WORK STATUS AND CHANGE ATTITUDES: EXPLORING PART-TIME EMPLOYEES'

ATTITUDES TOWARD ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

by

REBECCA LINDSEY ECKART

(Under the Direction of Karl W. Kuhnert)

ABSTRACT

Using a large sample of employees from a Fortune 50 organization in the United States, this study explores predictors of employees' attitudes toward organizational change. Specifically, the intersection of work status and manager consideration with attitudes toward change by examining how work status (part-time and full-time) and manager consideration influence employees' attitudes toward organizational change management. This study investigates part-time employees as one group, but also utilizes a more fine-grained approach to investigating part-time employees through the use of a part-time categorization by Tilly (1996). Overall, findings suggest that work status and manager consideration both play important roles in the prediction of employees' perceptions of organizational change actions. Results failed to provide support for the interaction of work status and manager consideration in predicting change attitudes. Future research should seek to continue the investigation of part-time workers, as this important segment of the workforce is projected to continue growing.

INDEX WORDS: Work Status, Manager Consideration, Leadership, Full-Time, Part-Time, Retention Part-Time, Secondary Part-Time, Change Management, Attitudes Toward Change

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Organizational change has been a substantial focus of research in the field of

organizational psychology with increasing attention placed specifically on employee attitudes in

recent years. Organizational change is defined as an attempt or series of attempts to adjust an

organization's structure, goals, innovation, technology, and functional flexibility (Cordery,

Sevastos, Mueller, & Parker, 1993; Kanter, 1983; Yousef, 2000). Major research areas focusing

on employee change attitudes include resistance to change (e.g., Aktouf, 1992; Piderit, 2000),

openness to change (Wanberg & Banas, 2000), commitment to organizational change

(Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002), adaption to change (Jimmieson, Terry, & Callan, 2004), climate

for organizational change (Brotheridge, 2003), and readiness to change (e.g., Cunningham,

Woodward, Shannon, MacIntosh, Lendrum, & Rosenbloom, 2002; Eby, Adams, Russell, &

Gaby, 2000; Holt, Armenakis, Feild, & Harris, 2007). However, this is not just an area of

growing interest for researchers. Over the past few decades, organizations have also been tasked

will increasing pressures to change. Organizations are currently transforming in order to rebound

from a recession, respond to globalization, keep pace with technological advances, and meet

shifting customer demands (Howard, 1995; Kitchen & Daly, 2002; Longenecker, Neubert, Fink,

2007; Pfeffer, 1994). The American Management Association indicated that 84 percent of

companies were in the process of at least one major change initiative, with 46 percent reporting

three or more transformations in progress. However, about 70 percent of these change efforts

will result in failure (Beer & Nohria, 2000; Maurer, 2010; Peak, 1996). It is now commonly

recognized that organizations are under the pressure of multiple changes of varying impact at any given time; thus, further understanding employee attitudes toward organizational change is both academically and practically important.

One strategy recently adopted by organizations to effectively cope with the changing environment is to shift the structure of their workforce (Gordon, 2001; Wheeler, Buckley, & Halbeesleben, 2002). Specifically, employers are creating part-time jobs or converting full-time jobs to part-time. This approach allows organizations to avoid high wage and benefit costs while still remaining flexible and getting the skills necessary to support current initiatives (Gordon, 2001; Smith, 1997). However, despite the growing number of part-time workers, the work experiences and attitudes of this population are still only marginally understood (Wheeler et al., 2002). This is largely due to inconsistent definitions for this population and researchers focusing primarily on investigating only a small number of attitudes (e.g., Thorsteinson, 2003). This narrow focus equates to a lack of general understanding around attitudes toward change at a time when change is a primary concern for organizations.

Although the role of individual attitudinal differences has been previously explored in the change literature (e.g., Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999; Armenakis & Harris, 2009; Bouckenooghe, 2010), the majority of extant research on change management has focused exclusively on the experiences of full-time employees, largely neglecting the experiences of those with alternative work arrangements. It is important for researchers to investigate both full-time and part-time employee attitudes due to shifting workforce demographics and the possibility that different strategies may be necessary in order to successfully manage transformations across these populations. It is unknown whether the current change research and theory as applied to full-time workers generalizes to workers in these other employment arrangements (Rotchford & Roberts,

1982). This study suggests that part-time workers may not experience the social-psychological organizational climate, and thus change process, in the same way as full-time employees. It is the hope that this study could enable organizations to more effectively leverage part-time employees' value in the context of change initiatives.

Manager behavior is consistently identified as a valuable tool in the facilitation of organizational change (e.g., Damanpour, 1991; Rubin, Dierdroff, Bommer, & Baldwin, 2009). Thus, an important extension of this study includes uncovering potential boundary conditions for the relationship between work status and attitudes toward organizational change (i.e., moderators). Manger consideration is conceptualized as the actions and behaviors taken by a manager that demonstrate and communicate concern about the well-being of his or her employees (Yukl, 2010). This study specifically investigates manager consideration as directly related to change and as a potential moderator of the relationship between work status and change attitudes. Including manager consideration may provide organizations with some additional insights into how to actively manage change attitudes across their workforce.

Study significance. The significance of the present study is that it seeks to address several knowledge gaps. First, this is the only known empirical attempt to investigate attitudes toward change across varying work status groups. The inclusion of Tilly's (1996) part-time employment framework is significant as current thought suggests that part-time employees should not necessarily be considered an undifferentiated population (e.g., Feldman, 1990; Thorsteinson, 2003). Second, as the number of part-time workers grows, understanding how employment status is related to perceptions of the change process many have potential implications for both theory and practice. Practically speaking, different interventions and approaches may be needed in order to successfully manage the change attitudes of full-time and

part-time employees. The ability to both anticipate and capitalize on the need for change and also effectively communicate it to employees could be viewed as a core competency, providing a source of strategic survival for many organizations and serving as a significant competitive advantage (Iverson, 1996; Kitchen & Daly, 2002; Pfeffer, 1994; Todnem, 2005). This study provides insight regarding potential ways to more effectively manage change across a diverse workforce. Additionally, the inclusion of manager consideration is significant as this is one element that is within an organization's control, easily actionable within the change setting, and only really understood in the context of full-time employees.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW, HYPOTHESES & RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Work Status: Part-Time Workers

Interest exploded in the area of nontraditional work schedules in the 1980s after this growing segment of the labor force was defined as "one of the most spectacular and important evolutions in Western working life" (Cuyper, Jong, De Witte, Isaksson, Rigotti & Schalk, 2007, p. 1). With the publication of Rotchford and Robert's (1982), *Part-time as missing persons in organizational research*, researchers increasingly devoted attention to the specific investigation of part-time employee attitudes. This amplified focus on part-time employees also partly resulted in response to changes in the larger social setting. Part-time workers comprised 17 percent of the employed US workforce ages 16 years or older in 2006, equating to approximately 22 million part-time workers according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (Shafer, 2009). The growth in the amount of part-time work arrangements is predicted to endure as organizations continue to adopt part-time workers as a business strategy in order to control costs during the recession (Smith, 1997), maintain flexibility in uncertain business conditions, and boost overall innovation (Cuyper et al., 2007; Wheeler et al., 2002). Disappointingly, research results have been relatively ambiguous and inconclusive when it comes to investigating the differences between full-time and part-time workers (e.g., Barling & Gallagher, 1996; Thorsteinson, 2003). The United States Bureau of Labor Statistics considers *part-time employment* as any job in which the incumbent works between one and 34 hours per week (Labor Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey, 2011). Additionally, organizations are typically not required by federal or state laws to provide benefits to part-time employees who work less than 40 hours per week

(Wheeler et al., 2002). In the literature, part-time employment has been defined as those who work less than 35 hours per week (e.g., Eberhardt & Shani, 1984; Martin & Hafrer, 1995) or 40 hours per week (e.g., McGinnis & Morrow, 1990; Shockey & Mueller, 1994); although many studies never actually state how part-time employment is defined (e.g., Barker, 1993; Lee & Johnson, 1991). Thorsteinson (2003) argues that lack of an absolute definition is not necessarily a flaw given that what is believed to be important is the psychological effect of being classified as 'part-time' rather than the actual number of hours worked.

Regardless of definition, researchers argue that part-time workers are distinctly different from their full-time counterparts (Gentry, Kuhnert, Mondore, & Page, 2007; Thorsteinson, 2003) but there are still many questions that remain about the specific differences between part-time and full-time workers in regards to work attitudes and behaviors. Furthermore, Feldman (1990) argued that there is too much diversity among non-standard workers, which includes part-time employees, to continue treating them as a homogenous group. He contends that these differences are significant enough to warrant separate empirical investigations. Other researchers agree and have recently suggested that part-time employees may not even be similar enough to each other to be considered one, undifferentiated group (Martin & Sinclair, 2007; Sinclair, Martin, & Michel, 1999) and that this population should also be investigated as a heterogeneous population (Cho & Johanson, 2008; Feldman, 1990). In other words, empirical conclusions drawn using samples of full-time employees should not be automatically generalized to the part-time worker population overall or universally (Lee & Johnson, 1991).

After almost 30 years of contradictory and inconclusive research (e.g., organizational commitment, Feather & Rauter, 2004, Lee & Johnson, 1991; Shockey & Mueller, 1994; job satisfaction, Levanoni & Sales, 1990; Miller & Terborg, 1979) there is still relatively little that is

definitively known about this population of workers. The one quantitative meta-analysis regarding attitudes of part-time workers inadvertently reveals an interesting gap in the literature (Thorsteinson, 2003). Specifically, researchers have been examining the same few attitudes repeatedly in the part-time workforce literature: job satisfaction, organizational commitment, satisfaction with supervisor, job involvement, satisfaction with pay, satisfaction with coworkers, and satisfaction with promotion. This narrow focus on part-timer work attitudes coupled with inconsistent definitions stresses the true need to expand the criterion domain and simultaneously consider this population as an undifferentiated, as well as, potentially heterogeneous group. Attitudes toward organizational change have been largely ignored; one significant aspect of this study resides in the consideration of differences in this attitude between full-time and part-time workers but also within the part-time population itself.

Part-time workers as a heterogeneous group. Instead of assuming the clear divide between full-time and part-time employees, and homogeneity within these two groups, research has begun to examine the potential differences among employees working part-time (e.g., Feldman, 1990; Martin & Sinclair, 2007; Senter & Martin, 2007). But organizational researchers are not the only ones noticing heterogeneity within the part-time labor force as one economist drew the distinction between "old concept" and "new concept" (Kahne, 1985). The "new concept" conceptualizes part-timers as permanent workers with valuable skills instead of the traditional "old concept" view of this population as just unskilled labor. By treating part-time employees as one indistinguishable group, researchers may be overlooking some important differences within this population. To address this gap this study will further differentiate within this population by considering Tilly's (1991) conceptualization of several types of part-time positions.

In *Half a Job: Bad and Good Part-Time Jobs in a Changing Labor Market*, Tilly (1996) introduces the categorization of part-time workers as falling into retention ("good") or secondary ("bad") positions. According to Tilly (1996), certain characteristics (skill, training, and responsibility; pay and benefits; turnover; and promotional latter) distinguish retention from secondary part-time work arrangements. *Retention part-time* positions are defined as those that use moderate skill, contain some training, receive comparable hourly wages and benefits, but are given less responsibility compared to their full-time counterparts. Retention part-time positions are typically found to be non-entry level and incumbents are generally offered some career advancement opportunities. Supervisors or specialists might be considered retention part-time positions. An organization may allow for skilled employees to work these part-time schedules in order to accommodate employees' work/life needs and also retain their skills within the organization. *Secondary part-time* positions are defined as those with reduced fringe benefits, lower hourly pay, and reduced job security as compared with full-time positions. Secondary part-time workers also tend to occupy higher turnover positions. Cashiers at a fast food restaurant or manual laborers are some examples of secondary part-time positions. Organizations are increasingly incorporating part-time labor into their strategic agendas and using part-timers in positions beyond just those of entry-level and low skill status so investigating these sub-populations of part-time workers is currently of significant value (Smith, 1997).

Tilly (1996) investigated the categorization of part-time workers into retention and secondary part-time workers across multiple industries including insurance, retail, healthcare and government. Other researchers have also empirically investigated Tilly's (1991, 1996) conceptual categorization. Broschak, Davis-Blake, and Block (2008) found that there was little difference between retention part-time employees and full-time employees at a financial services

firm in the employee's level of affective commitment, supervisor satisfaction, and social integration. This suggests that retention part-time positions may share similar attitudes as full-time positions, regardless of the reduced hours worked. Citing Tilly's (1991, 1996) framework, Thorsteinson's (2003) meta-analysis hypothesized that retention part-time employees would have similar job attitudes as their full-time counterparts. He concluded that distinguishing between retention and secondary part-time positions did not serve as a moderator across various organizational attitudes and failed to support the claim that retention part-time employees hold organizational attitudes more closely aligned with full-time employees rather than other part-time employees (e.g., secondary part-time). Researchers have yet to empirically investigate part-time employee perceptions, or Tilly's taxonomy (1996), in the context of change management.

Theoretical Overview: Partial Inclusion Theory

Katz & Kahn's (1978) Partial Inclusion Theory proposes that individuals are members of numerous social systems and must perform multiple roles at any given time. This theory emphasizes that these multiple competing roles tax both physical and psychological availability forcing individuals to be less involved with any one particular role. Researchers speculate that this theory may be particularly relevant to understanding the work experiences of part-time employees as they may experience differing levels of involvement in work and non-work roles. Miller and Terborg (1979) were some of the first to suggest that part-time employees may not be included in the organization's social system to the same extent as full-time employees. Part-time workers may instead spend more effort and time in other non-work related roles with the understanding that this may lead to decreased feeling of inclusion when in their organizational setting (Barker, 1993). This theory has continued to be utilized to understand the psychological processes contributing to the development of attitudes and behaviors of part-time employees

(e.g., Eberhardt & Shani, 1984; Thorsteinson, 2003). Recent evidence from Thorsteinson's (2003) meta-analysis reported that part-time employees do indeed seem to experience less job involvement. While few significant differences between work status groups were reported, part-time employees did significantly differ from full-time employees on job involvement. He concluded that Partial Inclusion Theory is useful in understanding part-time employee attitudes and should continue to be utilized when investigating this population.

Attitudes Toward Change

Micklethwait (1999) states, "the only constant is change" (p. 95); yet, as changes continue to happen across organizations, very few change initiatives ever achieve the desires results (Probst & Raisch, 2005). The frequency of unsuccessful organizational transformations has created demand for more work to understand these processes (e.g., Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999; Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002; Pettigrew, Woodman, & Cameron, 2001). A study by Harvard Business School found that over a 15-year period, Fortune 100 firms each invested almost $1 billion in organizational changes. Despite the investments, only half of these firms improved market share and only a third improved bottom-line results (Pascale, Millemann, & Gioja, 1997) demonstrating the need to more fully investigate potential factors contributing to these dismal results. Scholars stress that one of the keys to successful organizational change resides in the perceptions of the employees and the ability to positively influence employee attitudes and behaviors around change (Aktouf, 1992; Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002). Lack of adequate consideration of the potential varying beliefs of different work status groups could have costly consequences for organizations, even potentially differentiating between the ultimate success or failure of organizational change initiatives (Armenakis, Bernerth, Pitts, & Walker, 2007).

Construct development. Change is conceptualized and investigated in numerous ways across the literature (e.g., readiness for change, resistance to change, cynicism toward change, commitment to change), with some debate regarding the most appropriate perspective (e.g., Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999; Bouckenooghe, 2010). In a 2010 review, Bouckenooghe examined 58 journal articles spanning 15 years of change literature suggesting that the meanings and constructs involving attitudes toward change are often used interchangeably and display considerable conceptual overlap. Drawn from Elizur and Guttman's (1976) definition, employee attitudes toward change include "a set of feelings about change, cognitions about change and interactions towards change" (p. 612). Bouckenooghe (2010) further refines this working definition suggesting that attitudes toward change represent relatively stable feelings, views, and behavioral tendencies *by employees directed toward organizational approaches to change and organizational change capabilities* (Bouckenooghe, 2010; Hellriegel, Slocum, & Woodman, 2001). This is a departure from some other popular conceptualizations of organizational change attitudes (i.e., resistance to change, cynicism toward change, readiness for change) as it represents the employee's view of the organization's ability to change rather than the employee's personal attitudes related to change (Bouckenooghe, 2010; Weiner, Amick, & Shoou-Yih, 2008). Positive attitudes toward change indicate general openness to organizational ideas, belief in the positive potential implication of modifications, and the readiness of the workforce to adapt to impending changes (Goh, Cousins, & Elliott, 2006). These positive attitudes are related to substantial organizationally-pertinent phenomena and are likely necessary for the successful execution of change initiatives (Armenakis et al., 2007). In addition, attitudes are "characterized as individual states that may become shared by groups of individuals" (Bouckenooghe, 2010, p.

518), suggesting that different organizational populations may share some similarities in the context of organizational change perceptions.

Change attitudes and work status. Despite the demonstrated importance of employees in change surprisingly little work has empirically investigated change attitudes of part-time workers (Armenakis & Harris, 2009). With minimal direct evidence to guide the understanding of part-time employee attitudes, previous work around the development of change recipients' beliefs is potentially informative (e.g., Armenakis et al., 2007; Lines, 2005). Armenakis et al. (2007) identified that the beliefs most important to determining the reactions of change recipients to an organizational change are discrepancy (i.e., belief in the need for change), appropriateness (i.e., belief that specific organizational change is required to reduce discrepancy), efficacy (i.e., perceived capacity to execute the change), principal support (i.e., degree of support from change agents/opinion leaders regarding the change), and valence (i.e., perceived attractiveness of the potential outcome of the change). In the context of part-time workers, the importance of discrepancy, efficacy, principal support, and valence may be especially relevant. Depending on work status, employees may experience varying degrees of belief in the need for change, their ability to impact that necessary change, and/or the attractiveness of consequences resulting from the change.

One of the most significant conclusions of Thorsteinson's (2003) meta-analysis was that part-time workers perceive less job involvement and are not be included in the organization's social system to the same extent as their full-time counterparts which could lead to the development of different attitudes toward organizational change (i.e., Partial Inclusion Theory; Katz & Kahn, 1978). Wheeler et al. (2002) found that contingent workers typically report being physically and socially isolated on the job and do not receive the same amount of feedback from

the organization as full-time employees. In essence, designation as "part-time" represents an important classification or categorization for an employee, signifying decreased presence in the organization, either for voluntary or involuntary reasons (Martin & Hafer, 1995; Thorsteinson, 2003). This perceived decreased involvement or exclusion may lead to cognitive perceptions of less discrepancy, or the belief in the need and advantages for the organization to change, and efficacy, or the decreased capability to implement change, among part-time workers. Cuyper and colleagues (2007) suggest in a review of the temporary employment literature that feelings of being at the organization's periphery due to categorization as "part-time" could be related to unique perspectives about the organization. Part-timers may have the freedom of not having to engage too deeply in organizational problems and also avoid getting overly involved in organizational politics. This actual or perceived exclusion may also lead to fewer attempts to gain knowledge about changes that are occurring in the organization (Eberhardt & Shani, 1984), decreased willingness to become involved in change initiatives, or even reduced interest in the success of change practices by part-time employees. This study hypothesizes that perceptions of decreased discrepancy and efficacy may contribute to part-timers experiencing lessened positive attitudes toward organizational change than full-time workers, who are more holistically included and impacted by change activities (Armenakis et al., 2007; Cuyper et al., 2007).

> *Hypothesis 1: Work Status (e.g., full-time and part-time) will be related to attitudes toward organizational change management, such that full-time employees will demonstrate significantly` more positive attitudes toward organizational change than part-time employees.*

Retention and secondary part-time employees. Seeking to deliberatively understand the attitudes of part-time workers, treated as a heterogeneous population, is worthy of study as

previous work reveals overall reduced feelings of involvement in comparison to full-timers (e.g., Thorsteinson, 2003). However, there are still likely other factors contributing to the development of organizational change attitudes across part-timers. Specifically, retention part-time workers may have stronger negative attitudes toward organizational change management than secondary part-time employees, due in part to the absence of substantial personal benefits (valence) and the transactional nature of the work contract held by secondary part-timers. Armenakis et al. (2007) and Holt et al. (2007) suggest that valence, or the perceived value of the potential outcome from a change, is an important belief in influencing employee attitudes toward organizational change. Secondary part-time employees may perceive a smaller valence or "what is in it for me" in the context of organizational change than retention part-timers since they are by definition already receiving (and expect to receive) significantly fewer opportunities and benefits from the organization as a result of their position (Tilly, 1991). Secondary part-time positions are plagued by much higher turnover than retention part-time positions (Tilly, 1996). This indicates less attachment and personal investment to the organization. Across a sample of U.S. Postal Service employees, turnover for the secondary part-time position of letter carriers was four times that of full-time employees (Tilly, 1996). Tilly's (1996) analysis revealed that secondary part-timers tended to lack in "commitment" and "effort," leading them to exert less energy on behalf of the employer. The decreased inclusion in the organization's social system and potential increased focus on other non-work related roles (e.g., Partial Inclusion Theory) could result in secondary part-timers being less concerned with organizational changes than retention part-timers, since potential changes are less of a necessity, likely hold fewer implications and represent potentially less value to them (e.g., Barker, 1993; Katz & Kahn (1978): Partial-Inclusion Theory; Goh et al., 2006; Tilly, 1996).

The change recipient belief of valence is further segmented into extrinsic and intrinsic categories (Armenakis et al., 2007). Extrinsic valence refers to the potential rewards or benefits that an employee may receive from participating in the change effort (e.g., gain-sharing). Intrinsic valence refers to the potential internal rewards that may be realized through an organizational change (e.g., professional development opportunities). Valence, especially intrinsic valence, of a potential benefit that will occur as a result of the change is a significant motivator toward increasing the value of involvement in the change and attitudes toward change (Bartunek, Rousseau, Rudolph, & DePalma, 2006). Creating extrinsic valence for part-times is potentially difficult, but organizations have the capacity to impact intrinsic valence, especially in the case of retention part-timers. Secondary part-time employees receive minimal organizational perks and may not feel high valence (i.e., that they will experience or be the recipients of any additional rewards or benefits) since they are less included in the organizational fabric and may not see the relevance of the changes to their role. This group is likely even further isolated from the rest of the workforce through nonstandard shifts and/or geographically remote locations which could further impact efficacy (i.e., perceived capacity to execute changes) and principal support (i.e., degree of support from leaders regarding the change; Tilly, 1996). On the other hand, retention part-time workers are not often occupying entry-level positions, are receiving comparable hourly wages and benefits to full-time employees, and are generally offered some career advancement opportunities so are likely more integrated into organizational systems and more directly impacted by organizational changes (Tilly, 1996). So while retention part-time workers could perceive higher valence and discrepancy regarding changes due to these factors, they are still labeled "part-time" by the organization and, as Thorsteinson (2003) states, this signifies decreased inclusion in the organizational culture (Martin & Hafer, 1995).

Experiencing some of the opportunities and perks allotted to full-time employees while also feeling decreased status and reduced involvement in the organizational system could create internal conflict for retention part-time employees and lead them to experience more negative attitudes or responses toward organizational actions around change. On the other hand, secondary part-timers are already expecting to receive less perks from a change so their attitudes are likely to be less influenced by organizational policies and actions as compared to retention part-time workers.

> *Hypothesis 2: Retention and secondary part-time work status will be differentially*
> *related to attitudes toward organizational change, such that employees in retention part-*
> *time positions will express more negative attitudes toward organizational change than*
> *employees in secondary part-time positions.*

The Role of Manager Consideration

Managers play a critical role in the communication of change, employees' knowledge and perceptions of organizational changes (Porras & Robertson, 1992) and the change process overall (Kotter, 1995; Wanous, Reichers, & Austin, 2000). How change is managed and communicated affects the behavior of the workforce and, in the long run, the perceived success or failure of the change initiative (Armenakis et al., 2007). There is a long line of research dedicated to understanding the role of managers in the change process (Armenakis et al., 2007; Armenakis & Harris, 2009; Paglis & Green, 2002). Much of this research has centered on examining manager behavior from a change agent (Armenakis & Harris, 2009), transformational leadership (Eisenbach, Watson, & Pillai, 1999) or charismatic leader (Levay, 2010) perspective. However, beyond these conceptualizations, other manager behaviors and characteristics are also instrumental in the change management process. For example, Tierney (1999) found that

supervisors play a direct role in the change climate by increasing employee perceptions of open communication, trust, and understanding of existing conditions. This study thus incorporates another potentially important aspect of leadership into the change literature by focusing specifically on the manager behavior of consideration as related to attitudes toward change.

The Ohio State studies from the 1950s first suggested the significance of consideration as an important manager behavior, and as a result, manager consideration was a core focus in the leadership literature until the emergence of transformational/transactional leadership (Yukl, 2010). Transformational leadership has been shown to be significantly related to change perceptions (e.g. Eisenbach et al., 1999); however, researchers recently suggested revisiting the "forgotten one" of consideration as another important aspect of manager behavior (Judge, Piccolo, & Lies, 2004). Manager consideration has received limited examination in the change context, thus inclusion in this study answers the recent call to continue linking this behavior to new outcomes (Tabernero, Chambel, Curral, & Arana, 2009). Manger consideration is defined as the degree to which a manager communicates and engages in behaviors that demonstrate concern about the well-being of his or her employees (Yukl, 2010). Also called relationship-oriented leadership, considerate manager behavior focuses on building relationships, demonstrating respect, communicating and providing feedback to followers (Fleishman, 1953; Hemphill & Coons, 1957).

Considerate manager behavior has been linked to many outcomes that may be relevant in the change context; specifically, followers of considerate managers displayed increased well-being and decreased overall stress levels (Skakon, Nielsen, Borg, & Guzman, 2010). Change can foster uncertainty in employees (Armenakis & Harris, 2009) and in the absence of a single interpretation for the change then employees' perceptions are likely influenced by other members

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of the organization, specifically supervisors (Lines, 2005). Managers can frame and define the reality of their teams through building meaningful relationships, establishing symbols and providing feedback about the organization's actions (Reichers, Wanous, & Austin, 1997; Tierney, 1999). Relationship-oriented leaders are typically especially good at this as they are highly communicative, use their interactions to distribute knowledge, and develop trusting relationships with their direct reports (Caldwell & Dixon, 2010; de Vries, Bakker-Pieper, & Oostenveld, 2010). This is likely especially relevant in a changing organizational environment as effective communication and information sharing are social exchange mechanisms that can enhance employees' ability to cope (Burnes, 1992; Schweiger & DeNisi, 1991), increase their openness to change (Wanberg & Banas, 2000) and foster awareness of organizational shifts (Burnes, 1992). Information sharing about changes (Miller, Johnson, & Grau, 1994; Wanberg & Banas, 2000) and social support (Porras & Robertson, 1992) have been consistently linked to positive reactions to organizational changes. Because considerate manager behavior is associated with increased communication, trust, respect and support between managers and direct report, it is expected that consideration will be positively related to employee attitudes toward organizational change.

Hypothesis 3: Manager consideration will be positively associated with employee attitudes toward organizational change.

Manager consideration as a moderator. Managers are often positioned in the critical position of delivering change messages across the organization (Armenakis et al., 2007). Previous work highlights a link between employee change attitudes and leader behaviors (Rubin et al., 2009), making manager consideration a potentially critical influencer in the development of change recipients' sense making and attitudes toward change (Gordon, 2001; Weick, 1995). In

the research of effective strategies for change, Armenakis and Harris (2009) found that the influence of a change strategy was moderated by the attributes of the change agent. However, this may not occur equally across work status groups. It is expected that high manager consideration will serve as a powerful boundary condition, significantly elevating worker attitudes toward organizational change management to varying degrees depending on the employment arrangement.

Full-time employees have significantly more opportunities to build a relationship and receive feedback from a manager due to their classification as "full-time" (Martin & Hafer, 1995) and may also internalize their role differently due to increased feelings of job involvement (LeGrow, 1992; Levanoni & Sales, 1990; Martin & Hafer, 1995; Thorsteinson, 2003). This may lead full-timers to view their role in the organization as more long-term and inclusive thus seeking to be more informed and involved in change management (Cuyper, Jong, Witte, Isaksson, Rigotti, & Schalk, 2007). Sias, Kramer, & Jenkins (1997) found that some organizations that utilize both full-time and part-time employees experience decreases in communication effectiveness when compared with organizations that exclusively use full-timers. This is because organizational goals are sometimes not communicated successfully between work status groups, leaving part-time employees feeling isolated and invisible (Rogers, 1995; Wheeler et al., 2002). Tabernero and colleagues (2009) suggest that manager consideration may be especially helpful in a disruptive change setting by helping employees to establish long-term goals and understand their role in the organization, thus potentially impacting the feelings of isolation. Manager consideration can pull employees from the peripheral of the organizational environment, engage them in the organizational activities, and buffer against some of the feeling of exclusion or marginalization (Cuyper et al., 2007).

Hypothesis 4: Manager consideration moderates the relationship between work status and attitudes toward organizational change, such that as manager consideration increases so will attitudes toward organizational change of full-time and, to a lesser extent, part-time (retention & secondary) employees.

This relationship may be especially relevant for employees in retention part-time roles. Retention part-timers receive a number of the same organizational perks as full-time workers, increasing their extrinsic and intrinsic valence in changes. Previous research suggests they still do not feel as included in the organization's environment due to their classification as "part-time" (Tilly, 1996). For retention part-timers, high manager consideration may especially compensate for perceptions that occur from being categorized as "part-time" resulting in a significantly positive impact on the overall change attitudes. Cognitively oriented research suggests that changes are interpreted with a rather narrow self-interest perspective, with a secondary focus on the achievement of organizational goals (Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002; Lines, 2005). Greater consideration from a manager may target these "self-interests" of retention part-timers by providing more opportunities to focus on their well-being and their positive contributions to the organization thus bringing them back into the organization's social core (Yukl, 2010). Managers can elevate the perceived intrinsic valence (i.e., understanding for necessity of changes and personal value of changes) and also increase inclusion and interpersonal support that is typically withheld through holding the "part-time" label. Consequently, retention part-timers that perceive high manager consideration may be more likely to develop positive cognitive and affective change perceptions. It is hypothesized that this would only be the case for retention part-timers since secondary part-time employees may still not view

significant personal benefits due to the transactional nature of their work contract. For these workers, consideration will not buffer the effects of "part-time" labeling.

> *Hypothesis 5: Manager consideration moderates the relationship between work status and attitudes toward organizational change, such that:*
>
> *5a: As manager consideration increases so will attitudes toward organizational change of full-time employees*
>
> *5b: As manager consideration increases so will attitudes toward organizational change of retention part-time employees, but to a lesser extent than full-time employees*
>
> *5c: As manager consideration increases so will attitudes toward organizational change of secondary part-time employees but to a lesser extent than both full-time or retention part-time*

CHAPTER 3

METHOD

Participants and Procedure

Data were collected from 22,280 employees in 2009 as part of a yearly satisfaction

survey at a Fortune 50 organization. Of the 22,280 participants, a holdout sample of 10% (N =

2278) were randomly selected for exploratory factor analysis and were not replaced into the data

set for subsequent analyses. The 20,002 remaining employees served as the sample for all

remaining analyses and descriptives reported below. Although the organization is an

international employer, the sample was restricted to include only US employees. Employees took

the survey online through the company's intranet. Participation was voluntary and participants

were assured of confidentiality.

All measures were part of the organization's annual attitudes survey and were self-report.

Participants occupied positions spanning all hierarchical levels of the organization including

management (e.g., supervisor, manager, district manager, senior staff manager) and non-

management positions (e.g., clerical operations, maintenance mechanic, and technician). They

also worked across various job functions and departments (i.e., business development,

operations, sales, accounting). The organization employs a substantial amount of part-time labor,

as compared to U.S. norms (Fox, 2010). Approximately 46% of participants in this study were

part-time employees. Full-time and part-time employees were located across various job types,

functions, and departments. Approximately 28% identified as union members. Two subject

matter experts employed within the organization's human resources department classified part-

time employees as either retention or secondary. Approximately 27% of participants are

retention and 73% are secondary part-time. Whereas almost 30% of participants indicated that

they have been employed with this organization for one to five years, approximately 21% report

being employed for 20 or more years with this organization.

Measures

Work status. Previous literature suggests that the categorization of work roles as "part-

time" and "full-time" is more important than the actual number of hours worked due to the

psychological labeling that takes place in employees' minds (Thorsteinson, 2003; Tilly, 1996).

Work status was a categorical variable assessed in the demographic section of the survey with

the following question: "What is your employment status?" Participants selected their work

status from two options: full-time (coded "0") and part-time (coded "1").

Retention part-time and secondary part-time work status distinctions were made

using Tilly's (1991, 1996) definitions and classifications. Subject matter experts working in the

Human Resources Department at the participating organization categorized part-time employees

based on the organization's job profiles for each job category (e.g., manager, supervisor,

specialist, mechanic). Retention part-time positions were defined as those that require moderate

skill, contain some training and advancement opportunities, constitute non-entry level, and

receive comparable hourly wages and benefits, but are typically given less responsibility when

compared to full-time coworkers. According to subject matter experts from the participating

organization, retention part-time employees average between 25 and 30 hours per week, with

full-time employees averaging 40 to 45 hours per week. Secondary part-time positions were

defined as those with reduced fringe benefits, lower hourly pay, reduced job security, and higher

potential turnover when compared to full-time positions. Secondary part-time employees

typically work three to four hour shifts across five or more days (average 18-21 hours total per week); some of these shifts occurring during non-standard work hours.

Attitudes toward organizational change. The attitudes toward change scale consisted of four items ($\alpha = .90$) measured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). These items were designed to examine employee attitudes toward changes and the way in which their organization manages change. Items included, "I am satisfied that (the organization) makes necessary changes before external factors force the change," "(This organization) manages change well," "I am satisfied that (this organization)'s policies and procedures make it possible to change the way things are done," and "Employees are encouraged to become involved with change initiatives."

Manager consideration. The manager consideration scale consisted of seven items ($\alpha = .92$) measured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). These items assessed the manager's use of feedback, openness to new ideas, respect for employees, and attempt to understand subordinates' point of view. Sample items include, "Employees are treated with respect by my immediate supervisor or manager," "I receive useful feedback from my immediate supervisor or manager," "My immediate supervisor or manager is sincere in their attempt to understand the employee's point of view," and "My immediate supervisor or manager is receptive to new ideas."

Control variables. Iverson (1996) found tenure and union membership that to be significant predictors of acceptance of organizational change, and thus, these were included as control variables in this study. Participants selected their tenure status from a categorical set of response options (e.g., Less than 1 year, 1-5 years, 6-10 years, 11-15 years, 16-20 years, Over 20

years) and union status data were provided by subject matter experts working in Human

Resources Department at the participating organization based on job category.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Descriptive Statistics

Means, standard deviations, correlations, and alphas were computed for all scales and

compared across full-time and part-time (Table 1), as well as across retention and secondary

part-time employees (Table 2).

Table 1.

Means, Standard Deviations, Intercorrelations and Reliabilities by Work Status

	Full-Time						Part-Time					
			Correlations						Correlations			
	M	SD	1	2	3	4	M	SD	1	2	3	4
1. Tenure	4.39	1.48	(1)				2.49	1.17	(1)			
2. Union Status	.49	.50	.16*	(1)			.03	.17	.07*	(1)		
3. Manager Consideration	3.81	.89	-.09*	-.19*	(.93)		3.96	.78	-.08*	-.03*	(.91)	
4. Attitudes Toward Change	3.44	.98	-.09*	-.09*	.66*	(.91)	3.67	.89	-.08*	-.01	.65*	(.89)

Note. *N=20,002 (Full-Time =10,869 and Part-Time=9,133).* Reliability coefficient alpha for Manager
Consideration and Attitudes Toward Change appear on the diagonal. Union status was dummy coded (Union = 1
and no union membership = 0)
*p<.01

Table 2.

Means, Standard Deviations, Intercorrelations and Reliabilities by Part-Time Work Status

		Retention Part-Time						Secondary Part-Time					
				Correlations						Correlations			
		M	SD	1	2	3	4	M	SD	1	2	3	4
1.	Tenure	2.97	1.28	(1)				2.31	1.07	(1)			
2.	Union Status	.11	.32	.003	(1)			.00	.00		(1)		
3.	Manager Consideration	4.06	.78	-.04	-.09*	(.92)		3.92	.78	-.13*	-	(.90)	
4.	Attitudes Toward Change	3.74	.88	-.06*	-.05*	.60*	(.90)	3.64	.89	-.12*	-	.67*	(.89)

Note. *N=9,133 (Retention Part-Time=2,506 and Secondary Part-Time=6,627).* Reliability coefficient alpha for Manager Consideration and Attitudes Toward Change appear on the diagonal.
*p<.01

Factor Analysis

   Exploratory factor analysis. An exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted using the previously mentioned holdout sample (N= 2078) to examine the factor structure underlying the items on the manager consideration and attitudes toward change scales. To determine how many factors should be retained, parallel analysis with maximum likelihood extraction and direct oblimin rotation was used (Horn, 1965). Parallel analysis has been shown to be more adept at identifying the number of factors to retain than either Kaiser's (1960) criterion or Cattell's (1966) scree test. Parallel analysis entails generating a set of eigenvalues from a set of random data based on the same number of variables and cases as the data set under investigation. Only those factors whose actual eigenvalues exceeded that of their randomly generated counterparts' mean eigenvalues were retained. Results of this procedure suggested the retention of two

factors. One item significantly cross-loaded on both the manager consideration and attitudes toward change scale so was removed from all subsequent analyses. This procedure resulted in a 4-item attitude toward change scale and a 7-item manager consideration scale.

Confirmatory factor analysis. A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted in the remaining portion of the sample (N = 20,002) to verify the factor solution retained from the EFA. The two-factor a priori model ($\chi^2(43) = 522.54$; CFI = .97, TLI = .97, RMSEA = .07, SRMR = .04) was compared to an alternative one-factor model ($\chi^2(44) = 3136.23$, CFI = .83, TLI = .79, RMSEA = .18, SRMR = .08). The chi-square difference test between the one- and two-factor models suggests that the two-factor model provides significantly better fit to the data ($\Delta\chi^2(1) = 2613.69$, p<.01), and thus, manager consideration and attitudes toward change are better represented as separate constructs. Given that chi-square is influenced by sample size and both models' chi-square values were significant, I also compared the model fit in accordance with other fit indices (CFI, TLI, RMSEA, SRMR). Whereas the fit indices from Model 1(two-factor) indicate great fit, the fit indices for Model 2 (one-factor) indicate a poor fit to the data. Taken together, the CFA results provide strong evidence to suggest that the two-factor model does indeed provide a better fit to the data. Table 3 displays the goodness-of-fit indices and model comparison for these CFAs.

Table 3.

CFA Goodness-of-Fit Indices: Manager Consideration and Attitudes Toward Change

Model	df	X^2	TLI	CFI	RMSEA	SRMSR
1. 2 Oblique Factors: Attitudes Toward Change and Manager Consideration	43	522.539*	.967	.974	.070	.036
2. 1 General Factor	44	3136.226*	.791	.833	.176	.075

Model Comparison	Δdf	ΔX^2				
Model 2 versus Model 1	1	2613.69*				

Note: df: model degrees of freedom; TLI: Tucker-Lewis index; CFI: comparative fit index; SRMSR: standardized root mean squared residual; RMSEA: root mean squared error of approximation

*p < .01

Prediction of Attitudes Toward Change

Full-time and part-time employees. Hierarchical regression analyses (Cohen & Cohen, 1983) were used to investigate the relationship between work status (full-time and part-time), manager consideration and attitudes toward change (Aiken & West, 1991). Tenure and union status were entered in step 1 as control variables. In step two, the main effects of work status (dummy coded 1 = part-time and 0 = full-time) and manager consideration were entered. Manager consideration was centered around the mean (Aiken & West, 1991). The cross-product term was computed between work status (dummy coded) and the centered manager consideration variable and was entered into the regression equation in step 3. Results of the hierarchical regression appear in Table 4.

Table 4.
Hierarchical Moderated Regression for Attitudes Toward Change: Full-Time and Part-Time Work Status

Model	Variable	β (SE)	β (SE)	β (SE)
Model 1	Tenure	-.01* (.004)	-.02* (.004)	-.02* (.004)
	Union Status	-.16* (.02)	.09* (.01)	.09* (.01)
Model 2	Work Status FT/PT		.12* (.01)	.12* (.01)
	Manager Consideration		.73* (.01)	.73* (.01)
Model 3	Work Status X Manager Consideration			.01 (.01)
	ΔR^2	.03	.41	.00
	ΔF	251.05*	7321.44*	.82
	R^2	.03	.44	.44
	Adjusted R^2	.02	.44	.44
	Overall F	251.05*	3878.14*	3102.65*

Note. N=20,002. Union Status = dummy coded union membership (1) and no union membership (0). Work Status FT/PT = Work status dummy coded full-time (=0) and part-time (=1)
*$p <.05$

To test hypotheses 1 and 3, Model 2 was examined. This model, which included the main effects only, was significant ($R^2 = .44$, $F (4, 19997) = 3878.14$, $p < .01$) suggesting that both work status ($\beta = .12$, $t = 8.95$, $p < .01$) and manager consideration ($\beta = .73$, $t = 120.91$, $p < .01$) had significant main effects on attitudes toward change. While the regression coefficient for work status was significant, the direction of the relationship ran counter to hypothesis 1. That is, part-time employees actually demonstrated significantly *more* positive attitudes toward organizational change than full-time employees. As expected, manager consideration was positively related to employee attitudes toward organizational change, thereby supporting hypothesis 3.

The inclusion of the interaction term between work status (full-time and part-time) and manager consideration from Model 2 to Model 3 did not significantly add to the variance accounted for in the prediction of attitudes toward organizational change ($\Delta R^2 = .00$, ΔF (1,19996) = .82, $p = .37$) and the interaction term was not significant ($\beta = .01$, p = .37). Failure to account for significant incremental variance from the main effects model (Model 2) to the full model (Model 3) suggests that manager consideration does not moderate the relationship between work status (full-time vs. part-time) and attitudes toward change, and thus, hypothesis 4 was not supported.

Retention and secondary part-time employees. Hypothesis 2 stated that part-time workers in retention-type positions would hold more negative attitudes toward organizational change than employees in secondary part-time positions. Hierarchical regression analyses (Aiken & West, 1991) were again used to test this relationship. In step one, the control variables (tenure and union status) were entered. In step two, work status (dummy coded: 1 = secondary part-time and 0 = retention part-time) was entered. Model 2 suggests that the addition of work status accounted for significant incremental variance in attitudes toward change ($\Delta R^2 = .01$, ΔF (3, 9129) = 39.68, $p < .01$) and the significant regression coefficient indicates that work status does indeed predict attitudes toward organizational change ($\beta = -.16$, p > .01). This indicates that retention and secondary part-time work status are differentially related to attitudes toward organizational change, as predicted. However, the direction of these effects suggests that secondary part-time employees hold more negative attitudes toward organizational change than retention part-time employees, opposite of the expected relationship (hypothesis 2). Results appear in Table 5.

Table 5.

Multiple Regression for Attitudes Toward Change: Retention and Secondary Part-Time Work Status

Model	Variable	β (SE)	β (SE)
Model 1	Tenure	-.06* (.01)	-.08* (.01)
	Union Status	- .01 (.05)	-.13* (.06)
Model 2	Part-Time Work Status		-.16* (.02)
	ΔR^2	.007	.006
	ΔF	32.10*	54.47*
	R^2	.007	.013
	Adjusted R^2	.007	.013
	Overall F	32.10*	39.68*

Note. N=9,133. Part-Time Work Status = part-time work status dummy coded secondary (=1) and retention (=0)
*p <.05

Retention part-time, secondary part-time and full-time employees. Hierarchical regression analyses (Cohen & Cohen, 1983) were used to investigate the relationship between work status (retention part-time vs. secondary part-time vs. full-time), manager consideration and attitudes toward change. Results appear in Table 6. Weighted effects coding was used to account for the unequal sample sizes across work status groups (Davis, 2010). Two weighted effects vectors were used to represent the three work status groups, with full-time employees as the base group, weighted as -.23 (retention part-time= 1; secondary part-time=0) in vector one and -.61 (secondary part-time=1; retention part-time=0) in vector two. In step one, the control variables (tenure and union status) were entered. In step two, the main effects of work status (weighted effects coded for full-time, retention part-time and secondary part-time) and mean-centered manager consideration were entered. In step three, the cross-product terms of manager

consideration by each work status group (retention part-time and secondary part-time) were entered into the regression equation.

Model 2, which contained the main effects of work status and manager consideration, was significant ($R^2 = .44$, F (5, 19996) = 3102.69, $p < .01$), and so was Model 3, which contained the interaction terms ($R^2 = .44$, F (7, 19994) = 2219.36, $p < .01$). As previously indicated, manager consideration was significantly and positively related to attitudes toward organizational change ($\beta = .73$, $p < .01$). Work status was also significant for the retention part-time ($\beta = .08$, $p < .01$) and secondary part-time ($\beta = .06$, $p < .01$) vectors, with full-time serving as the base group. Thus, attitudes toward change were more negative among full-time employees than either retention or secondary part-time employees.

To test hypothesis 5a through 5c, the full model containing the interaction effects (Model 3) was compared against the model containing only linear effects (Model 2). A ΔF-test was performed to determine if the addition of interaction terms accounted for incremental variance in predicting attitudes toward change. The ΔF-test was statistically significant (ΔF (2, 19994) = 6.65, $p < .01$) indicating that there were moderation effects present. However, the incremental variance accounted for from Model 2 to Model 3 is negligible ($\Delta R^2 = .0004$). Among the two-way interactions of work status and manager consideration (Model 3), both secondary part-time x manager consideration ($\beta = .03$, $p < .01$) and retention part-time x manager consideration ($\beta = -.05$, $p < .01$) were significantly related to attitudes toward change (full-time as base group), supporting hypotheses 5a and 5b. The significant results from model 3 were plotted in figure 1, however, the largely parallel lines suggest a lack of moderation effects. The significant interaction terms may be a result of elevated power due to the large sample size. Manager consideration was related to an increase in attitudes toward change for secondary part-timers, but

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not to a lesser degree than both full-timers and retention part-timers, as predicted by hypothesis

5c.

Table 6.

Hierarchical Moderated Regression for Attitudes Toward Change: Full-Time, Retention Part-Time and Secondary Part-Time Work Status

Model	Variable	β (SE)	β (SE)	β (SE)
Model 1	Tenure	.07* (.004)	-.03* (.004)	-.02* (.004)
	Union Status	-.16* (.02)	.09* (.01)	.09* (.01)
Model 2	Work Status SPT		.06* (.01)	.06* (.01)
	Work Status RPT		.08* (.01)	.08* (.01)
	Manager Consideration		.73* (.01)	.73* (.01)
Model 3	Work Status SPT X Manager Consideration			.03* (.01)
	Work Status RPT X Manager Consideration			-.05* (.02)
	ΔR^2	.03	.41	.0004
	ΔF	251.05*	4881.25*	6.653*
	R^2	.03	.44	.44
	Adjusted R^2	.02	.44	.44
	Overall F	251.05*	3102.69*	2219.36*

Note. N=20,002. Work Status SPT =Weighted effects coded secondary part-time work status compared against full-time work status. Work Status RPT= weighted effects coded retention part-time work status compared against full-time work status. Full-time employees serve as the base group in both the Work Status SPT and Work Status RPT variables.
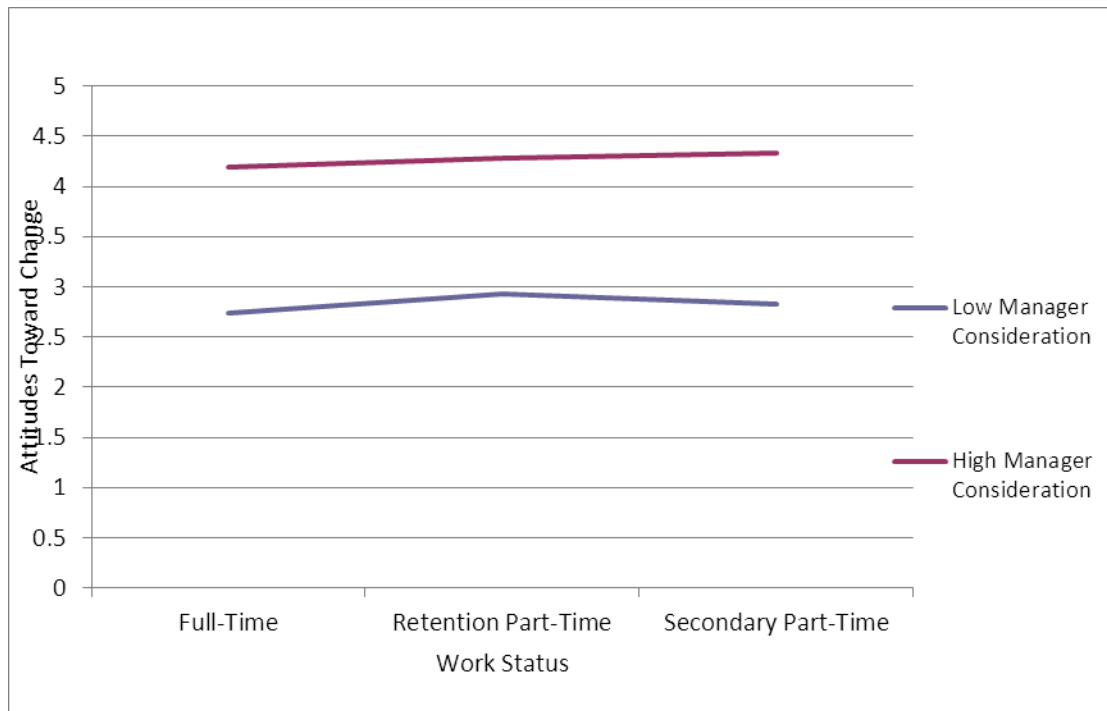**p <.05*

Figure 1. Work Status Predicting Attitudes Toward Change by Manager Consideration

Effect size estimates. With such a large sample size, thereby increasing the study's power, reported results might be subject to increased chances of a Type I error. In an effort to frame the results, Cohen's *d* effect sizes were computed in an effort to place some practical boundaries around the magnitude of the effects found in this study (Cohen, 1988). The difference between full-time and part-time employees was statistically significant which suggests that the results obtained cannot be explained by chance alone (Aguinis et al., 2010). However, the magnitude of the effect found was small ($d = .13$) as defined by conventional standards (Cohen, 1988). Thus the mean scores on attitudes toward change between full-time and part-time employees may not be that meaningfully different. This same trend continued as the strength of the effects between full-time and two part-time employee groups were examined. The magnitude of the effect between retention and secondary part-time employees ($d = .17$), retention part-time ($d = .12$), and secondary part-time ($d = .12$) were all small (Cohen, 1988). Results also show that

considerate manager behavior is directly related to change attitudes statistically and that the magnitude of the effect is large ($d = 1.7$; Cohen, 1988). Overall, in the context of change, part-timers do in fact seem to be distinctively different from their full-time counterparts, and maybe not in a negative way. Results provide some evidence to support previous arguments for a multi-faceted conceptualization and investigation of part-timers but also the importance of managerial consideration (Feldman, 1990; Thorsteinson, 2003; Tilly, 1996).

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

The current study investigated the relationship between work status, considerate manager behavior, and attitudes toward change. Results lend new insight into the relationship between full-time and part-time employees and attitudes toward organizational change, as well as a potential moderator that has an influence on this relationship. There is currently a significant gap in the understanding of different work status groups in the context of organizational change. Thus, the primary aim of this study was to investigate the extent to which work status is related to differential attitudes toward organizational change. This study contributes to the very few studies that empirically demonstrate differential attitudes among full- and part-time employees. In addition, it also shows managerial consideration to be an important predictor of attitudes toward change. In any study, the researcher is tasked with considering both the statistical and practical impact of any findings (Thompson, 2002). Statistical significance provides evidence that the variables investigated are related to each other, but not enough to conclude the extent of the relationships (Aguinis, Werner, Lanza Abbott, Angert, Park, & Kohlhausen, 2010). Thus, an important caveat in regards to the interpretation of this study is that while the results were statistically significant, with such a large sample size, this does not automatically translate to practical importance.

Importance of work status. As speculated by Thorsteinson (2003) and others, results show that work status is related to differential organizational attitudes. Results of the present study indicate that full-time and part-time employees have differing perceptions about their organization's change actions and ability to manage change. This could suggest that the

development of change recipients' beliefs, as defined by Armenakis and colleagues (1993), may not carry the same importance or be conceptualized the same way across full-time and part-time employees. Contrary to what was expected, part-time employment was statistically related to more positive attitudes toward organization change than full-time employment. While the magnitude of the effect size was small, this implies that part-time employees feel a stronger general openness to organizational ideas, belief in the positive potential implication of adjustments, and the readiness of employees to adjust to impending changes (Goh et al., 2006). While it was expected based on previous research (Clinebell & Clinebell, 2007) that full-time employees would feel more included in the organization and thus demonstrate more positive attitudes about the organization's changes, these findings suggest the opposite. Additional examination of the literature provides some insights around this contradictory finding.

Although the psychological effect of being classified as "part-time" was expected to have a negative effect on change attitudes since part-time status was related to decreased involvement (Thorsteinson, 2003) and social isolation (Clinebell & Clinebell, 2007; Wheeler et al., 2002) in previous research, an alternate explanation is that decreased involvement may actually protect part-time employees from some of the more negative aspects of organizational change, such as rumors (Bordia, Jones, Gallois, Callan, & Difonzo, 2006) and politics (Cuyper et al., 2007). By participating in multiple roles (e.g., Social Inclusion Theory; Katz & Kahn, 1978) part-timers do not have to engage as deeply in any one role. As such, part-timers may benefit from a decreased concern or focus regarding the impact of the changes on themselves and their work (Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002; Lines, 2005; Webber & Manning, 2001). On the other hand, full-time employees, whose identity is more closely tied to the organization's actions, may feel increased anxiety surrounding the uncertainty about the future. Full-time employees have more investment

in the status quo and are more likely to view the changes as a breach of their psychological contract with the organization (Armenakis et al., 2007; Cuyper et al., 2007; Rousseau, 2011).

A significant difference in organizational change attitudes was also found when examining part-time employees as a heterogeneous group, as recommended by Miller and Terborg (1979). In examining part-time employees based on Tilly's (1996) taxonomy, secondary part-time employment was related to less positive organizational change attitudes than retention part-time employment. However, when considering all three groups (full-time, secondary part-time, and retention part-time) together, both retention and secondary-part time employees demonstrated significantly more positive attitudes toward change than full-time employees. Even though the magnitude of the effect sizes were small, this statistically significant finding provides further evidence in support of the observations made by organizational researchers (e.g., Feldman, 1990; Martin & Sinclair, 2007) and economists (e.g., Kahne, 1985) regarding the potentially missed information by treating part-timers as a homogenous population.

The present study does support the treatment of part-time employees as a heterogeneous group (retention and secondary part-time); however, findings regarding attitudes toward change were contrary to expectations. Retention part-timers demonstrate more positive organizational change attitudes than both secondary part-timers and full-timers, opposite of the proposed argument that this group would feel a conflict between their work status and organizational responsibilities. A potential explanation for this finding is that retention part-time workers are sufficiently integrated, similar to their full-time peers, due to their role requirements, and thus, they understand more about the changes and relative impact (Broschak et al., 2008). In this study's sample, retention part-timers worked 25 to 30 hours and full-timers averaged 40 to 45 hours per week, respectively. This may suggest that the number of hours worked by retention

part-timers provided enough opportunity to comprehend organizational change management. However, they may have the choice as to how fully they participate in changes. Some research states that employees in retention part-time positions were more likely to request these work arrangements due to the flexibility it provides, which may translate into an increased positive relationship and re-defined psychological contract with the organization (Fox, 2010; Rousseau, 2011; Tilly, 1996). Therefore, it is plausible that retention part-time employees are benefiting from many aspects of their work arrangement (i.e., promotional opportunities, training, comparable wages) without feeling as if they are sacrificing other important roles outside of the organization (e.g., Partial Inclusion Theory; Katz & Kahn, 1978). This relationship actually results in more positive attitudes of the organization's change capability for retention part-timers.

Secondary part-time employees, on the other hand, were found to be significantly distinct from both full-time and retention part-time workers. The present study suggests, contrary to the hypothesized relationship, secondary part-time employees hold more positive change attitudes than full-time and less positive change attitudes than retention part-time. A potential explanation for this finding is that secondary part-time employees, who are occupying positions characterized by higher turnover, operating in non-traditional working hours, and working in physically isolated locations are less integrated (Tilly, 1996). In fact, according to subject matter experts from the participating organization, secondary part-time employees were more likely to work short (3.5 hour shifts) across multiple days with many shifts occurring during non-traditional hours. As a result, their focus on other non-work related roles coupled with reduced commitment and isolation could cause secondary part-time employees to be relatively detached and complacent to the organization's actions, as long as they are not directly impacted. With little previous research to guide the understanding of change attitudes across differing work status

groups, an important contribution of this study is the additional evidence that there are potentially important differences between part-time and full-time employees in regards to change attitudes. The current change management frameworks generated using full-time employees may not effectively translate to part-time workers, whether conceptualized as a homogeneous or heterogeneous group.

Importance of considerate managers. Organizations are continually in a state of motion, but this incessant change can be both disruptive and difficult for employees (Armenakis & Harris, 2009). This necessitates investigating factors that influence employee perceptions and behaviors before and during transformations. Results suggest that manager consideration is directly related to employees' attitudes toward an organization's change capabilities. This specifically lends support to extant literature suggesting that manager behaviors such as building relationships, demonstrating respect, providing feedback and demonstrating concern over the well-being of direct reports are important contextual features in any organizational change process (Yukl, 2010). This is also congruent with other studies that emphasize the role of supervisor support and facilitation of role understanding as a valued social resource in times of stress, which often characterizes periods of change (Halbesleben, 2006; Mehta, 2009; Tabernero et al., 2009).

When so many organizational transformations are deemed failures and strategies for effective change are empirically linked to the attributes of change agents, these findings provide actionable insights to leaders regarding important behaviors during change (Armenakis & Harris, 2009). Managers can place an emphasis on having meaningful conversations with each direct report, engaging in actions that inspire trust, and gathering feedback from their team as ways of positively influencing organizational change attitudes. Research often focuses on factors that

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lead to negative attitudes toward change (e.g., resistance to change, cynicism toward change; Lines, 2005), but the present study suggests that there is value in also considering the antecedents associated with more positive perceptions of the organization's ability to change.

This study demonstrates that managerial consideration is directly related to change attitudes and that the magnitude of the effect is large. As a practical recommendation, organizations can provide additional training to managers around effective communication tactics and the steps to building meaningful relationships with direct reports. It is also worthwhile to provide managers with decision-making discretion during times of change so that they can offer individualized consideration, meaningful support, and demonstrate care for the welfare of each team member. Change can induce reactions such as stress, anxiety, and low commitment among employees, but considerate behavior from a manager may serve as a buffer against these negative states (Ashford, 1988; Rafferty & Griffin, 2006).

The present study also examined considerate manager behavior as a potential moderator of the relationship between work status and organizational change attitudes. When examining part-time employees as a homogeneous group in relation to full-time employees, contrary to expectations, manager consideration was not a significant moderator. However, when treating part-time employees as a heterogeneous group based on Tilly's taxonomy (1996), manager consideration was a statistically significant moderator of the relationship between work status and organizational change attitudes. Similar to earlier discussions, statistical significant does provide some indication that there is a relationship between the variables of interest. However, with such a large sample size, it is necessary to interpret these findings in the context of this boundary condition. Work status and manager consideration each independently provide valuable information related to change attitudes across all three work status groups (full-time,

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retention part-time and secondary part-time), but the interaction between the two variables does not result in a significant increase in valuable information.

Future Directions and Limitations

Ultimately, the present study provides some evidence that both work status and manager consideration are important aspects for inclusion in future change research. Heeding the call for more research investigating change recipient characteristics (Armenakis & Harris, 2009), this study is the first known to investigate work status as related to change attitudes. Findings provide some indication that continued research around this topic and treatment of part-time workers as both a homogeneous and heterogeneous group is in fact warranted.

To really understand the practical impact of these results, it is suggested the future work adopt the approach suggested by Aguinis and colleagues (2010) to bridge the gap between practice and research by engaging practitioners in the research process. This approach encourages researchers to devote increased attention to establishing the practical significance of their research. Work status as related to change attitudes is a prime candidate for this type of work, and the present study has made strides in this direction by examining the statistical significance as well as the magnitude of the effects between manager consideration, work status, and organizational change attitudes. Future work should complete the final step by directly assessing the practical significance by, for instance, engaging in a qualitative study soliciting practitioners' opinions on the extent to which these reported differences actually practically matter in a change context. Examining beyond perceptions to determine if more positive attitudes actually translate into change-related behavioral differences that help the organization more effectively transform is also encouraged.

The part-time workforce is projected to continue growing (Shafer, 2009) and the recent organizational shift of using part-time employees as a business strategy to increase competitive advantage will likely persist (Smith, 1997). Furthermore, organizations do not appear to be becoming any more effective at navigating organizational transformations (Beer & Nohria, 2000; Maurer, 2010). Thus, using this study to recognize that there are potentially important differences in work status, future research should seek to incorporate additional moderators in an effort to holistically frame these findings into recommendations that are helpful for both management's decision-making and development of employees in organizational change settings. Potential moderators included in future work might include: organizational commitment, change recipient's beliefs outlined by Armenakis et al. (1993), nature of the change (episodic vs. continual; Bouckenooghe, 2010), and leader-member exchange (Mehta, 2009).

There are a few limitations of the present study. One limitation is that this data was collected from one organization *just prior* to a large-scale planned transformation that impacted the organizational structure and individual job roles. So, while these results likely reflect attitudes in a continuous change environment, there is opportunity to determine if these same patterns would be found in the context of episodic change (i.e., change that is planned, intentional and systemic; Bouch) and across organizations in other industries. The beliefs about the organization's change capabilities may differ depending on the type of change being examined and organizational context (Tenkasi & Chesmore, 2003). Another limitation of this study includes the cross-sectional design. While this design provided unique information to inform the understanding of different work status groups, future research should seek to engage in more longitudinal research. Beyond the change setting, future research should also seek to continue expanding the criterion domain to shed more light on the potential attitudinal,

behavioral, and other differences between various work status groups (Thorsteinson, 2003).

Some potentially interesting areas include contextual aspects of performance, such as

organizational citizenship behavior and counterproductive work behavior, and also the role of

union membership in these relationships.

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