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EXPLORING THE MODERATING EFFECT OF SOCIO-MORAL CLIMATE ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RESISTANCE TO CHANGE AND CHANGE-ORIENTED ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOR

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EXPLORING THE MODERATING EFFECT OF SOCIO-MORAL CLIMATE ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RESISTANCE TO CHANGE AND CHANGE-ORIENTED ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOR

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Abstract

To be able to compete and achieve goals, organizations must change at a rapid pace; ergo, they must create environments in which employees do not just accept change, but drive change that propels the organization forward. This study investigated the impact of dispositional and psychological climate variables on change-related outcomes in a higher education institution. Specifically, the study examined whether dispositional resistance to change was negatively related to change-oriented organizational citizenship behaviors (COOCB), and whether this relationship was moderated by socio-moral climate (SMC) perceptions. Full-time employees from a large multi-campus urban community college were surveyed by email with standardized questionnaires, yielding a 24.78% response rate for a total 227 responses. Multiple regression analyses tested the relationship between dispositional resistance to change and COOCB to examine whether those with higher dispositional resistance to change demonstrated less COOCB. Multiple regression analysis also tested the interaction effect between resistance to change and the moderator variable SMC on the criterion variable COOCB, to investigate if employees with more resistance to change were more likely to exhibit COOCB when perceiving a positive SMC. While dispositional resistance to change had a weak negative relationship with COOCB, SMC did not demonstrate a relationship with COOCB, either directly or as a moderator, when the study was conducted, during the height of the global COVID-19 pandemic. Results suggest limitations regarding the influence of dispositional resistance to change across contexts and suggest that ethical climate perceptions, although important for other outcomes, may not have a substantial relationship with change-related behavior.

Keywords: higher education, change management, socio-moral climate, change-oriented organizational citizenship behavior, resistance to change, ethical climate

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Organizational Change

Organizations across industries are facing copious organizational changes at an accelerated rate (Gilley et al., 2011; Judson, 1991; Oreg & Berson, 2011; Piderit, 2000; Todnem By, 2005; Worley & Lawler, 2006). Many modern organizations, however, struggle to adapt to their rapidly changing environment, and most organizational changes fail (Bushe & Nagaishi, 2018; Kotter, 1995; 1996; Michel et al., 2013; Todnem By, 2005). Organizational change has become a constant (Martins, 2011); even if organizations manage *some* successful change initiatives or have done so in the past, that does not ensure their survival or a successful future.

Higher education is also facing monumental changes. Increased government regulations and accountability, rapidly changing technology, competition, and globalization (Bailey et al., 2015; Dowling-Hetherington, 2016; Goedegeburre et al., 2014; Kezar, 2001) have forced colleges and universities to transform while simultaneously maintaining or improving student outcomes (Buller, 2015). While organizational change is necessary, it is challenging amidst realities such as shrinking budgets, complex organizational structures, shared governance requirements, and widening schisms between stakeholders' perspectives regarding the ultimate purpose of colleges and universities (Bailey et al., 2015; Buller, 2015; Kezar, 2001). Additionally, colleges and universities are notoriously slow and resistant to change (Buller, 2015; Chronicle of Higher Education, 2013; Evans & Henrichsen, 2008; Palmer & Zajonc, 2010), and some researchers have called higher education "immune" (Gilley et al., 2011, p. 1) to change.

To increase the likelihood of survival and success amidst these challenges, higher education institutions need to continuously change and improve (Buller, 2015). Much of the literature on organizational change, however, investigates planned change regarding specific

initiatives. Although this type of research is important, emergent change, which occurs more organically due to ongoing activities, acknowledges the dynamic environment in which modern organizations operate (Burnes, 2017; Todnem By, 2005).

For emergent change to regularly occur, organizations need employees who demonstrate proclivity toward change because, ultimately, organizational outcomes occur due to the collective work of individuals (Hiatt & Creasey, 2012; Marinova et al., 2015; Piderit, 2000; Sharif & Scandura, 2014). Employees should initiate change as well as suggest and implement changes in policies, procedures, and work methods. Change-oriented organizational citizenship behaviors (COOCB; Choi, 2007) have been linked to improved individual and organizational performance (Chiaburu et al., 2017; Mackenzie et al., 2011) and can be the catalyst for continuous emergent change and adaptation. Additionally, COOCB is particularly relevant to public institutions where it can mitigate slow, inflexible processes and bureaucracy (Vigoda-Gadot & Beeri, 2012). Consequently, organizational leaders need to understand the factors that influence COOCB and understand the type of environment they need to create to promote COOCB (Li et al., 2016; Seppälä et al., 2012).

Numerous studies indicate that individual differences are predictive of change-related behavior (Chiaburu et al., 2011; Fuller & Marler, 2009; Marinova et al., 2015). Resistance to change is often cited as one of the primary inhibitors of change in organizations (Bovey & Hede, 2001; Erwin & Garman, 2010; Pardo del Val & Martinez Fuentes, 2003). Although dispositional characteristics predict COOCB, situational and social factors also influence an individual's likelihood to exhibit COOCB (Choi, 2007; Li et al., 2016; Marinova et al., 2015; Seppälä et al., 2012). Research has consistently linked climate perceptions to individual outcomes such as

employee job satisfaction, motivation, psychological well-being, organizational commitment, and performance (Carr et al., 2003; Parker et al., 2003).

Ethical work environments have received increased attention in recent decades (Pircher Verdorfer, Weber et al., 2013). The current study will introduce an ethical climate construct, socio-moral climate (SMC), as the key moderating variable in the relationship between resistance to change and COOCB. SMC is a comprehensive climate construct that examines employees' perceptions of an organization's practices and procedures (Pircher Verdorfer, Weber et al., 2013; Weber et al., 2009). SMC is positively related to organizational democracy, organizational citizenship behavior, organizational commitment, knowledge sharing, psychological empowerment, work engagement, and innovation (Pircher Verdorfer, Steinheider et al., 2013; Pircher Verdorfer, Weber et al., 2013; Seyr & Vollmer, 2014; Steinheider & Pircher Verdorfer, 2017), and is negatively related to organizational cynicism (Pircher Verdorfer, Steinheider et al., 2015). These relationships suggest SMC will likely play a significant role as a moderator in the relationship between resistance to change and COOCB. The study will assess if positive socio-moral climate (SMC) perceptions lessen the negative association between resistance to change and COOCB.

Although resistance to change and COOCB are both constructs related to change, there is no research examining their linkage. Moreover, researchers have suggested investigating COOCB in public institutions (Campbell & Im, 2016; Vigoda-Gadot & Beeri, 2012), but only one study has been conducted in a higher education setting (Simo et al., 2016). Additionally, although there is substantial research on organizational climate, little research examines its relationship with change reactions (Oreg et al., 2011).

Research Question

What are the individual and organizational factors that influence the likelihood an employee will exhibit COOCB?

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Organizational Change

Scholars and researchers have been studying organizational change for many decades (Erwin & Garman, 2010). Organizational change continues to remain relevant due to the lack of stability in which organizations operate (Burnes, 2017) and because change "affects all organizational aspects, including strategy, internal structure, processes, people's jobs and attitudes and overall culture" (Al-Haddad & Kotnour, 2015, p. 251). Accordingly, many change models, approaches, and theories of change exist (Todnem By, 2005).

Kurt Lewin remains one of the earliest and most influential scholars on change (Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999; Martins, 2011; Schein, 1996; Todnem By, 2005). In his publication "Frontiers in Group Dynamics," Lewin (1947) defines change as moving "from the present level to the desired one" (p. 32). Lewin conceptualizes a force field model with opposing forces that simultaneously drive and resist change. When driving (e.g., changes in competition or social values) and restraining forces (e.g., leadership or organizational group norms) are in equilibrium, no change occurs; an imbalance must be created to enable conditions for change. Because the driving forces are often external and the restraining forces are internal, Lewin (1947) recommends weakening restraining forces as more feasible and effective than increasing driving forces (Lewin, 1947).

Lewin (1947) describes successful change as occurring in three steps: unfreezing, moving, and freezing. He claims that the new state, or force field, implies a level of permanency made relatively secure against change. Lewin's conceptualization of planned change (1947) describes changes as intentional actions initiated by an organization rather than unintended changes such as those that might occur via accident, happenstance, or forced on an organization

unwillingly (Bamford & Forrester, 2003; Burnes, 2017; Senior & Swailes, 2010; Todnem By, 2005).

The planned change approach has been criticized, however, because it is more useful in understanding change in a relatively stable environment (Burnes, 2017). Although this well-established planned approach dominated change theory and practice for decades, in recent years, the emergent approach has gained more traction (Bamford & Forrester, 2003; Burnes, 2017; Todnem By, 2005). It refers to change as a continuous, dynamic, and unpredictable process that occurs due to ongoing activities; it describes change as a continuous process of alignment and realignment to an unstable environment (Burnes, 2017; Senior & Swailes, 2010). Proponents of the emergent approach argue that change is the normal state of an organization, whereas continuity, stability, and the status quo are exceptions to the rule (Burnes, 2017; Martins, 2011). Accordingly, Martins (2011) argues for the need "to shift our lenses and research methodologies from mechanistic ones to more fluid, dynamic ones that are based on change as the normal state of organizations" (p. 695). If employees are necessary to promote change, and change is regularly emerging, change-oriented organizational citizenship behaviors (COOCB) can be the mechanism by which emergent change is initiated and performance is improved (Choi, 2007).

Change-Oriented Organizational Citizenship Behavior

Change-oriented organizational citizenship behavior refers to voluntary, constructive, and proactive employee actions that attempt to increase work effectiveness by identifying and implementing changes in the work environment (Bettencourt, 2004; Marinova et al., 2015). Over the past several decades, numerous studies across various industries have examined the broad concept of organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), one of the most researched concepts in the organizational sciences (Klotz et al., 2018; Organ, 2018). OCB refers to an employee's voluntary

actions that are not tied to formalized job duties, evaluation, or reward systems but which contribute to the successful functioning of the organization (Podsakoff et al., 2000).

While there are different operationalizations of OCB, Organ's (1988) OCB dimensions of altruism, conscientiousness, sportsmanship, courtesy, and civic virtue, are among the most cited and well researched (LePine et al., 2002). Reviewing the literature, Podsakoff and colleagues (2000) describe seven types of OCB including helping behavior, sportsmanship, organizational loyalty, organizational compliance, individual initiative, civic virtue, and self-development. The rise in OCB research has generated the need to better comprehend the similarities and differences among various types of OCB (Chiaburu et al., 2017; Podsakoff et al., 2000), as well as their value in specific work environments (LePine et al., 2002).

Some researchers draw a distinction between two forms of OCB, affiliative and challenging. Most OCBs are affiliative (Choi, 2007; Podsakoff et al., 2000; Van Dyne & LePine, 1998); they focus on collaboration, interpersonal relationships, and compliance as well as the fostering of desirable and congenial work environments. In contrast, challenging organizational citizenship behaviors refer to an individual's efforts to improve their work environment via disruption of the status quo (Choi, 2007; Morrison & Phelps, 1999). Challenging OCBs have received increasing attention in recent decades because some scholars have asserted that affiliative behaviors are not enough to produce outcomes in changing work climates or circumstances requiring flexibility, proactivity, and creativity (Chiaburu et al., 2017; Choi, 2007; Morrison & Phelps, 1999; Van Dyne & LePine, 1998). Moreover, because affiliative types of OCB promote harmonious work environments, and challenging types of OCB cause disruption, these types of OCB could potentially be contradictory.

Over the years, researchers have given the challenging category of OCB various labels. For example, LePine and Van Dyne (1998) defined voice behavior as "speaking out and challenging the status quo with the intent of improving the situation" (p. 853). Morrison and Phelps (1999) labeled their conceptualization of change-oriented behavior as "taking charge" and described it as "discretionary behavior intended to effect organizationally functional change" (p. 403). In 2007, Choi adapted the concept of change-oriented organizational citizenship behaviors (COOCB) from Bettencourt (2004) and defined it as "constructive efforts by individuals to identify and implement changes with respect to work methods, policies, and procedures to improve the situation and performance" (p. 469). Despite these various labels for proactive change behaviors, this study follows Marinova and colleagues (2015) and Burris (2012) in using the terminology "change-oriented OCB," instead of "challenging-oriented OCB", given that the intent of the behavior is to bring about change and because the perception of what is challenging is subjective. The synthesized research demonstrates that individual differences and situational variables are predictive of COOCB and that COOCB is related to increased organizational performance (Chiaburu et al., 2011; Mackenzie et al., 2011; Marinova et al., 2015).

Numerous studies indicate that individual differences are predictive of proactive and change-related behavior (Chiaburu et al., 2011; Fuller & Marler, 2009; Marinova et al., 2015). For example, conscientiousness, extraversion, openness, and proactive personality are positively associated with change-oriented behaviors, while agreeableness and neuroticism are negatively associated with such behaviors (Chiaburu et al., 2011; LePine & Van Dyne, 2001; Marinova et al., 2015). Morrison and Phelps (1999) found that individuals with higher levels of self-efficacy and internalized sense of responsibility for instigating change are more likely to engage in taking-charge behaviors. Additionally, research suggests an employees' propensity to trust

predicts their likelihood of taking charge; furthermore, employees with strong employee exchange ideologies (quid-pro-quo, transactional views of their relationship with the organization) are less likely to exhibit challenging behaviors (Chiaburu & Baker, 2006).

While early research on proactive behavior treated it as a stable dispositional variable, most researchers acknowledge contingencies of a situation or other factors influence behavior beyond personality (Bindl & Parker, 2011). For example, positive perceptions of top management's openness were associated with higher likelihood to engage in taking-charge behavior, while supportive group norms did not explain any unique variance in taking-charge behavior (Morrison & Phelps, 1999). Research specific to COOCB found that employees who highly identify with their work area and have high openness to change only demonstrate COOCB when they feel they have power (Seppälä et al., 2012).

Leadership has also been linked to COOCB. Research specific to a public organizational setting found that COOCB was most likely to be exhibited by employees who reported high levels of leader-member exchange (LMX) and low levels of perceptions of organizational politics (Vigoda-Gadot & Beeri, 2012). Additionally, research suggests that empowering leadership may be an important factor in an employee's likelihood to exhibit COOCB; this is especially likely for employees who have high autonomy (Li et al., 2016). This is particularly relevant for an industry such as academia where independence and autonomy are prevalent (Lane, 2007).

A meta-analysis of COOCB, including constructs related to voice, creative, innovative and adaptive performance, personal initiative, positive proactive behavior, and taking charge, found that relationships between leaders, relationships between co-workers, and organizational support were all positively associated (and to a relatively equal extent) with COOCB (Chiaburu

et al., 2013). Results indicated that these effects were still strong after controlling for employees' intentions to quit, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction.

An increasing number of studies have examined the relationship between OCB and COOCB with organizational performance (Chiaburu et al., 2017; Mackenzie et al., 2011). For example, despite the apparent contradiction between affiliative and challenging types of OCB, research examining workgroup performance demonstrated that challenging OCBs had a positive association with performance to a certain point, and past that point only when group members demonstrated high levels of affiliative OCBs (Mackenzie et al., 2011). This suggests that affiliative OCBs strengthen positive effects and weaken negative effects of challenging OCBs, and that both types of behavior need to be balanced in an organization's environment to optimize performance. This lends support to the notion that research should examine unique antecedents and variables, as well as various interactions therein, when studying different types of OCB (Mackenzie et al., 2011; Podsakoff et al., 2000).

Chiaburu and colleagues (2017) also concluded that both affiliative and challenging OCBs contribute to job performance, although they found that the affiliative behaviors accounted for more of the variability in job performance than challenging behaviors. They also found that when various types of OCB (discretionary proactive behavior directed at the organization, other individuals, and change-oriented behavior) were combined, OCB accounted for overall performance, as rated by supervisors, more than task performance. Interestingly, the authors posit that challenging OCBs might become more important with the passage of time as organizations better comprehend their influence on organizational effectiveness.

Additional research has demonstrated the link between proactive behavior and performance. For example, in a study of different types of voice, Maynes and Podsakoff (2014)

found that constructive voice, a highly similar measure to COOCB, had a direct effect on employee performance evaluations, whereas supportive, defensive, and destructive voice did not. They also found that the "primary indirect path for constructive voice was through the positive impact others perceive that it will have on organizational functioning which suggests observers value constructive voice because it potentially benefits the organization" (p. 104). Mackenzie and colleagues (2011) suggest that team members' suggestions lead to healthy debates regarding which procedures need improvement, and these conversations may lead to enhanced organizational effectiveness. Additionally, in a comprehensive meta-analysis, various proactivity variables, including personal initiative, proactivity, and voice behavior, had sizeable relationships with both objective and supervisor-rated performance outcomes. Objective performance measures included variables such as organizational success and employees' salaries. They also found significant relationships between proactivity variables and innovation (Tornau & Frese, 2013).

Due to the strong external pressures demanding change, scholars have suggested further research should examine change and COOCB in public organizations (Campbell & Im, 2016; Oreg & Berson, 2011; Vigoda-Gadot & Beeri, 2012). Vigoda-Gadot and Beeri (2012) assert that improving organizational effectiveness in public agencies depends upon reinventing old practices and challenging conservative paradigms. They argue that a dynamic organizational environment that encourages public employees to embrace change and innovation and go beyond their formal job duties in every day work may compensate for slow and inflexible processes inherent in public organizations (Vigoda-Gadot & Beeri, 2012). However, few researchers have studied OCB in the realm of higher education (Mathur et al., 2013; Rose, 2012) and only one study specific to COOCB in a higher education setting appears to be available (e.g., Simo et al., 2016).

Researchers synthesizing the OCB literature have found that demographic variables have not demonstrated significant correlations to OCB in general (Organ & Ryan, 1995; Podsakoff et al., 2000). However, demographic differences in the proactive and change-related behavior literature are mixed (Bindl & Parker, 2011). LePine and Van Dyne (1998) found that men are more likely to voice concerns at work while Choi (2007) found that gender influences COOCB such that older males, who generally hold higher positions, exhibit more COOCB. Morrison and Phelps (1999) also found hierarchical level within the organizational structure related to taking charge, but found that neither age, gender, nor organizational tenure correlate with taking charge. Vigoda-Gadot and Beeri (2012), however, found that younger but more tenured employees are more likely to exhibit COOCB.

As Bindl and Parker (2011) point out, the research on proactivity thus far has mostly focused on white-collar personnel; demographics are often gathered to control for rather than to understand their effects. In many cases where there are differences related to demographic characteristics, the effect sizes are small. Additionally, gender and ethnicity may be confounded with occupation and hierarchical level; these factors need to be examined to better understand their relationship (Bindl & Parker, 2011; LePine & Van Dyne, 1998).

In conclusion, research suggests COOCB is linked to increased organizational performance (Chiaburu et al., 2017; Mackenzie et al., 2011), but additional research is needed that focuses on COOCB in public organizations (Campbell & Im, 2016; Vigoda-Gadot & Beeri, 2012). Although demographic variables have not demonstrated consistent findings (Bindl & Parker, 2011; LePine & Van Dyne, 1998), the literature clearly suggests that individual differences, as well as situational and contextual variables, are predictive of proactive and

change-related behavior (Bindl & Parker, 2011; Chiaburu et al., 2011; Fuller & Marler, 2009; Marinova et al., 2015).

Resistance to Change

Early scholarly work on organizational change typically took a systems approach, whereas in the 2000s, much of the research shifted focus to psychological processes at the individual level (Bovey & Hede, 2001; Erwin & Garman, 2010; Judge et al., 1999; van Dam et al., 2008). Resistance to change is one of the most referred to psychological processes, but is often defined in dramatically different ways, at times very broadly, and often, not at all (Dent & Goldberg, 1999; Erwin & Garman, 2010; Oreg et al., 2011; Szabla, 2007). Regardless of the definition or organization in which it occurs, resistance to change is a powerful restraining force (Gilley et al., 2011; Szabla, 2007) that an organization needs to weaken to enable change.

Although resistance to change has typically been characterized as a negative force that organizational leaders need to manage, in more recent literature, scholars have acknowledged that this view can be counter-productive in the inquiry regarding how to mitigate its impact (Dent & Goldberg, 1999; Giangreco & Peccei, 2005; Mathews & Linski, 2016). While many researchers still operationalize the term "resistance to change" utilizing instruments that measure negative reactions (van Dam et al., 2008), scholars are increasingly recognizing the positive, or at least neutral, aspects of resistance to change (Burnes, 2017; Ford et al., 2008; Giangreco & Peccei, 2005; Oreg, 2018). Additionally, scholars acknowledge the importance of differentiating overt resistance or protest from more subtle forms of dissention, such as a failure to engage in proactive change (Giangreco & Peccei, 2005).

Many studies on resistance to change measure it indirectly or examine a similar construct (Oreg, 2003) such as change cynicism, coping with change, change acceptance, change readiness

or openness to change (Oreg et al., 2011). In 2003, however, Oreg created and validated an instrument to measure an individual's dispositional resistance to change (i.e., their predisposed tendency to resist change) regardless of other factors. He found that individuals who are low in sensation seeking, high in risk aversion, and have low tolerance for ambiguity are the most change resistant. Oreg's (2003) results also indicate that dispositional resistance reliably predicts an individual's likelihood to resist specific changes.

Recognizing its complexity, Piderit (2000) conceptualized resistance to change as a multi-dimensional construct comprised of affective (feelings), cognitive (thoughts), and behavioral (actions) dimensions simultaneously. Following Piderit's (2000) suggestion, Oreg (2006) also developed a tri-dimensional measure of resistance to change. He and other researchers have adopted this concept of resistance to change as a multidimensional comprehensive construct and operationalized it as such in their research (Oreg, 2006; van Dam et al., 2008).

Researchers have acknowledged the value in examining the dimensions separately in recognition that reactions can be different along the various dimensions (Piderit, 2000; van Dam et al., 2008). Piderit (2000) explains this concept of "ambivalence" to change whereby an employee may have conflicting feelings about a change, which influences their affective, cognitive, and behavioral resistance differently. For example, an employee might cognitively approve of a change, believing it is in the best interest of the organization, but emotionally react negatively, knowing that their job might change significantly for the worse, or any combination therein. Subsequent research has quantitatively demonstrated the effect of change ambivalence (Oreg & Sverdlik, 2011). For example, among employees with high levels of organizational identification and trust, Oreg and Sverdlik (2011) found a positive relationship between

dispositional resistance to change and ambivalence; the same relationship was negative among employees with low levels of organizational identification and trust.

Throughout the decades, individual differences have been acknowledged as important factors in how one reacts to change (Bindl & Parker, 2011; Burnes, 2017). An individual's locus of control, perceived change-related sense of control, positive self-concept, and personal resilience have been linked to positive reactions to change (Judge et al., 1999; Wanberg & Banas, 2000). Judge and colleagues (1999) found risk tolerance and self-efficacy associated with the ability to cope with change, while Wanberg and Banas (2000) focused on change related self-efficacy and found it to be associated with greater change acceptance. Walker and colleagues (2007) found tolerance for ambiguity negatively related to general cynicism and a negative relationship between general cynicism and positive change beliefs. Bovey and Hede (2001) examined the influence of irrational ideas and found that employees with higher levels of irrational thoughts had higher levels of resistance to change. Additionally, in a study at an international university, Mulinge and Munyae (2008) found that employee personality traits of social boldness and receptivity significantly predicted change acceptance.

As Judge and colleagues (1999) point out, there are important distinctions regarding many of these dispositional variables, as some characteristics are relatively stable over time and others may be more malleable. Moreover, some researchers distinguish between similar variables in relation to an individual's general disposition and their change-specific disposition. For example, Stanley and colleagues (2005) distinguished change-specific cynicism, dispositional cynicism, and management cynicism. Change cynicism was associated with stronger intentions to resist change than more general dispositional cynicism. In fact, even a single item measure of change cynicism gathered near the beginning of a large organizational change initiative predicted

resistance many months later. Similarly, research has found that lack of trust in management significantly correlates with affective, cognitive, and behavioral resistance (Oreg, 2006; van Dam et al., 2008). In addition, research has found that organizational treatment, i.e., the extent to which an employee perceives the organization as acting fair, proving support, and showing appreciation, mediates the relationship between ongoing organizational change and negative emotions (Kiefer, 2005). Organizational support and trust in peers have also been shown to influence change readiness (Eby et al., 2000).

Furthermore, participation in change initiatives has often appeared in change research. Multiple researchers have found participation in change initiatives reduces employees' levels of resistance (Giangreco & Peccei, 2005; Lines, 2004, van Dam et al., 2008) or increases their readiness or openness to change (Eby et al., 2000; Wanberg & Banas, 2000). Additionally, several researchers have found that communication and information about the change influence change reactions, but the results have been contradictory (Erwin & Garman, 2010; Lewis, 2006; Oreg, 2006; Wanberg & Banas, 2000). For example, Wanberg and Banas (2000) found that employees who received information about a change were more open about the change, and Lewis (2006) found that resistance to change was lower when individuals received high quality information about the change. On the contrary, Oreg (2006) found that individuals who received more information about a change had higher levels of resistance to change. He conjectured that the information itself does not necessarily affect resistance to change, but employees decide if they will resist based on the information provided.

A recent study demonstrated that individuals who have high levels of dispositional resistance to change perform better on routine tasks than non-routine tasks (Oreg, 2018). This is particularly relevant in higher education, as it is often characterized as a loosely coupled system

with a high level of ambiguity, and thus many of the tasks required in the work are non-routine (Kezar, 2001). This finding demonstrates that resistance to change is not detrimental to the organization (Oreg, 2018), but it is important to weaken an individual's resistance to change so they may improve their performance on non-routine tasks, which are prevalent in higher education. This finding corroborates the assertion that resistance to change will be negatively linked with COOCB, and demonstrates the importance of weakening resistance to change as it relates to performance.

Resistance to change is a powerful restraining force within an organization (Gilley et al., 2011; Szabla, 2007). Although dispositional resistance to change might not appear inherently malleable (Oreg, 2003), situational circumstances are an important factor in the behavior of "resistant" individuals (Oreg, 2006). Likewise, scholars on resistance to change acknowledge that research examining individuals' orientations towards change is relevant because it generalizes beyond any specific organizational change (Oreg & Sverdlik, 2011). Theoretically, if the organization creates a powerful enough situational variable, it can lessen the influence of an individual's resistance to change and increase the likelihood they will exhibit more positive behavior.

Socio-Moral Climate

In recent decades, an increasing amount of research has targeted ethical behaviors and contexts within organizations, which in part has been spurred by non-ethical behaviors of organizations' leaders and economic and financial crises (Pircher Verdorfer, Weber et al., 2013). Ethical context refers to "the prevailing perceptions of norms, procedures, and ethical policies within an organization" (Bedi et al., 2016, p. 519). Scholars have utilized two frameworks to describe the ethical context: Ethical culture (Treviño et al., 1998) and ethical climate (Victor &

Cullen, 1988). Victor and Cullen's (1988) ethical climate framework describes issues an organization's members consider to be ethically important and the criteria they use to consider and resolve these issues. Ethical climate demonstrates what constitutes correct behavior, and as such, influences decision-making and conduct (Bedi et al., 2016; Victor & Cullen, 1988). Victor and Cullen (1988) categorized three ethical climates: an *egoist* climate, which refers to an environment of self-interest, a *benevolent* climate, which refers to a climate that maximizes the interests of a specific group, and a *principled* climate, which refers to one in which there is an emphasis on formal rules.

Victor and Cullen's (1988) ethical climate framework was based on the theoretical foundations of Kohlberg's (1984) theory of moral development. Kohlberg's theory suggests that moral development, like cognitive development, occurs in stages. Each of the three stages, identified by Kohlberg (1984), pre-conventional, conventional, and post-conventional, describes increasingly complex levels of moral development. Kohlberg (1984) describes the *socio-moral perspective* as "The point of view the individual takes in defining both social facts and socio-moral values, or "oughts" (p. 173).

Socio-moral climate (SMC) is a relatively new construct that takes a developmental approach to the ethical environment in an organization (Pircher Verdorfer et al., 2015). The theoretical foundation of SMC is based on Kohlberg's theory, along with Lempert's (1994) research regarding organizational experiences and moral socialization. Lempert (1994) described socio-biographical conditions that foment moral development, and his research demonstrated the influence of the occupational environment on workers' advancement to higher levels of moral reasoning.

Weber and colleagues (2008) furthered the concept of the socio-moral atmosphere in the field of organizational behavior referring to "communication, teamwork, collective problem-solving, decision-making as well as leadership, which form a field of socialization for prosocial, democratic, and moral orientations" (p. 172). The SMC, further utilized in subsequent research (e.g., Weber et al., 2009; Pircher Verdorfer, Weber et al., 2013), measures employees' perceptions of an institution's practices and procedures. It is a comprehensive construct that includes shared perceptions of confrontation of conflicts; appreciation, care, and support; communication and cooperation; trust; and organizational concern for the employee (Pircher Verdorfer et al., 2015). *Open confrontation of conflicts* measures behaviors that demonstrate honest and respectful constructive conflict and confrontation. The component of *reliable and constant appreciation, care and support* refers to genuine care, mutual respect, and empathy demonstrated by various members of the organization. The component of *open communication and participative cooperation* refers to the extent the organizations' members are actively involved in the decision-making process as well as the extent to which they are encouraged to question the norms and rules and develop their own independent judgments. *Trust-based assignment and allocation of responsibility* refers to the balance of delegation and accountability of employees based on their abilities. *Organizational concern for the individual* refers to the willingness of employees to recognize and have concern for the legitimate needs of other organizational members.

Research has demonstrated that employees have more affective and normative commitment to the organization when they perceive a strong SMC (Pircher Verdorfer, Weber et al., 2013; Weber et al., 2009). Moreover, employees perceiving a strong SMC experience less feelings of organizational cynicism and SMC has incremental validity beyond employees'

perceptions of overall justice (Pircher Verdorfer et al., 2015). This demonstrates that the organization can create an environment that lessens negative feelings, such as cynicism, which in turn lead to deviant behaviors (Pircher Verdorfer et al., 2015). Additionally, this study demonstrated that servant leadership significantly predicts employees' perceptions of SMC (Pircher Verdorfer et al., 2015).

Organizational democracy has also been linked to SMC. More democratic organizational structures represent a substantial predictor of higher employee levels of SMC (Pircher Verdorfer, Weber et al., 2013; Weber et al., 2008), and an individual's participation in decision-making processes was associated with higher perceptions of SMC as well (Weber et al., 2009). Additionally, a positive SMC predicts work engagement, psychological ownership, and knowledge sharing (Steinheider & Pircher Verdorfer, 2017). Furthermore, positive perceptions of an organization's SMC have been linked to behavioral intentions and prosocial attitudes related to both work and community (Pircher Verdorfer, Weber et al., 2013; Weber et al., 2009). Prosocial and community-related behaviors have often been the focus of OCB research and refer to courtesy, helping behaviors, and altruism (Konovsky & Organ, 1996).

Another related finding regarding SMC is a link to innovation. Research has indicated a correlation, albeit moderate, between SMC and innovation that was mediated by debate and decision comprehensiveness (Seyr & Vollmer, 2014). According to McLean (2005), innovation (more than creativity) is dependent on interrelationships and dynamics among the organizational members, and thus the work environment and climate are important influences on individuals' behaviors.

Work climate broadly encompasses almost all aspects of organizational life (Kuenzi & Schminke, 2009) and climate perceptions have an impact on various individual outcomes,

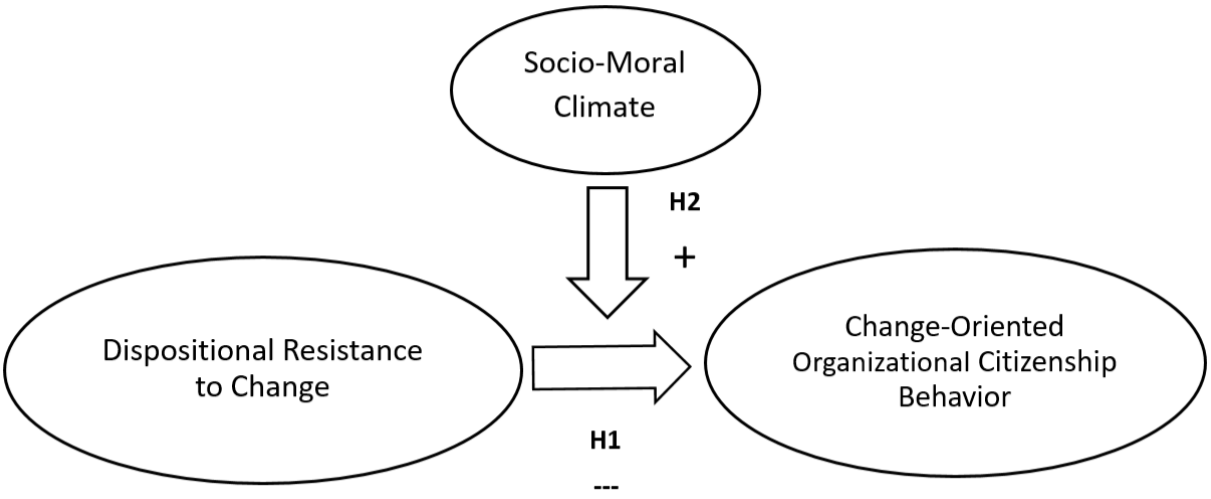
including OCB (Carr et al., 2003; Ehrhart, 2004). Previous research on ethical work climates has indicated its impact on various outcomes, but most of the research investigated traditional organizational behavior variables including job satisfaction, organizational commitment, turnover intentions, ethical behavior, and employee motivation (Martin & Cullen, 2006; Parker et al., 2003; Simha & Cullen, 2012). Simha and Cullen (2012) suggested that future research should examine additional organizational outcomes of ethical climates that might demonstrate their advantages and disadvantages. Although the literature on organizational climate is quite prevalent, little research links climate with reactions to organizational change (Oreg et al., 2011) and there appears to be no research linking ethical climate to change-related outcomes.

CHAPTER 3: RATIONALE AND HYPOTHESES

The purpose of the proposed study is to investigate the relationship between dispositional resistance to change and COOCB and to assess whether employees' perceptions of a strong socio-moral climate will influence the likelihood that employees will demonstrate COOCB. The proposed model and hypotheses are depicted in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Change Model with Hypotheses 1 and 2



Many recent scholars believe constant change is the current normal state of organizations, and organizations need to continuously change to survive and thrive (Balogun et al., 2016; Burnes, 2017; Lueke, 2003; Martins, 2011; Senior & Swailes, 2010). If emergent, continuous change is to occur via regular activities, COOCB may be more critical to an organization than the acceptance or advocacy of one specific change. Research has demonstrated the positive influence of proactive change-related behaviors on organizational performance (Chiaburu et al., 2017; Mackenzie et al., 2011; Tornau & Frese, 2013). Additionally, COOCB may be particularly relevant for higher education as employees typically have a high level of independence and autonomy in their regular work (Lane, 2007). Researchers have also recognized that COOCB has

particularly relevant implications for public organizations as it may be a way to mitigate the negative influence of bureaucracy, stagnation, and outdated processes (Vigoda-Gadot & Beeri, 2012). Moreover, higher education is known for being especially slow and resistant to change (Buller, 2015; Chronicle of Higher Education, 2013; Evans & Henrichsen, 2008; Palmer & Zajonc, 2010).

Resistance to change is regularly cited as an inhibitor of change (Dent & Goldberg, 1999; Erwin & Garman, 2010). Dispositionally resistant individuals demonstrate risk aversion and a preference for the status quo, and they exhibit resistant behavior (Oreg, 2003). Researchers have suggested that OCB and COOCB research continue to utilize personality traits as predictors, but that the traits examined be a closer match with the type of OCB the researchers are seeking to explain (Bettencourt, 2004; Marinova et al., 2015). If change-related behavior occurs on a spectrum (Judson, 1991), and one extreme of behavioral resistance is open protest, the extreme opposite would be COOCB. Although no studies link resistance to change to COOCB, many of the same dispositional traits, such as extraversion, openness, and neuroticism, are predictors of both resistance to change and COOCB (Chiaburu et al., 2011; Marinova et al., 2015; Oreg, 2003). The literature on change clearly demonstrates a link between dispositional traits and change behavior (Chiaburu et al., 2011; Fuller & Marler, 2009; Marinova et al., 2015) and scholars on OCB have called for a more exact matching of predictors (Bettencourt, 2004; Marinova et al., 2015), leading to the following hypothesis as depicted in Figure 1:

Hypothesis 1: Resistance to change will be negatively related to COOCB.

Lewin's (1947) Force Field Analysis

For decades, Lewin's (1947) conceptualization of a force field has offered direction for managing change within organizations. According to his theory, a force field exists in which driving forces and restraining forces are continually working against each other. When an equilibrium exists between the driving and restraining forces, no change will occur. If an organization can increase its driving forces and/or decrease its restraining forces, they can increase the likelihood of successful change. Driving forces and restraining forces may include many factors such as people, habits, or attitudes. As previously mentioned, modern higher education institutions face a great number of external pressures and driving forces (Bailey et al., 2015; Dowling-Hetherington, 2016; Goedegeburre et al., 2014; Kezar, 2001). Because driving forces are often external and, consequently, less influenceable by the organization, leaders should attempt to weaken the restraining forces to help facilitate successful change. This research acknowledges that restraining forces exist and attempts to identify a variable that will help to reduce the strength of negative restraining forces and lessen their influence.

Moderating Effect of Socio-Moral Climate

Researchers have demonstrated that affective, cognitive, and behavioral resistance are distinct constructs (Oreg, 2006; van Dam et al., 2008) and behavioral resistance varies from dispositional resistance based on contextual variables (Oreg & Berson, 2011). Oreg and Berson (2011) demonstrated the malleability of teachers' dispositional resistance to change when transformational leadership by the school principal moderated the relationship between resistance to change and change attitudes (which encompassed cognitive, affective, and behavioral components). Research on ambivalence to change also demonstrated the conflict that occurs between an individual's resistance to change (Oreg, 2003), and a more malleable attitude

such as orientation toward a change agent. Oreg and Sverdlik (2011) conclude that during times of change there is "particular value of promoting a positive orientation toward the organization" (p. 346).

Because COOCB focuses on regular, recurring proactive behavior, the moderating variable in this model encompasses multiple factors in the organizational environment. Research on proactive change behaviors has largely focused on proactivity as a single event, thus neglecting the dynamic environment in which it occurs (Bindl & Parker, 2011). The pragmatic implications of this type of behavior suggest, however, that organizations need to establish environments in which their employees are prone to engage in COOCB (Li et al., 2016).

Meta-analytic research has indicated that the influence of climate on individual outcomes is broadly generalizable across various industries, organizations, and occupations (Parker et al., 2003). Consequently, climate is the moderating variable in this study. Employees perceive and interpret their work environment before they react (Carr et al., 2003). Thus, positive experiences in an organization can contribute to the general receptivity of employees, thereby influencing their general change attitudes, and ultimately, their behavior (Parker et al., 2003). Psychological climate refers to an individual's perceptions of the organizational environment including structures, processes, and events while organizational climate often refers to perceptions aggregated at the group or organizational level. Decisions regarding the level of aggregation are typically based upon theory and development of a sufficient level of within-group agreement (Parker et al., 2003).

Organizational perceptions and climate are of the utmost importance in influencing change behavior (Choi, 2007; Morrison & Phelps, 1999). Additionally, because the main beneficiary of COOCB is the organization (Choi, 2007), the perception of the organizational

climate will theoretically be an important factor in determining behavior. Results of a meta-analysis by Chiaburu and colleagues (2013) indicated that organizational support correlated significantly with COOCB. Likewise, Choi (2007) found that an innovative climate was positively associated with COOCB and suggests research to further examine how employees' dispositions interact with climate perceptions to influence COOCB.

SMC has been chosen as the moderating climate variable because it has theoretical and practical implications in the relationship between resistance to change and COOCB but has not been previously examined. SMC theoretically cultivates ethical decision-making and behavior (Pircher Verdorfer, Weber, et al., 2013); researchers have suggested that the implications of a strong SMC can demonstrate relevance in other contexts (Pircher Verdorfer et al., 2015). There is also evidence that suggests ethical contexts are more important for public organizations than private (Bedi et al., 2016).

Because the literature has shown multiple factors are related to change reactions (Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999; Oreg et al., 2011), this study proposes SMC as a comprehensive climate variable. For example, the SMC component *open confrontation of conflicts* theoretically demonstrates organizational support and willingness of the organization to deal with conflict. Because COOCB involves risk-taking and disruption of the status quo, support from the organization can be crucial when employees choose whether they should demonstrate that behavior (Chiaburu et al., 2013). The psychological safety created by a strong SMC provides a sense of security which allows individuals to take risks in their interactions with others without the fear of being penalized (Seyr & Vollmer, 2014). Researchers of COOCB suggest that confronting conflicts with constructive disagreements may lead to more creativity, reduced costs, and improved organizational effectiveness (Mackenzie et al., 2011).

Additionally, *trust-based assignment and allocation of responsibility* contains elements of trust, which has demonstrated influence on all types of resistance including affective, behavioral, and cognitive (Oreg, 2006; van Dam et al., 2008). Employees in academia are often suspicious of change (Buller, 2015; Lane, 2007). Research demonstrates that public sector employees have higher levels of COOCB when their perception of organizational politics is low (Vigoda-Gadot & Beeri, 2012). This lends additional support to the notion that a strong SMC, which includes perceptions of trust and collaboration, will be a critical determinant in employee behavior, especially faculty, in a higher education institution.

The SMC component of *open communication and participative cooperation* includes items regarding participation. Various studies have corroborated that employee participation in the change process influences the success of changes by decreasing resistance or increasing readiness or openness to change (Choi, 2007; Eby et al. 2000; Giangreco & Peccei, 2005; Lines, 2004; van Dam et al., 2008; Wanberg & Banas, 2000). Participation in decision-making contributes to the participants' view of transparency (Buller, 2015), which is critical in higher education, a field that is known to breed skepticism of change (Lane, 2007). This subscale of the SMC measure also includes the extent to which employees are encouraged and empowered to question norms and rules. Psychological empowerment has also been linked to an employee's proactive COOCB (Choi, 2007).

The SMC components of *reliable and constant appreciation, care, and support* and *organizational concern for the individual* encompass concepts of mutual respect and genuine understanding of others' perspectives. Research has demonstrated that organizational support is associated with increased change readiness (Eby et al., 2000) and a meta-analysis demonstrated organizational support was positively associated with COOCB (Chiaburu et al., 2013).

Additionally, the research of Kiefer (2005) suggests positive organizational treatment reduces negative emotions during change. In a study specific to academicians, perceptions of organizational justice were strongly correlated with OCB (Mathur et al., 2013).

These concepts of mutual respect and concern inherent in SMC relate well to key social science theories and lend further support to the proposed model. Social exchange theory suggests that when employees believe their organization cares for their well-being, they feel obligated to reciprocate the support (Bedi et al., 2016; Brown et al., 2005). Gouldner (1960) describes this generalized moral norm of reciprocity as one which defines "certain actions and obligations as repayments for benefits received" (p. 170). One of the notable attributes of this norm is its comparative indeterminacy. It can act as flexible moral guidance applied to countless situations, and the actions demanded by the norm of reciprocity change significantly from situation to situation. An organization that creates a strong SMC by providing employees with a voice in decisions, treating employees with respect, and allocating responsibilities fairly, is likely to trigger reciprocity among its employees who, in turn, will feel obligated to act in a manner that benefits the organization.

Other factors regarding the higher education organizational context lend additional support to the hypothesized model. For example, in 1979, Ouchi distinguished three types of organizational control - market, bureaucracy, and clan. Organizational control refers to the mechanisms by which an organization is managed to achieve its goals. A 1996 article by Smart and St. John found that the most common type of culture among colleges and universities was the clan form, with 210 of 332 institutions demonstrating primarily clan culture. Although this research was conducted some time ago, a recent study in higher education asserted that the organizational culture is typically slow and difficult to shift even during times of change and

provided empirical evidence of little change in terms of cultural values and perceptions over a five-year period (Chandler et al., 2017).

A "clan" is a more demanding type of environment in terms of social interactions that become necessary for successful functioning. It depends on broad consensus about what behavior is acceptable and relies upon a significant commitment by its members to act accordingly. The likelihood that the college in which the study will occur would be distinguished as a "clan" further supports the notion that a strong SMC will be a significant factor in an employee's change behavior. Ethics researchers have also recognized that "some organizations are more prone to moral hazards" (Sharif & Scandura, 2014, p. 194).

Moreover, scholars have acknowledged that organizational change models have often been developed for other industries, and their applicability may be limited, or at least in need of adaptation, to make them relevant to the challenges of the higher education setting (Kezar, 2001; Torraco & Hoover, 2005). For example, a literature review examining various types of OCB found that leader behaviors were a critical factor affecting most types of OCB (Podsakoff et al., 2000). Higher education, however, typically utilizes various components of hierarchical, decentralized, and distributed organizational structures, which is one reason why traditional change models, which often include a top-down approach, do not necessarily translate well to higher education (Buller, 2015). Consequently, this model utilizes SMC as the critical interaction variable because it is a climate construct that contains leadership influence but is not fully dependent on individual supervisors' leadership. This model also aligns with Michaelis and colleagues' (2010) suggestion that research should explore moderators and substitutes for leadership in the support of innovative implementation behavior.

Again, this climate variable is comprehensive and measures, directly or indirectly, various concepts in one measure. Because SMC includes components of organizational support, trust, participation, and empowerment to question the status quo, this study proposes to test the following hypothesis (as depicted in Figure 1):

Hypothesis 2: Perceived socio-moral climate will moderate the relationship between dispositional resistance to change and COOCB such that the relationship between dispositional resistance to change and COOCB will be weaker when positive socio-moral climate perceptions are present.

CHAPTER 4: METHODS

Sample and Procedures

Data for the study were collected from full-time employees of Tulsa Community College (TCC), which is a large, multi-campus community college serving approximately 24,000 students per year. Before administration of the survey, Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval was granted by both the University of Oklahoma IRB and the Tulsa Community College IRB (see Appendices A and B). The survey was emailed to the entire full-time employee distribution list at TCC, which was at the time 916 employees. The survey was open for approximately one month, with a reminder to complete the survey sent two weeks after the initial email. To minimize survey fatigue, the survey was strategically timed in relation to other major college-wide surveys.

The 227 complete responses yielded a response rate of 24.78%, which was close to the anticipated 25%. The average respondent was a Caucasian female between the ages of 35-64 years who has earned a master's degree. The employee groups were relatively even with 29.9% faculty, 34.8% professional (supervisory) staff, 34.4% college (typically hourly) staff, and .9% did not provide a response. Regarding the question to what extent they had been recently personally impacted by change at TCC, 57.3% responded they had been impacted to a great (36.6%) or very great (20.7%) extent, 21.1% to a moderate extent, 11.9% to some extent, 9.3% said to a small extent, and .4% responded that they were not at all personally impacted by change at TCC. Demographic survey items are located in Appendix C, and original participant responses to demographic data are included in Appendix D.

Measures

In this study, the predictor variable was dispositional resistance to change, and the outcome variable was COOCB. The first hypothesis was that *resistance to change will be negatively related to COOCB.* The second hypothesis was that the *perceived socio-moral climate would moderate the relationship between dispositional resistance to change and COOCB such that the relationship between dispositional resistance to change and COOCB would be weaker when positive socio-moral climate perceptions are present.*

Resistance to change

Resistance to change was measured using Oreg's (2003) 17-item scale (see Appendix E). It measures overall dispositional resistance to change at the individual level using four sub-scales, including routine seeking (5 items; e.g., "I generally consider changes to be a negative thing"), emotional reaction to imposed change (4 items; e.g., "When I am informed of a change of plans, I tense up a bit"), short-term focus (4 items; e.g., "Changing plans seems like a real hassle to me"), and cognitive rigidity (4 items; e.g., "I don't change my mind easily"). The scale uses a 6-point Likert-scale ranging from 1 *(strongly disagree)* to 6 *(strongly agree)* and in previous studies had alpha coefficients of .87 (Oreg, 2003) and .86 (Oreg, 2006). Oreg (2003) conducted seven studies to establish convergent, discriminate, concurrent, and predictive validity. The measure was used in a variety of contexts, which helped to validate the instrument's relevance in explaining change resistance regardless of context or confounding variables. Additionally, this scale did not predict cognitive evaluation of specific changes, which demonstrates its relevance as a distinct construct. This scale has been validated in more than 25 samples from 19 different countries (Oreg & Sverdlik, 2011). In this study, the instrument yielded a strong internal reliability of $\alpha = .86$. The subscale reliabilities were $\alpha = .73, .82, .79,$

and .66 for routine seeking, emotional reaction to imposed change, short-term focus, and cognitive rigidity, respectively.

Socio-moral climate

Perceptions of SMC were measured using Pircher Verdorfer and colleagues' (2015) psychometrically sound 21-item scale, which consists of five subscales (see Appendix F). The English version of the instrument was translated from German using forward and back translations, verified by subject matter experts and was shortened from its original 42 items. In addition, confirmatory factor analysis demonstrated construct validity and reliability. The scale contains five dimensions, including open confrontation of conflicts; reliable care, appreciation, and support; open communication and participative cooperation; trust-based assignment and allocation of responsibility; and concern for the individual. Sample items include, "At TCC, we deal openly with conflicts and disagreements," "Important decisions at TCC are made by just a few," and "TCC's employees are treated with respect regardless of their qualifications or position." The validation study yielded strong reliability with a Cronbach's α of .88. Respondents completed the scale using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 *(strongly disagree)* to 5 *(strongly agree).*

In this study, the instrument yielded a strong internal reliability of α = .95. The reliabilities of the five dimensions were α = .91 for open confrontation of conflicts, α = .87 for reliable care, appreciation, and support, α = .86 for open communication and participative cooperation, α = .82 for concern for the individual, and .68 for trust-based assignment and allocation of responsibility.

Change-oriented organizational citizenship behavior

COOCB was measured using Choi's (2007) 4-item scale (see Appendix G), which was adapted from Morrison and Phelps (1999). The scale includes components of personal initiative, task revision, voice, and innovative behavior. The items are, "I frequently come up with new ideas or work methods to perform my tasks at TCC," "I often suggest work improvement ideas to others at TCC," "I often suggest changes to unproductive rules or policies at TCC," and "I often change the way I work at TCC to improve efficiency." Choi (2007) found strong reliability for the scale (α = .83), and subsequent research indicated Cronbach's α of .85 and .80, respectively (Lopez-Dominguez et al., 2013; Simo et al., 2016). In addition, Seppälä and colleagues (2012) and Li and colleagues (2016) utilized three supervisor-rated items adapted from Choi's (2007) scale to measure COOCB and found high internal consistencies of .92 and .92, respectively. Participants responded using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 *(strongly disagree)* to 5 *(strongly agree)*. The COOCB measure in this study yielded an acceptable Cronbach's α of .72.

Analytical Approach

The survey software Qualtrics was used to gather responses, and the data were imported into IBM SPSS Statistics version 27. Two hundred sixty-one individuals began the survey and one was removed due to their choosing not to participate. All of the scale items, placed at the beginning of the survey, were required to continue, and all of the demographic and indirect identifiable information items were optional. Most participants provided responses to all of the scale items; 33 individual responses, however, were removed for having more than 30% missing values. None of those had provided any responses on the resistance to change scale, which was the last scale on the survey and a critical variable for the analysis. Mean scores were calculated for the study variables as well as subscales, where applicable.

Demographic variables gathered included gender, race and ethnicity, age range, education level, employee classification type, and tenure in education and with Tulsa Community College. Education level and age range were treated as continuous variables in their original format. Race and ethnicity, as a multiple response (i.e., check all that apply) item on the survey, was recoded. Individuals that selected more than one response were coded as two or more races and the variable was dichotomized into Caucasian/not Caucasian. The non-Caucasian category was comprised of 46 individuals marking African-American, Asian, Hispanic, Native-American, other, and/or two or more races. Gender was dichotomized to male and female; two individuals who marked gender non-conforming were excluded from comparison analysis. The employee type variable was also recoded into three categories; 30 assistant, 28 associate, and 10 full professors were condensed into one faculty category, $n = 68$, while professional, $n = 79$, and college staff, $n = 78$, categories remained the same.

The variables in the model and their relationships, where applicable, were examined to determine whether they met the assumptions necessary for multiple regression analysis; that is, normality of the variables, linearity in the relationship between the predictor and outcome variable, homogeneity in the variance of errors, independence of errors, and normality in the distributions of errors. These assumptions were tested via visual inspection of scatterplots, p-p plots, and histograms, and analyses of skewness and kurtosis for normality and model fit for linearity.

Zero-order correlation analyses were conducted for study variables and demographic variables to determine relationships among the variables. This analysis was exploratory, and the demographic variables that showed significant differences were controlled for in subsequent

analysis. An ANOVA was conducted with employee classification type to determine if there were mean differences in the predictor, criterion, or moderator variable.

Multiple regression analyses examined the relationship between dispositional resistance to change and COOCB to investigate whether those with higher dispositional resistance to change reported less COOCB. Multiple regression analyses also tested the interaction effect between resistance to change and the moderating variable, SMC, when predicting COOCB, to test if employees with more resistance to change were more likely to exhibit COOCB when perceiving a positive SMC. Variables demonstrating relationships with the criterion variable were controlled for in the multiple regression analyses.

CHAPTER 5: RESULTS

First, evidence will be presented regarding the assumptions for correlational and regression analyses. Next, the correlational data with the study variables as well as differences in scores among demographic groups will be presented. Lastly, data from regression analyses will be presented to demonstrate the results of the hypotheses tests. The criterion defined for significance of analyses was $p < .05$.

The distribution of the scores for the predictor, moderator, and criterion variable were examined for normality. A Shapiro-Wilks test, as well as an examination of the histograms, normal Q-Q plots, and box plots demonstrated that the resistance to change scores were approximately normally distributed. The skewness of -.08, *SE* =.16, and kurtosis of -.19, *SE* = .32, fell within an acceptable range between -1 and 2 (Huck, 2004).

Visual inspection of the SMC scores via histograms, normal Q-Q plots, and box plots demonstrated an approximately normal distribution. Skewness was -.36, *SE* = .16, and kurtosis was -.16, *SE* = .32, which were also in the normal range. A Shapiro-Wilks test found a significance of .039, slightly below the .05 alpha level of significance for the test, demonstrating that the scores were not normally distributed. Statisticians have pointed out, however, that normality tests such as the Shapiro-Wilk and Kolmogorov-Smirnov may be significant even with a slight variation from a normal distribution, and that these tests should be interpreted along with histograms, Q-Q plots, and the values of skewness and kurtosis (Field, 2013).

Analysis of the COOCB variable demonstrated a non-normal distribution via the Shapiro-Wilks test. The skewness and kurtosis were -.81, *SE* = .17, and 2.57, *SE* = .32, respectively, with the kurtosis being slightly out of normal range (Huck, 2004). However, visual examination of Q-plots, box plots, and histograms demonstrated that the mean scores of the COOCB measure were

approximately normal, slightly negatively skewed, and somewhat leptokurtic. All three variables were approximately normally distributed or only slightly outside the range of normality; thus, for the purposes of analysis, normality was assumed.

The population values, observed ranges, means, standard deviations, and zero-order correlations between the means of the demographic and study variables, as well as the Cronbach's alphas for the study variables are presented in Table 1. Demographic survey items were optional, and consequently, data is included only for individuals who provided responses. For the purposes of the demographic analysis below, some categories have been condensed from the original data as explained in the Analytic Approach section (see Appendix D for original responses to demographic items).

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics, Correlations, with Cronbach Alpha Coefficients Displayed in the Diagonal

Variable	*n*	*Range*	*M (SD)*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Resistance to Change	227	1.53-4.65	3.02 (.61)	(.86)								
2. SMC	227	1.10-4.95	3.21 (.74)	-.17*	(.96)							
3. COOCB	227	1-5	3.77 (.57)	-.19**	.03	(.72)						
4. Extent Impacted by Change	227	1-6	4.46 (1.23)	.07	-.13*	.18**	--					
5. Years Worked at TCC	221	0-38	10.37 (8.38)	.08	-.12	.004	.17*	--				
6. Years Worked in Education	220	0-38	13.88 (9.17)	.008	-.13*	.009	.11	.79***	--			
7. Level of Education	224	1-6	4.66 (1.06)	-.04	-.03	.2**	.16*	.001	.21**	--		
8. Age Range	220	1-6	3.93 (1.11)	-.02	.06	-.03	.007	.42***	.45***	-.02	--	
9. Race	220	--	--	.04	.07	.08	.16*	-.02	-.06	.01	.07	--
10. Gender	219	--	--	.06	.03	-.03	.02	-.10	-.11	-.06	-.07	-.09

*Note: *p < .05. **p < .01, *** p < .001*
Note: For race variable, non-Caucasian=0, Caucasian=1; for gender variable female=0, male=1

Resistance to change, measured on a 6-point scale, yielded a mean score of 3.02 (*SD*= .61). Higher scores indicate more dispositional resistance to change. SMC and COOCB, both measured on a 5-point scale, yielded mean scores of 3.21 (*SD*= .74) and 3.77 (*SD*= .57),

respectively, with higher scores signifying a more positive perception of the organization's SMC or the respondent reported more COOCB.

Correlation analysis was performed to determine whether significant relationships existed between the study and the demographic variables. This analysis was exploratory to demonstrate if any relationships existed, either hypothesized or otherwise. It also determined which variables needed to be controlled for in the subsequent analyses. The Pearson's correlation between resistance to change and COOCB was $r(225) = -.19$, $p < .01$; when the dimensions were examined, routine seeking had the most significant relationship of $r(225) = -.25$, $p < .01$ with COOCB, followed by short-term focus $r(225) = -.15$, $p < .05$. The emotional reaction and cognitive rigidity dimensions did not demonstrate significant correlations. Correlation analysis also demonstrated relationships between the outcome variable, COOCB, with the extent to which one was impacted by change $r(225) = .18$, $p < .01$, as well as the level of education $r(222) = .20$, $p < .01$. Correlation analysis demonstrated a significant relationship between resistance to change and SMC $r(225) = -.17$, $p < .05$. Years in education had a negative relationship with the overall mean SMC $r(225) = -.13$, $p < .05$. Likewise, the extent to which one was impacted by change was significantly related to SMC, $r(225) = -.13$, $p < .05$. Results are displayed in Table 1.

Analysis revealed differences in mean scores based on employee type. Significant differences were found regarding both resistance to change, $F(2, 140.53) = 6.63$, $p = .002$, and COOCB, $F(2, 145.14) = 6.73$, $p = .002$. The Tamhane's post hoc comparisons revealed a significantly higher resistance to change mean score in faculty, $M = 3.11$ ($SD = .71$), than professional staff, $M = 2.85$ ($SD = .50$) $p = .034$. Likewise, college staff had higher resistance to change scores, $M = 3.13$ ($SD = .56$) $p = .003$, than professional staff. Post hoc comparisons using the Tamhane's demonstrated that professional staff reported more COOCB, $M = 3.94$ ($SD = .49$)

than college staff, M = 3.62 (SD = .62) p =.002. While faculty M = 3.73 (SD = .54), reported less COOCB than professional staff the difference was not significant, p = .054. Because both employee type and education level had relationships with the outcome, COOCB, it is of note that faculty were among the most educated of the employee groups: 92.5% of the faculty respondents held master's or doctoral degrees, while 72.2% of professional staff, and 44.2% of college staff held the same; faculty also had the highest count of doctoral degrees among the three groups.

To test Hypothesis 1 that *resistance to change will be negatively related to COOCB,* multiple regression analysis was performed. COOCB was regressed onto resistance to change, while employee type, education level, and the extent to which an employee felt impacted by change were used as control variables. The variables were entered into SPSS in the following order: 1) control variables: status as a professional staff member (dummy), education level (continuous), and the extent to which the respondent was impacted by change (continuous); 2) the predictor variable: resistance to change. A statistically significant relationship between resistance to change and COOCB was found, β= -.15, t = -2.37, $p < .05$. As depicted in Table 2, model 1, an employees' status as professional staff member increased COOCB, as well as education level and the extent to which an employee felt impacted by change, R^2 = .10. The R^2 increased to .123 when resistance to change, which had a negative relationship with COOCB, was added, as depicted in model 2. When the control variables were accounted for, resistance to change explained 2% of the variance in COOCB, ΔR^2= .022. Results are shown in Table 2, model 2.

Table 2

Stepwise Regression for Hypothesis 1 and 2, with COOCB as Criterion Variable

Variable	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3			Model 4			R^2	ΔR^2
	β	t	p	β	t	p	β	t	p	β	t	p		
Professional Staff	.20	3.08	.002	.16	2.50	.013	.16	2.47	.014	.18	2.63	.009		
Education Level	.16	2.50	.013	.16	2.43	.016	.16	2.43	.016	.16	2.46	.015	.100	.10
Extent Impacted by Change	.14	2.08	.039	.15	2.31	.022	.15	2.33	.021	.15	2.29	.023		
Resistance to Change				-.15	-2.37	.019	-.15	-2.28	.023	-.15	-2.25	.025	.123	.022
Socio-moral Climate							.02	.30	.763	.009	.14	.887	.123	.000
Interaction/Moderator										-.07	-1.10	.272	.128	.005

The second hypothesis, *perceived socio-moral climate will moderate the relationship between dispositional resistance to change and COOCB such that the relationship between dispositional resistance to change and COOCB will be weaker when positive socio-moral climate perceptions are present,* was tested using multiple regression analysis. The variables were entered into SPSS in the following order: 1) status as a professional staff member, education level, and the extent to which one was impacted by change; Step 2) the predictor variable, resistance to change; Step 3) the moderator variable, SMC; Step 4) the interaction variable, which is the product of resistance to change and SMC. The variables were centered around the mean to reduce the potential multicollinearity that a moderation analysis often creates.

The interaction between resistance to change and SMC was not found to be statistically significant, β = -.07, t = -1.10, p > .05, and thus, the second hypothesis was not supported. As depicted in Table 2, model 3, the addition of SMC to the regression analysis did not account for any additional change in COOCB, $R^2\Delta$ = .000 after the control variables from model 1, professional staff member status, education level, and the extent to which an employee felt impacted by change, as well as resistance to change from model 2, were accounted for. Likewise,

when SMC as a moderator was added to the regression analysis, as depicted in Table 2, model 4, the R^2 change of .005 was not statistically significant, $p = .272$.

In summary, significant positive relationships were found between employee status as a professional staff member, education level, the extent to which an employee felt impacted by change and the outcome, COOCB. Regarding Hypothesis 1 that *resistance to change will be negatively related to COOCB,* regression analysis confirmed that resistance to change had a statistically significant relationship with COOCB after controlling for the aforementioned variables. The second hypothesis, *perceived socio-moral climate will moderate the relationship between dispositional resistance to change and COOCB such that the relationship between dispositional resistance to change and COOCB will be weaker when positive socio-moral climate perceptions are present,* was tested using multiple regression analysis and was not supported. From the data gathered in this study, the strongest associations with an employee's COOCB were, in descending order: employee status as a professional staff member, education level, resistance to change, and the extent to which one was impacted by change. An employee was more likely to exhibit COOCB if they were a professional staff member and COOCB had a positive relationship with level of education. Resistance to change had a negative relationship with COOCB, and those who reported being more impacted by change reported more COOCB.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION

Change is ever-present in many industries and organizations, and higher education is no different (Bailey et al., 2015; Dowling-Hetherington, 2016; Goedegeburre et al., 2014; Kezar, 2001). The rapid pace of change, due in part to governmental accountability measures, changing technology, globalization, and decreasing enrollment, has contributed to an increasingly competitive higher education industry, and institutions must continuously adapt to ensure their survival (Bailey et al., 2015; Dowling-Hetherington, 2016; Goedegeburre et al., 2014; Kezar, 2001; Musselin, 2018). Organizational change will only occur, however, due to the collective work of individuals (Hiatt & Creasey, 2012). For higher education to evolve it needs employees who "have a lover's quarrel with the institution whenever they see it fall short of its potential and are willing to translate that quarrel into positive action" (Palmer & Zajonc, 2010, p. 21). To ensure emergent, continuous change and improvement, positive and proactive action may be even more important than the acceptance of specific changes.

One such critical proactive employee behavior, COOCB, refers to voluntary and constructive work behaviors aimed at suggesting and implementing change to increase effectiveness in the work environment (Bettencourt, 2004; Marinova et al., 2015). While affiliative OCBs focus on harmonious work environments, COOCB, which aims to disrupt the status quo, has emerged in the literature as an important behavior to produce outcomes in environments demanding more flexibility (Chiaburu et al., 2017; Choi, 2007; Morrison & Phelps, 1999; Van Dyne & LePine, 1998). Although scholars acknowledge both types of behavior need to be present for optimal outcomes, research has demonstrated the distinct positive influence of proactive change-related behaviors on individual, workgroup, and organizational performance (Chiaburu et al., 2017; Mackenzie et al., 2011; Tornau & Frese, 2013). COOCB

may be particularly relevant both in public organizations that need to compensate for slow and inflexible processes (Vigoda-Gadot & Beeri, 2012) and higher education, an industry known for its resistance to change (Buller, 2015; Chronicle of Higher Education, 2013; Evans & Henrichsen, 2008; Palmer & Zajonc, 2010).

The change literature consistently demonstrates a link between dispositional traits and change behavior (Chiaburu et al., 2011; Fuller & Marler, 2009; Marinova et al., 2015). Furthermore, resistance to change is one of the most frequently cited barriers to change and is a powerful restraining force (Dent & Goldberg, 1999; Erwin & Garman, 2010; Gilley et al., 2011; Szabla, 2007). Individuals who are dispositionally resistant to change are more risk averse, prefer the status quo, and demonstrate more resistant behavior (Oreg, 2003). In addition, scholars have suggested future research regarding specific work-related behavior, such as OCB and COOCB, examine dispositional predictors more closely aligned with the type of OCB being researched than, for example, the Big Five personality traits (Bettencourt, 2004; Marinova et al., 2015). As two constructs at theoretically opposite ends of the change spectrum (Judson, 1991), this study introduced resistance to change as a predictor of COOCB, leading to the first hypothesis that *resistance to change will be negatively related to COOCB.*

While the data support Hypothesis 1, β= -.15, t = -2.37, $p < .05$, the effect size was very small, $\Delta R^2 = .022$, and practically not relevant. Thus, it is difficult to support this hypothesis based on the evidence. It is clear that in the urban community college in which this hypothesis was tested, dispositional resistance to change was not a strong predictor of employees' COOCB. This finding is intriguing given the extant evidence regarding both dispositional resistance to change and proactive change-related behaviors in various organizations, making it important to speculate why dispositional resistance was not a more substantial predictor of COOCB.

The timing of the survey, amidst the global COVID-19 pandemic, may have affected the results. Many individuals faced increased stress and anxiety, job insecurity, increased workload, and difficulties related to caregiving or isolation (Caligiuri et al., 2020; Prime et al., 2020). Previous studies have had contrasting results whether stress promotes (Fay & Sonnentag, 2002) or inhibits (Sonnentag, 2003) proactive behavior. Thus, it is unclear if the pandemic-induced challenges made individuals more or less likely to exhibit COOCB, which includes components of personal initiative and speaking up regarding changes. For example, employees may have been more likely to report COOCB if they were trying to influence the direction of a rapidly changing environment.

Contrarily, even if an individual was prone to engage in COOCB, this behavior may have been thwarted by the lack of opportunity. Decisions were made quickly by college leadership often without giving employees an opportunity to provide suggestions (Caligiuri et al., 2020; Fernandez & Shaw, 2020). Likewise, employees may not have had the capacity to engage in such behavior as they were forced to adapt quickly to shifting operations and transitions to remote learning, and were exhausted, physically and emotionally (Charoensukmongkol & Phungsoonthorn, 2020). COOCBs regarding improving efficiency, suggesting changes to unproductive policies, and coming up with new work methods were likely not a priority.

Likewise, employees' reporting of resistance to change may have been affected by the pandemic. Although the resistance to change measure is dispositional and, theoretically, relatively stable, it includes affective reactions to change (Oreg, 2003) which may have been exacerbated by the stress and anxiety that employees experienced as a result from the COVID-19 crisis (Charoensukmongkol & Phungsoonthorn, 2020). Individuals have different reactions to change (Oreg et al., 2011), and employees may have become more or less sensitized to change,

reporting different levels of resistance to change than they would have under typical circumstances.

Theoretically, dispositional resistance to change, a variable which demonstrates change aversion in everyday life, should have had a stronger negative relationship with COOCB, a behavior aimed at initiating change in everyday work behavior. For example, Oreg's (2003) research demonstrated a relationship between dispositional resistance to change and students' voluntarily initiating changes in their course schedules. Perhaps a dispositional trait more closely aligned with proactivity than with general affective reactions to change would have been a better predictor of COOCB in this organization. For example, a meta-analysis between proactive personality and voice, taking charge, and proactive behavior (Fuller & Marler, 2009), as well as a meta-analysis between proactive personality and COOCB, found stronger relationships than those found in this study (Marinova et al., 2015).

An employee's resistant disposition may also manifest itself in other ways than hypothesized, accounting for the relative lack of association between resistance to change and COOCB. Perhaps individuals who are more resistant to change still exhibit proactive behavior to exert a sense of control over changes, a sort of mitigation strategy to ensure changes that do occur are ones with which they agree. This may be supported by the finding that the extent to which one felt impacted by change was a significant predictor of COOCB.

Additionally, the COOCB measure used in this study includes aspects of both proactive personal initiative targeted at improving one's own working environment, as well as suggesting productive changes to others (i.e., proactive voice; Choi, 2007). Scholars have suggested distinguishing between proactive change-related behavior (Parker & Collins, 2010) and voice behavior (Maynes & Podsakoff, 2014), as well as between negative (defensive and destructive)

and positive types of voice (supportive and constructive; Maynes & Podsakoff, 2014). Accordingly, a more specific construct may have provided a stronger relationship for Hypothesis 1. For example, an employee with a high level of resistance to change may also speak up, but they may be exhibiting destructive voice which refers to questioning the status quo by criticizing the organization's procedures and making disparaging comments about policies (Maynes & Podsakoff, 2014).

Although colleges and universities are notoriously slow to change (*Chronicle of Higher Education*, 2013; Evans & Henrichsen, 2008; Palmer & Zajonc, 2010) and often even resistant to changes limited in scope (Buller, 2015), the mean score for resistance to change in this study was 3.02 (*SD*= .61), which is in line with studies in other industries (Oreg, 2003). This finding suggests that resistance to change in higher education does not stem from individuals' affective resistance to change, but rather may stem from cognitive resistance to change, or change-specific resistance to change, which, in turn, may influence behavior. Conversely, the perceived resistance to change in higher education may stem from other unique characteristics of the industry that may appear to inhibit the speed of change including multiple power and authority structures, goal ambiguity, shared governance systems, and the unique culture of the academe (Chandler et al., 2017; Kezar, 2001).

Additionally, resistance to change is among the most cited reasons for change failure (Dent & Goldberg, 1999; Erwin & Garman, 2010). Yet, individuals with higher resistance to change still exhibit COOCB. Their resistance to change does not prohibit, or substantially lessen, suggesting changes to others and initiating improvements in their own routine behavior. Other research has also demonstrated limitations in the predictive power of this dispositional resistance to change variable. In contrast to their hypothesis, Michel and colleagues (2013) found that

dispositional resistance to change did not moderate the relationship between the perceived extent of change and affective commitment. This research lends further credence to a paradigm shift that calls into question resistance to change as one of the most significant barriers to change in the literature (Ford et al., 2008; Piderit, 2000), and supports a more systems-oriented approach to organizational change.

The second hypothesis was that *perceived socio-moral climate will moderate the relationship between dispositional resistance to change and COOCB such that the relationship between dispositional resistance to change and COOCB will be weaker when positive socio-moral climate perceptions are present.* Lewin's (1947) seminal conceptualization of a force field theorized that driving and restraining forces are competing against each other, and when equilibrium is disrupted, change will occur. If the organization can reduce restraining forces, in this case employees' resistance to change, successful change can occur. Research has demonstrated the malleability of dispositional resistance based on contextual variables (Oreg & Berson, 2011), and thus, the organization can lessen the negative association between resistance to change and COOCB.

Because COOCB focuses on regular, recurring proactive behavior (Choi, 2007), socio-moral climate was introduced as it encompasses a broad range of positive attributes in the organizational environment. SMC is a climate construct that examines employees' perceptions of an organization's practices and procedures including confrontation of conflicts; appreciation, care, and support; communication and cooperation; trust; and organizational concern for the employee (Pircher Verdorfer et al., 2015; Pircher Verdorfer, Weber et al., 2013; Weber et al., 2009). Trust, participation, organizational support, and psychological empowerment are also linked to change-related outcomes (Chiaburu et al., 2013; Chiaburu & Baker, 2006; Choi, 2007,

Eby et al. 2000; Giangreco & Peccei, 2005; Lines, 2004; Wanberg & Banas, 2000; Pircher Verdorfer et al., 2015; van Dam et al., 2008). Additionally, SMC has been linked to increased innovation, pro-social behavior, OCB, psychological ownership, knowledge sharing, work engagement, and to decreased organizational cynicism and counter productive work behavior (Pircher Verdorfer, Steinheider et al., 2013; Pircher Verdorfer, Weber et al., 2013; Seyr & Vollmer, 2014; Steinheider & Pircher Verdorfer, 2017; Weber et al., 2009). Hypothesis 2, however, was not supported, β = -.07, t = -1.10, p > .05. The lack of association between the perceived socio-moral climate and an individual's COOCB raises further questions about COOCB in this organizational setting as the scholarly literature provides strong support for this relationship.

The psychological safety created by a strong SMC should encourage individuals to take risks in their interactions with others (Seyr & Vollmer, 2014). This is supported by Baer and Frese's (2003) finding of a strong relationship between climate for psychological safety and climate for initiative (r= .70). Additionally, social exchange theory and the norm of reciprocity suggest that employees will reciprocate support when they believe their organization cares for their well-being (Bedi et al., 2016; Brown et al., 2005; Gouldner, 1960). Given the existing evidence, the lack of association between an employees' perception of the SMC and their COOCB is intriguing.

One possible explanation for the lack of the hypothesized relationship is the apparent contradiction between affiliative and change-related OCB (Mackenzie et al., 2011). While affiliative climates may make people more likely to exhibit OCB in the traditional sense, it may make them less likely to exhibit change behaviors. Proactive change behaviors often challenge the status quo and call into question current practices, which may be negatively viewed,

especially by those who have promulgated those practices (Bindl & Parker, 2011). While SMC includes items about openly confronting conflicts, for example, other items are more affiliative, such as those relating to the organization's concern for employees' well-being. A climate variable that lacks these affiliative items, or perhaps a climate variable more specific to change, such as a climate for initiative (Baer & Frese, 2003), may have demonstrated a stronger relationship with COOCB.

Another factor that may have contributed to the lack of relationship between SMC and COOCB is the organization in which the study occurred. As discussed in the literature review, the higher education industry is often characterized by "organized anarchical decision making" (Kezar, 2001, p. 71), with components of decentralized, hierarchical, and distributed organizational structures (Buller, 2015; Kezar, 2001). Choi (2007) demonstrated that organizational characteristics were more strongly related to COOCB than group-level characteristics, theorizing that supportive and cohesive group environments encourage affiliative OCBs and reinforce existing systems while hindering employees from exhibiting challenging OCB which disrupts the work environment. However, Lewin (1947) posited that change should focus on group dynamics, maintaining that individual behavior conforms to group norms. In higher education, with many interactions typically occurring at the group level, microclimates at the department or unit level may have been a more important determinant of COOCB in this organization.

Because differences between higher education and other industries are often highlighted in the literature (Buller, 2015; Kezar, 2001), it is important to note the mean scores for the measures did not appear substantially different and were within the ranges provided by other studies (Choi, 2007; Lopez-Dominguez et al., 2013; Oreg, 2003; Oreg, 2006; Pircher Verdorfer

et al., 2015). Although this organization may be different in ways that influence the interactions, or lack thereof, this suggests that if organizational differences influenced the results of the study, they were not likely due to particularly high or low levels of resistance to change, SMC, or COOCB.

However, responses to the SMC survey may also have been affected by the pandemic, either the employee's mental state when taking the survey, or more likely, indirectly, by the organization's response. For example, in 2019, the community college in which the data were collected reported overall climate scores significantly higher than the national average when compared to both large-two year colleges and all colleges ($p < .001$) in the sample (Suzuki & Maldonado, 2019). This suggests that the SMC scores may have been lower than they might have been otherwise. This is not surprising, however, as the institutional environment was certainly different during the pandemic. The emergency nature of the crisis, especially at the onset, meant that organizational leaders had to quickly make many decisions such as who may telework and how, the details regarding transitions to remote learning, as well as new priorities and how to best communicate those to employees (Caligiuri et al., 2020; Fernandez & Shaw, 2020). In many cases, decisions bypassed shared governance or other mechanisms for feedback (Fernandez & Shaw, 2020). Likewise, the organization had very few employees working on-campus and there were less opportunities for participation. This may have influenced SMC scores, which include items regarding participative processes and organizational concern for the employee.

While this study did not find strong relationships between the study variables, it corroborates components of the research regarding employee characteristics that predict, and do not predict, COOCB. For example, the finding that professional staff members report more

COOCB than college staff is consistent with previous evidence that supports hierarchical level relates to increased proactive behaviors (Choi, 2007; Morrison & Phelps, 1999). In comparing COOCB to the job roles and responsibilities of various higher education employees, one could make the argument that administrators, especially at the senior-level, *should* be regularly making suggestions for changes to unproductive rules or policies as a function of their legitimate power. Regardless, this does suggest that the organizational hierarchy present in higher education does influence employee behavior. This finding also suggests that situational differences such as job characteristics (see Marinova et al., 2015) may provide better predictive power when determining employee COOCB.

Although Rose (2012) found that faculty were less likely to exhibit the more broadly defined OCB than staff (with a sample across several higher education institutions), when measuring the more narrowly defined construct of COOCB in this study (Choi, 2007), faculty did not report significantly more or less COOCB. However, the difference between faculty and professional staff was *almost* significant, $p = .054$, with faculty reporting less COOCB, $M = 3.73$ ($SD = .54$) than professional staff, $M = 3.94$ ($SD = .49$). Given the mission-critical nature of faculty work in a higher education institution, this is a relevant topic for future research.

Although some authors, such as Tagg (2012), cite faculty resistance to change as a significant challenge for both administrators and other faculty alike, thus far, there appears to be little quantitative research linking faculty and resistance to change or comparing faculty to other groups regarding this phenomenon (for an exception, see Mulinge & Munyae, 2008). However, this research showed significantly higher resistance to change scores in both faculty and college staff than in professional staff. The resistance to change measure examines affective responses to change in general daily life, which are theoretically relatively stable over time, and not the

cognitive evaluation of specific work-related changes (Oreg, 2003; 2006), which might be more staff-, supervisor- or faculty-friendly. Additionally, Oreg and colleagues (2009) found that those with more resistance to change tend to select different types of careers (e.g., realistic, conventional, stable) than those with less resistance to change. This may suggest some generalizability of the results to faculty, professional, and college staff groups in other colleges and universities. This also suggests that researchers should continue to distinguish between faculty, professional staff, and college staff in higher education research.

This research also revealed that a higher education level increased an employee's COOCB. This is consistent with many studies that indicate a significant and positive link between job expertise and perceived capability with proactive behaviors (Bindl & Parker, 2011). Likewise, because a higher education level increased COOCB, cognitive-motivational processes such as perceived benefit or career aspirations may have yielded better predictive power. For example, in a university setting, Simo and colleagues (2016) found a significant positive correlation between promotion focus and COOCB.

The lack of differences in mean scores between males and females and those of various age ranges and tenure is not surprising. Evidence regarding demographic differences with resistance to change and COOCB has been mixed. While Oreg (2006) found older employees to be less change resistant and Choi (2007) found older employees more likely to exhibit COOCB, other research yielded dissimilar findings. Mulinge and Munyae (2008) found older employees less likely to embrace change and van Dam and colleagues (2008) showed that tenure was linked to increased resistance to change. Although Choi (2007) found that males were more likely to exhibit COOCB, Armstrong-Stassen (1998) found that gender was not a significant factor with regards to coping with change after controlling for level of position in the organization.

Summarizing the literature on proactive behaviors, Bindl and Parker (2011) noted that demographics may confound with occupation and hierarchical level, and that effect sizes were small when differences were present.

Limitations and Future Research

As with any study, this research had some limitations. The data were based on employees' self-assessments, including the resistance to change measure. Because the resistance to change items appear inherently negative, social desirability bias may have played a role in respondents not accurately assessing their resistance to change (Edwards, 1957). Although these types of measures are common in research on resistance to change (Bindl & Parker, 2011; Erwin & Garman, 2010), some of the items, particularly on the resistance to change and COOCB scale, could have yielded very different responses if others were to provide the response. However, as Campbell and Im (2016) point out, COOCB may be less observable by supervisors than other behaviors that assess work performance, and ratings may be affected by egocentric (i.e., supervisors reporting that their employees are proactive as a means of making themselves look good) and observational biases (i.e., individuals act more proactively when they are being observed: Bindl & Parker, 2011). Furthermore, Tornau and Frese (2013), in a meta-analysis on proactive behavior, demonstrated that supervisors did not differentiate between different types of proactivity and concluded that supervisor ratings may be less valid than those of job incumbents.

Additionally, Maynes and Podsakoff (2014), in testing relationships between personality and employee voice behavior, reported non-significant findings in some of the hypothesized relationships. They suggested future research should utilize self-assessments given that supervisors often do not understand the reasons employees exhibit voice behavior. Bindl and Parker (2011) acknowledge that one of the biggest challenges in measuring proactive behavior is

that it involves challenging and questioning accepted practices. That behavior is often not welcomed by others and, thus, can be assessed negatively. For example, Burris's (2012) research suggests that supervisors had more favorable reactions to *less* proactive change-oriented voice behaviors.

Further justifying the decision to use self-reported data is the nature of the supervisory relationship in the institution being studied. While some supervisors regularly observe their employees' behavior, many supervisors in the multi-campus work environment have subordinates of various levels that are not physically located on the same campus. Additionally, the independent nature of faculty work means that supervisors often do not observe their behavior frequently. This may have been further exacerbated by the remote working environment precipitated by the pandemic. Thus, utilizing supervisor assessment of behavior would have led to additional limitations.

McLean (2005) noted that it is difficult to assess the outcome variable in research on innovation and creativity, and research on change faces the same challenge. This research did not attempt to demonstrate that COOCB correlates with institutional outcomes. The mere act of suggesting changes or creating new ideas does not indicate that they will lead to more efficient work and ultimately better organizational performance. Bindl and Parker (2011), however, point out that "the price of passivity might be even greater than occasional misdirected proactivity" (p. 591). Furthermore, quantitative research has demonstrated the positive influence of COOCB on organizational performance (Chiaburu et al., 2017; Mackenzie et al., 2011).

Another limitation is that data were collected from only one college. Although this decreased external validity, it allowed the author to provide results that were institution-specific and relevant without the inclusion of confounding variables that data from multiple colleges

would create. Furthermore, participation from various colleges might have affected the fidelity of the data; respondents might have felt the survey was being conducted to compare one institution to another and that could have affected their responses. Additionally, some researchers have encouraged studies on COOCB in specific settings with the recognition that different predictors may emerge (Chiaburu et al., 2017).

A common limitation of studies on change is the timing. Martins (2011) points out the inherent challenge in studying a "dynamic phenomenon using the relatively static mechanism of scholarly research and publishing" (p. 713). Changes are ever-present and evolving and one's attitudes and perceptions can vary based on the snapshot of the environment in which the survey is conducted. It is important to reiterate, however, that this study approached change-related personality, behaviors, and organizational climate perceptions from a general standpoint, not cognitions regarding a specific change.

Even still, longitudinal studies with the same types of variables may provide insight regarding the extent to which the relationships remain stable over time, especially considering the timing of the survey at the height of the global COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic affected the mental state of individuals' worldwide (Caligiuri, et al., 2020; Prime, et al., 2020) and caused uncertainty and emotional exhaustion among employees in colleges and universities (Charoensukmongkol & Phungsoonthorn, 2020). As a study using psychological constructs, it is likely these scores were affected, although to what extent is unclear. More research and longitudinal studies regarding the organizational components that impact the psychological well-being of employees within organizations affected by the pandemic have yet to be conducted (Charoensukmongkol & Phungsoonthorn, 2020).

Future research utilizing resistance to change measures should consider alternative constructs to the dispositional resistance to change measure in this study. Owing to the complexity of the construct, a resistance to change variable including affective, cognitive, and behavioral resistance (e.g., Oreg, 2006) may provide researchers a more comprehensive picture than the narrower dispositional variable in this study. Likewise, the newer construct of ambivalence to change (Oreg & Sverdlik, 2011) may be a better construct to examine employees' contrasting feelings and attitudes regarding change than resistance.

The COOCB variable used in this study included both initiative to change one's personal efficiency and to suggest improvements to others. Researchers have acknowledged various types of change-related behavior (Grant & Parker, 2009; Maynes & Podsakoff, 2014; Parker & Collins, 2010), and studies should continue to distinguish and narrow these types so they may identify where differences and similarities exist. This will allow a more direct matching of individual predictors, as well as the identification of unique contextual differences, that may inhibit or encourage proactive change-related behavior.

Similarly, differences may emerge among levels of analysis, and thus, future SMC research should include analysis at the unit level. This will allow for aggregation and examination of more complex interactions that may influence outcome variables. Additionally, because co-worker support and leader support were found to have similar predictive power of COOCB as organizational support (Chiaburu et al., 2013), future studies should include those factors to account for more variance in COOCB.

Research should also examine if a more specific climate variable better predicts COOCB. In addition to climate for initiative (Baer & Frese, 2003), future studies could identify those factors that most contribute to change-related behavior and create and test new instruments for

distinct types of proactive change-related behaviors. The climate measures could also be tested in different organizations to determine their generalizability in various organizations.

Likewise, change models, in general, should be examined in various types of organizations to determine if the predictors of COOCB, or interactions, differ between industries, such as higher education, other public organizations, or the private sector. Future studies regarding resistance to change and change-related behavior in higher education should continue to disaggregate data by employee type and education level owing to the differences in mean scores present and the qualitative literature which asserts that Higher Education is resistant to change (Tagg, 2012).

Conclusion

Martins (2011) concluded that modern conceptualizations of change should envision employees as "empowered creators or cocreators of change along with organizational leaders" (p. 720) instead of characterizing employees as passive or reluctant targets of change. Research on organizational change needs to shift the paradigm from the image of the resistant employee who must be overcome, to viewing the organization and all its employees as an interdependent system in which all parties assume blame or receive credit for the failure or success of changes. These changes are in part possible due to employees' initiative, in their own work environment and in suggesting change to others.

Organizations should also acknowledge the extensive influence that the COVID-19 pandemic may have had on various aspects of organizational life. The pandemic's effect on psychological states, organizational processes and procedures, and as such climate perceptions and change-related behaviors, has yet to be comprehensively examined and understood. Additional research, along with the passage of time, will begin to provide insight regarding the

short- and long-term effects of the pandemic on organizations across the world, as well as higher education institutions.

In reference to change in higher education, Tagg (2012) stated, “we need to not only design change for our institutions but redesign our institutions for change” (p. 11). Scholars and educators must examine traditional change management models and methods and utilize those that fit the higher education culture if they wish to achieve successful change implementation (Buller, 2015; Kezar, 2001). At the same time, scholars should recognize that some aspects of person and environment interactions may be generalizable to many organizations and industries. Determining where these differences and similarities exist will help higher education and its employees to encourage the continuous change that is necessary to adapt to a changing world.

An institution’s survival can hinge on its ability to change (Evans & Henrichsen, 2008). It is important to recognize the permanency of change and understand its context in all organizations, including higher education, and to formulate and conduct relevant research on change management models. This research can help professionals understand the various factors that can contribute to the acceptance of change and understand their roles in influencing employees’ proactive change-related behavior.

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Appendix A

University of Oklahoma Institutional Review Board Approval Notification

The UNIVERSITY of OKLAHOMA

Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects

Approval of Initial Submission – Exempt from IRB Review – AP01

Date: October 12, 2020 **IRB#:** 12563

Principal Investigator: Lindsay C White **Approval Date:** 10/12/2020

Exempt Category: 2

Study Title: Exploring the Moderating Effect of Socio-Moral Climate on the relationship between Resistance to Change and Change-Oriented Organizational Citizenship Behavior

On behalf of the Institutional Review Board (IRB), I have reviewed the above-referenced research study and determined that it meets the criteria for exemption from IRB review. 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.
- Request approval from the IRB prior to implementing any/all modifications as changes could affect the exempt status determination.
- 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.
- Notify the IRB 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,



Ioana Cionea, Ph.D.
Vice Chair, Institutional Review Board

Appendix B

Tulsa Community College Institutional Review Board Approval Notification

From: Institutional Review Board <irb@tulsacc.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, October 21, 2020 1:01 PM
To: Lindsay White <lindsay.white@tulsacc.edu>
Cc: Institutional Review Board <irb@tulsacc.edu>
Subject: IRB Application #20-19 Approved

Human Subjects Review
Proposal Title: Factors that influence change-oriented behavior
IRB #: 20-19

Dear Researcher:

Your research proposal has been approved by the Institutional Review Board at Tulsa Community College. You are authorized to begin your research and implement this study as of the date of this email. This authorization is valid for one year from today. After this authorization runs out, you are required to submit a continuation or renewal request for IRB approval.

This approval is granted with the understanding that the research will be conducted within the published guidelines of the TCC Institutional Review Board and as described in your application. Any changes or modifications to the approved protocols should be submitted to the IRB for approval. Please use the IRB number provided above in all your communications regarding this study.

Thank you for sending us your application for research involving human subjects. By doing so, you safeguard the welfare of our students and federal funding of our college.

Intake Coordinator, Institutional Review Board
Tulsa Community College
irb@tulsacc.edu

Appendix C

Demographic Survey Items

Please answer each question below with the number or category that best describes you.

How many years have you have worked for Tulsa Community College?
____years

How many years have you worked in Higher Education?
____years

Which employee type best describes you?
___Faculty (Assistant Professor)
___Faculty (Associate Professor)
___Faculty (Professor)
___Professional Staff (Please mark professional staff if you meet ANY of the following):

- Receive a salary and are exempt from overtime
- Have a title of manager or director
- Supervise at least one full-time employee

___College Staff

What is the highest level of education you have achieved?
___High School
___Some College
___Associates Degree
___Baccalaureate Degree
___Master's Degree
___Doctorate Degree

Which category best describes you? Check all that apply.
___African-American ___Asian ___Caucasian ___Hispanic ___Native-American ___Other

How do you identify your gender?
___ Female ___Male ___Gender Diverse (gender non-conforming and/or transgender)

What is your age?
____ 18-24 ___25-34 ___35-44 ___45-54 ___55-64 ___65+

Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statements by selecting the most appropriate number in the scale with 1 = strongly disagree 6= strongly agree.

(Recently and currently) to what extent have you personally been impacted by change at TCC?
___ Not at all ___ To a small extent ___ To some extent
___ To a moderate extent ___ To a great extent ___ To a very great extent

Appendix D

Characteristics of Participants

Characteristic	Sample *n (%)*
Gender *(n=227)*	
Female	151(66.5%)
Male	68(30%)
Gender-Diverse	2(.9)
Unknown	6(2.6%)
Race/Ethnicity *(n=227)*	
African American	14(6.2%)
Asian	2(.9%)
Caucasian	168(74%)
Hispanic	6(2.6%)
Native American	8(3.5%)
Other	6(2.6%)
Two or More Races	16(7%)
Unknown	7(3.1%)
Age Range *(n=227*)	
18-24	1(.4%)
25-34	28(12.3%)
35-44	45(19.8%)
45-54	66(29.1)
55-64	72(31.7%)
65+	8(3.5%)
Unknown	7(3.1)
Employee Group *(n=227)*	
Faculty (Professor)	10 (4.4%)
Faculty (Associate)	28 (12.3%)
Faculty (Assistant)	30 (13.2%)
Professional Staff	79 (34.8%)
College Staff	78 (34.4%)
Unknown	2 (.9%)
Education Level *(n=227)*	
High School	6 (2.6%)
Some College	6 (2.6%)
Associates Degree	11 (4.8%)
Baccalaureate	47 (20.7%)
Master's Degree	119 (52.4%)
Doctoral	35 (15.4%)
Unknown	3 (1.3%)
	M(SD)
Years Worked in Education *(n=220)*	13.88 (9.17)
Years Worked at TCC *(n=221)*	10.37 (8.38)

Appendix E

Resistance to Change Instrument

Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statements by selecting the most appropriate number in the scale with 1= *strongly disagree* and 6= *strongly agree*. Refer, in general to your work life/your life in general.

I generally consider changes to be a negative thing.	1 2 3 4 5 6
I'll take a routine day over a day full of unexpected events anytime.	1 2 3 4 5 6
I like to do the same old things rather than try new and different ones.	1 2 3 4 5 6
Whenever my life forms a stable routine, I look for ways to change it.*	1 2 3 4 5 6
I'd rather be bored than surprised.	1 2 3 4 5 6
If I were to be informed that there's going to be a significant change regarding the way things are done at work, I would probably feel stressed.	1 2 3 4 5 6
When I am informed of a change of plans, I tense up a bit.	1 2 3 4 5 6
When things don't go according to plans, I tense up a bit.	1 2 3 4 5 6
If my boss changed the criteria for evaluating employees, it would probably make me feel uncomfortable even if I thought I'd do just as well without having to do any extra work.	1 2 3 4 5 6
Changing plans seems like a real hassle to me.	1 2 3 4 5 6
Often, I feel a bit uncomfortable even about changes that may potentially improve my life.	1 2 3 4 5 6
When someone pressures me to change something, I tend to resist even if I think the change may ultimately benefit me.	1 2 3 4 5 6
I sometimes find myself avoiding changes that I know will be good for me.	1 2 3 4 5 6
I often change my mind.*	1 2 3 4 5 6
Once I've come to a conclusion, I'm not likely to change my mind.	1 2 3 4 5 6
I don't change my mind easily.	1 2 3 4 5 6
My views are very consistent over time.	1 2 3 4 5 6

*Reverse-coded

Appendix F

Socio-Moral Climate Instrument

Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statements by selecting the most appropriate number in the scale with 1= *strongly disagree* and 5= *strongly agree*. Refer, in general to Tulsa Community College as a whole.

Differing viewpoints regarding important matters are handled openly at TCC.	1 2 3 4 5
At TCC, we deal openly with conflicts and disagreements.	1 2 3 4 5
Tensions between management and employees are discussed openly at TCC.	1 2 3 4 5
If someone is treated unjustly at TCC, we address this openly.	1 2 3 4 5
In TCC, honest mistakes can be forgiven.	1 2 3 4 5
Mutual respect is a central value in TCC.	1 2 3 4 5
There is mutual trust in TCC.	1 2 3 4 5
TCC's employees are treated with respect regardless of their qualifications or position.	1 2 3 4 5
In TCC you can speak your mind without fear of negative consequences.	1 2 3 4 5
TCC employees are asked whether they agree with organizational projects and procedures.	1 2 3 4 5
TCC employees have a voice in significant organizational changes.	1 2 3 4 5
Important decisions at TCC are made by just a few.*	1 2 3 4 5
In TCC, we can question principles and practices that are no longer useful.	1 2 3 4 5
TCC attempts to meet the needs of all its members.	1 2 3 4 5
When dealing with personal problems, TCC employees can count on the understanding of others in our organization.	1 2 3 4 5
There is little concern for personal needs in TCC.*	1 2 3 4 5
In TCC, management considers employee's well-being when making important decisions.	1 2 3 4 5
At TCC, everyone is tasked according to his/her skill set.	1 2 3 4 5
Supervisors at TCC don't have confidence in employees' ability to act responsibly.*	1 2 3 4 5
In TCC, people are encouraged to stand up for one another.	1 2 3 4 5
In TCC, qualified employees are given responsibility for their coworkers.	1 2 3 4 5

*Reverse-coded

Appendix G

Change-Oriented Organizational Citizenship Behavior Instrument

Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statements by selecting the most appropriate number in the scale with 1= *strongly disagree* and 5= *strongly agree*. Refer, in general, to changes occurring recently and currently at the College.

I frequently come up with new ideas or work methods to perform my tasks at TCC.	1 2 3 4 5
I often suggest work improvement ideas to others at TCC.	1 2 3 4 5
I often suggest changes to unproductive rules or policies at TCC.	1 2 3 4 5
I often change the way I work at TCC to improve efficiency.	1 2 3 4 5