassing different types of information and means of dissemination (Asgari et al., 2008; De Nobile & McCormick, 2008; Gülnar, 2007; Tobias, 2014). Employees are not merely satisfied or dissatisfied with overall communication, but they tend to feel and express different degrees of satisfaction about definite categories or types of communication (Downs & Adrian, 2004).

To illustrate the diverse scope of organizational communication, Downs and Hazen (1977) identified eight dimensions of communication satisfaction (Table 1), which describe the type and quality of information, relationships, social channels, and organizational climate. These dimensions provide a comprehensive foundation for the conceptualization of communication satisfaction within an organization. Downs and Hazen's dimensions address the quality of information, the individuals involved in the communicational, organizational conditions, and communication tools.

The first dimension described by Downs and Hazen (1977) is Organizational Perspective. This dimension refers to the information shared about organizational

performance, strategies, and goals (Downs & Adrian, 2004). Information communicated within this dimension includes general or major organizational changes, financial standings, information about policies and goals, market analysis, and changing regulations and environmental conditions. Satisfaction is based on the degree to which managers keep employees abreast of organizational performance and future events or issues to be aware of.

Table 1

Eight Dimensions of Communication Satisfaction

Organizational Perspective	General information about the organization - overall policies, goals, and progress
Communication Climate	Extent that communications environment stimulates employees and general attitudes about communication
Organizational Integration	The extent that individuals receive feedback about the immediate work environment
Supervisor Communication	Two-way communication with work supervisors; consulting and participative styles
Personal Feedback	How employees are judged and how their performance is being appraised
Subordinate Communication	Two-way communication of those in managerial positions
Horizontal and Informal Communication	Accurate and free flowing lateral communication; includes information gathered informally; also called the “grapevine”
Media Quality	Technical tools used to deliver information

Communication Climate is the second dimension described by Downs and Hazen (1977). Climate refers to the general pattern of attitudes and behaviors within an organization. Communication climate, then, encompasses both personal and

organizational communication. Personal communication helps create community spirit by informing employees about expectations, company policies, celebrating successes, recognizing outstanding performance, and acknowledging other issues that affect an organization's esprit de corps (Elving, 2005). Communication climate also refers to the extent to which communication stimulates and motivates employees to meet organizational goals, as well as the degree to which employees identify with an organization (Downs & Adrian, 2004).

The third dimension, Organizational Integration, refers to the satisfaction employees have with the information they receive about their organization and immediate work environment (Downs & Adrian, 2004). Organizational integration includes interdepartmental policies and plans, requirements for individuals' respective job responsibilities, and news about co-workers and other personnel. Attempts to improve organizational integration are often futile if leaders do not support team environments via communication that integrates different divisions of an organization (Clampitt & Downs, 1993; Downs & Adrian, 2004; Downs & Hazen, 1977).

The fourth dimension described by Downs and Hazen (1977) is Supervisor Communication, which includes the components of two-way communication. Two-way communication is the process by which people exchange information, feelings, and meaning through verbal and non-verbal messages, which may affect employee performance. This dimension measures superiors' sincerity toward subordinates as well as their ability to listen and pay attention to employees (Downs & Adrian, 2004). Additional elements of supervisor communication include perceived employee trust and the extent to which supervisors offer quality guidance during problem-solving situations.

Satisfaction with personal feedback is the fifth dimension described by Downs and Hazen (1977). This dimension relates to employees' desires to understand how their job performance will be evaluated and appraised (Downs & Adrian, 2004). The fifth dimension clarifies the methods used to evaluate employees, such as top-down, peer, 360 degree, and project-based. In addition, this dimension helps organizations identify and categorize employees based on their work outcomes (Thelen, 2021), which helps leaders motivate high performers and provide proper training to those who do not meet job expectations. This dimension also encompasses questions about superiors' understanding of job-related problems.

Subordinate Communication is the sixth dimension, which reflects managers' perceptions of two-way communication within an organizational structure (Downs & Adrian, 2004). Employee responsiveness to downward communication, as well as their willingness and capability to send accurate upward communication is measured. Superiors are also asked whether they experience communication overload.

Horizontal and Informal Communication is the seventh dimension of Downs and Hazen's (1977) framework. This dimension refers to the information delivered and the amount of activity within information networks (Downs & Adrian, 2004). For example, to prepare an organization for change, the objectives of new initiatives must be communicated, as well as why the changes are taking place. The accuracy and flow of communication and information gathered informally and unofficially between co-workers is also identified, often called the "grapevine," that can be filled with innuendo and uncertainty which could undermine new reforms.

Media Quality is the final dimension, which describes the technical tools used to deliver information to employees, such as answering employees' questions regarding efficiency, rewards, control, and relationship roles (Clampitt & Downs, 1993; Downs & Adrian, 2004; Downs & Hazen, 1977). This dimension accounts for perception toward various tools to communicate with employees. Electronic mail, intranet, social media, video conferences, and webinars are some common communication tools used to apprise employees of activities and organizational news (Hynes, 2015). For example, perceptions of media quality may relate to an organization's personnel meetings, the clarity of written directives, and the helpfulness of organizational publications (Clampitt & Downs, 1993; Downs & Adrian, 2004; Downs & Hazen, 1977). Employees are asked about the helpfulness and clarity of information, along with the perceived quality.

Higher levels of communication satisfaction fostered through the eight dimensions can enhance employees' sense of membership and belonging. The traditional workplace model, in which employees work in the same building, speak the same language, and meet face-to-face, has become antiquated (Payne, 2013). Today's organizations require colleagues to communicate via phone calls, email, and virtual meetings. Communication Satisfaction not only applies to the means of communication, but also the context of communication, such as management meetings, annual appraisals, and employee surveys (Ngozi & Ifeoma, 2015).

Perhaps the actual communication dimension is not suitable for the purpose intended or the employees are not aware of how to properly utilize the dimension, and lastly the dimension could conflict with the overall culture of the organization (Payne, 2013; Simsek, 2016). For example, video conferencing may be an ineffective means of

communication because the supporting technology is not available, participants may be unable to adapt their communication styles, or employees may feel that face time and interpersonal relationships are more important when communicating (Langone, 2018). The effect of communication on an organization involves many factors. Organizations can achieve high levels of communication satisfaction by providing employees with necessary tools, support, guidance, and skills.

When employees' needs and expectations are positively met, customers' needs and expectations are more likely to be satisfied, promoting increased organizational productivity and growth. However, the outcomes of poorly managed communication include rumors and resistance to change, creating potential barriers to organizational changes (Kumar, 2009; Langone, 2018). Proper development of Downs and Hazen's (1977) eight Dimensions of Communication Satisfaction can guard against ineffective communication during planned change.

Effects of Communication Satisfaction

Relevant and meaningful communication educates and informs employees at all levels, and also motivates them to support new reforms (Langone, 2018). Previous research on organizational communication revealed that when employees' communication needs are met, they are more likely to build effective work relationships (Gray & Laidlaw, 2004; Wagner et al., 2015). Langone (2018) and Hunt et al., (2000) reported that individuals' cognitive and affective perceptions of an organization influence their behavior within the organization; this feature is vital because change readiness is imperative to successful transformation initiatives (Kotter & Cohen, 2002; Lambert & Hogan, 2009) and resistance is a major barrier to overcome.

Employees look to management for credible information about the nature and effects of new strategies because executive leaders often decide the direction and scope of the new initiatives (Bray & Williams, 2017). Simsek (2016) along with Andevski and Arsenijevi (2012) found that effective communication reduced the amount of time employees needed to determine how to act in professional situations. When employees understand management's expectations, they are better positioned to contribute to management's goals (Gilsdorf, 1998). The researchers noted that employees who received clear and accurate communication performed at higher levels and were more likely to experience high job satisfaction. Alternatively, poor employee communication satisfaction can result in increased stress, staff turnover, absenteeism, and burnout (Lambert & Hogan, 2009; Ngozi & Ifeoma, 2015). Two possible outcomes associated with effective Communication Satisfaction are job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

Job Satisfaction

Positive relationships exist between the amount of time spent communicating new initiatives, increased job satisfaction, and the level of effort expended by employees (Carriere & Bourque, 2009). Recent researchers (Oso et al., 2017; Vermeir et al., 2018) found organizational communication satisfaction was significantly and positively associated with job satisfaction. Ngozi and Ifeoma (2015) reported that employee job performance was influenced by the accuracy of information shared within the workplace, and high job performance was related to high job satisfaction. As Tobias (2014) explained, without open and ongoing communication among group members, behaviors are likely to become random, disorganized, and uncommitted to specific goals.

Organizational leaders can help prevent low job satisfaction by providing accurate information, enhancing communication, and training employees to cope with the stress created by organizational change (Simsek, 2016; Tobias, 2014).

Researchers have identified significant relationships between organizational communication and job satisfaction. If organizations can develop consistent improvements to communication, it is likely that levels of employee job satisfaction will increase (Kumar, 2009). Communication practices can affect employees' sense of community and organizational commitment (Carriere & Bourque, 2009), which emphasizes the important role of organizational communication in employees' job perceptions and performance. Positive relationships between communication satisfaction and job performance support further research about communication and its influence on job satisfaction and performance (Carriere & Bourque, 2009).

Organizational Commitment

Researchers have linked effective organizational communication with reduced turnover and change resistance, higher levels of employee engagement, and increased employee commitment (Ammari et al., 2017). Evidence supports a relationship between employee voice (freedom to speak up about concerns and the ability to argue the issues surrounding those concerns) and organizational commitment (Tobias, 2014), which describes an employees' desire to remain employed by an organization, acceptance of its goals and values, and willingness to exert effort on behalf of the organization (Bray & Williams, 2017).

Carriere and Bourque (2009) found that organizational commitment depended largely on employees' knowledge and understanding of a company's strategic issues.

Accordingly, communication must be well managed during any change process to avoid confusion. Messages should be clear, honest, accurate, and utilize a variety of mediums with high coverage and effect (Karakaya, 2013; Simsek, 2016). Other researchers have reported similar findings regarding communication and its influence on organizational commitment. For example, Ghiyasvandian et al., (2017), Abdullah and Hui (2014), and Stewart et al., (2019) discovered a positive relationship between communication satisfaction and employees' organizational commitment. Employees often decide how they feel about an organization and set their commitment level accordingly.

In a study on similarities of underlying relationships between organizational commitment and communication, Baker-Tate (2010) compared data from several institutions of higher learning and found the communication practiced in an organization was directly related to organizational commitment. As Allen et al. (2007) explains, sincere and effective communication allows employees to integrate organizational reforms by internalizing organizational objectives and rules. The extent to which employees' own values and goals relate to those of an organization influence their organizational commitment; therefore, it is considered to be the linkage between the individual employee and the organization (Allen et al., 2007; Ammari et al., 2017; Wagner et al., 2015), and contributes to an organization's successful implementation of new reforms.

According to Baker-Tate (2010) and Bray and Williams (2017), the relationship between communication satisfaction and organizational commitment supports additional research about communication and its influence on job satisfaction and employee commitment. The effect of communication on an organization involves many factors.

Communication may be used as a mechanism to dismantle the actual construct of communication satisfaction; how communication relates to job satisfaction and organizational commitment can provide a strong framework for understanding employees' readiness for organizational change.

Readiness for Organizational Change

Weiner (2009) defined organizational readiness for change as, “organizational members' shared resolved to implement a change (change commitment) and a shared belief in their collective capability to do so (change efficacy)” (p. 295). Similar to Bandura's (1997) notion of collective efficacy, Weiner conceived of readiness to change as a belief in the collective commitment of organizational members to the planned change, along with organizational members' confidence in their ability to bring about change. Weiner emphasized shared beliefs and collective capabilities because effective implementation entails collective and collaborative action among interdependent employees and work teams.

As Bandura (2000) and others (Vermeir et al., 2018; Von Treuer et al., 2018) have noted, efficacy judgments refer to action capabilities; efficacy judgments are neither outcome expectancies nor assessments of knowledge, skills, or resources. Organizational members influence the ways in which policies, procedures, and new reforms are implemented (Weiner, et al., 2020). Differences in employees, such as cultures, personalities, values, communication styles, education level, and a plethora of other factors, can make efficacy judgments difficult. Change efficacy, an element of readiness, is higher when people share a sense of confidence that they can collectively implement complex organizational change. Weiner's (2009) definition of organizational readiness

for change is suitable for examining changes in which collective action underpins system-wide implementation of new processes. Shared resolve solidifies individuals' collective energy and motivation to bring a new vision to life.

Organizational readiness for change is considered a key precursor to successful implementation of organizational reform (Lewin, 1951; Weiner, et al., 2020). The failure to establish sufficient readiness accounts for almost fifty percent of failed organizational change efforts (Kuhar et al., 2004). Change management research indicates that the readiness of organizational members creates an atmosphere that encourages individuals to embrace new process and initiatives (Weiner, 2009).

Using Lewin's (1951) three-stage model of change, experts have suggested several strategies to create readiness for change by "unfreezing" current mindsets and generating motivation for change. These plans include emphasizing incongruities between present and preferred performance levels, provoking dissatisfaction with current situations, establishing an appealing image of the future, and encouraging confidence that a desired future state can be achieved (Gupta, 2011; Holt et al., 2006; Levesque et al., 2001; Mrayyan, 2019; Narine & Persaud, 2003; Weiner et al., 2009; Win & Chotiyaputta, 2018). Herscovitch and Meyer (2002) observed that organizational members can commit to organizational change because they want to (they value the change), because they have to (they have little choice), or because they ought to (they feel obliged). Commitment based on "want to" indicates the highest level of commitment to readiness for organizational change.

Organizational readiness for change fluctuates according to how strongly organizational members value new initiatives (Weiner, 2009; Weiner, et al., 2020).

Problems can arise when some actors are committed to implementation, but others are not. Previous research related to management communication suggests that employees' perceptions of management communication affects their willingness to do things differently, as well as the degree to which they engage in the change process (Mrayyan, 2019). Lasting change requires members to incorporate new innovations and policies into their daily routines.

When readiness for change is high, employees are more likely to initiate change, exert greater effort, exhibit persistence, and display more cooperative behaviors because they know what to expect, how to proceed, and have necessary resources available to implement new reforms (Weiner, 2009). A more effective implementation is the result. Without the support of employees throughout an entire organization, sweeping and radical transformation efforts are likely to fail (Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002; Weiner, et al., 2020). The unsatisfactory results of many reforms or improvements (Attaran et al., 2019; Marks, 2006; Paper & Chang, 2005) accentuate the fact that organizations are frequently ineffective at achieving the needed levels of employee commitment to change, so then what are the conditions necessary to foster a shared sense of readiness?

Klein and Kozlowski (2000) argued that "leadership messages and actions, information sharing through social interaction, and shared experience--including experience with past change efforts--could promote commonality in organizational members' readiness perceptions" (p. 226). Organizational members are unlikely to hold common perceptions and demonstrate willingness to embrace new ways of doing things if communication is limited and/or leaders act in ways that are inconsistent with the new vision. Additionally, limited opportunities for departments to share information and make

sense of new situations can constrain organizational readiness for change (Weiner, 2009). Thus, lower organizational readiness for change could result from poor communication strategies and a lack of information sharing (Weiner, et al., 2020).

Creating a shared sense of readiness can be difficult for organizations to achieve (Courpasson et al., 2012; Mrayyan, 2019; Von Treuer et al., 2018; Win & Chotiyaputta, 2018). Such difficulties explain why numerous organizations fail to generate adequate organizational readiness for change and subsequently experience complications or utter failure when implementing complex organizational reforms (Weiner, 2009). While organizational readiness for change may be challenging to achieve, social cognitive theory proposes several circumstances or conditions that may promote it.

Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework

Alberta Bandura's social cognitive theory (SCT) Bandura, (1986) is used in this study used to examine the relationship between communication satisfaction and organizational readiness to change. This study makes the argument that an appropriate hypothesized model would target the social and psychological drivers of organizational readiness to change. This section lays out the design and argument for such a model, deriving from two sources: 1) the cognitive, behavioral, and environmental components of social cognitive theory, and 2) evidence on the use of communication satisfaction as a means of increasing employees' readiness to change by effecting their job satisfaction and organizational commitment levels.

Component of Social Cognitive Theory

Social cognitive theory (SCT) is used in this study to explain the social and psychological sources of motivation and human behavior. At the core of SCT, humans are not forced to act according to external stimuli, neither are they driven by internal forces (Bandura, 1997). Individuals are self-organizing, proactive, self-reflective, and self-regulating entities, not merely reactive organisms shaped and shepherded by external events or internal forces. According to Bandura 2001, human growth, adaptation, and change are inextricably linked to social systems. As a result, individual agency acts within a complex network of social factors. Personal agency and social structure work as co-determinants within this structure and people react based on their own perceptions, conduct, and social surroundings (Bandura, 2001).

Human nature has a broad potential that may be shaped into a wide range of forms within biological constraints by direct and observational experience (Bandura,

2001). To assert that one of the primary differentiating characteristics of humans is their innate adaptability is not to imply that they lack nature or are created without structure (Miles et al., 1996). The inherent flexibility of humans is dependent on neurophysiological systems and structures that have evolved over time. These highly developed brain networks specialized in processing, preserving, and utilizing coded information enabled the development of distinctly human capacities such as generative symbolization, foresight, evaluative self-regulation, reflective self-consciousness, and symbolic communication (Bandura, 2001). These three influences-cognitive, behavioral, and environmental-constantly interact with each other in a triadic and dramatic relationship (Bandura, 1986). These capabilities are discussed in detail in the following sections

Cognitive Influences

Cognitive, vicarious, self-regulatory, and self-reflective processes are important to SCT. The majority of environmental variables have an effect on behavior indirectly, through cognitive processes. Cognitive factors influence which environmental events are perceived, how they are interpreted, whether they have enduring consequences, their emotional impact and motivating strength, and how the knowledge they transmit is organized for future use (Bandura, 2001). People process and turn temporary experiences into cognitive models that serve as guides for judgment and behavior through the use of symbols then people add meaning, form, and connection to their experiences.

By operating symbolically on the plethora of information gained from personal and vicarious experiences, individuals develop an understanding of causal relationships (Bandura, 2001). They also learn to resolve issues by developing solutions, evaluating

their potential results, and selecting suitable possibilities without having to engage in an arduous behavioral search (Bandura, 2000). Through the use of symbols, humans can communicate across time and space. However, social cognitive theory, in keeping with the interactional perspective, puts the main focus on the social origins of cognition and the mechanisms through which social factors influence cognitive functioning.

Behavioral Influences

Individuals are more than knowers and performers. They are also self-reactors with the capacity for self-direction. Effective behavioral functioning creates the elimination of external punishments and demands in favor of self-regulation (Bandura, 2001). Motivation, mood, and action are all self-regulated in part through internal standards and evaluative reactions to one's own conduct (Bandura, 1997). Self-satisfaction associated with meeting desired standards and dissatisfaction associated with inadequate performance serve as intrinsic motivators for action (Bandura, 2001). The motivational benefits of standards are not due to the standards themselves, but to the evaluative self-investment in activities and positive and negative reactions to one's performance.

Most self-regulation ideas are based on a negative feedback loop in which individuals attempt to reduce the gap between their perceived performance and an established benchmark (Bandura, 2001). However, self-regulation through negative disparity only conveys half of the issue. Indeed, humans are proactive, aspirational organisms. Human self-regulation is based on both the development and decrease of discrepancies (Bandura, 2001). Through proactive control, individuals drive and direct their behaviors by setting demanding goals and then utilizing their resources, talents, and

efforts to accomplish them. After achieving the goal for which they were striving, individuals with a strong sense of competence set new ones for themselves. Adopting additional challenges introduces fresh motivational discrepancies to overcome. Thus, Bandura 2001 states that, self-regulation of motivation and activity entails a dual control process that begins with the generation of disequilibrium discrepancies (proactive control) and ends with the reduction of equilibrating discrepancies (reactive control).

Additional research indicates that successful completion of challenging tasks fosters motivation (Abdullah, 2019; Porter et al., 2003). This does not mean, however, that simply accomplishing a task will result in increased readiness to change. Rather, readiness to change depends on how employees psychologically process the information generated from tasks. Learning from one's previous accomplishments, as well as those of other employees, is particularly important when individuals have little prior experience on which to arrive at a base assessment (Ozyilmaz et al., 2018).

Environmental Influences

Psychological theories have historically placed a premium on learning through the consequences of one's actions. If information and skills were gained solely through reaction consequences, human progress would be significantly slowed, to say nothing of being extremely tiresome and dangerous (Bandura, 2000). A culture cannot transfer its language, social behaviors, and essential abilities if they must be painstakingly sculpted each time a new member responds in the absence of models exemplifying the cultural norms (Bandura, 2001). Accelerating the acquisition process is critical for survival and self-development, as natural endowment supplies few inborn abilities, threats are constant, and errors can be fatal. Additionally, time, budget, and mobility constraints

severely restrict the places and activities that can be investigated directly for the purpose of acquiring new information and competencies (Bandura, 2001).

Humans have acquired a sophisticated aptitude for observational learning, which enables them to swiftly extend their knowledge and abilities through the information communicated by a diverse array of models. Indeed, practically all behavioral, cognitive, and affective learning can be accomplished vicariously through observation of other people's behaviors and their outcomes (Bandura, 1986). Much social learning comes as a result of models in one's immediate environment, either consciously or unintentionally. However, thorough modeling in the symbolic context of organizational readiness to change, yields a wealth of knowledge about human values, modes of thought, and behavioral tendencies.

A significant aspect of symbolic modeling is its enormous scope and psychosocial influence. Unlike learning by doing, which requires adjusting each individual's actions through repetitive trial and error, observational learning allows a single model to simultaneously transmit new ways of thinking and behaving to a large number of people in widely scattered areas (Bandura, 2001). Another feature of symbolic modeling amplifies its psychological and societal consequences. People come into close contact with only a limited portion of the physical and social surroundings on a regular basis. They work in the same environment, travel the same routes, see the same sights, and interact with the same group of friends and acquaintances. As a result, without direct experiencing corrections, their ideas of social reality are heavily impacted by vicarious experiences—what they see, hear, and read (Bandura, 2000). People act mostly on the basis of their perceptions of reality. The more people's perceptions of reality are shaped

by the symbolic environment of the media, the greater its societal impact (S. Ball et al., 1976).

Modeling can provide a training approach for enhancing employees' willingness to change. Through this strategy, managers can develop effective procedures for coping with cognitive and behavioral intricacies of a particular job. Those procedures can then be conveyed to employees and used to create programs to improve competence (Bandura, 2000).

Social and Psychological Aspects of Organizational Readiness to Change

According to Bandura (1986), people experience physical and emotional sensations when dealing with certain situations, which can influence their cognitive, motivational and behavioral levels all of which can influence their willingness to change. Some examples situations that can induce anxiety and stress include taking an exam, giving a speech in front of a large group of people, or embarking on a task that one hasn't previously completed (Blackley, et al., 2021). Even though this source is the least influential, it is important to note that if an individual is at ease with the task at hand, they will feel more capable and experience a higher level of competence (Partin-Dunn, 2020).

Because working in teams is vitally important in today's organizations, Bandura (1986) extended social cognitive theory from a focus on individual competence, to the group level and corresponding construct of collective competence (Porter et al., 2003) which is defined as a group's shared belief in its joint capabilities to perform actions required to successfully achieve a certain level of performance (Bandura, 1986; Stajkovic & Lee, 2001). When shared commitment to organizational readiness to change is paramount, shared resolve is necessary because implementing complex organizational

changes requires collaborative action by a large number of people, each of whom contributes something to the effort. According to Herscovitch and Meyer, 2002, organizational members can commit to implementing a change because they want to (they value the change), because they have to (they have little choice), or because they ought to (they feel obliged). Commitment motivated by 'want to' demonstrates the highest level of commitment to organizational change implementation. Due to the fact that implementation is frequently a 'team sport', issues arise when some are committed to implementation while others are not.

According to SCT, collective competence has the same antecedents of self-competence, which operate through similar processes and have the same correlates and consequences (Porter et al., 2003) because, as Bandura (1986) explained, "inveterate self-doubters are not easily forged into a collective efficacious force" (p. 143). Individuals' beliefs are not detached from the group in which they function, nor is a group's competence interdependent of the competence of individuals compromising the group. In other words, it is hard to access individual competence without considering relevant group dynamics and how well each member executes their respective roles (Porter et al., 2003).

Organizational readiness to change is essential to determining group motivation and performance because successful group performance is contingent upon cooperative dynamics and shared skills and abilities (Bandura, 2000). Organizational readiness for the context of this study is a multi-level, multi-faceted construct (Weiner, 2009) that more precisely, refers to organizational members' commitment to implementing change (Weiner et al., 2009). This definition is consistent with the common usage of the term

'readiness,' which denotes a state of psychological and behavioral readiness to act (i.e., willing and able). Organizational readiness to change determines what tasks groups choose to complete, how much effort they put into those tasks, and how long they sustain efforts in the face of adverse and uncertain conditions. Research on organizational readiness to change reveals a strong relationship with work performance. In particular, a meta-analysis (2,687 groups) by Stajkovic and Lee (2001) found an average correlation of .45 between organizational readiness to change and group performance. Utilizing the same probability of success shown for that study, this suggests there is likely almost a 76% probability that a group higher organizational readiness to change will outperform a group with lower levels of readiness to change (Porter et al., 2003).

Similar to Bandura's concept of goal commitment, change commitment refers to an organization's members' shared determination to pursue the change implementation courses of action (Bandura, 1997). As a result, when an organization's readiness is higher, its members are more likely to initiate change, exert additional effort, demonstrate greater persistence, and exhibit more cooperative behavior. As a result, implementation becomes more effective.

Hypothesized Model and Rationale

Previously, Bandura's (1997) notion of collective efficacy was utilized to conceptualize organizational readiness to change. The evidence on Social-Cognitive Theory (SCT) is used to link motivation, self-regulation, and positive mental states. The general explanation of how multiple motivational components relate to group effectiveness provided by SCT leads to a hypothesized model that was tested in the current empirical analysis.

Bandura (1986) stated that humans are not forced to act according to external stimuli, neither are they driven by internal forces. Rather, people react based on their own perceptions, conduct, and social surroundings. These three influences—cognitive, behavioral, and environmental—constantly interact with each other in a triadic and dramatic relationship (Bandura, 1986).

Research on SCT signifies that individuals with increased self-efficacy beliefs are increasingly likely to engage in innovative behavior and persist in the face of setbacks (Abdullah, 2019). This persistence is vital for employees dealing with organizational change. Researchers have observed that readiness to change is positively related to one's ability to successfully cope with changes at work (Mrayyan, 2019) and the perception that such change is controllable (Vardaman et al., 2012). An employee's increased confidence of their capacity to change established work practices, norms, and routines (Ng & Lucianetti, 2016) can promote new reform implementation. Early adopters might encounter situations that can create distress (Janssen & Van Yperen, 2004). However, employees who experience increases in readiness are increasingly able and motivated to overcome any negative feelings associated with changes (Ng & Lucianetti, 2016). Much of the existing research indicates that employees' favorable attitudes toward readiness to change are positively related to their behavioral adoption and SCT (Coeurderoy et al., 2014; Mrayyan, 2019). A general description of the social-psychological pathway to evolution and growth provides the foundation for a hypothesized model that predicts how communication provokes employee motivation to embrace new initiatives (Figure 1).



Figure 1

Hypothesized Model

Motivation to change is influenced by two prominent psychological characteristics, including job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Both of these characteristics create productive employee behaviors that foster positive attitudes, greater cooperation, and increased performance (Memari et al., 2013).

According to Locke (1976), job satisfaction describes “a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one’s job or job experiences” (p. 1304). Common predictors of job satisfaction include satisfaction with pay, supervision, benefits, operating conditions, nature of work, and communication (Carriere & Bourque, 2009). Additionally, job satisfaction has emotional, cognitive, and behavioral components (Bernstein & Nash, 2008). The emotional component refers to feelings toward a job, such as boredom, anxiety, or excitement. The cognitive component of job satisfaction refers to beliefs regarding one’s job, such as the belief that a job is mentally demanding and challenging. Finally, the behavioral component includes people’s actions in relation to their work, such as being tardy, staying late, or feigning sickness to avoid work (Bernstein & Nash, 2008). Employees who exhibit greater job satisfaction are more likely to exhibit employee empowerment (Gazzoli et al., 2010; Kim et al., 2009),

interpersonal relationships, work re-design, and increased service quality (He et al., 2012; Stewart et al., 2019; Tutuncu & Kozak, 2007).

Organizational commitment is an additional interpersonal source of employee empowerment. According to Porter et al. (1974), organizational commitment is an attitudinal perspective to the psychological attachment or affective commitment formed by employees in relation to their identification and involvement with respective organizations. Organizational commitment can enhance employee performance (Alanezi, 2015) and foster less turnover and absenteeism (Nehmeh, 2009). In addition, employees with higher levels of organizational commitment can bring positive outcomes to an organization (Ngozi & Ifeoma, 2015). Individuals consider the extent to which their own values and goals relate to that of the organization as part of organizational commitment; therefore, organizational commitment can link individual employees to organizations.

Most current evidence indicates that employee motivation is fueled by cognitive functioning, character traits, and motivational states that are partly acquiescent of one's job function and social network (Ozyilmaz et al., 2018). The current study focused on the social-psychological connection to one's readiness to change. As explained by SCT, communication satisfaction can determine whether an environment is inspiring and productive or defeating and limiting (Abdullah, 2019; Ryan & Deci, 2000). Based on the evidence, the researcher predicted that communication satisfaction would work to increase job satisfaction and organizational commitment thus influencing employees' readiness to change.

Chapter 4: Research Methods

This study followed a non-experimental cross-sectional design. Cross-sectional research designs have three distinctive features: (a) no time dimension; (b) a reliance on existing differences rather than changes following an intervention; and (c) groups are selected based on existing differences rather than random allocation (Hall & Lavrakas, 2008). A cross-sectional design can only be used to measure differences between or among a variety of people, subjects, or phenomena, rather than a process of change (Lavrakas, 2008). As such, researchers using this design can only employ a relatively passive approach to making causal inferences based on findings.

According to Barratt and Kirwan (2009), cross-sectional studies provide a clear “snapshot” of outcomes and characteristics associated with a change, at a specific point in time. Unlike an experimental design, in which an intervention is used to produce and measure change or to create differences, cross-sectional designs are used to study and draw inferences about existing differences between people, subjects, or phenomena, for a single point in time. While longitudinal studies involve multiple measurements over an extended period of time, cross-sectional research examines relationships between variables at one moment in time.

Groups identified for the current study included employees at Tulsa Technology Center (TTC) who were faculty and staff that do not supervise employees. Demographic data were collected from participants, including age, years employed, and job role within the organization. A description of the participants was advisable so that other readers of the study know whether the findings of the study of one group of participants might be similar to another group of participants. These groups represented a cross-section of

employees working at TTC and were purposely selected based upon existing differences, rather than random sampling. Cross-sectional studies are capable of using data from a large number of subjects; unlike observational studies, cross-sectional studies are not geographically bound. Because cross-sectional designs generally use survey techniques to gather data, they are relatively inexpensive and take up little time to conduct.

Background

This research examined the structural relationships among employee Communication Satisfaction, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and readiness to change at TTC. Tulsa Technology Center (TTC) is the oldest and largest technology center in Oklahoma's Career Tech System, and was founded in 1965 as part of Tulsa Public Schools. Tulsa Technology Center purchased its single campus (now the Lemley Campus) from Tulsa Public Schools and became an independent school district in 1973. With sites now in Owasso and Sand Springs, along with five other campuses in the Tulsa metro area, TTC serves over 5000 full-time adult and high school students and consists of 92 programs and 206 full-time faculty.

Tulsa Technology Center offers a wide range of opportunities to prepare students for career success. Students can choose from a variety of programs including health sciences, aerospace, pre-engineering, automotive/alternative fuels, and information technology. Tuition is free for public, private, and home-schooled high school students, with low-cost tuition for adult learners. Morning, afternoon, evening, and all-day classes are available to fit any student's schedule. TTC builds partnerships with business and industry communities within the Tulsa area, creating opportunities for student placement

and work-based experience. Career advising is also available for middle school, high school, and adult students.

The TTC is currently in the last phase of a four-part strategic planning implementation. The plan addresses six priority initiatives: (a) increase market awareness and understanding, (b) improve student access and success, (c) align program portfolio with industry needs, (d) strengthen partner relationships, (e) enhance organizational effectiveness, and (f) enrich human capital development and experience. One critical internal issue identified by a 120-member stakeholder conference held in April 2014 was internal communication. Horizontal and vertical communication needed to be improved at all levels of the district, starting with management. The district, in turn, adopted communication and collaboration as one of its core values, recognizing that success of the organization depended on effective collaboration and strong partnerships. The TTC is currently working on various projects and initiatives to promote two-way communication flow and provide timely, accurate, and complete information to the public, faculty, staff, and students.

Data Collection

This study was designed in accordance with the guidelines established by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the University of Oklahoma (OU). After meeting specific training certification requirements and obtaining IRB approval from OU to move forward with the project, the researcher inquired about receiving approval from the TTC Superintendent and/or Director of Human Capital to survey faculty and staff. Oversampling of 425 full-time faculty and staff members at TTC was conducted to ensure an adequate sample size was obtained. According to previous survey research

(Dillman, 2020; Pituch & Stevens, 2015), response rates for email-administered questionnaires are typically between 20% and 30%.

The total number of faculty and staff available for selection at the time of the study was obtained via e-mail and phone dialog with the human resource department (Pam Winterscheidt, email communication, October 2017). To be eligible to participate, individuals had to be full-time faculty and staff members who were currently employed by TTC did not hold supervisory roles. Study participation was completely voluntary. For the quantitative phase of the study, study participants were all currently employed, full-time faculty and staff members as of October 2017. The survey was administered online and consisted of several instruments. Participants varied in terms of age, job role, and years employed within the TTC district. The unit of analysis was individual faculty/staff for all indicators.

Profile of Participants

The study population included 425 full-time faculty and staff members at TTC who do not hold supervisory roles. The survey was attempted by 136 employees; however, 21 of those surveys were eliminated based on the following reasons: 15 participants provided informed consent but did not complete the entire survey; six participants did not agree to the informed consent. The final dataset consisted of 113 completed surveys, resulting in a 27% response rate. According to Hall and Lavrakas (2008), a 20-40% response rate for survey research is common; therefore, this response rate was considered acceptable.

A number of instruments were used to collect quantitative data for this study (Communication Satisfaction, Job Readiness Questionnaire, Organizational Commitment

Questionnaire, and Organizational Readiness for Implementing Change Questionnaire).

The survey instruments were used to assess faculty and staff members' overall satisfaction and willingness to implement strategic planning initiatives. These questionnaires contained response items of different formats, including dichotomous responses, multiple choice responses, self-assessment items, (measured on the Likert-type scale), and open-ended questions.

The surveys were web-based and accessed through the URL provided by Qualtrics, which was sent to all current full-time faculty and staff members identified by the Human Resource Department at TTC. An advantage of web-based surveys is that participants' responses were automatically stored in a database, and the final dataset was easily transformed into numeric data in Excel or SPSS formats. All of the employees at TTC had a company email address. Email can be used for company announcements as well as notifications, thus making work emails an ideal medium for reaching the majority of TTC's employees.

This study used a consent procedure to notify participants of the voluntary nature of the study. Participants were informed of the purpose of the research, the time involved, how the research would benefit them, who to contact for questions concerning the research, and contact information regarding questions about their rights as a research participant. This information was addressed in a cover letter to all participants of online surveys. After the online survey was ready for delivery, an email notice was distributed to announce the study. Flyers were placed on prominent bulletin boards, encouraging faculty and staff to check their email for the study invitation. Five days after the announcement, the web-based survey was sent to potential respondents along with the

aforementioned cover letter. When respondents clicked the link to the web-based survey, they had to check a button that stated “I agree to complete these surveys.” This action served as evidence of their agreement to participate in the research study and complete the questionnaires.

Once completed, employees simply clicked a button and the electronic survey was submitted. As an incentive to participate in the study, respondents were able to provide contact information if they wanted to participate in a random drawing for a prize. This information was kept separate from the actual data; after data collection was complete, the information was destroyed.

Measures

The study survey consisted of 118 questions. The instrument was comprised of an informed consent form, three demographic questions, items from four validated surveys, and one qualitative, open-ended question. The first survey was the Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire (Downs & Hazen, 1977), which consisted of 42 questions. The second survey was the Job Satisfaction Survey (Spector, 1997), which consisted of 36 questions. The third survey was the Meyer and Allen Model of Organizational Commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1997), which consisted of 18 questions. The fourth survey was the Organizational Readiness for Implementing Change (ORIC) questionnaire, which consisted of 12 questions. Participants ranked questions on a 5 to 7-point Likert scale. A qualitative question was added to the overall survey to provide the participants with an opportunity to relay both positive and negative feedback regarding employee communication at the institution.

Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire

The Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire (CSQ) was developed by Downs and Hazen (1977) and is widely-used instrument for measuring organizational communication effectiveness. The CSQ has been used in a number of organizations and industries (Abdullah & Hui, 2014), leading to a greater understanding about the importance of communication in organizations. This instrument has been translated into more than six different languages and utilized internationally (Alanezi, 2015). The CSQ focuses on employees' attitudes and judgments of several communicative practices, as these perceptions influence employee behavior within organizations (Zwijze-Koning & de Jong, 2007).

Downs and Hazen (1977) identified eight dimensions of communication satisfaction in the CSQ, which illustrate the diverse scope of organizational communication. Each dimension consists of five questions to measure perceived satisfaction on a seven-point Likert scale, ranging from very dissatisfied to very satisfied. The CSQ is comprehensive, efficient, easily scored, and typically completed within 15 minutes (Greenbaum et al., 1988). Effective communication helps organizations strengthen employees and reach organizational goals (Hindi et al., 2004). Several researchers examined communication satisfaction with job satisfaction (Akkirman & Harris, 2005; Nakra, 2006; Wagner et al., 2015) and reported a positive relationship between these two factors.

Job Satisfaction Scale

The Job Satisfaction Survey (Spector, 1997) was used to measure job satisfaction. The JSS is used to evaluate nine dimensions of job satisfaction, which relate to overall

satisfaction. This instrument is well established among the other job satisfaction scales (Spector, 1997). The JSS consists of 36 items scored along a six-point Likert-type scale ranging from Disagree Very Much (1) to Agree Very Much (6). A nine-facet scale is used to assess employee attitudes about aspects of the job. The nine facets include Pay, Promotion, Supervision, Fringe Benefits, Contingent Rewards (performance based rewards), Operating Procedures (required rules and procedures), Coworkers, Nature of Work, and Communication (Spector, 1997). Each facet is assessed with four items, and a total score is computed from all items. Although the JSS was originally developed for use in human service organizations, it is applicable to organizations such as public employees and teachers in secondary education because of its structure, validity, reliability and internal consistency (Girma, 2016).

Meyer and Allen Model of Organizational Commitment

This construct for measuring organizational commitment was developed by Meyer and Allen (1997) and is arguably the most popular measure of organizational commitment in management and psychology literature (Jaros, 2007; Memari et al., 2013). Meyer and Allen proposed that organizational commitment is felt by employees as three simultaneous mindsets: the Affective Commitment Scale (ACS), the Normative Commitment Scale (NCS), and the Continuance Commitment Scale (Jaros, 2007). The scale is comprised of eight items; however, Meyer and Allen created an academic version of the Three-Component Model (TCM) survey of commitment (2004). The academic version of the TCM Employee Commitment Survey was prepared for researchers who intend to use the commitment scales for academic research purposes. The survey consists of 24 items, which have scored along a seven-point Likert-type scale, ranging from

strongly disagree to strongly agree. Higher scores indicate stronger organizational commitment.

Organizational Readiness for Implementing Change (ORIC)

The Organizational Readiness for Implementing Change (ORIC) was used to measure change readiness. This 12-item instrument employs a five-point scale (ranging from disagree to agree), drawing on Weiner's (2009) theory of Organizational Readiness for Change. The ORIC was "developed and validated to measure organizational readiness in healthcare contexts" (Shea et al., 2014, p. 7). For the purpose of the current study, the ORIC was used to assess employees' organizational readiness to implement organizational change, via perceptions of individuals responsible for initiating new reforms. The climate concerning organizational change has been identified as major contributor of employees' readiness for change (Weiner, et al., 2020).

Analysis

Data analysis included descriptive statistics of the data, reliability estimation, factor analyses, correlation analysis, regression analysis, and path analysis using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The path analytic approach was utilized to study the correlation between the variables. Details of the analyses and the statistical techniques utilized to analyze and report the data are described in the following sections. Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used for descriptive statistics, reliability analysis, factor analysis, and regression analysis. Analysis of Moment Structure (AMOS) was used to conduct PATH analyses.

Descriptive statistics. Descriptive statistics included the number of participants who took the survey, the range of scores, the means, medians, modes, and standard deviations for all the items.

Reliability analysis. According to Pedhazure and Schmelkin (1991), reliability is a necessary condition of validity, which is used to check the homogeneity of items used to measure a variable or to the extent to which item scores are free from “errors of measurement” (p. 82). Cronbach’s alpha or alpha coefficient is the most commonly used technique to estimate internal-consistency reliability (Pedhazure & Schmelkin, 1991). For the current study, the reliability of the four scales of measurement for communication satisfaction, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and readiness to change was estimated using Cronbach’s alpha technique.

Correlation analysis. The researcher used the correlation coefficient (r) to determine if there were positive or negative associations between study variables. A correlation analysis is used to examine if an association or covariance exists between two variables (Kachigan, 1991). According to Kachigan (1991), “the correlation coefficient finds application in the widest range of data analysis problems” (p. 125). A correlation coefficient, or r , can range from -1 to +1. While a correlation coefficient of +1 suggests a perfect positive correlation, an r of -1 suggests a perfect negative correlation. An r of 0 suggests no relationship exists between the two variables of interest.

In this study, the researcher hypothesized a significant positive correlation would exist between communication satisfaction and each of the dependent variables (job satisfaction and organizational commitment). Similarly, the researcher hypothesized a significant positive correlation would exist between job satisfaction and the readiness to

change. It was also hypothesized that a significant positive correlation would exist between job satisfaction and organizational commitment. All hypothesized relationships were unidirectional and were hence defined as one-tailed (Price, 2000).

Path analysis. A path analytic approach was used to depict the correlation matrices hypothesized in the study and to test the hypothesized causal paths between variables. The path model for this study was hypothesized based on the results of the researcher who suggested a causal relationship among communication satisfaction, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. According to Klem (1995), a path analysis is conducted under the following assumptions:

1. The casual flow is in one-direction. That is, there is no reverse causation;
2. Relations among models are linear, additive, and causal. Curvilinear, multiplicative, or interaction relations are not included;
3. Residuals are uncorrelated with all other variables and other residuals; and
4. Variables are measured on an interval scale and variables used as predictors are measured without error.

Based on path analysis literature (Garson, 2007; Mertler & Vannatta, 2005) communication satisfaction was categorized as an exogenous variable. Exogenous variables are defined as independent variables that do not have any clear causes. In contrast, endogenous variables have explicit causes and include intervening/intermediate variables and dependent variables. For the current study, job satisfaction and organizational commitment were termed endogenous variables. Communication satisfaction was examined as the independent variable, and readiness to change was examined as a dependent variable. The path analysis approach was used to examine the

direct and/or indirect effects of communication satisfaction and its two dimensions, job satisfaction and organizational commitment on readiness to change.

Study Limitations

Limitations exist in all facets of research, and this study was no exception. Limitations that must be considered when rationalizing the evidence and conclusions presented in this research. These limitations do not negate the findings, but clarify particular aspects of the study for future reference.

Internal Validity

According to Gravetter and Forzano (2015) internal validity refers to the accuracy and effectiveness of the measurement and test itself; that is, outcomes can be attributed to the independent variable, not other factors. In experimental research, a cause-and-effect relationship can be determined because researchers can control variables. In contrast, non-experimental research relies interactions, observations, and interpretations to arrive at conclusion. While non-experimental research cannot determine cause-and-effect relationships, it can demonstrate high levels of external validity, and under certain conditions, findings from non-experimental research may be generalized to larger populations. All of the statistical data demonstrated valid research design measures and good reliability based on Cronbach alpha acceptability of .70 or greater. The following Cronbach alpha values report inter-item consistency. Alpha values greater than .80 suggest excellent reliability, between .80-.89, is good, between .70 - .79 acceptable, below .70 is questionable, between .60 and .50 is poor and below .50 is unacceptable. As shown in Table 2, all study measures demonstrated excellent to acceptable reliability, according to guidelines suggested by George and Mallery (2016).

Table 2

Cronbac's Alpha for Study Measures

	<i>α</i>
Comm. Satisfaction	0.98
Job Satisfaction	0.94
Affective Commitment	0.88
Continuance Commitment	0.71
Normative Commitment	0.82
Org. Change Readiness	0.96

Steps were taken to control for alternative explanations for faculty and staff's readiness to change and embrace new district initiatives in the statistical models. However, factors other than the variables of interest could contribute to organizational readiness to change.

External Validity

External validity refers to the ability to generalize the finding to a target population. One limitation was that this research was cross sectional, and was susceptible to time of measure effects. The data was taken at one point in time and could only reflect that point in time for the organization studied. The use of longitudinal designs would ensure a greater investigation in the relationships between variables. The participants from Tulsa Tech were from a range of positions that are not utilized at other tech centers so the findings cannot be generalized for other organization that are not similar in structure to Tulsa Tech. Also, the timing of the questionnaire was limited to the discretion of the Human Capital Office (HR Director) because the organization was in the midst of conducting a third-party engagement survey and the researcher was delayed in implementing the survey by several weeks which caused the response period to fall between Thanksgiving and Winter Break.

Another potential bias was in the administration of the questionnaire by the researcher who is employed by the organization used in this study. It was important to ensure that the responses to the questionnaires by the survey respondents were anonymous and that the research was done independently from the technology center used in the study. It can be assumed that the researcher's employment within the organization may have affected participants' responses to some items.

Yet another limitation was the length of the questionnaire. In the zeal for the researcher to glean as much data as possible, the length (136 questions) was too long for some individuals to finish and affected the response rate which could have impacted the statistical power of the results. The larger the sample size, the more accurate a generalization to the whole population, given the sample was smaller the results would possibly be not as significant.

One more limitation of the study was the exclusion of job satisfaction to affective commitment for the determination of whether the mediation was independent of the effect of the other mediator when testing the complex path model. Research has suggested that job satisfaction is a possible determinant of affective commitment (Rifai, 2005) and argued that experiences employees find particularly satisfying help to buffer against the impact of stress and displeasure increasing levels of organizational readiness to change.

Chapter 5: Results

The purpose of this study was to gain an understanding of the relationship between communication satisfaction and organizational readiness for change. The following two research questions guided this study:

RQ1: What is the relationship between communication satisfaction and organizational readiness to change in a career tech district implementing a new strategic plan?

RQ2: What factors mediate the relationship between communication satisfaction and organizational readiness to change in a career tech district implementing a new strategic plan?

Findings from previous researchers (Ammari et al., 2017; Oso et al., 2017; Wagner et al., 2015) revealed positive correlations between communication satisfaction and organizational readiness to change (Varona, 1996). However, this relationship had not been explored among a sample of employees at a technology center. Findings from the current study are presented in this chapter. Findings include, a description of the sample and results from the correlation analysis, comparison analysis, linear and multiple regression analysis, and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM).

Descriptive Statistics of Participants

Descriptive data for the study participants are reported in Table 3. Among the overall target population of 435 bargaining unit employees, 40% were male and 60% were female. The research sample consisted of 114 study participants of which 27.2% male (n = 31), 71.1% female (n = 81), and 1.8% (n = 2) declined to provide their gender. The age category, 50-59 years old, had the highest number of participants (n = 34;

30.1%). The next largest age group was 30-39 years old (n = 30; 26.5%), followed by the 40-49 years old category (n = 23; 20.4%). Participants 60 years or older comprised 16.8% (n = 19) of the sample. The two smallest groups were 18-25 years old (n = 4; 3.5%) and 25-29 years respectively (n = 3; 2.7%). Over 67% of the sample was over the age of 40. Regarding job role, 58.4% of participants worked as an instructor, trainer, counselor, or coordinator (n = 66). The remaining participants (n = 47; 41.6%) held non-teaching roles such as office support staff, technicians, and facilities/maintenance personnel.

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics of Sample

Variable	<i>n</i>	%
Gender		
Male	31	27.2
Female	81	71.1
Prefer not to answer	2	1.8
Age Range		
18-25 years	4	3.5
25-29 years	3	2.7
30-39 years	30	26.5
40-49 years	23	20.4
50-59 years	34	30.1
60 years or older	19	16.8
Job Role		
Instructor/Trainer/Counselor/Coordinator	66	58.4
Other	47	41.6

Descriptive Statistics of the Study Variables

Table 4 reports means and standard deviation for study variables. As reported, Communication Satisfaction had a mean of 4.45 with a standard deviation of 1.27; Job Satisfaction had a mean of 3.90 with a standard deviation of .80 which is marginally below the “agree slightly” scale of 4; Affective Commitment had a mean of 4.75 with a standard deviation of 1.2) and Continuance Commitment had a mean of 4.52 and a

standard deviation of 1.1 which is slightly below the “slightly agree” scale of 5; Normative Commitment had a mean of 4.25 and a standard deviation of .96 which is just above the “neither disagree nor agree scale of 4; Organizational Readiness to Change had a mean of 3.04 with a standard deviation of .90 which is slightly above the “Neither Agree nor Disagree” scale of 3.

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics for Study Variables

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Range
Comm. Satisfaction	4.45	1.27	1.27 – 6.84
Job Satisfaction	3.90	0.80	2.17 – 5.75
Affective Commitment	4.75	1.23	1.38 – 7.00
Continuance Commitment	4.52	1.11	1.75 – 6.63
Normative Commitment	4.25	0.96	2.00 – 6.88
Org. Change Readiness	3.04	0.90	1.00 – 4.75

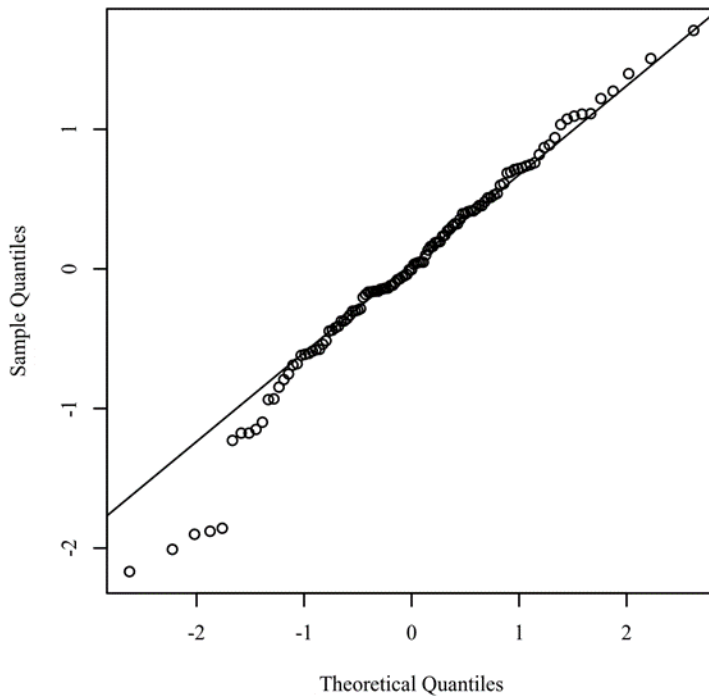
Assumptions

The first research question examined the relationship between communication satisfaction and organizational readiness to change. Before proceeding with the preliminary and main study analyses, it is important to test that specific assumptions hold true with the dataset that is being utilized. For data to be appropriate for use in linear regression analysis and path analysis, it is essential that the assumptions of linearity, heteroscedasticity, and normality are met (Osborne & Waters, 2002). In addition, if outliers are identified in the data, transformations of these outliers may be essential for accurately understanding the relations between variables.

Normality. The assumption of normality was assessed by plotting the quantiles of the model residuals against the quantiles of a Chi-square distribution, also called a Q-Q scatterplot (Larnyo, 2017). For the assumption of normality to be met, the quantiles of the residuals must not strongly deviate from the theoretical quantiles. Strong deviations could indicate that the parameter estimates are unreliable. Figure 2 presents a Q-Q scatterplot of the model residuals. The assumption of normality was met, since all skewness and kurtosis scores were within the range of -2 to +2 (Larnyo, 2017). The normal probability plots (i.e., q-q plots) for the measure scores yielded straight diagonal lines, with slopes that roughly equaled 1.

Figure 2

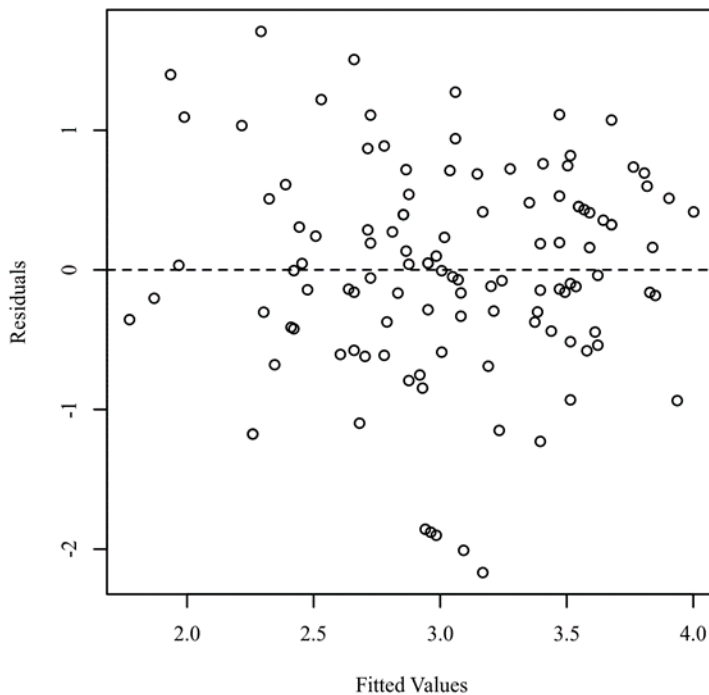
Q-Q scatterplot for normality of the residuals for the regression model



Homoscedasticity. Homoscedasticity was evaluated by plotting the residuals against the predicted values (Osborne & Waters, 2002). The assumption of homoscedasticity is met if the points appear randomly distributed with a mean of zero and no apparent curvature. Figure 3 presents a scatterplot of predicted values and model residuals. The data reports were evenly clustered about the line where $y = 0$, indicating that this assumption was met (Osborne & Waters, 2002).

Figure 3

Residuals scatterplot testing homoscedasticity



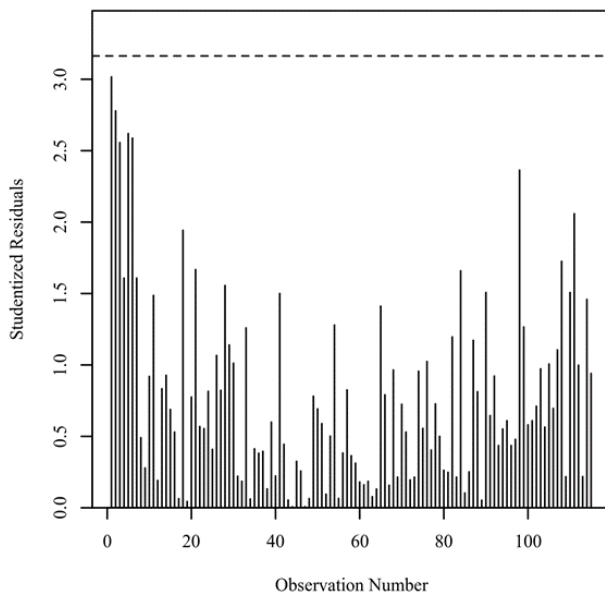
Multicollinearity. Since there was only one predictor variable, multicollinearity does not apply, and Variance Inflation Factors were not calculated.

Outliers. To identify outliers and leverage, shifts in the regression coefficients, discrepancy, and influential cases in the model were calculated. Studentized residuals

were calculated and the absolute values were plotted against the observation numbers (Pituch & Stevens, 2015). Studentized residuals are calculated by dividing the model residuals by the estimated residual standard deviation. An observation with a Studentized residual greater than 3.16 in absolute value, the 0.999 quantile of a t distribution with 114 degrees of freedom, was considered to have significant influence on the results of the model. Figure 4 presents the Studentized residuals plot of the observations. Observation numbers are specified next to each point with a Studentized residual greater than 3.16. Which means no cases were identified that exceeded the DFBETA criterion of ± 1.0 , suggesting no changes in the relative influence of the predictor variables as a result of omitting cases. Influential cases assessed using Cook's Distance showed that no cases exceeded values greater than the criterion of 1.0 (Pituch & Stevens, 2015).

Figure 4

Studentized residuals plot for outlier detection



Subgroup differences. Before conducting the main analyses, a series of bivariate comparison analyses were conducted – independent samples t-tests and an analysis of variance (ANOVA) – to examine whether any scores on the study measures significantly differed by participant age group, gender, or job role. Independent samples t-tests are utilized when comparing score differences between two groups and ANOVA are utilized when comparing score differences between more than two groups. Results of these analyses are presented in Table 5; significant group differences are shown in red.

To examine whether scores differed by age group, an ANOVA was conducted and demonstrated that scores were not significantly different between age groups for the majority of scales. However, scores on the normative commitment scale differed significantly for participants who were 49-49 (the lowest scoring participants on this scale) compared to those who were 50-59 (the highest scoring participants on this scale) ($F = 2.52, p < .05$).

To examine whether scores differed between male and female participants, an independent samples t-tests was conducted and demonstrated that scores only differed on one of the study measures – continuous commitment. Females scored significantly higher on this measure than males ($t = 3.55, p < .01$).

To examine whether scores differed between participants who were instructors/coordinators/counselors/trainers compared to those in other employee roles, another independent samples t-tests was conducted and demonstrated that scores differed significantly on two of the study measures – job satisfaction and organizational readiness for change. On both of these scales, instructors/coordinators/trainers/counselors scored significantly higher than other employees ($t = 2.32, p < .05$ and $t = 2.51, p < .05$,

respectively). Because there was a significant subgroup difference in the dependent variable – organizational readiness for change by job role, this variable was included as a covariate in the main study analyses.

Table 5

Analysis of Age, Gender, or Job Role Differences in Scores on the Study Measures

	CommSat	JobSat	AC	CC	NC	ORC
Age						
18-25	4.18	4.45	4.19	5.19	3.44	2.54
25-29	4.89	3.23	4.04	4.63	4.17	2.86
30-39	4.55	3.45	5.03	4.76	4.29	3.08
40-49	4.30	3.95	4.60	4.36	3.78	2.75
50-59	4.23	3.82	4.64	4.55	4.51	3.13
60+	4.75	3.94	4.91	4.11	4.45	3.34
Gender						
Male	4.81	4.07	4.80	3.93	4.21	3.16
Female	4.36	3.86	4.78	4.72	4.27	3.02
Job Role						
Instructor	4.59	4.05	4.80	4.36	4.23	3.22
Other	4.27	3.70	4.70	4.72	4.27	2.80

To determine whether any correlations existed between (a) demographic variables and the independent variable (communication satisfaction) and (b) demographic variables and the outcome variable (organizational readiness to change), a bivariate correlation was computed for the demographic variables and the continuous variables of interest. A correlation matrix is presented in Table 6.

Table 6

Correlation Matrix of Demographic Variables and Continuous Variables

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Age (1)	—								
Gender (2)	.09	—							
Job Role (3)	-.17	-.13	—						
Communication Satisfaction (4)	-.05	.16	-.12	—					
Job Satisfaction (5)	.06	.12	-.22*	.84***	—				
Affective Commitment (6)	-.06	.01	-.04	.69***	.72***	—			

Continuance Commitment (7)	-.18	-.32**	.16	-.14	-.18	.07	—	
Normative Commitment (8)	.04	-.03	.02	.20*	.21*	.41***	.26**	—
Organizational Change Readiness (9)	.03	.07	-.23*	.57***	.62***	.57***	.01	.36***

Note. Age: 0=18-39, 1=40 and older; Gender: 0=Female, 1=Male; Job Role: 0=Instructor/Trainer/Counselor/Coordinator, 1=Other; *** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$, $N = 113$, two-tailed.

Analysis revealed that none of the demographic variables were significantly related to both communication satisfaction and organizational change readiness; therefore, they were not included in the structural equation models. Age was not significantly related to communication satisfaction [$r(113) = -.05$, $p = .609$, two-tailed] or organizational change readiness [$r(113) = .03$, $p = .725$, two-tailed]. Gender was not significantly related to communication satisfaction [$r(113) = .16$, $p = .091$, two-tailed] or organizational change readiness [$r(113) = .07$, $p = .457$, two-tailed]. Although job role was not significantly related to communication satisfaction [$r(113) = -.12$, $p = .193$, two-tailed], it was significantly and negatively related to organizational change readiness [$r(113) = -.23$, $p = .014$, two-tailed]. Based on the variable coding, organizational change readiness was higher for instructors/trainers/counselors/coordinators than for individuals in other positions.

Research Question One

To address the first research question, examining the direct association between communication satisfaction and organizational readiness for change in a career tech district implementing a new strategic plan, first a correlation analysis was conducted. Pearson's correlation statistics are shown in Table 7 for the correlation between each pair of study variables. As shown, there were correlations between a number of study variables, including a statistically significant, positive correlation between communication satisfaction and organizational readiness for change ($r = .57$, $p < .001$)

and the other variables such as communication satisfaction and job satisfaction ($r = .84, p < .001$), communication satisfaction and affective commitment ($r = .69, p < .001$), and communication satisfaction and normative commitment ($r = .20, p < .001$), but not between communication satisfaction and continuance commitment ($r = -.14, p < .05$) which had a statistically negative relationship.

Table 7

Correlations between All Study Variables

	CommSat	JobSat	AC	CC	NC
JobSat	.84***				
AC	.69***	.72***			
CC	-.14	-.18	.07		
NC	.20*	.21*	.41***	.26**	
ORC	.57***	.62***	.57	.01	.36***

Note. *** $p < .001$. ** $p < .01$. * $p < .05$.

In addition, job satisfaction was significantly, positively associated with organizational readiness for change ($r = .62, p < .001$). Positive correlations were identified between communication satisfaction and affective commitment and normative commitment [$r(113) = .41, p < .001$, two-tailed]. However, a positive association was not indicated between communication satisfaction and continuance commitment [$r(113) = -.14, p = .001$, two-tailed]. Therefore, continuance commitment was excluded from these analyses because it was not significantly related to organizational readiness to change.

Job satisfaction was positively correlated with organizational readiness for change [$r(113) = .62, p < .001$, two-tailed], and also positively correlated with affective commitment [$r(113) = .72, p < .001$, two-tailed]. These findings revealed communication satisfaction was positively associated with all of the other study variables (job satisfaction, affective commitment), and that job satisfaction was significantly associated

with organizational readiness for change as indicated by results from the correlational analyses presented in Table 7.

These findings provided partial support for the research question that Communication Satisfaction would be positively associated with all of the other study variables and that job satisfaction and organizational commitment would be significantly associated with organizational readiness for change.

Next, because a significant subgroup difference was identified in scores on the Organizational Readiness for change measure between participants in teacher/coordinator /trainer/counselor roles compared to other employees at TTC, a linear regression analysis was conducted to control for this difference. The organizational readiness for change score was entered as the dependent variable, job role was entered as a covariate, and communication satisfaction score was entered as the independent variable. Results from this analysis are presented in Table 8 and indicate that even when controlling for the subgroup differences in job role, communication satisfaction is significantly, positively associated with organizational readiness for change among non-supervising employees of Tulsa Tech.

Table 8

Association between Communication Satisfaction and Organizational Readiness for Change

	Type III Sum of Squares	<i>df</i>	Mean Square	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Intercept	50.57	1	50.57	100.61	< .001
CommSat	.42	1	0.42	0.87	.36
Job Role	72.71	80	0.91	1.87	.03

To test whether Communication Satisfaction is the primary predictor of Organizational Readiness to Change levels in employees, a regression analysis was conducted. As shown in Table 9 since the p value was lower than .05, it was considered statically significant ($r = .57, p < .001$). The results of the linear regression model were significant, $F(1,113) = 53.06, p < .001, R^2 = 0.32$, indicating that approximately 32% of the variance in ORCscore is explainable by CommSatScore. CommSatScore significantly predicted ORCscore, $B = 0.40, t(113) = 7.28, p < .001$. This indicates that on average, a one-unit increase of CommSatScore will increase the value of ORCscore by 0.40 units. Table 9 summarizes the results of the regression model.

Table 9

Results for Linear Regression with CommSatScore predicting ORCscore

Variable	B	SE	95% CI	β	t	p
(Intercept)	1.26	0.25	[0.76, 1.77]	0.00	4.97	< .001
CommSatScore	0.40	0.05	[0.29, 0.51]	0.57	7.28	< .001

Note. Results: $F(1,113) = 53.06, p < .001, R^2 = 0.32$

Unstandardized Regression Equation: $ORCscore = 1.26 + 0.40 * CommSatScore$

Research Question Two

To address the second research question, examining which factors may mediate the relationship between communication satisfaction and organizational readiness to change in a career tech system implementing a new strategic plan, structural equation modeling was used to determine which factors could possibly mediate the relationship between communication satisfaction and organizational readiness to change. A series of path models were designed, while omitting the demographic variables that were not significantly related to the independent and dependent variables, which would allow for an examination of the following mediators in the association between communication

satisfaction and organizational readiness for change: job satisfaction, affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment. Mediation is a four-step process which requires running regression analysis to obtain the beta coefficients (Ullman & Bentler, 2003). First, the causal variable must be correlated with the outcome variable. Second, the causal variable must be correlated with the mediator. In the case of this study, the causal variable is communication satisfaction and the outcome variable are organizational readiness to change. Third, the mediator must be correlated with the outcome variable. For this research, the three mediators (affective commitment, normative commitment, and job satisfaction) were tested individually. Fourth, to establish mediation between the predictor and the outcome variable, the effect of the predictor variable on the outcome variable controlling for the mediator must be zero.

The first four path models were used to examine each of these mediators in separate models; communication satisfaction was included as the exogenous variable and the others were included as endogenous variables. The tested pathways included the direct path from communication satisfaction to organizational readiness for change, as well as the path mediated by job satisfaction.

Communication Satisfaction as the Independent Variable

As illustrated in Figure 5, the first path model confirmed that communication was significantly related to organizational readiness to change ($\beta = .5, Z = 7.32, p < .001$).

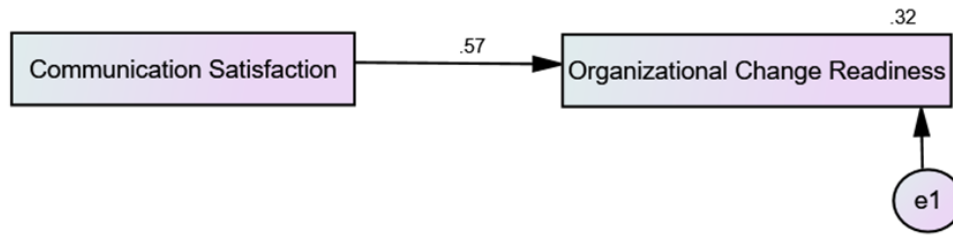


Figure 5

Path Model Examining Communication Satisfaction as a Variable for Organizational Readiness for Change

Job Satisfaction as a Mediator

As illustrated in Figure 6, the second model revealed the independent variable (communication satisfaction) was correlated with the mediator of job satisfaction ($\beta = .84, Z = 16.76, p < .001$).

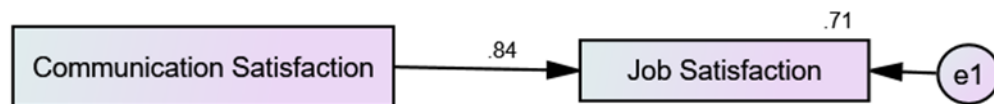


Figure 6

Path Model Examining Causal Variable Correlated with Mediator (Job Satisfaction)

The third model of mediation is shown in Figure 7. This model indicated that when job satisfaction was included as a mediator in the relationship between communication satisfaction and organizational readiness for change, the direct effects of the association were mitigated ($\beta = .14, Z = 1.05, p = .29$). To establish that a mediator mediates the relationship between a predictor and outcome variable, the effect of the predictor variable on the outcome variable controlling for the mediator should be zero.

The standardized regression weight for the relationship between communication satisfaction and organizational readiness to change, after controlling for the mediator (job satisfaction), was not significantly different from zero ($p = .29$). This finding suggested that higher satisfaction communication led to higher overall job satisfaction; in turn, this fostered increased positive perceptions of organizational readiness for change.

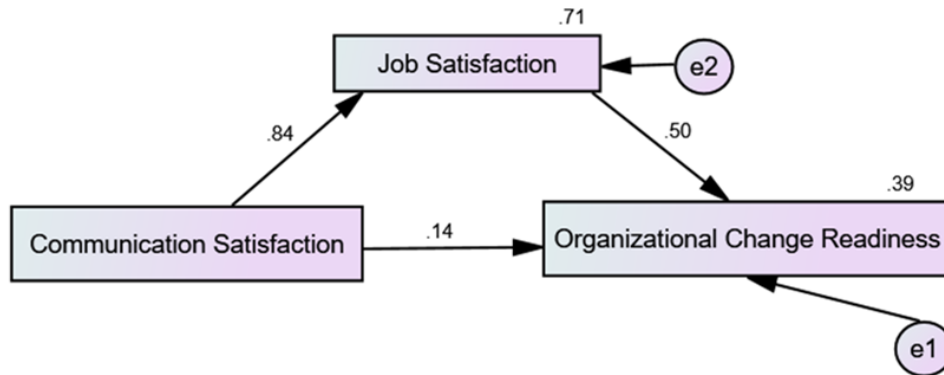


Figure 7

Path Model Examining Job Satisfaction as a Mediator in the Association between Communication Satisfaction and Organizational Readiness for Change

Affective Commitment as a Mediator

It was previously established that communication satisfaction related to organizational readiness to change. To determine whether affective commitment was a mediator in this relationship, affective communication had to be correlated with communication satisfaction. The path model established that the independent variable of communication satisfaction was significantly associated with the mediator, affective communication ($\beta = .69$, $Z = 10.17$, $p < .001$). See Figure 8.



Figure 8

Path Model Examining Causal Variable Correlated with Mediator (Job Satisfaction)

Analyses indicated affective commitment partially mediated the relationship between communication satisfaction and organizational readiness to change. Partial mediation occurs when the path from a causal variable to an outcome variable is reduced in size but still differs from zero when the mediator is introduced. In this case, the path from communication satisfaction to organizational commitment was affected when the mediator of affective commitment was introduced ($\beta = .33$, $p = .001$). Specifically, the standardized regression weight was reduced by a factor of 1.72 ($.57/.33$). See Figure 9. Which suggests that affective commitment plays an important role in the association between communication satisfaction and organizational readiness for change, but that only accounts for part of the variance in this dependent variable.

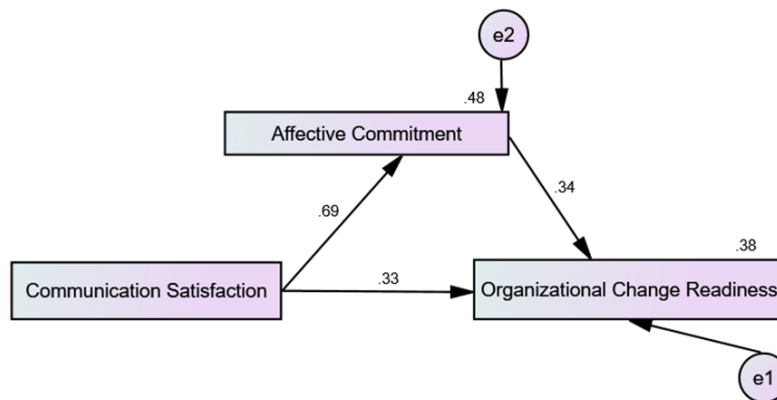


Figure 9

Path Model Examining Affective Commitment as a Mediator in the Association between Communication Satisfaction and Organizational Readiness for Change

Normative Commitment as the Mediator

It was previously established that communication satisfaction related to organizational readiness to change. To determine whether normative commitment was a

mediator, normative communication had to be correlated with communication satisfaction. The path model established that the independent variable of communication satisfaction was significantly correlated with the mediator of normative commitment ($\beta = .20, Z = 2.14, p = .033$). See Figure 10.



Figure 10

Path Model Examining Causal Variable Correlated with Mediator (Normative Commitment)

Based on the results of these analyses, normative commitment minimally mediated the relationship between communication satisfaction and organizational readiness to change. The path model examined normative commitment as mediator and revealed the direct effect of communication satisfaction on organizational readiness for change was significant ($\beta = .52, Z = 6.86, p < .001$). The indirect effect through normative commitment was also significant ($\beta = .26, Z = 3.41, p < .001$). The path from communication satisfaction to organizational commitment was affected when the mediator of normative commitment was introduced ($\beta = .52, p < .001$). Specifically, the standardized regression weight was reduced by a factor of 1.10 ($.57/.52$), which may be considered negligible (See Figure 11). This finding suggested that, like affective commitment, normative commitment played an important role in the association between communication satisfaction and organizational readiness for change; however, normative commitment only accounted for part of the variance in organizational readiness for change.

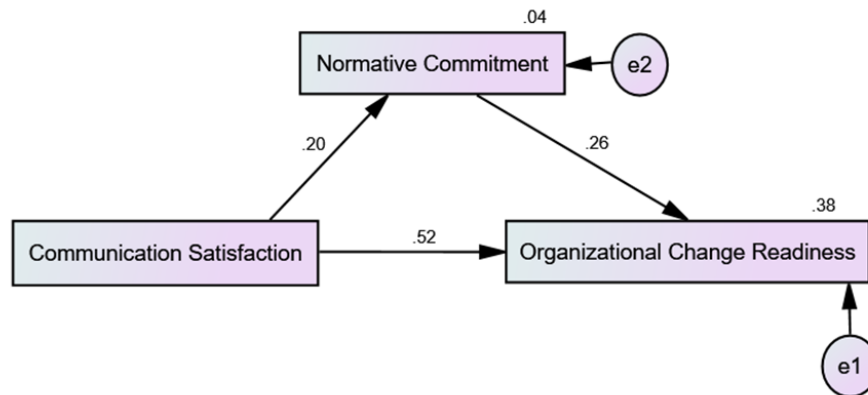


Figure 11

Path Model Examining Normative Commitment as a Mediator in the Association between Communication Satisfaction and Organizational Readiness for Change

Path Model with All Mediating Variables

After running these potential mediators separately, a complex path model was tested, which included three potential mediators: job satisfaction, affective commitment, and normative commitment. The inclusion of all of these mediators in one complex model allowed for the determination of whether the mediation was independent of the effect of the other mediators.

In the full path model, Communication Satisfaction had statistically significant relationships with job satisfaction ($\beta = .41, Z = 3.15, p = .002$) and normative commitment ($\beta = .20, Z = 2.82, p = .005$). The other mediating pathway through affective commitment was not significant ($\beta = .13, Z = 1.34, p = .179$). In addition, when all three of these mediators were included, communication satisfaction was not statistically related to organizational readiness for change ($\beta = .10, Z = 0.65, p = .517$), suggesting that Communication Satisfaction works indirectly through job satisfaction and normative commitment to influence employee readiness to change. As shown in Figure 12.

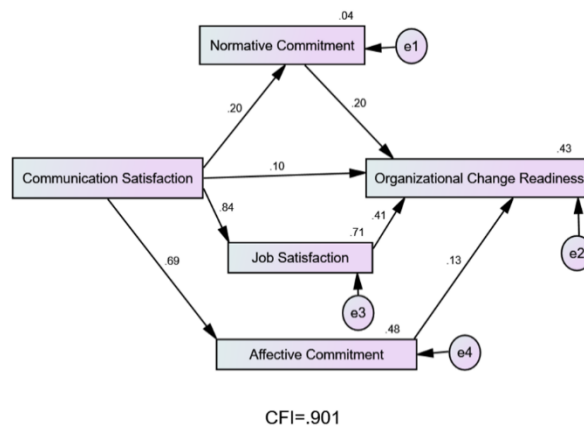


Figure 12

Complex Path Model Examining Multiple Mediators in the Association between Communication Satisfaction and Organizational Readiness for Change

When considering path models, it is also important to consider the overall model fit, which can be assessed by examining the comparative fit index (CFI). CFI values can range from 0 to 1.00, and the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA). The closer the model is to 1.00, the better the fit for the data. For the full model, CFI = .90, indicating a good fit for the data (Suhr, 2006). For the RMSEA, lower values indicate a better fit; values below .08 are generally considered to be indicative of a good fit. CFI, and RMSEA for each of the path models tested are shown in Table 10. As shown, each of the models looking at each potential mediator separately demonstrated a good fit to the data based on the CFI. The RMSEA values indicated a good fit to the data for the models looking at affective and normative commitment as mediators. CFI and RMSEA values for all the path models are presented in Table 10. Unstandardized regression weights for the complex path model is presented in Table 11.

Table 10*Model Fit Statistics for All Path Models Tested*

Path Model	CFI	RMSEA
CommSat → JobSat → ORC	0.98	0.19
CommSat → AC → ORC	1.00	0.00
CommSat → CC → ORC	0.97	0.12
CommSat → NC → ORC	1.00	0.00
CommSat → JobSat, AC, CC, NC → ORC	0.89	0.23

Table 11*Unstandardized Regression Weights for Complex Path Model*

Path			<i>Estimate</i>	<i>S.E.</i>	<i>C.R.</i>	<i>p</i>
NCscore	<---	CommSatScore	.15	.07	2.14	.033
JobSatScore	<---	CommSatScore	.53	.03	16.76	< .001
ACscore	<---	CommSatScore	.67	.07	10.17	< .001
ORCscore	<---	CommSatScore	.07	.10	0.65	.517
ORCscore	<---	NCscore	.19	.07	2.82	.005
ORCscore	<---	JobSatScore	.46	.15	3.15	.002
ORCscore	<---	ACscore	.09	.07	1.34	.179

Summary

This chapter included a presentation of statistical results of this survey research. Each research question was answered based on the collected data. Descriptive statistics were used to describe the sample and answer the two research questions regarding the

current level of communication satisfaction, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment at the study site. In reference to the first research questions, significant positive correlations were found between communication satisfaction and organizational readiness to change. To answer the second research question, job satisfaction organizational commitment mediated the effect that communication satisfaction had on organizational readiness to change. Path analysis was used to reveal the relationships between the different variables, via models to represent specific mechanisms through which communication satisfaction produce both direct and indirect effects on organizational readiness to change with open ended questions to help give voice to respondents and provide critical information that provide anecdotal evidence of participants' thoughts and feelings. The final chapter provides a discussion of findings, relationship of results to theoretical framework, implications for school leaders and employees, and suggestions for future research.

Chapter 6: Discussion

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the empirical evidence on the relationship between communication satisfaction and readiness for organizational change in a career tech system. The findings suggest that satisfaction with leadership communication was related to employee self-reported readiness to change. Additionally, results from the path model suggest that this relationship was largely mediated by employee self-reported job satisfaction, and to an extent, employee normative organizational commitment. These findings, when considered through social cognitive theory, lead to two tentative claims about leadership communication: leadership communication has the potential to influence readiness to change and the influence of leadership communication works through social-psychological processes that underlie readiness to change. Building from these claims, the chapter concludes with recommendations for leadership practice and future research.

Leadership Communication and Readiness to Change

The first research question sought to examine if there was a relationship between communication satisfaction and readiness to change for non-supervising employees at Tulsa Technology Center. Correlation results showed a positive relationship between communication satisfaction and organizational readiness for change ($r = .57, p < .001$). Higher levels of satisfaction with leadership communication was associated with stronger perceptions of readiness to engage change. This finding is consistent with existing evidence outside of the career tech context which found that higher levels of employees' satisfaction with communication during new reforms has a positive relationship with

organizational readiness to change (Bray & Williams 2017; Holt 2007; McKay et al., 2010).

To understand characteristics of leadership communication that might influence readiness to change, it is necessary to understand the components of communication satisfaction. To recap, Downs and Hazen (1977) defines communication satisfaction as the overall degree of satisfaction that employees perceive concerning all forms of organizational communication. Eight aspects of Downs and Hazen's (1977) Communication Satisfaction gives a preview of varying levels of fulfillment inside an organization that support and reward readiness to change. These include a climate that fosters identification with organization and employees' ability to initiate communication with supervisors; supervisors' willingness to be open, honest, and attentive along with providing feedback on job performance and recognizing employees' efforts; accurate co-worker communication and reduction of the gossip mill or "grapevine"; ability of the organization to provide personnel updates, company financial standing, and any disappointments or accomplishments; openness and transparency with policies, resources, and decisions; capacity of the organization to work interdepartmentally and provide timely information in various forms. Communication satisfaction, or lack thereof, stems from the disparity between what an employee wants from communication and what an employee gets from communication (Kandlousi et al., 2010).

The characteristics of effective communication can be used as means to activate employees' organizational readiness to change. Weiner 2009 states, "As an organization-level construct, readiness for change refers to organizational members' shared resolve to implement a change (change commitment) and shared belief in their collective capability

to do so (change efficacy).” Therefore, when organizational readiness levels are higher, employees are more likely to initiate change, exert greater persistence and effort, and display more cooperative behavior, which leads to better implementation of the proposed change. Conversely, when organizational readiness is lower, members are more likely to look at the change as undesirable and subsequently avoid, or possibly resist, planning for the roadblocks that could occur within the change process. Given that many of Tulsa Tech’s strategic initiatives need collaboration, administrators can benefit by leveraging communication efforts to inspire employees to take control of their circumstances, thrive in the face of adversity, and be eager to try new things. For that reason, higher levels of communication satisfaction should equate with higher levels of employee buy-in and acceptance of new reforms and initiatives.

To understand how communication satisfaction plays a role in a person’s willingness to change, one must return to Bandura’s (1986) social cognitive theory (SCT). Bandura’s theory helps clarify how SCT affects an employee’s willingness to change and can be applied to business settings (Bandura, 1986). Bandura’s (1997) SCT is an individual motivation theory that explains group-motivated behavior. According to Bandura’s theory, learning happens in a social context characterized by a dynamic and reciprocal interaction between the individual, the environment, and behavior. SCT is distinguished by its emphasis on social impact and its emphasis on both external and internal social reinforcement. It explains individual and group motivation and behavior as a function of social-psychological processes that interact to affect beliefs and perceptions that underlie action (Bandura, 2000). Accordingly, beliefs like readiness to change, are influenced through interactions with the social environment as well as psychological

responses to normative interactions that take place in an organization (Holt et al., 2007). For Tulsa Tech, that positive interaction or lack thereof, comes from the various communication dimensions. This theory is significant to this study because it may be utilized to gain a better understanding of how characteristics of communication satisfaction at a technology center can affect employees' organizational preparedness to adopt new reforms. Given the correlation findings, it seems reasonable to predict that leadership communication is a social factor that has implications for employees' readiness and potential engagement in change initiatives.

Furthermore, change in organizations is as much a function of cognitive processes as behavioral (Sundel & Sundel, 2017). Leadership communication utilizing the dimensions of communication satisfaction likely activate cognitive processes that place employees in a position where they feel ready to change and existing research supports this claim. In a study of higher education staff, Bray and Williams (2017) found that communication satisfaction was related to employee buy-in to the mission and vision of the organization. The results of this study also build on the existing evidence found by McKay et al., 2013 and Holt, 2007 that states communication satisfaction influences readiness to change by enabling employees to realize the appropriateness of change, management support for the change, self-efficacy, and personal benefits. The implication of this result is that increased satisfaction with overall communication in the organization will positively enhance employee's satisfaction with their position in the company and the willingness to produce desired results. Buy-in to the mission and vision, as Bray and Williams (2017) explain is necessary for employees' change on behavior. When administrators (of all levels) communicate frequently with staff, employee

communication satisfaction rises (Thomas et al., 2009). In other words, the higher the employees' communication satisfaction level, the less uncertainty they feel, and this helps to keep them informed and focused. Therefore, communication satisfaction helps employees make sense of new strategic initiatives that involve higher levels of uncertainty.

Leadership Communication and Social-Psychological Processes Behind Readiness to Change

The second research question examined the mediation of job satisfaction and organizational commitment on the relationship between communication satisfaction and readiness to change. The findings showed communication satisfaction was not only positively related to job satisfaction but organizational (affective and normative) commitment as well, and relationships found in the path models are consistent with exciting evidence.

First, communication satisfaction had statistically significant positive associations with job satisfaction ($\beta = .84, p < .001$). Likewise, evidence outside Career Tech indicates that communication satisfaction has an effect on job satisfaction (Carriere & Bourque, 2009; Downs & Adrian, 2004; Pincus, 1986). Job satisfaction is critical for both employees and employers. Several recent research studies have established that positively viewed internal means of communication have a favorable effect on employee job satisfaction (Dinger, 2018; Djordjevic et al., 2020; Yudiawan et al., 2017). Whereas, lower level of job satisfaction is adversely connected to job disengagement and feelings of stress (Miles et al., 1996). When it comes to job satisfaction criteria, P. E. Spector (1997) is one of the pioneers in the literature. According to the author, job satisfaction

reflects relationships with colleagues and superiors and the nature of the tasks they undertake. In short, job satisfaction is connected with many significant components of employees' attitudes and behaviors demonstrated in the workplace. Communication satisfaction is one of the factors that has a significant ability to influence job satisfaction and all of the beneficial outcomes associated with it (Vermeir et al., 2018). The results from this study reveal that employees who are more satisfied with leadership communication at work are more likely to be satisfied with their jobs (Saruhan, 2014), and their proclivity to accept change and recognize its beneficial effects is greater (Cordery et al., 1993; Iverson, 1996). Similarly, the preceding implies that it is critical to understand and identify the elements that contribute to (or detract from) employee job satisfaction.

Secondly, results also showed communication satisfaction had statistically significant positive associations with affective commitment ($\beta = .69, Z = 10.17, p < .001$) and normative commitment ($\beta = .20, Z = 2.82, p = .005$). This suggest that higher satisfaction with leadership communication was associated with employee satisfaction with work and their commitment to the organization. However, the other significant pathway via continuance commitment was not significant ($\beta = .13, Z = 1.34, p = .179$). The relationships in the model are consistent with existing evidence. These findings are consistent with Memari et al. (2013); also Engin and Akgöz's (2013) that contend communication satisfaction has an effect on organizational commitment and is associated with greater levels of normative and affective commitment. The researcher asserts that enhanced communication satisfaction is a predictor of increasing organizational commitment. When employees feel respected and encouraged, they are better equipped to

pool their knowledge and abilities. Eby et al., (2000) argue that when employees believe their organization's priorities are aligned with its vision and mission and are satisfied with communication about these issues, they believe the organization is capable of successfully implementing change, which increases employee commitment to new initiatives. As a result, individuals who are more content with their jobs are more engaged when they have the opportunity to contribute to the organization's success (Rapert et al., 2002).

Communication satisfaction has a positive relationship with organization readiness for change. However, when job satisfaction and organizational commitment are also predictor variables, communication satisfaction no longer has a statistically significant relationship with organizational readiness to change. When all four of these variables were included in a regression analysis, communication satisfaction had no statistically significant relationship with organizational readiness for change ($\beta = .10$, $Z = 0.65$, $p = .517$), implying that communication satisfaction influences employee readiness to change indirectly via job satisfaction and normative commitment. These findings corroborate prior research from fields other than career tech (Gray & Laidlaw, 2004; Gülnar, 2007; Miles, et al., 1996; Saruhan, 2014), which demonstrate a substantial positive association between communication satisfaction, job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

To understand the importance of communication satisfaction and its ability to foster job satisfaction, it is necessary to revisit Bandura's (1986) social cognitive theory (SCT). Bandura's theory can be applied to work settings to illustrate how SCT influences job satisfaction (Bandura, 1986). According to Bandura (2005), SCT approaches people's

development, adaptation, and growth, from an agent-like perspective. Bandura defines an agent as someone who purposefully changes another person's functioning and life circumstances (Bandura, 2005). By fostering interests, agents can influence the conduct of others, thereby enabling self-beliefs and competences. The agents in this study are Tulsa Tech's immediate supervisors and senior leaders. Given that the frequency and quality of communication from departments, campuses, and upper administration can have a significant positive or negative effect on employees, it is critical for leaders to understand how to maintain optimal levels of communication satisfaction and to acknowledge and support employees. The way such professionals structure and delineate information is critical to creating higher levels of employee job satisfaction. This knowledge makes it easier to manage staff, thereby laying the groundwork for new reforms and initiatives. Employees' communication satisfaction levels can influence whether they think optimistically or pessimistically in self-enhancing or self-defeating ways when dealing with change and could affect their levels of organizational commitment (Bandura, 2001). According to social cognitive theory (SCT), persons who experience a surge in worry and dread are unlikely to grow, as negative emotions overcome and they are prone to lower levels of performance (Bandura, 1986). This has an effect on the degree of persistence with which an individual will attempt to learn a new and challenging task. This approach is critical since one of the primary goals of communication during times of transition is to alleviate employee insecurity (Allen et al., 2007). Effective communication appears to alleviate psychological uncertainty about change while also increasing acceptance, openness, and commitment to change (Schweiger & Denisi, 1991; Wanberg & Banas, 2000). Generally, many direct

supervisors at Tulsa Tech have a working awareness of communication satisfaction, as reflected by the following survey statements: "I like my supervisor." "My supervisor listens to me and pays attention to my concerns," and "My supervisor assists me in resolving job-related issues." Inadequate or inaccurate information can have negative implications, such as perceived pessimism about change and a lack of transparency (Wanous et al., 2000).

Additionally, SCT considers the particular manner in which individuals acquire and sustain behavior, as well as the social setting in which individuals practice the behavior. SCT examines an individual's prior experiences, which influence whether or not behavioral action will occur. For example, supervisors and executives can give opportunities for Tulsa Tech employees to participate in decision-making; attend professional development courses; and serve on site, department, and district-wide committees. By providing employees with opportunities for learning, leadership, and progression, employers can meet job satisfaction standards while increasing their organizational commitment to the organization. These experiences can shape and reinforce expectancies, which has an effect on whether an individual engages in specific behaviors and the reasons for doing so. These aspects, coupled with the literature on communication satisfaction, contribute to the explanation of the findings in this study.

Accordingly, outcomes of this study suggest that job satisfaction and organizational commitment may operate as mediators of communication satisfaction and that these factors are also predictors of organizational readiness to change. Increased employee communication satisfaction can assist in boosting job satisfaction and organizational commitment during times of change by influencing employees' general

perceptions of the objectives and effects of any changes (Nelissen & Van Selm, 2008). Thus, organizational leaders may significantly contribute to employees' increased levels of job satisfaction and organizational commitment by incorporating all eight elements of Communication Satisfaction into Tulsa Tech's daily operations. According to the research, employees who had higher levels of communication satisfaction also tended to exert greater effort to ensure the success of new initiatives and reforms. This is because communication satisfaction can indirectly increase job satisfaction and organizational commitment, which is promoted by social cognitive theory as a strategy for boosting employees' willingness to change.

Therefore, practices for senior leadership are proposed both for enhancing communication satisfaction which has a positive influence on job satisfaction and for strengthening affective and normative commitment among employees. In the next section, implications for leadership practice are discussed. In addition, limitations of the study, and opportunities for further research are examined along with the conclusion.

Implications for Leadership Practice

While this study fills a void in the literature regarding the relationship between communication satisfaction and organizational readiness to change, it also provides insight into the complexities of the change process and the critical importance of understanding how communication satisfaction can affect employees' willingness to implement new reforms. The following three implications emerge as a result of theory and evidence: persistent challenges of organizational change, how leaders might enhance effective communication, and the effects of leader communication on the overall culture and climate of the organization.

The first implication involves persistent challenges of organization change during the implementation phase. Most evidence seems to indicate that change runs into problems during the implementation phase (Burgess et al., 2018). Readiness for change has an effect on the success of any organizational changes by helping individuals to recognize four imperatives: the appropriateness of the change, management support for the change, self-efficacy, and personal benefits of the change (Holt et al., 2007; e.g., McKay et al., 2013, p. 31). Effective communication with all stakeholders, particularly employees who are directly affected, from the beginning to the end of the organizational change process and the integration of the outcomes helps to promote interaction, understanding, and commitment to the change process (Christensen, 2014).

The second implication for leaders is to enhance their communication effectiveness by employing the dimensions of communication satisfaction as a useful framework. A thorough assessment of the literature suggests that effective communication is a critical component in determining the effectiveness of organizational change when applied at all phases. The Organizational Perspective dimension could be utilized to send out data and information concerning Tulsa Tech's organizational objectives, financial situation, level of performance, as well as organizational and government policies. Leadership could utilize Tulsa Tech's internal "Hub" site utilizing the communication satisfaction dimension of organization integration to present information such as spotlight stories, site and department-specific news, construction timelines, and information about how employees can align their goals with Tech's vision and mission. In addition, since the horizontal and informal communication dimension is sensitive to the level of activity within coworkers' information networks, as well as the

quality and accuracy of information shared, including via grapevines, it is vital that leadership embraces ways to communicate with employees using a variety of methods. Evidence drawn from a comprehensive review of literature, establishes that clear and consistent communication throughout any organizational change initiative can enable leaders and employees to achieve successful implementation of new reforms (Christensen, 2014; Van der Voet et al., 2014).

Finally, the outcomes of this study reveal that the effects of leader communication also appear to have consequences on employees' willingness to change. Through communication, leaders can increase awareness and provide clarity during the change process (Van der Voet et al., 2014). Research has shown that the majority of change initiatives fail to achieve their objectives because leaders either ignore or lack the skills necessary to communicate effectively during change (Burgess, et al., 2018). By building and encouraging a climate of willingness and resiliency among employees utilizing communication satisfaction as a catalyst, top management can increase job satisfaction and organizational commitment in the workplace. Implementation of well-developed communication protocols will help leaders increase staff readiness for change (Akkirman & Harris, 2005). Senior leaders may consider a variety of tactics to increase job satisfaction and organizational commitment, including persuasive communication, active participation, and managing the flow of internal and external information.

Recommendations for Future Research

In light of the research's findings and conclusions, several recommendations should be considered for future research to address limitations in this study. First, it is important to address the generalizability of this study. Due to the study's single-

institution design, these findings are limited to Tulsa Tech and may only be partially transferable to comparable technology centers. Studying different post-secondary institutions such as other technology centers, community colleges, and public and/or private colleges and universities, would provide better insight into employee perceptions of communication satisfaction, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and willingness to change within different educational entities. Additional research that includes a variety of institution types may yield more information and patterns of similar or different themes on this subject, hence enhancing the generalizability of the results.

Furthermore, for the sake of this study, communication satisfaction was examined as a single construct, limiting the scope of the research. Future research could duplicate this study by examining all eight elements of communication satisfaction and recruiting employees from a variety of technology center districts. Statistical analysis could be used to determine which predictor variables (e.g. organizational perspective, communication climate or personal feedback) have a statistical relationship with an organization's readiness to change. The findings of such a study could provide insight on how and when to develop district-wide communication plans.

In addition, communication satisfaction during a pandemic could be researched further. The global COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the difficulty of connecting with colleagues while working remotely and observing critical nonverbal clues for efficient communication. Through social cognitive theory, research may be able to connect how communication satisfaction works when leaders adjust their communication styles and how those techniques are regarded. While leaders say they appreciate listening to their staff, they may not always prioritize it. As a result, research may also include

conducting periodic online pulse polls, utilizing video conferencing technology, and utilizing mobile applications to determine which modes of communication provide the highest degree of communication satisfaction during a pandemic.

Moreover, further research could examine the effect of demographic variables on the link between job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and communication satisfaction. The association between some demographic characteristics such as gender, age, and educational background was not examined in detail in this study. Earlier research has established a relationship between age, educational background, number of years in the organization, and gender and communication satisfaction (Gizir & Simsek, 2005); between age and organizational commitment (Brown & Sargeant, 2007); and between employee tenure and affective commitment (Brown & Sargeant, 2007; Karakaya, 2013). By examining professional and personal traits through the lens of communication satisfaction and prospective predictors of job satisfaction and the three categories of organizational commitment, technology center directors can gain a better understanding of the established paradigms at their sites. These findings can be used to determine current levels of communication satisfaction and their impact on the organization's readiness to develop strategies to address those needs.

Finally, because communication satisfaction, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and organizational readiness to change may include more complexity in its components, further qualitative research would allow participants some latitude to provide additional detail about their responses. This could provide a better understanding of the reasons and behaviors behind survey responses. Examples of such approaches are focus groups and in-depth interviews.

Conclusion

A noteworthy finding of this research is that it provides insight and fills a gap in the body of knowledge about employees' perceptions of communication satisfaction, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and willingness to change in a technology center district. The findings given in this study bolsters the theoretical argument made in the body of literature that communication satisfaction might operate as a barrier to organizational readiness to change. Readiness is a critical stage in the transformation process (Bernstein & Nash, 2008). As Tulsa Tech evolves to increase its effectiveness in delivering educational and training services, it is critical to understand how communication satisfaction works through social cognitive theory to achieve the changes in behavior necessary to gain employee acceptance and cooperation in implementing new reforms and/or initiatives. The current research may help public sector leaders gain a better understanding of how organizational commitment and job satisfaction affect employees' willingness to cooperate and embrace change. If low communication satisfaction with technology center leadership can act as a barrier to embracing new reforms or initiatives, this research study adds to the body of knowledge of how communication satisfaction can affect organizational readiness to change, by increasing job satisfaction and organizational commitment via social cognitive theory.

Employees at Tulsa Tech, on average, show a high level of affective organizational commitment, which means they want to stay with the institution and strongly identify with its ideals. Tulsa Tech's budget, together with the considerable time and human capital required to establish new educational programs, accounts for the majority of financial outlays. District leadership and building-level administrators would

be well to consider how their communications with employees can either boost or decrease employee job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Inadequate communication can bring an implementation to a halt before it even begins. This study established that lower employee satisfaction with district and site-level communication may operate as a barrier to employees' willingness to accept new reforms by lowering job satisfaction and organizational commitment. It is critical to understand the significance of organizational readiness to change and communication satisfaction, since these variables can have an effect on the efficiency and productivity within technology centers and other educational institutions. Understanding the relationship between communication satisfaction and organizational readiness to change enables school districts to examine and determine ways to improve employees' communication satisfaction, hence increasing the organization's productivity. Given these factors, employees' communication satisfaction gives useful insights on how and when to make school improvements and how to engage a workforce. As a result, extensive investigation into this relationship is warranted.

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B. Please indicate how satisfied you are with the following (circle the appropriate number at right).

18. Extent to which my superiors know and understand the problems faced by subordinates
19. Extent to which the organization's communication motivates and stimulates an enthusiasm for meeting its goals
20. Extent to which my supervisor listens and pays attention to me
21. Extent to which the people in my organization have great ability as communicators
22. Extent to which my supervisor offers guidance for solving job related problems
23. Extent to which the organization's communication makes me identify with it or feel a vital part of it
24. Extent to which the organization's communications are interesting and helpful
25. Extent to which my supervisor trusts me
26. Extent to which I receive in time the information needed to do my job
27. Extent to which conflicts are handled appropriately through proper communication channels
28. Extent to which the grapevine is active in our organization
29. Extent to which my supervisor is open to ideas
30. Extent to which horizontal communication with other organizational members is accurate and free flowing
31. Extent to which communication practices are adaptable to emergencies
32. Extent to which my work group is compatible
33. Extent to which our meetings are well organized
34. Extent to which the amount of supervision given me is about right
35. Extent to which written directives and reports are clear and concise
36. Extent to which the attitudes toward communication in the organization are basically healthy
37. Extent to which informal communication is active and accurate
38. Extent to which the amount of communication in the organization is about right

C. Answer the following only if you are a manager or supervisor. Then indicate your satisfaction with the following:

39. Extent to which my subordinates are responsive to downward directive communication
40. Extent to which my subordinates anticipate my needs for information
41. Extent to which I do not have a communication overload
42. Extent to which my subordinates are receptive to evaluation, suggestions, and criticisms
43. Extent to which my subordinates feel responsible for initiating accurate upward communication

Appendix B

Job Satisfaction Survey

	JOB SATISFACTION SURVEY Paul E. Spector Department of Psychology University of South Florida Copyright Paul E. Spector 1994, All rights reserved'	
	PLEASE CIRCLE THE ONE NUMBER FOR EACH QUESTION THAT COMES CLOSEST TO REFLECTING YOUR OPINION ABOUT IT.	Disagree very much Disagree moderately Disagree slightly Agree slightly Agree moderately Agree very much
1	I feel I am being paid a fair amount for the work I do.	1 2 3 4 5 6
2	There is really too little chance for promotion on my job.	1 2 3 4 5 6
3	My supervisor is quite competent in doing his/her job.	1 2 3 4 5 6
4	I am not satisfied with the benefits I receive.	1 2 3 4 5 6
5	When I do a good job, I receive the recognition for it that I should receive.	1 2 3 4 5 6
6	Many of our rules and procedures make doing a good job difficult.	1 2 3 4 5 6
7	I like the people I work with.	1 2 3 4 5 6
8	I sometimes feel my job is meaningless.	1 2 3 4 5 6
9	Communications seem good within this organization.	1 2 3 4 5 6
10	Raises are too few and far between.	1 2 3 4 5 6
11	Those who do well on the job stand a fair chance of being promoted.	1 2 3 4 5 6
12	My supervisor is unfair to me.	1 2 3 4 5 6
13	The benefits we receive are as good as most other organizations offer.	1 2 3 4 5 6
14	I do not feel that the work I do is appreciated.	1 2 3 4 5 6
15	My efforts to do a good job are seldom blocked by red tape.	1 2 3 4 5 6
16	I find I have to work harder at my job because of the incompetence of people I work with.	1 2 3 4 5 6
17	I like doing the things I do at work.	1 2 3 4 5 6
18	The goals of this organization are not clear to me.	1 2 3 4 5 6

	<p>PLEASE CIRCLE THE ONE NUMBER FOR EACH QUESTION THAT COMES CLOSEST TO REFLECTING YOUR OPINION ABOUT IT.</p> <p>Copyright Paul E. Spector 1994, All rights reserved.</p>	<p>Disagree very much Disagree moderately Disagree slightly Agree slightly Agree moderately Agree very much</p>
19	I feel unappreciated by the organization when I think about what they pay me.	1 2 3 4 5 6
20	People get ahead as fast here as they do in other places.	1 2 3 4 5 6
21	My supervisor shows too little interest in the feelings of subordinates.	1 2 3 4 5 6
22	The benefit package we have is equitable.	1 2 3 4 5 6
23	There are few rewards for those who work here.	1 2 3 4 5 6
24	I have too much to do at work.	1 2 3 4 5 6
25	I enjoy my coworkers.	1 2 3 4 5 6
26	I often feel that I do not know what is going on with the organization.	1 2 3 4 5 6
27	I feel a sense of pride in doing my job.	1 2 3 4 5 6
28	I feel satisfied with my chances for salary increases.	1 2 3 4 5 6
29	There are benefits we do not have which we should have.	1 2 3 4 5 6
30	I like my supervisor.	1 2 3 4 5 6
31	I have too much paperwork.	1 2 3 4 5 6
32	I don't feel my efforts are rewarded the way they should be.	1 2 3 4 5 6
33	I am satisfied with my chances for promotion.	1 2 3 4 5 6
34	There is too much bickering and fighting at work.	1 2 3 4 5 6
35	My job is enjoyable.	1 2 3 4 5 6
36	Work assignments are not fully explained.	1 2 3 4 5 6

Appendix C

Organizational Commitment Questionnaire

A Three-Component Organizational Commitment Questionnaire

By Natalie Allen and John Meyer

Instructions: Listed below are comments about how people may feel about their organizations. Using the seven-point scale provided, please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with each comment.

Scale: (1) strongly disagree, (2) moderately disagree, (3) slightly disagree, (4) neither disagree nor agree, (5) slightly agree, (6) moderately agree, and (7) strongly agree. An “(R)” denotes a negatively phrased and reverse-scored item.

Affective Commitment Scale Items

1. I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization.
2. I enjoy discussing my organization with people outside it.
3. I really feel as if this organization’s problems are my own.
4. I think that I could easily become as attached to another organization as I am to this one. (R)
5. I do not feel like ‘part of the family’ at my organization. (R)
6. I do not feel ‘emotionally attached’ to this organization. (R) 7. This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me.
8. I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization. (R)

Continuance Commitment Scale Items

1. I am not afraid of what might happen if I quit my job without having another one lined up. (R)
2. It would be very hard for me to leave my organization right now, even if I wanted to.
3. Too much in my life would be disrupted if I decided I wanted to leave my organization now.
4. It wouldn’t be too costly for me to leave my organization now. (R)
5. Right now, staying with my organization is a matter of necessity as much as desire.
6. I feel that I have too few options to consider leaving this organization. (R)
7. One of the few serious consequences of leaving this organization would be the scarcity of available alternatives.
8. One of the major reasons I continue to work for this organization is that leaving would require considerable personal sacrifice—another organization may not match the overall benefits I have.

Normative Commitment Scale Items

1. I think that people these days move from company to company too often.
2. I do not believe that a person must always be loyal to his or her organization. (R)
3. Jumping from organization to organization does not seem at all unethical to me. (R)
4. One of the major reasons I continue to work for this organization is that I believe that loyalty is important and therefore feel a sense of moral obligation to remain.
5. If I got another offer for a better job elsewhere I would not feel it was right to leave my organization.
6. I was taught to believe in the value of remaining loyal to one organization.
7. Things were better in the days when people stayed with one organization for most of their careers.
8. I do not think that wanting to be a “company man” or “company woman” is sensible anymore. (R)

Appendix D

Organizational Readiness for Implementing Change Questionnaire

Organizational Readiness for Implementing Change (ORIC)

	1	2	3	4	5
	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree
1. People who work here feel confident that the organization can get people invested in implementing this change.	1	2	3	4	5
2. People who work here are committed to implementing this change.	1	2	3	4	5
3. People who work here feel confident that they can keep track of progress in implementing this change.	1	2	3	4	5
4. People who work here will do whatever it takes to implement this change.	1	2	3	4	5
5. People who work here feel confident that the organization can support people as they adjust to this change.	1	2	3	4	5
6. People who work here want to implement this change.	1	2	3	4	5
7. People who work here feel confident that they can keep the momentum going in implementing this change.	1	2	3	4	5
8. People who work here feel confident that they can handle the challenges that might arise in implementing this change.	1	2	3	4	5
9. People who work here are determined to implement this change.	1	2	3	4	5
10. People who work here feel confident that they can coordinate tasks so that implementation goes smoothly.	1	2	3	4	5
11. People who work here are motivated to implement this change.	1	2	3	4	5
12. People who work here feel confident that they can manage the politics of implementing this change.	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix E

IRB Approval



Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects

Approval of Initial Submission – Expedited Review – AP01

Date: October 30, 2017

IRB#: 8430

Principal Investigator: Angela Hope Durant-Tyson

Approval Date: 10/30/2017
Expiration Date: 09/30/2018

Study Title: Communication Satisfaction and its Effects on Organizational Readiness to Change

Expedited Category: 7

Collection/Use of PHI: No

On behalf of the Institutional Review Board (IRB), I have reviewed and granted expedited approval of the above- referenced research study. To view the documents approved for this submission, open this study from the *My Studies* option, go to *Submission History*, go to *Completed Submissions* tab and then click the *Details* icon.

As principal investigator of this research study, you are responsible to:

- Conduct the research study in a manner consistent with the requirements of the IRB and federal regulations 45 CFR 46.
- Obtain informed consent and research privacy authorization using the currently approved, stamped forms and retain all original, signed forms, if applicable.
- Request approval from the IRB prior to implementing any/all modifications.
- Promptly report to the IRB any harm experienced by a participant that is both unanticipated and related per IRB policy.
- Maintain accurate and complete study records for evaluation by the HRPP Quality Improvement Program and, if applicable, inspection by regulatory agencies and/or the study sponsor.
- Promptly submit continuing review documents to the IRB upon notification approximately 60 days prior to the expiration date indicated above.
- Submit a final closure report at the completion of the project.

If you have questions about this notification or using iRIS, contact the IRB @ 405-325-8110 or irb@ou.edu.

Cordially,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Fred Beard', written over a horizontal line.

Fred Beard, Ph.D.
Vice Chair, Institutional Review Board

Appendix F

Letter for District Approval to Use Tulsa Tech Employees as Participants



P.O. Box 477200 Tulsa, OK 74147 918.828.5000

October 22, 2017

Institutional Review Board, Office of Human Research Participant Protection
Five Partner's Place, 201 Stephenson Parkway, Suite 4300A
Norman, OK 73019

Dear IRB Committee Members,

After reviewing the proposed study, "Communication Satisfaction and its Effect on Organizational Readiness to Change", presented by Mrs. Angela Durant-Tyson, a doctoral candidate at The University of Oklahoma, I have granted permission for the study to be conducted at Tulsa Tech.

The purpose of the study is to examine the connection between leadership communication and employees' willingness to accept organizational change. The primary activity will be completing a questionnaire. Only employees who do not have supervisory duties are eligible to participate.

I understand that surveying employees will occur for approximately *three weeks*. I expect that this project will end no later than December 20th. Mrs. Durant-Tyson will *contact* and *recruit* our employees and will *collect data* at Tulsa Tech.

I understand that Mrs. Durant-Tyson will receive employee consent from all participants, and have confirmed that she has the cooperation of the bargaining unit employees. Mrs. Durant-Tyson has agreed to provide to my office a copy of all University of Oklahoma IRB-approved, stamped consent documents before she recruits participants. Any data collected by Mrs. Durant-Tyson will be kept confidential. Mrs. Durant-Tyson has also agreed to provide to us a copy of the aggregate results from her study.

If the IRB has any concerns about the permission being granted by this letter, please contact me at 918.828.5006.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Williams', written over a horizontal line.

Dr. Scott Williams
Associate Superintendent, Instruction & Institutional Effectiveness

SW/at

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Health Sciences Center
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Lemley Campus
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