**CHANGE AND ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT IN UKRAINE**

**ABSTRACT**

An understudied issue is how change influences the employee-organization relationship, as exemplified by organizational commitment. We propose a relationship between resistance to change and commitment, moderated by two work place variables, which we test with samples from four Ukrainian firms undergoing change. The results indicate that those higher in resistance to change express lower commitment, which is conditioned by trust in management such that trust mitigates the negative relationship between resistance and commitment, and by procedural justice, which strengthens the negative relationship, a major divergence from the Western literature. These findings have a range of implications for theory and practice.

**INTRODUCTION**

Organizational change, increasingly ubiquitous in the modern organization, is particularly salient in transition contexts. Perhaps nowhere has the need for change been more pressing than in the transition from a state-controlled to market-oriented system in the area of the former Soviet Union (FSU), where firms have had to cope with a fundamentally altered institutional environment. This institutional disruption requires punctuated, systemic organizational change and ongoing adjustments as the transition evolves. Ultimately, such multi-level, transformative change is the responsibility of individual actors (Rosenberg, 1995; St. John, 2005), and researchers have begun to recognize the importance of micro, person-oriented considerations in organization change (Judge, Thorensen, Pucik, & Welbourne, 1999). Here, our focus is on employees, as their resistance to change is ubiquitously cited as a principle inhibitor of organizational change, particularly in the FSU. Nearly 300 years ago, Peter the Great observed that “anything that is new, even if it is good and necessary, our people will not do without being compelled” (Massie, 1981: 773). More recently, evidence of pervasive employee resistance to change in the post-Soviet region, including Belarus, Bulgaria, Estonia, Russia and Ukraine, suggests formidable impediments to forging more competitive firms (May, Stewart, Puffer, McCarthy, & Ledgerwood, 2011).

A key issue in the behavioral literature is how change endeavors influence the employee-organization relationship, specifically as indicated by organizational commitment (Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999), a psychological state pertaining to the level of attachment the employee has to the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Organizational commitment (OC) influences job attendance, performance, turnover and organizational citizenship, and correlates positively with job involvement, job satisfaction and occupational commitment (Fedor, Caldwell, & Herold, 2006; Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, & Topolnytsky, 2002). Consequently, the level of employee OC is expected to influence an array of job-related behaviors important for firm change and subsequent firm performance.

OC is particularly relevant during times of change. Organizational change influences the degree of person-organization congruence (Caldwell, Herold, & Fedor, 2004), raising concerns both for the impact on individuals’ responses to the change, and for their relationship with the organization (Fedor et al., 2006). Consequently, we focus on dispositional resistance to change (RTC) and OC, which address these two considerations, but research examining the connection between RTC and OC is sparse. We draw on trait activation theory (Tett & Geuterman, 2003) to argue that organizational change is a situation that will “activate” employees’ RTC, and subsequently reduce the degree to which they are committed to their organizations.

We also draw on trait activation to predict how employees with varying levels of RTC will respond to change based on their perceptions of two potentially important situational factors that are likely to affect the way that employees experience change: trust in management and procedural justice. Both of these constructs reflect important employee perceptions of the work setting during change (van den Bos, Wilke, & Lind, 1998), are connected to commitment (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Meyer et al., 2002), and are particularly important in the post-Soviet context, where distrust in organizational climates and favoritism as a basis of managerial decision-making have been pervasively endemic (May & Stewart, 2013). Consequently, we expect that the relationship between RTC and OC will be influenced by these two organizational factors such that trust in management will mitigate the negative relationship between RTC and OC, whereas procedural justice will exacerbate this relationship because of cultural values and the novelty of formalized work systems in the FSU.

We specify, to our knowledge, a heretofore unexamined model of the influence of RTC and OC, specifically, affective OC, moderated by the work experience factors of perceptions of trust in management and procedural justice. This analytical approach follows the person by situation recommendation by Judge and Zapata (2015) to better explain outcomes. We test this model with a sample of employees from four firms in Ukraine, a country once an integral region of the Soviet Union, an unconventional setting useful for theory development (cf. Bamberger & Pratt, 2010). All of these organizations were undergoing fundamental change in their human resource management approaches, including their performance evaluation and compensation systems, at the time of data collection. The results of the study hold promise for theory development, both in the nucleus of the post-Soviet region and in the West, as the results may supplement and extend Western theory in a manner described by May and Stewart (2013) as “double-loop theorizing” across contexts. The results also have practical implications in recognizing the potential to inform managerial intervention by predicting resistance potential, and addressing workplace climate and practices to improve commitment to the firm, and the likelihood of employee involvement for successful change.

**THEORY AND HYPOTHESES**

The context of Ukraine offers a useful contrast from the West. The culture of Ukraine is characterized by high levels of power distance (an individual’s acceptance of power differentials between parties) and uncertainty avoidance (Hofstede, 2004, Naumov, 1996; Prykarpatska, 2008). These features, and the historical legacy of communism, have implications for the variables of interest in this study.

The meanings and practices of cultural contexts are interdependent with dispositions, which develop through individuals’ active involvement in an array of social worlds (Markus & Kitayama, 1998) that produce shared cultural narratives (Cheung, Leung, & Au, 2006). Institutions are a primary source of identity creation and imprinting (Puffer, McCarthy, & Satinsky, 2018) through institutional logics that encompass “beliefs, practices, values, assumptions, and rules that shape cognition and guide decision-making in a given social context (Thornton & Ocasio, 1999, 801).” According to imprinting theory, during a period of susceptibility, individuals develop characteristic traits that reflect the nuances of their environment, which then persist in subsequent periods despite significant changes in the environment (Marquis & Tilcsik, 2013). Individuals are particularly susceptible to communist imprinting from their environment from ages six to 25 (Grigore & Tucker, 2014).

The degree to which individual dispositions are expressed in a culture depends on the behavioral variance permitted by the social norms and sanctioning within that culture (Gelfand, Nishii, & Raver, 2006), a phenomenon particularly notable in the countries of the FSU, where there is now more latitude in expressing individual differences in dispositions, attitudes and behaviors than there was under the imposed conformity of the communist system. As a result, thisenvironment is now more conducive to the investigation of individual differences, such as the disposition, cognitive and attitudinal variables in this study.

**Organizational Commitment**

Meyer and Allen (1991) described OC as a psychological state that includes three distinguishable components: affective (an attitude or desire), continuance (a need), and normative (a perceived obligation). Meyer and Allen (1991: 14) defined affective commitment as an employee’s “attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization.” The authors described continuance commitment as more calculative, entailing the perceived costs of continuing with the organization compared to leaving, and normative commitment as opting to maintain organizational membership out of a sense of obligation. Meyer and Allen (1991) suggested that, to varying degrees, an individual can experience all three forms of commitment such that the elements might interact to influence behavior, although they have different antecedents, correlates and consequences (cf. Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Meyer et al., 2002). For instance, personal dispositions (like RTC, as addressed here), work experiences, and organizational structure (i.e., the degree ofdecentralization of decision-making, and the formalization of policies and procedures) are the most important predictors of affective commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991). In, to our knowledge, the only study of OC in the FSU, Buchko, Weinzimmer and Sergeyev (1998) found job involvement, work satisfaction, promotion satisfaction, and supervisor satisfaction all significantly positively correlated with attitudinal OC in a sample from a Russian firm. Turnover intention was negatively correlated with attitudinal commitment, defined as the acceptance of the organization’s values, and the willingness to exert effort on the organization’s behalf (Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979).

We focus on affective OC because its generalized psychological orientation makes it more important than other forms of commitment in terms of understanding why an employee will act in the best interests of the organization across situations (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Subsequent research supports this contention, as affective commitment, with its emphasis on personal fulfillment, strongly and consistently correlates with outcomes relevant for both employees and the organization (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Meyer et al., 2002). The meta-analysis by Meyer et al. (2002: 20) indicated that, of the three types of OC, “affective commitment had the strongest and most favorable correlations with organization-relevant (attendance, performance, and organizational citizenship behavior) and employee-relevant (stress and work-family conflict) outcomes,” and these resultsed cross-culturally generalizable.

**Resistance to Change**

Piderit (2000) posited that resistance to change is best viewed as a multidimensional position toward change comprising cognitive, affective and behavioral components. Consistent with this conceptualization, Oreg (2003: 680) developed a multidimensional dispositional measure of RTC “designed to tap an individual’s tendency to resist or avoid making changes, to devalue change generally, and to find change aversive across diverse contexts and types of change.” Althoughthe four factors in the RTC scale - routine seeking, emotional reaction, short-term thinking and cognitive rigidity - are not entirely independent, the components are distinct dimensions that reflect behavioral, affective and cognitive aspects of RTC, respectively (Oreg, 2003). Defined this way, RTC is an individual’s enduring generalized response to change, rather than response to a specific change situation, and can explain why some employees are more adaptive to change, while others are more recalcitrant.

The aforementioned cultural context of high power distance and uncertainty avoidance in Ukraine provides an interesting context for studying RTC, suggesting that RTC could be of more consequence than in low uncertainty avoidance cultures. Moreover, a communist “attitudinal legacy” (Blanchflower & Freeman, 1997) persists, and can influence individuals’ values and behaviors (Wyrwich, 2013). These contextual considerations are relevant to the dimensions of RTC. For instance, RTC includes the dimension of routine seeking. Routine and conformity, facilitated by rules and regulations, were important in the Soviet period (Michailova, 2000), and remain so (May & Stewart, 2013). Similarly, change associated with institutional transition emphasizes the emotional reaction of RTC to imposed change, as evidenced by the rise in alcohol and drug abuse (Koshkina, 2003), suicides (Turkish Press, 2006) and decreased life expectancy (Rodriguez, 2005; Puffer, McCarthy, & Wilson, 2007) in the region after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Also, short-term planning and tasks are still emphasized over longer term considerations (Michailova, 2000). Moreover, unquestioning compliance was preferred to independent, critical thinking (cognitive flexibility) during the Soviet period, which was often punished (Michailova & Husted, 2003). Overall, given the relevance of the dimensions of RTC in this cultural context, we believe that RTC holds value for better understanding OC in the region.

**Resistance to Change and Organizational Commitment**

Although individual dispositions, once largely neglected in organizational change research (Judge et al., 1999), are getting more attention, including some investigation of how dispositional RTC influences change phenomena, these studies are currently sparse, and have not included links between RTC and OC. To make the connection between RTC and OC, we draw on trait activation theory, which argues that the extent to which a particular trait is likely to affect an employees’ attitudes or behaviors is dependent on the degree to which the situation provides an opportunity for, or necessitates, the activation of the trait (Tett & Geuterman, 2003), as frequently demonstrated in the literature (cf. Tett & Burnett, 2003; Zagenczyk, Smallfield, Scott, Galloway, & Purvis, 2017). Here, we argue that organizational change will activate RTC, causing employees to feel lower levels of emotional attachment to their organizations.

The work of Oreg (2003; 2006; and with Sverdlik, 2011) and Elias (2009), considered in conjunction with trait activation theory, provides a basis for understanding the connection between RTC and OC. Oreg (2006) found that individuals high in dispositional RTC were less likely to initiate change, and were more likely to hold negative attitudes toward change initiatives. These negative attitudes about change, we reason, have implications for OC, given its focus on an individual’s affiliation with the firm. Additionally, Naus, van Iterson and Roe (2007) discovered that the interaction of rigidity, measured with two of Oreg’s (2003) RTC items, and role conflict significantly predicted employees’ inclination to leave the organization, an indirect indicator of OC, which influences turnover (Meyer et al., 2002). Moreover, Oreg and Sverdlik (2011) concluded that the expectation of the correlation between individuals’ higher dispositional RTC and ambivalence about change was moderated by their orientation toward the change agent, defined as both trust in management and identification with the organization, a construct with similarity to OC.

Elias (2009) found that change attitudes, defined as an individual’s evaluative judgment of a change initiative, fully mediated the relationship between growth need strength and affective OC. Additionally, change attitudes partially mediated the relationships between both locus of control and internal work motivation with OC. Notably, although Elias characterized the mediator as an attitude toward change, it was a general approach to change, not to the specific change situation. Thus, the results produced with this measure may have implications for the relationship between RTC and OC.

Ultimately, successful organizational change requires that employees accept and facilitate the change. Yet change can have a range of implications for employees, such as uncertainty, increased work demands, and loss of sense of control (cf. Fedor et al., 2006), and can disrupt an employee’s psychological contract with the organization (Ashford, Lee, & Bobko, 1989). Consequently, the change can alter the alignment between the individual and the organization, a consequence for OC (Cable & Judge, 1996) that has ramifications for important workforce behaviors. Those high in dispositional RTC are more likely to respond to imposed change with negative emotional reactions, including anger, anxiety and fear (Oreg, 2006). As personality is strongly linked with affect (cf. Oreg, 2006), this reaction has implications for employees’ attitudes toward the organization. We posit that the potential implications of change for OC is especially important for those employees with a high dispositional RTC, such that those higher in RTC will be less committed to their organizations.

Hypothesis 1: There will be a negative relationship between RTC and OC.

**Organizational Context**

While trait activation provides the basis for the argument that RTC is “activated” by organizational change, it also provides a backdrop for understanding how situations in organizations may affect the magnitude of employees’ reactions to change. Research supports the notion that organizational contexts can affect the degree to which employees’ dispositional characteristics influencing their reactions to change (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). Typically, perceptions pertaining to trust in top management and procedural justice represent work experiences that are important antecedents of affective OC (Meyer & Allen, 1991; Meyer et al., 2002), and are specifically important to an employee’s organizational experience in the FSU.

Ukraine is also a country with a particularist culture (Michailova & Hutchings, 2006), where interpersonal reciprocity, favoritism and in-group/out-group membership considerations in interpersonal networks influence processes and outcomes (May & Stewart, 2013). Moreover, inequality and injustice were common in the Soviet experience, and often still prevail (May & Ledgerwood, 2007). Therefore, we posit that this institutional legacy will help explain the relationship between RTC and OC via the intervening effects of the organizational context in the midst of change initiatives.

**Trust in Management**

Trust in management refers to an employee’s situational belief that managers are reliable, fair and competent, among other characteristics (Butler, 1991). Trust correlates favorably with a number of positive organizational outcomes, including OC, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions (for a meta-analysis, see Choi & Resick, 2016). Trust in management is particularly critical because managers typically have greater power based on their position in the hierarchy, better access to information, and make decisions (including work assignments, performance evaluations, and restructuring, among others) that affect employees. Based on this, Jiang and Probst (2016) suggested that trust in management is especially valuable to employees because it makes uncertain situations (such as organizational change) more predictable. In the context of our study, we suggest that trust in management is a situational factor that may mitigate the negative relationship between RTC and OC. Change is problematic because of its inherent uncertainty; trust in management should reduce this uncertainty, as it signals a willingness to be vulnerable (Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman, 1995), and thus makes employees less threatened by change, allaying at least some of the concerns of those higher in RTC.

Although trust between employees and management is important for organizational change initiatives (Gomez & Rosen, 2001), it infrequently explored, but there is some evidence to support the idea that trust in management will buffer the negative effects of RTC and OC. For example, Jiang and Probst (2016) argued that trust in management should reduce the strength of the negative relationship between job insecurity and outcomes. Their results showed that trust in management moderated the relationships between job insecurity and work satisfaction, supervisor satisfaction, affective commitment, psychological distress and burnout. Employees who had higher levels of trust in management tended to have more positive (or less negative) reactions to job insecurity, whereas employees with lower levels of trust in management had worse reactions to job insecurity. Similarly, Wong, Wong, Ngo and Liu (2005) showed that the negative relationship between job insecurity and helping behavior was weaker when employee trust in the organization was higher.

Trust in management is particularly salient in the FSU due to lingering distrust from the Soviet era (May & Stewart, 2013; Stewart, May, McCarthy, & Puffer, 2009a) and employee reports of managerial inconsistency, lack of interest, and even corruption in the region (McCarthy, Puffer, May, Ledgerwood, & Stewart, 2008). Thus, while trust has been cited as an important antecedent of OC in the West, we aver that it is perhaps more important in the context of the former Soviet region. The exchange of favors is widespread in the area, and trust is important for the reciprocity practiced within these social networks (Michailova & Worm, 2013). Moreover, we argue that trust in management helps mitigate some of the anxiety associated with changing employee expectations and responsibilities amidst organizational change, particularly in an area, like Ukraine, noted for high uncertainty avoidance (Hofstede, 2004; Prykarpatska, 2008). Consequently, we propose that trust in management will alleviate some of the concerns of those most resistant to change, such that when these employees have a high level of trust in management, they will be more likely to express commitment to their organization.

Hypothesis 2: Trust in management will moderate the relationship between RTC and OC such that those higher in RTC, but who trust management, will be more committed to the organization than are those who evince low trust in management.

**Procedural Justice**

Organizational justice entails perceptions about the accuracy, consistency, fairness and correctability of organizational decision-making processes (Colquitt & Rodell, 2011), and the means used to achieve stated aims, and distribute rewards and sanctions (Lind & Tyler, 1988). Research has devoted considerable attention to the processes that result in decision outcomes, termed procedural justice (cf. Colquitt, 2001). We focus on procedural justice because it is notably related to organizational outcomes, such as OC (Sweeney & McFarlin, 1993; Colquitt, 2001) as it signals to employees that the organization supports them, values their contributions, and cares about their well-being (Wayne, Shore, Bommer, & Tetrick, 2002). These perceptions of support, in turn, activate the reciprocity norm, which obligates employees to repay the organization for favorable treatment, strengthening the employee-organization relationship (Eisenberger, Armeli, Rexwinkle, Lynch, & Rhoades, 2001). Extensive research shows that a key way that employees respond to favorable treatment is through high levels of affective OC (Kurtessis et al., 2017; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002) and group engagement (e.g., Blader & Tyler, 2009)

While research in the West shows a clear and consistent relationship between procedural justice and affective OC, we anticipate a different outcome in the FSU. Here, there is a long history of favoritism afforded through particularist norms that emphasize relationships over rules that are applied universally (cf. Nawojczyk, 2006), and the instrumentality of these relationships, where advantages accrued from them via the exchange of favors has largely guided human resource practices. Not only is procedural justice novel in the FSU, it may not be appreciated (Özbek, Yoldash, & Tang, 2016). We expect that the abandonment of these norms in favor of formalized work expectations, practices and routines of procedural justice will be problematic in the FSU, as the change represents a dramatic departure from longstanding informal norms and practices that will be threatening to those who have historically not been held accountable for job performance because of their personal ties. Unlike in the West, in this scenario, fair treatment may actually signal to an employee who is resistant that he or she is less valuable to the organization, and will likely reduce their commitment to the firm. Evidence supporting this from Russia indicates that job security, not evaluation based on merit, is the only predictor of positive HR outcomes (Fey, Björkman, & Pavlovskaya, 2000), and that employees will actually leave their jobs for lower paying positions to avoid the uncertainty of being evaluated on higher performance standards (McCarthy et al., 2008).Consequently, we propose that a change to procedural justice considerations from historical practices of relationship-based work practices in the region is particularly threatening to those who are dispositionally resistant to such change, and this will have consequences for their attitudes toward the firm.

Hypothesis 3: Procedural justice will moderate the relationship between RTC and OC such that higher perceptions of procedural justice will decrease OC for those higher in RTC.

**METHOD**

**Samples**

In order to overcome the considerable obstacles to research in the post-Soviet states (cf. Stewart et al., 2009a), we drew on a network of Russian and U.S. academicians, practitioners and consultants that we have forged over the years to seek participation in the study. One of these people gained agreement from the CEOs (Directors General) of four privately held companies in Ukraine for their employees to participate in the study, although their agreement necessitated the collection of minimal demographic data from participants, which is typical in the region (cf. May et al., 2011). The administration of the survey, part of a larger research project, was similar across the firms, enhancing the comparability of samples (Schaffer & Riordan, 2003). Notably, at the time of data collection, which occurred before the upheaval in Ukraine, all of the firms were undergoing large scale organizational change that would directly influence employees, such as the introduction of job design and descriptions, performance appraisals, and compensation systems linked to performance.

The sample comprises firms in a range of sectors: a cosmetics retailer, headquartered in Kiev, with retails stores in central and eastern Ukraine; a supermarket chain with 27 stores in the Dnepropetrovsk area; a warehousing and distribution services provider for retail food outlets across Ukraine; and a holding company, based in Dnepropetrovsk, that oversees retail, transportation and commercial real estate in Ukraine and Russia. In conjunction with management, we targeted 2,300, 1,180, 167 and 305 employees, respectively, from the four firms to participate in the study. After eliminating cases with missing data, the final, usable sample totaled 937 non-managerial employees, an effective overall response rate of approximately 24%, which we attribute to the support from management and the provided anonymity. Eighty-four percent of the respondents were female, and the sample was relatively young: 64% were age 30 or younger, 24% were 31 to 40 years of age, and 12% were 41 years of age or older.

**Measures**

*Reward Expectancy.* Grounded in the anticipatory element of Vroom’s (1964) expectancy theory, we developed a five-item scale (Cronbach alpha = .80) to measure the degree to which employees actually believed that their organization was undergoing change such that their compensation was about to be linked to their job performance for the very first time. Here, we use the measure as a screening device to ensure that the subjects in the analysis are only those who believed that change was actually occurring in the human resource practices of their firms. This type of check is necessary, we argue, because managers of firms in this region often abandon organizational reforms, or capriciously switch among new consultants and techniques before new approaches take hold (May, Rayter, & Ledgerwood, 2016). No wonder then that employees have little confidence in change initiatives (McCarthy et al., 2008).

*Resistance to Change.* We used Oreg’s (2003) Resistance to Change Scale, which measures an individual’s dispositional tendency to resist or avoid change, to generally devalue change, and to find change aversive across contexts and types of change. Consequently, the scale measures an approach to change as an element of personality, instead of resistance to a specific change situation, and includes the aforementioned dimensions of routine seeking, emotional reaction to change, short-term thinking, and cognitive rigidity. Despite considerable validity evidence (e.g., Oreg, 2003, 2006; Oreg et al., 2008), the cognitive rigidity subscale of the instrument is problematic in Russia and Ukraine, but the other subscales exhibit measurement validity (Stewart et al., 2009a; Stewart, May, McCarthy, & Puffer, 2009b). Thus, we excluded cognitive rigidity, and measured RTC with 13 items associated with the dimensions of routine seeking, emotional reaction and short-term thinking, which produced a Cronbach alpha of .80.

*Trust in Top Management.* We measured the level of trust that an employee has in the top management of the firm with the overall trust subscale from Butler’s (1991) Conditions of Trust Inventory, which measures overall trust in management, not just their legitimacy, competence, accessibility, etc. Butler (1991) reported encouraging validity evidence for the measure, and here the four Likert-type items produced a reliability coefficient of .86.

*Procedural Justice.* We adapted five Likert-type items from Moorman (1991) to measure the degree to which employees perceive a sense of consistency and fairness in organizational procedures and policies. Factor analysis of the items resulted in one problematic item that loaded weakly onto a factor separate from the others, so we discarded this item. The remaining four items loaded strongly onto a single factor, and produced a Cronbach’s alpha of .74.

*Organizational Commitment*. We used the eight items of the Affective Commitment Scale by Allen and Meyer (1990). These items address an emotional state concerning the employee’s emotional attachment, identification and involvement with the organization. Therefore, this measure addresses the strength of the individual’s affiliation with the organization, and the associated willingness to remain with the organization because the employee wants to, rather than needs to, or feels that he or she ought to (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Allen and Meyer (1996) reported considerable validity evidence for the measure, and the reliability of the scale is .71 for our sample.

*Translation of Instrumentation*. We capitalized on the bicultural, bilingual skills of the research team to address semantic equivalency of the instrumentation. This included separate translation and back-translation by bilingual people with work experience in the region, and subsequent review for linguistic and cultural equivalency, a benefit for translation in cross-cultural research (Schaffer & Riordan, 2003).

**RESULTS**

First, we screened the respondents using the mean of reward expectancy, retaining the responses of 3.45 or higher for analysis to ensure that the participants for analysis actually believe their firms are undergoing change. This resulted in a total of 473 respondents. Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics and correlations. RTC was strongly negatively correlated with procedural justice, trust and OC. OC was positively correlated with sex, procedural justice and trust, and the latter two variables were also positively correlated.

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Insert Table 1 About Here

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We used hierarchical regression modeling to test the hypotheses. We initially tested controls for firm, and respondent sex and age, the only individual demographics data that we were allowed to collect. The results showed that, although sex was a significant predictor of OC, firm and respondent age (collected in 10 age ranges at the direction of firm management) were not significantly related to OC. Because of the number of dummy variables associated with firm and age, and because the results did not materially change without them in the model, we dropped the two variables for the sake of simplicity and readability of the results.

The results of the analysis are presented in Table 2. Sex was entered at step 1 as a control, followed by the predictor variables (resistance to change, trust and procedural justice) in step 2. RTC was significantly negatively related to OC, as predicted in hypothesis 1. As theory predicts, procedural justice and trust perceptions were positively related to OC. Next, we mean centered these variables before computing the interaction terms with RTC, and entering them in Step 3. We found that high trust significantly moderated the relationship between RTC and OC, such that employees with high trust perceptions reported higher levels of commitment. Moreover, for employees with high reward expectancy perceptions, low perceptions of procedural justice (rather than high, as would be expected in the West) bolstered OC. Both of these interaction terms were significant above and beyond the main effects, which, with the support of simple slope analysis, provided support for hypothesis 2 concerning trust, and for hypothesis 3 regarding procedural justice.

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Insert Table 2 About Here

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**DISCUSSION**

The institutional disruption brought about by the collapse of the Soviet Union initiated pressure for radical organizational change, but these change initiatives are often thwarted by employees (Shin, Taylor, & Seo, 2012), particularly in this region, where lingering institutional logics and behaviors from the Soviet past pose formidable obstacles in aligning the firm with the new environment. The relationship between employees’ dispositional RTC and affective OC, as moderated by trust and procedural justice, is a combination of personality and context that is rare in the extant literature (Oreg, 2006), but one that holds promise for understanding OC (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990), which influences a range of attitudes and behavior important for competitiveness (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). Notably, the role of trust in mitigating the effects of resistance on OC was comparable to the West, but the effect of procedural justice was the opposite, reducing OC. The shift from favoritism to fairness through universal guidelines of procedural justice is heretofore unexperienced in most indigenous firms in the region, and it appears that the perceived threat to self-interest from procedural justice reduces commitment to the organization. This result exemplifies the importance of context in developing more robust theory, and also has implications for managers. Attention to communication can facilitate positive attitudes toward the firm (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990), and training for new responsibilities can bolster employee confidence (Wanberg & Banas, 2000), perhaps reducing the negative consequences of the interplay of RTC and procedural justice on OC, in particular.

**Limitations and Future Directions**

The principle limitations are those typical of a cross-sectional study with a sample of convenience, not reiterated here in the interest of brevity, except that we note that analysis indicates no concerns about common methods affecting the results. Our inability to control for demographics is alleviated by the fact that Oreg (2003) found no significant age, gender or occupational status differences in the RTC scale factor structure, and that demographics are weakly connected to OC (Meyer et al., 2002). Finally, this study represents a snapshot of circumstances during change, so we can provide no inferences about how OC changed, as might reflect person-organization fit perspectives by virtue of the change initiatives of the firms over time. Overcoming these limitations would bolster the inferences presented here.

The results presented here have a range of implications for additional inquiry that may better elucidate the links between dispositions, perceptions and attitudes during change initiatives. First, we advocate consideration of other dimensions of OC and their interplay (cf. Meyer & Allen, 1991). Additionally, because procedural justice functioned differently than in the West, it would be interesting to see how distributive justice, entailing fairness in compensation, in particular, affects OC over time, particularly continuance commitment. Moreover, we believe that consideration of additional elements of trust and organizational justice (cf. Berneth & Walker, 2012), and other organizational variables pertinent to the context, can help clarify the RTC-OC relationship. We also believe that including commitment to the change initiative (cf. Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002) can help explain OC, and other outcomes relevant to change situations, as can understanding the role of social influences (cf. Cable & Judge, 1996), particularly in this context. In particular, longitudinal efforts are needed to understand changes in OC as firm change processes unfold. Also, the findings of Buchko et al. (1998) notwithstanding, more research concerning the outcomes of OC and organizational identification in the region is also needed. Additionally, the results here provide the foundation for needed multi-level analyses of change, and for cross-national comparative studies that clarify the emic and etic aspects of change phenomena that can forge more robust theory across boundary conditions, which is particularly important for international management.

It is necessary to understand important core processes, including potentially problematic individual difference and attitude combinations, associated with change management in a way that could enable managerial interventions. Our research addresses crucial questions about gauging employees’ RTC, and how their perceptions of work climate temper or complicate the influence of resistance on employee commitment to the organization. Research is needed concerning how to address trust and procedural justice, and other considerations, in a manner that benefits commitment in this context. Likely considerations include recognition, empowerment, development, rewards and information sharing (cf. Lind & Tyler, 1988), but ameliorative approaches may be context specific. Although change is necessary, the willingness and ability of employees to adjust is imperative for success. As Peter the Great lamented, these changes are particularly difficult in the region, but are prerequisite for both the firm and for the broader macroeconomic outcomes of transition in the FSU.

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**Table 1**

***Descriptive Statistics and Correlations***

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Variables | M | SD | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |  |
| 1. Sex | .83 | .38 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2. RTC | 2.16 | .29 | .01 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3. Procedural Justice | 3.77 | .62 | .02 | -.13\*\* |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4. Trust | 3.72 | .77 | .11\* | -.21\*\* | .62\*\* |  |  |  |  |
| 5. RTC\*Trust | -.18 | 1.02 | -.08 | .37\*\* | -.10\*\* | -.15\*\* |  |  |  |
| 6. RTC\*PJ | -.20 | .37 | -.04 | .51\*\* | -.78\*\* | -.52\*\* | .68\*\* |  |  |
| 7. Org Commitment | 3.56 | .50 | .09\* | -.19\*\* | .49\*\* | .54\*\* | -.10\* | -.44\*\* |  |

*Note*. *N* = 473. Unstandardized coefficients are reported. \* *p* < .05. \*\* *p* < .01. Sex: 0 = male; 1 = female. RTC = Resistance to Change. PJ = Procedural Justice.

**Table 2**

***Hierarchical Moderated Regression Predicting Organizational Commitment Among Workers with High Reward Expectancy Perceptions***

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | B |  |  |  |
| Variable and Step | Step 1 | Step 2 | Step 3 | *R2* | *ΔR2* |
| Step 1: Controls |  |  |  | .01\* |  |
| Sex | .12\* | .06 | .07 |  |  |
| Step 2: Direct Effects |  |  |  | .34\*\* | .33\*\* |
| Resistance to Change |  | -.14\* | -.12 |  |  |
| Procedural Justice |  | .22\*\* | .22\*\* |  |  |
| Trust |  | .23\*\* | .22\*\* |  |  |
| Final Step: Interaction Terms |  |  |  | .35\* | .01\* |
| RTC\*Trust  RTC\*PJ |  |  | .31\*\*  -.30\* |  |  |

*Note*. *N* = 473. Unstandardized coefficients are reported. \* *p* < .05. \*\* *p* < .01. Sex: 0 = male; 1 = female. RTC = Resistance to Change. PJ = Procedural Justice.