The Exertion of Influence by Different Organizational Climates on Employees' Attitude Towards Change

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Organizational change illustrates a topic of ever-expanding relevance in today's fast moving environment, however, the rate of failed change efforts is high. A main reason for this is the lack of support from employees as human resources depict a crucial part of a functioning organization. In the past decades, an increasing amount of studies have examined the impact of organizational climate on employees' attitude towards change which can occur in diverse shapes including several categories of positively and negatively labeled attitudes. For this study, a structured literature review has been made use of that includes a pool of 22 articles. Organizational climate has been divided into group climate, developmental climate, rational goal climate, and internal process climate while attitudes towards change have been segmented into different labels including readiness, openness, commitment, resistance, and cynicism. In the course of the present structured literature review a high congruence between the results of the different analyzed studies emerged. Developmental climates and rational goal climates have been found to mostly provoke positive attitudes towards change while the majority of authors detected that internal process climates predominantly cause resistance to and cynicism about change. The results of the different studies addressing group climates show diverging results.

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1. INTRODUCTION

There is an increasing amount of research that has been done in the areas of investigating the relevance of the corporate climate within an organization (e.g. Ashkanasy et al., 2011; Burton et al., 2004; Stetzer et al., 1997) and the attitude of employees towards organizational change (e.g. Bouckenooghe, 2010; Choi, 2011; Elias, 2009). However, comparatively little research has been conducted that deals with the relationship between these two variables. Consequently, to create an overall picture of this connection, it is necessary to review the literature that has already been composed and to detect possible undeveloped areas in order to determine opportunities for future research. In this research, the organizational climate will be viewed as the independent variable that exercises influence over the dependent variable "employees' attitude towards change". In the present fast moving environment every organization needs to engage in continuous change in order to gain and maintain a competitive advantage in the market as well as to catch up on the quickly evolving demands of customers. To do so it is crucial to possess the support of the body of workers. Especially in the present age, it is common knowledge that human resources present a vital part of an organization and that a company will not be able to successfully prosper without their support since frequently "employee responses to changes ultimately determine whether the change efforts succeed or fail" (Foster, 2010, p. 4). Subsequently, organizations increasingly face the pressure to improve in enhancing the acceptance and support of change initiatives of the employees (Choi, 2011). As mentioned above, the organizational climate might illustrate an important determinant for the attitude of employees towards change. Thus, in the following, a structured literature review on the kind of influence the organizational climate exerts on the attitude of employees towards change will be conducted. It will discuss the multiple subparts of the overall corporate climate including group climate, developmental climate, rational goal climate, and internal process climate and their positive or negative effects on the different dimensions of the attitude of employees concerning organizational change which are comprised of readiness, openness, commitment, resistance, and cynicism. In order to specifically dive into the existing literature, to create a clear understanding of the two variables, and to assemble a total picture of the relationship between them, the following research question emerged:

"How does organizational climate exert influence on employees' attitude towards change?"

The academic contribution of this research is to detect novel insights into a field that does not provide mature knowledge yet. There has been a lot of research in the field of organizational climate including its characteristics and implications, and in the recent past especially in the area of organizational change and the respective responses of employees as it gained a lot of attention lately (Choi, 2011). This research will explicitly deal with the different subparts of the organizational climate of enterprises including group climate, developmental climate, rational goal climate and internal process climate (Burton et al., 2004) as well as the bandwidth of various scales that measure these climactic profiles (e.g. Patterson et al., 2005). It will also discuss in detail the differing attitudes and responses of employees that are given rise by these climactic profile towards prospective organizational changes that the employees might encounter. Eventually, this study will break new ground and connect these variables in order to determine how the corporate climate positively and negatively exercises influence over the viewpoint of the workforce towards upcoming change which is especially relevant as, at the present day, it is inevitable to have a strong and supportive workforce that is willing and motivated to embrace change (Choi, 2011). This literature review is divided in four sections. Primarily, both the independent variable "organizational climate" and the dependent variable "employees' attitude towards change" will be conceptualized including four different climactic profiles and the several dimensions of the employees' attitude. Secondly, literature will be retrieved from several online research databases and analysed. In the subsequent section, the found results with regard to the research question will be illustrated. Eventually, the results will be discussed and possible limitations as well as suggestions for future research will be presented.

2. THEORY

In order to clarify the research question, the two main components "organizational climate" and "employees' attitude towards change" have to be clearly defined.

2.1 Organizational Climate

In a broader sense, "organizational climate" can be conceptualized as the "employee[s'] perceptions of and affective response to the workplace and work tasks" (Aarons & Sawitzky, 2006, p. 2). The organizational climate is "more descriptive of the context and not of feelings about the context, the internal evaluation of those experiences, or the ways in which the context treats an individual" (Ashkanasy et al., 2011, p. 32) which seemingly distances the climate from the culture within an organization which can be conceptualized as shared assumptions, values, and artefacts possessed by employees that guide their interaction behavior (Schein, 1990; Patterson et al., 2005). However, also current literature can be found that contradicts this belief and assumes a more evaluative and affective character as well as a certain interchangeability between both terms (Patterson et al, 2005). Climate has also been conceptualized as a subset of culture and thus as an inevitably combined construct (Langford, 2009; Morris & Bloom, 2002). Another study that emphasizes this opinion is the one by Håkonsson et al. (2008) in which it is stated that organizational climate "relates to the softer, human aspects of organizations" (p. 62) and revolves around people's feelings and affections. Consequently, climate is conceptualized here as affection related incidents "that influence shared employee emotions and consequent […] behaviors" (p. 63). The framework that has been used to subdivide the organizational climate into four climates differently affecting employees' attitudes towards change is based on the climactic profiles by Burton et al. (2004) which include group climate, developmental climate, rational goal climate, and internal process climate.

2.1.1 Group Climate

The group climate is especially concerned with the interpersonal relationships in an organization. It is mainly associated with belonging, trust, and cohesion, achieved through means such as training and human resource development (Patterson et al., 2005). Influential factors as compiled by Patterson et al. (2005) include employee welfare, autonomy, participation, communication, emphasis on training, integration, and supervisory support. Consequently, the group climate includes high trust and morale (Burton et al., 2004) and entails emotions such as calmness and comfort (Håkonsson et al., 2008) due to the creation of a feeling of belonging. In this climate, a "internally driven, top-down style" can be found (Håkonsson et al., 2008, p. 66).

2.1.2 Developmental Climate

The developmental climate revolves around the growth and development of an organization. It is a climate that affects employees in a stimulating and motivating way which causes

workers to feel "that new events are generally pleasant" (Håkonsson et al., 2008, p. 66). Consequently, these events are most often followed by emotions such as enthusiasm, excitement, and happiness (Håkonsson et al., 2008). Referring to Patterson et al. (2005), climactic dimensions that reflect this kind of orientation are flexibility, innovation, outward focus, and reflexivity.

2.1.3 Rational Goal Climate
The rational goal climate mainly includes situations which cause employees to feel discontentment and give rise to an urge to reach a certain striven for future state. This climate is externally oriented and does not involve factors such as close interpersonal relationships, high trust or morale. In this climate, tension between the persons involved is high and consequent emotions include anger, anxiousness, and distress (Håkonsson et al., 2008). Rational goal climates mainly distinguish by a private view of information where sharing and exchange do not happen naturally (Håkonsson et al., 2008). This climate primarily emphasizes the pursuit and attainment of well-defined objectives which include productivity, efficiency, and goals fulfillment. Possible climate dimensions are clarity of organizational goals, effort, efficiency, quality, pressure to produce, and performance feedback (Patterson et al., 2005).

2.1.4 Internal Process Climate
The internal process climate appears rather mechanical and does not support interpersonal relationships including "sharing and openness" (Håkonsson et al., 2008, p. 65). It is characterized by high conflict and low morale which leads to unpleasant emotions such as disappointment, tranquility, shame, and fatigue towards the organization which causes employees to lose confidence. In this climate, importance is attached to formal rules and procedures which implies that scales reflecting this climate include formalization and tradition (Patterson et al., 2005).

2.2 Employees' Attitude Towards Change
"Attitudes toward change is a multi-facetted concept comprised of a set of feelings about change, cognitions about change and intentions toward change" (Elizur & Guttman, 1976, p. 612). The dependent variable of the present research question "employees' attitude towards change" can be conceptualized as the presumable reaction employees will show by the time an organizational change occurs. Organizational changes include any kind of transformation within an organization, and the subsequent reaction of the body of workers is mainly composed of embracing or resisting the change (Faghihi & Allameh, 2012). "Employees' attitudes toward change are a key component to whether an organization's change efforts are either successful or fail" (Elias, 2009, p. 39) as employees who hold a strong positive attitude towards change tend to be open towards occurring changes while employees possessing a strong negative attitude most likely resist them. Obviously, there is a "positive-negative mindset" (Bouckenooghe, 2010, p. 502) regarding attitudes towards organizational change since the continuously most used structures include (I) readiness for change and (II) resistance to change. However, in recent research there has been a much broader range of differing attitudes established in order to adequately cope with the "umbrella concept 'attitudes to change'" (Bouckenooghe, 2010, p. 502). Additionally, Piderit (2000) proposed a multidimensionality of the different reactions to change including affective, behavioral, and cognitive responses. The primary benefit of using this multidimensional definition to determine change recipients' responses to prospective changes is that "conceptualizing each dimension as a separate

continuum allows for the possibility of different reactions along the different dimensions" (Piderit, 2000, p. 787).

2.2.1 Positively Labeled Attitudes
As already mentioned above, the most widely spread positively phrased attitude towards change is "readiness for change" (e.g. Axtell et al., 2002; Cunningham et al., 2002; Holt et al., 2007) as "there exists a strong consensus about the content of readiness for change" (Bouckenooghe, 2010, p. 502). It can be conceptualized as "a demonstrable need for change, a sense of one's ability to successfully accomplish change (self-efficacy) and an opportunity to participate in the change process contribute to readiness for organizational change" (Cunningham et al., 2002, p. 377). This dimension has already been visible in Lewin's change management model (1951) in which the concept of *unfreezing* was proposed that depicts an important part of fitting people for a prospective change. Another positively phrased attitude towards change is "openness to change" which can be conceptualized as "support for change and positive affect about the potential consequences of change" (Miller et al., 1994, p. 60) and the willingness to accept a certain change. Consequently, openness to change is considered to be a required predecessor for the successful implementation of change. "Commitment to change" illustrates a further attitude including a positive background that is dealt with in this literature review. Herscovitch & Meyer (2002) define it as "arguably one of the most important factors involved in employees' support for change initiatives" (p. 474). According to them, it can be conceptualized as "as a force (mind-set) that binds an individual to a course of action deemed necessary for the successful implementation of a change initiative" (p. 475).

2.2.2 Negatively Labeled Attitudes
The most common negatively phrased dimension of attitude towards change in recent literature is "resistance to change" (e.g. Folger & Skarlicki, 1999; Oreg, 2006). This attitude has been defined as "employee behavior that seeks to challenge, disrupt, or invert [prospective changes]" (Folger & Salicki, 1999, p. 36). The second negatively phrased attitude towards change that is discussed in this literature review is "cynicism about change". This concept mainly states that negative and distrustful attitudes towards the organization prevail (Bateman et al., 1992; Andersson & Bateman, 1997) as well as pessimism concerning future efforts of implementing changes.

3. METHODOLOGY
For the purpose of finding an answer to the established research question, a structured literature review including five segments (introduction, theory, methodology, results, and discussion) will be conducted. This methodology section follows the suggested method to review literature by Wolfswinkel et al. (2011). The first step involved detecting studies. For this purpose, the online research databases *EBSCOHost, ScienceDirect, Scopus* and *Wiley Online Library* have been used. Primarily, the scope of the prior chosen subject had to be determined by establishing criteria in order to decide on the integration of an article in this research. The terms that have been used during the conduct of the search include *Organizational Climate, Attitude Towards Change, Group Climate, Developmental Climate, Rational Goal Climate, Internal Process Climate, Readiness for Change, Resistance to Change, Commitment to Change, Openness to Change,* and *Cynicism About Change* which have been used in different combinations and with increasing specification (see Appendix I), thus the final search included every single of the above mentioned search terms. Since this primary search generated a pool of literature of several hundreds of articles, a first selection had to be initiated. For this purpose, the second

step involved that the articles to be chosen out of the data pool had to meet the inclusion criteria of containing at least one of the established search terms in their title. Additionally, articles that included only one of the search terms but also other terms that unambiguously refer to certain established terms were highly desirable. Eventually, also articles which actually only included one of the established search terms in the title have been included, for instance: "*Employee cynicism and resistance to organizational change*" by Stanley et al. (2005). These articles had to certainly include one of the search terms in their title, similar ones that could be related to them did not count. The amount of empirical articles that met this criteria were a total of 220 studies that were published in the time interval of 1948 until 2015 in a variety of journals in, predominantly, the psychology field but also in the human resource management and leadership field. In connection with the finalized search, the amount of collected articles had to be reduced. During the following step, duplicates had to be traced which reduced the amount of articles to 207 articles. Afterwards, during the fourth step, a further downsizing took place by separating out articles after having read and evaluated on the abstract with regard to earlier established criteria for integrating or leaving out literature. The inclusion criteria that has been created for this second selection contained the necessity of the articles to include both the dependent and the independent variable, meaning that at least one subpart of "organizational climate" that could be fitted into the climactic profiles by Burton et al. (2004) had to be associated with at least one of the concepts of "attitude towards change". Here, both studies that addressed change only hypothetically (e.g. Håkonsson et al., 2008) as well as articles that dealt with actual changes in organizations (e.g. Axtell et al., 2002) were included. A large number of the articles found could be eliminated from the pool of literature as they did not conform to the demands of the intended research that were previously mentioned. Aside from the articles that (I) mentioned certain attitudes towards change but did not connect them to any subpart of organizational climate and the ones that (II) included the concept of change but did not refer to the recipients' reactions and attitudes, also articles that (III) dealt with any other change than organizational change or other actors than employees (e.g. change situations that occurred in the private life of persons or completely unrelated topics involving climate related or zoological studies) have been eliminated. After this step, the references of the remaining studies have been examined to ensure to not miss out on any relevant resource. This led to a set of literature of 68 articles. The sixth step included a further downsizing during which samples were removed out of the pool due to noticeable overlapping of content. Some sparse exceptions were made in the cases of certain articles which do not clearly address the relationship between an organizational climate and employees' attitude towards change but provide information that promised to be highly useful and relatable to the topic of this thesis such as the study "*The measurement and antecedents of affective, continuance and normative commitment to the organization*" by Allen & Meyer (1990) that delivers valuable insights in the different components of commitment. Eventually, the residual articles have been read entirely to obtain the finalized, accurate and unbiased dataset. This made the number of relevant empirical articles amount to a number of 47 articles. However, examining the studies gathered after devoting myself to their analysis for a considerable time, the established pool of data turned out to be not sufficient during the writing of the results section of this structured literature review. Quite a few articles had yet again to be eliminated in the course of analyzing them more thoroughly due to various reasons including (I) addressing lines of arguments that have been used by numerous other

authors which resulted in a reduction of the concerned studies (II) the insight that several articles do not clearly relate to organizational change but, for example, only to the overall attitude towards an organization and (III) the realization that the general content of various articles actually does not ideally fit into this literature review. Eventually, a total number of 58 articles have been included in this review, however, mainly due to lack of time and space, 22 studies have been analyzed in detail and made use of in the subsequent results section. In order to successfully review the selected literature, the found data have been segmented, compared and formed into concepts and categories (Wolfswinkel et al., 2011). The final step includes writing down the detected relevant results. In order to optimally and most attractively visualize the results, a clear structure to present the findings has been established.

	Number of residual articles
Step 1: Searching for articles in different online databases	Myriad articles
Step 2: Applying several inclusion criteria	220
Step 3: Tracing of duplicates	207
Step 4: Separating out articles after having read and evaluated on the abstract and including new articles from the references of remaining studies	68
Step 5: Removal of articles due to noticeable overlapping of content	47
Step 6: Subsequent elimination of articles due to unsuitable content and lack of time	22

Table I: Stepwise reduction of articles

4. RESULTS

In order to present the results of this research, the following section is divided into four subsections, each one illustrating the influence of a different climactic profile (Burton et al., 2004) on employees' attitude towards change.

4.1 Influence of the Group Climate on Employees' Attitude Towards Change

Recalling the characteristics of group climate, it has been learned that this particular climate is mostly affected by different HR activities such as training, employee welfare, autonomy, participation, communication, integration, and supervisory support (Patterson et al., 2005). Additionally, this climate is associated with belonging, trust, cohesion as well as high morale (Patterson et al., 2005; Burton et al., 2004). Out of the analyzed articles in the established pool of literature, eight deal with the impact of group climate on workers' attitude towards change (see Bernerth et al., 2007; Folger & Skarlicki, 1999; Håkonsson et al. 2008; Burton et al., 2004; Mayer et al., 2007; Vandenberghe et al., 2002; Weeks et al., 2004; Lechner & Floyd, 2012). The relationship between group climate and employees' attitude towards change depends on the quality and character of the interpersonal connections as well as the external treatment of the members of a group. One of the articles addressing this issue is the study by Bernerth et al. (2007) in which the concept of organizational justice and its effect on individual employees' as well as groups' perceptions of change is illustrated. Organizational justice has its origin in the *equity theory* by Adams (1965) and "occurs when an employee's ratio of inputs to outcomes conceptually equal those

of a comparison other" (Bernerth et al., 2007, p. 305). It can be subdivided in distributive justice, procedural justice, and the most recently established form called interactional justice which addresses the "quality of the interpersonal treatment individuals receive" (Bernerth et al., 2007, p. 305). Bernerth et al. (2007) found that different conductions of the forms of justice lead to different perceptions of change of the affected employees. Primarily, high justice can be recognized by an equal ratio of inputs to outcomes between the workers. Moreover, "a fundamental premise of procedural justice is that individuals who contribute or have a voice in the procedures are more likely to view the decision as fair and just" (Bernerth et al., 2007, p. 307). Also interactional justice is able to support positive perceptions of the employees on both an individual and group level as "giving employees relevant and accurate information and in a polite and respectful way ultimately helps employees buy into the change effort" (Bernerth et al., 2007, p. 307). Consequently, if workers experience a fair treatment, they will develop a readiness and commitment to organizational change initiatives. However, on the other hand, if they are confronted with injustice, their attitude will most likely change. For instance, if employees feel that they do not receive necessary information from colleagues, supervisors or other group members or experienced that change efforts continuously fail, they will develop a pessimistic mindset towards organizational change (Bernerth et al., 2007). Consequently, "when change leaders' actions are not founded in the principles of justice, destructively active behaviors (e.g., sabotage) and attitudes (e.g., cynical responses) are more likely to take shape" (Bernerth et al., 2007, p. 312). An equally negative view of the outcomes of group climates has been illustrated by Håkonsson et al., 2008. In their study, it is stated that the group climate mainly entails emotions such as "calmness, comfort, and relaxation" (p. 66) which emerge from the overall contentment with the current situation as employees possess the tendency to try to hold on familiar procedures especially in long-term groups. Thus, an "internally driven, top-down style" (Håkonsson et al., 2008, p. 66) is created that leads to a high resistance to change. These findings conform to the results found by Burton et al. (2004) as they emphasize the autonomy of group climates and state that "the group climate reinforces its own values and ways of doing things and is not very adaptive to external pressures" (p. 71). Folger and Skarlicki (1999) found in one sense similar results as the previous authors, however, they especially emphasize the negative relationship between organizational injustice and employees' perceptions concerning change. During their study it has been found that prospective change initiatives under most circumstances lead to "heightened sensitivity about fairness" (p. 36). Consequently, employees react much more intensively to injustice than fair treatments as they tend to obsess about it and expect to experience further injustice compared to other members of the group (Folger & Skarlicki, 1999). "Employees prefer a sense of security, familiarity, and continuity" (Folger & Skarlicki, 1997, p. 39) which causes them to prefer to stick to the current situation. Additionally, workers often possess the feeling that they do not fully understand changes as they tend to compare it with the precedent state and struggle against working together with, probably unfamiliar, fellow workers (Kirkman et al., 1996; Folger & Skarlicki, 1999) which might be the case in situations of, for instance, the creation of cross-functional teams. Thus, a main reason for the hesitance of workers is "the relative certainty and clarity of the status quo versus the uncertainty associated with change" (Folger & Skarlicki, 1999, p. 39) which leads to a resistant behavior of employees. Matching to Bernerth et al.'s (2007) and Folger's & Skarlicki's (1999) results, Mayer et al. (2007) found a similar relationship between organizational justice and employees' attitude towards change, however, they focus more on the positive outcomes of well conducted justice efforts. Among others, they observed the products of justice in organizations and detected that "shared perceptions of justice at the group level are also positively related to individual outcomes" (Mayer et al., 2007, p. 13) which implies that the perception of being treated fairly that embraces a whole group also leads to a positive mindset of the individual members concerning the organization. Consequently, it can be seen that "group members are influenced not only by their own justice perceptions, but also by how fairly the group as a whole is treated" (Mayer et al., 2007, p. 14) which clearly identifies the presence of a group climate. In line with this, Mayer et al. (2007) found that "when an individual has high justice perceptions, and the group as a whole is treated fairly (i.e., justice climate is high), this should increase the individual's satisfaction and commitment to the organization, since the fact that both the individual and the group are treated well signals that employees are highly valued by the organization" (p. 14). On the other hand, this indicates that if an employee believes to be treated unfairly individually or on a group level, "satisfaction and commitment will be less favorable" (Mayer et al., 2007, p. 15). A further study that emphasizes the positive effect of group climates is the one by Vandenberghe et al. (2002). The authors found "evidence that employees do engage in separate exchange relationships with the organization to which they belong, the supervisor who is in charge of monitoring their performance, and the co-workers with whom they interact in the completion of their tasks" (Vandenberghe et al., 2002, p. 64). Subsequently, "the perceptions of being supported by the organization, of having a constructive and quality exchange relationship with one's superior, and of working in a cohesive work group, foster employee commitment" (Vandenberghe et al., 2002, p. 64). Thus, employees' perception of an existing "group cohesiveness" (Vandenberghe, 2002, p. 64) increments their commitment and positive feelings towards the organization which leads to an increased behavioral support concerning its undertakings. The importance of a well-ordered and trustful group climate in creating readiness for change can also be seen in Weeks et al.'s study (2004). They detected that employees are the most important part in initiating successful change efforts and represent "the energy, support, and inspiration required to create the perception among employees that an organization is ready for change" (Weeks et al., 2004, p. 9; cf. Armenakis et al., 1993). Three further components of group climates that positively affect employees' attitude towards change have been determined by Lechner and Floyd (2012). According to their study, the three concepts that positively influence "developing novel routines and other forms of unfamiliar know-how" (Lechner & Floyd, 2012, p. 479) include "*rational justification*, *use of formal authority*, and *coalition building*" (p. 479). Rational justification can be conceptualized as "the use of rational appeals, data, analysis, and/or arguments to demonstrate the benefits of an initiative" (Lechner & Floyd, 2012, p. 481), and is considered effective in enhancing employees' commitment to change since "it reduces the level of perceived uncertainty in the minds of decision makers" (p. 481) and stills employees' fear concerning their lack of experience and the "information gap about how the success of an initiative will relate to future organizational performance" (p. 481). Secondly, "[i]nvolvement and support by individuals with formal authority endows an initiative with hierarchical power" (Lechner & Floyd, 2012, p. 482) which implies that especially groups of workers that also include the support from senior executives profit from "acquiring […] important resources" (p. 482) and an enhanced preparation for prospective change

initiatives. Eventually, coalition building refers to "creating relationships with other individuals and groups" (Lechner & Floyd, 2012, p. 479) and can be seen as "an effective means of gaining informal support for an initiative" (p. 479) and "secur[ing] cooperation from a wide variety of organizational actors" (p. 482).

4.1.1 Conclusion

Comprising the presented results of the different articles which link group climate to employees' attitudes towards change, it becomes apparent that most authors made use of similar concepts. For instance, the different components of justice and their allocation within a group of employees have been used frequently (see Bernerth et al., 2007; Folger & Skarlicki, 1999; Mayer et al., 2007). Moreover, also the overall positive outcomes of belonging to a cohesive group of employees and cultivate contacts to executives have been discussed by several authors (see Vandenberghe et al., 2002; Weeks et al., 2004; Lechner & Floyd, 2012). Every analyzed article referred to the strong link to human relations in group climates and included similar components, however, there have been differing opinions and emphases on either a more positive or negative influence on employees. Burton et al. (2004), on whose study the choice of different organizational climates is based in this review, defined group climates as resistant to change as affected employees tend to focus on their own established way to deal with tasks. Similar results were shown by Håkonsson et al. (2008), Mayer et al. (2007) and Folger and Skarlicki (1999). The latter of whom additionally emphasized the high vulnerability of workers considering unjust treatment and thus the more negative influence of group climates on employees which give rise to resistance and cynicism. On the other hand, Vandenberghe et al. (2002), Weeks et al. (2004), and Lechner and Floyd (2012) particularly highlight the overall fostering effect of a sense of togetherness and mutual support which rather evokes commitment to organizational change.

4.2 Influence of the Developmental Climate on Employees' Attitude Towards Change

The developmental climate is, as the label suggests, associated with the development and process of growth of an organization. It is typically linked to optimistic perceptions and judgments (Håkonsson et al., 2008) as people affected by this climate tend to be highly motivated to engage in continuous growth and explore new opportunities. The developmental climate includes affective events that convey the feeling to employees "that new events are generally pleasant [and evoke emotions such as] enthusiasm, excitement, and happiness" (Håkonsson et al., 2008, p. 66). Out of the articles used in this literature review, nine address the effect of developmental climates on employees' attitude towards change (see Håkonsson et al., 2008; Burton et al., 2004; Axtell et al., 2002; Cunningham et al., 2002; Wanberg & Banas, 2000; Miller et al., 1994; Chen & Wang, 2006; Elias, 2009; Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002). The results of all articles from this selection confirm the positive relationship between the influence of developmental climates on positively labeled attitudes of employees towards change including readiness for change, openness to change and commitment to change. Both Håkonsson et al. (2006a, 2008) and Burton et al. (2004) found that the developmental climate profits from both high activation and also pleasant emotions of the employees which results in the overall feeling of being sufficiently prepared for an upcoming change and thus low resistance to change. Taking into account the findings of Håkonsson et al. (2006a, 2008), readiness for change depicts an outcome of the influence of the developmental climate as readiness for change embarks on the individual's perception of

the benefits of a certain change (Prochaska et al., 1994) and it has been determined that the developmental climate reveals optimistic and enthusiastic perceptions as well as overall pleasant emotions towards novel situations. Similar results have been found by Axtell et al. (2002). In their article, a longitudinal study of the effects of exposure to change have been conducted, in this case change is exemplified through the implementation of new technology and work practices which also indicates the presence of a developmental climate. The article shows that certain groups of workers, especially operational employees, which are exposed to developmental climate "become more welcoming of change" (Axtell et al., 2002, p. 223) as the time span increases. The reasoning behind this is that workers which are influenced by developmental climate in the long-term feel more involved and sufficiently informed about the change process, also, appositely to Håkonsson et al.'s (2006a, 2008) findings, it has been discovered that the employees possess a positive attitude towards experiencing something new and different (Axtell et al., 2002). Another factor that increases the readiness for change is that developmental climates involve, for instance, the described introduction of new technology and work practices which motivate workers to contribute own ideas and might enable them to "have some minor input to modify the way they work[…] with […] new technology" (Axtell et al., p. 228). A further indicator for the readiness for change that emerges from developmental climates is the concept of self-efficacy Cunningham et al. (2002) seized on in their study. Self-efficacy can be conceptualized as the perception of an individual of being able to manage change successfully which afterwards exerts a positive influence on individual and organizational change (Prochaska et al., 1997; Cunningham et al., 2002). This concept can be strongly related to the developmental climate as this climate is characterized by high self-esteem and confidence of employees due to the overall enthusiasm towards novel opportunities and prospective growth. Cunningham et al. (2002) found in their study that "[e]mployees in active positions with more control over challenging jobs reported a higher readiness for organizational change […] and were more likely to participate in organizational redesign" (Cunningham et al., 2002, p. 386). During the study, workers that were influenced by developmental climate and possessed "an active approach to work problems [and] were more confident in their ability to cope with job change, reported a higher readiness for organizational change scores at Time 1, participated in a greater number of redesign activities during the following year, and felt that they made a greater contribution to organizational change at Time 2" (Cunningham et al., 2002, p. 388). The same concepts of self-efficacy and participation have also been used by Wanberg & Banas (2000). They created a conceptual model of predictors of individual openness to organizational change that included *Individual Difference Variables* and *Context-Specific Variables*. The context-specific variables, which are relevant for this review, contain besides self-efficacy and participation also information, social support, and personal impact. Personal impact "refers to the net perceived effect that a particular change will have on an individual or his or her working environment" (Wanberg & Banas, 2000, p. 134). Employees who perceive that a prospective change will affect them strongly and in a negative way most likely hold a negative attitude towards change, however if employees such as those affected by developmental climate possess an enthusiastic basic mood towards change and are motivated to explore new opportunities, openness towards change increases (Ashford, 1988; Wanberg & Banas, 2000). Another variable of Wanberg's and Banas' (2000) conceptual model that have been found to enhance openness towards change among employees is the

information variable. Obtaining adequate information about possible changes is highly important in an organization as it reduces anxiety and uncertainty of workers and supports them in feeling more secure when faced with a change (Wanberg & Banas, 2000). Miller et al. (1994) found very similar results. Concerning developmental climates which are characterized by employees' perception to possess sufficient resources to adequately deal with change, they applied the *social information processing model (SIP)*. "[T]he SIP model posits that job attitudes […] result from available information influencing employees' perceptions of their needs and job characteristics" (Miller et al., 1994, p. 61). The content and quality of messages from supervisors and fellow employees determine the character of the perceived needs of involved persons and the way they feel about changes. Additionally, the appropriate information can be especially valuable during the initial shaping process of workers' impact of a planned change (Miller & Monge, 1985). Miller et al. (1994) describe that "announcements of change seen as timely, useful, answering questions, and conveyed by an appropriate medium favorably impress employee attitudes about change" (p. 73). During this arrangement of creating openness towards change it is of utmost importance to share all relevant information concerning the need, plan, and consequences of a change between all affected people (Cartwright, 1951; Miller et al., 1994). If this is the case, employees within such a climate which profit from adequate information, and are well-briefed about their job and the organization will assuredly face change a lot more positively minded (Miller et al., 1994). Another approach has been used by Chen & Wang (2006). In their study, Chen & Wang (2006) introduced the *locus of control* which can be conceptualized as an individual's perception of the degree of control it possesses over its environment (Chen & Wang, 2006; Rotter, 1966). In order to measure the locus of control, Rotter (1966) introduced the internal-external locus of control scale. In case an individual is highly internal, it believes that it is able to control its environment, however, persons that score high on externality perceive themselves as being controlled by their environment (Chen & Wang, 2006). At this point, first inferences can be drawn about the developmental climate. As the developmental climate is characterized by optimism and enthusiasm as well as the belief of employees that they are prepared to cope with change, it can be seen that individuals affected by a developmental climate can be placed on the highly internal side of Rotter's (1966) scale. Considering that "an individual's control over the environment will influence his or her psychological reactions to change" (Chen & Wang, 2006, p. 505), it can be concluded that individuals with a strong perception about their ability to control their environment show a greater positive attitude towards change. More precisely, Chen & Wang (2006) found that "LOC was positively correlated with affective and normative commitment to a change" (p. 509) which indicates that individuals which feel to be able to exercise control over their surroundings display both high affective commitment (desire to support change due to perceived benefits) and high normative commitment to change (feeling of being obliged to support change). The same concept of locus of control has also been taken up by Elias (2009). In his study, he stated "that an internal locus of control is associated with organizational commitment in general and affective organizational commitment in particular" (Elias, 2009, p. 41). Aside from the locus of control, he also presented two further predictors of commitment to change. The first predictor is *growth need strength* that can be conceptualized as "a personality variable that affects the extent to which an employee has a strong need for personal growth and development within the workplace" (Elias, 2009, p. 40). A strong growth need is especially present in people that enjoy engaging in complex and challenging tasks, thus individuals with a high need for growth tend to react eagerly to novel opportunities offered by their workplace (Elias, 2009; Graen et al., 1986; Houkes et al., 2001). Consequently, Elias (2009) found that "growth need strength has a mediated effect on affective organizational commitment" (p. 49) as "people with a high need for growth should be committed to their jobs, if the jobs provide them opportunities to develop" (p. 40). The next predictor of commitment to change that has been introduced is *internal work motivation*. Elias (2009) stated "that when an individual is internally motivated to perform a task, he or she will seek out new experiences and set new goals for himself or herself that are relevant to that task" (p. 42; cf. Ryan & Deci, 2000). At this point, a connection to the developmental climate can be clearly established which is characterized by evoking curiosity and pleasure about new opportunities in employees. It can be seen that employees with a high internal work motivation possess a positive attitude towards change. "In addition, his or her affective organizational commitment should benefit because of his or her place of work allowing for new experiences that would be considered rewarding" (Elias, 2009, p. 42). The three studies by Meyer, Allen and Herscovitch (Meyer & Allen, 1991; Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001; Herscovitch & Meyer; 2002) yield a similar result. After creating a three-component model of commitment to change including affective, continuance, and normative commitment, also items that function as predictors of organizational commitment have been established. For instance, Herscovitch and Meyer (2002) found that items that strongly lead to affective commitment include, for instance, "I believe in the value of this change", "This change is a good strategy for this organization", and "This change serves an important purpose" (cf. p. 477). Indicators for normative commitment include, for example, "I feel a sense of duty to work towards this change", and "I do not think it would be right of me to oppose this change" (cf. p. 477). Clearly, these items indicate both enthusiasm of the employees and a devoted relationship with the organization which further indicates developmental climate.

4.2.1 Conclusion

Eventually, it can be observed that studies from this pool of articles are consistent regarding the positive effect of developmental climates on employees' attitudes towards change. In order to support the common finding that this form of climate evokes readiness and commitment to change, self-efficacy has been a frequently used concept (see Cunningham et al., 2002; Wanberg & Banas, 2000) as well as the locus of control (see Chen & Wang, 2006; Elias, 2009). A rather unique model including social information processing (*SIP model*) has been presented by Miller et al. (1994). To sum up, the finding that this climate evokes the perception of being sufficiently prepared and delighted about change situations and thus feeling ready and committed can be observed in every analyzed study.

4.3 Influence of the Rational Goal Climate on Employees' Attitude Towards Change

The rational goal climate is associated with a strong urge of employees to reach a certain goal due to "distress with respect to the current situation" (Håkonsson et al., 2008, p. 65) which might already visualize the positive relationship between this climate and a welcoming attitude towards change of employees. From the established pool of articles, eight illustrate the positive relationship between these two variables (see Håkonsson et al., 2008; Burton et al., 2004; Kotter, 1995; Bouckenooghe, 2010; Miller et al., 1994; Holt et al., 2007; Fedor et al., 2006). Håkonsson et al. (2006a, 2008) found that rational goal climates

mainly produce emotions including anger, anxiousness, and distress which lead to a reclusiveness of the employees that noticeably complicates communication and spontaneous sharing of information. These overall negative emotions and discontent of the employees give rise to an openness to change as the workers are powered by their anger and distress and motivated to attempt to change their situation for the better. One of the most prominent studies in the field of change is the work by Kotter (1995) in which he describes the first step of creating a sense of urgency when facing a situation where change is needed in order to accomplish a more favorable future state. At this point, the connection to rational goal climate can be recognized as this climate revolves around initiating change in order to overcome discontentment with a present poor situation. Kotter (1995) describes that in order to create the needed readiness for a prospective change, employees have to be made aware of the importance of it as it might include "potential crises, or major opportunities" (p. 61). In his narrative literature review, Bouckenooghe (2010) has been able to draw very similar conclusions. He found that "[t]hrough the assessment of readiness for change, one can identify the gap that exists between the current situation and where one should be" (p. 503). Consequently, in rational goal climates, readiness for change develops from the cognitive process of contrasting past und potential future situations and trying to overcome possible existing discrepancies (Bouckenooghe, 2010; Kotter, 1995; Lewin, 1951; Armenakis & Harris, 2002). Different from the other authors addressing this relationship, Miller et al. (1994) make use of the *job characteristics model (JCM)* with regard to rational goal climates, however, they were able to draw resembling conclusions. The job characteristics model states that employees evaluate on job characteristics according to their individual needs (Miller et al., 1994) and the overlapping between the needs and the actual job characteristics determines the either positive or negative attitude towards the current situation and possible changes of the employees. Miller et al. (1994) found that "[t]hose employees with a high need for achievement perceive[…] […] change in very favorable terms" (p. 75). These affected individuals experience change as a desirable challenge to face in order to achieve a striven for future state (Miller et al., 1994; Litwin & Stringer, 1968; Steers & Braunstein, 1976). An identical conclusion containing very similar predictors to readiness for change has been established by Holt et al. (2007), although they used readiness for change as a starting point and determined several "readiness factors" (Holt et al., 2007, p. 237) in order to specify the needed climate to create this readiness. According to Holt et al. (2007), these readiness factors fall into the categories content attributes, context attributes, process attributes, and individual attributes. These attributes include the readiness factors (a) self-efficacy (confidence of being capable of making change; (b) personal valence (confidence about the change being beneficial personally); (c) senior leader support; (d) organizational valence (confidence about the change being beneficial for the organization); (e) discrepancy (recognition of the need for change) (Holt et al., 2007). These indicators can clearly be associated with rational goal climates as they conform to the established characteristics including urgent discontentment but at the same time high motivation and confidence of employees to reach a certain future state due to adequate available resources. The aspect of personal valence has also been addressed in more detail by Fedor et al. (2006). Consequent to the "notion that the outcomes or consequences of organizational events have an impact on organizational participants" (Fedor et al., 2006, p. 6), they determined that "in the midst of changing work situations employees use their immediate past situation as a referent" (p. 6) which evokes that the scope of "how their

work lives have changed (either for better or worse) will have a significant impact on their commitment-related reactions" (p. 6). Consequently, changes that generate positive perceptions of the outcome and are believed to establish a more desirable situation than before are "positively related to individuals' commitment to both the change and the organization" (Fedor et al., 2006, p. 6).

4.3.1 Conclusion
Summarizing this section of the literature review primarily shows that there is a consistency in the results of the different studies. Every included study eventually showed that the main characteristic of rational goal climates is an existing gap between the current situation of employees and their desired future state (see Håkonsson et al., 2006a, 2008; Kotter, 1995; Bouckenooghe, 2010; Miller et al., 1994; Holt et al., 1997; Fedor et al., 2006). The factors that can be positively correlated to readiness and commitment to change of employees mainly include self-efficacy and most-notably personal valence (see Miller et al., 1994; Holt et al., 2007; Fedor et al., 2006).

4.4 Influence of the Internal Process Climate on Employees' Attitude Towards Change
The internal process climate depicts the climate with the most negative affect on employees concerning novel and unknown situations. Formal rules and procedures as well as tradition are highly important (Patterson et al., 2005) which gives rise to reserved employees who disapprove of openness and close interpersonal relationships. Out of the pool of articles to be integrated in this study, eight address the assumed positive relationship between internal process climates and negatively labeled attitudes towards change (see Håkonsson et al., 2008; Burton et al., 2004; Kotter, 1995; Folger & Skarlicki, 1999; Weeks et al., 2004; Wanous et al., 2000; Andersson & Bateman, 1997; Ford et al., 2008). Burton et al. (2004) found that, due to this adhesion to habitual processes and practices, and the strong "rules-oriented and inwardly focus[…]" (p. 71), "such a climate does not change or adapt quickly" (p. 71). This tendency to compulsively stick to long-established principles has also been observed by Håkonsson et al. (2008). They figured out that employees affected by internal process climates relate their current working situation to "high conflict, low morale, and low leadership credibility" (p. 65). Consequently, employees do not possess the feeling that they are sufficiently prepared for successfully engaging in change actions and are thus highly unmotivated to explore new opportunities which gives rise to a high resistance to and cynicism about change. A famous study that also addresses the relationship between internal process climates and resistance to, and cynicism about change is the study by Kotter (1995). In his article he discusses eight reasons for the failure of change efforts and thus the negative attitude of employees towards change. The first predictor to employees' resistance to change is "not establishing a great enough sense of urgency" (Kotter, 1995, p. 2) which leads to insecure workers who do not understand the purpose and necessity of a change. The next factor is "not creating a powerful enough guiding coalition" (p. 4) which causes a lack of active supporters encouraging and guiding the employees. "Lacking a vision" and "undercommunicating the vision" (p. 5) bring about demotivated workers who are missing an appealing picture of a desirable future state caused by a certain change. The next error includes "not removing obstacles to the new vision" (p. 6) which gives rise to desperate employees which actually are motivated and willing to participate in a change effort but are hindered due to certain obstacles and not receiving support. The following predictor to negative attitudes towards change involves "not systematically planning for and

creating short-term wins" (p. 7). This error leads to disappointed employees which do not perceive a change as beneficial anymore. Eventually, "declaring victory too soon" and "not anchoring changes in the corporation's culture" are also counterproductive regarding enhancing employees' attitude towards change. As the internal process climate is characterized by disappointment of employees concerning change and distrust towards coworkers, managers, and one's own abilities to cope with change, the similarities between this climate and Kotter's (1995) predictors to failed change efforts due to employees' resistance and cynicism can clearly be seen. Concerning the next study to be analyzed, it has already been stated earlier in this review that Folger's and Skarlicki (1999) observed the displayed behavior of employees to stick to known approaches. They found that "[e]mployees prefer a sense of security, familiarity, and continuity" (p. 39) which leads to a resisting behavior towards change. Consequently, employees are not willing to deal with "the uncertainty associated with change" (Folger & Skarlicki, 1999) and hold on to the transparent and innocuous status quo. Parallels to Folger's and Skarlicki's (1999) article can be found in the study by Weeks et al. (2004). In order to investigate the antecedents of resistance to change, they focus on individual fears of change. Primarily, recalling the characteristics of internal process climates, it has been defined in this review that these climates are mainly based on strong connections with familiar traditions and an overall feeling of distrust und disappointment. Weeks et al. (2004) stated that "initiatives will likely fail" (p. 8) if the acceptance of change is not visible in "the deep rooted set of values and beliefs" (p. 7) and "the ways organizations operationalize routine behaviors" (p. 7). Additionally, they also emphasize that "[c]hange threatens one's stability and continuity (Weeks et al., 2004, p. 8) which provokes that employees resist change even though they are aware of its usefulness because they perceive it as far too "major, risky, or different" (p. 8). As a result, "fear of failure creates a fear of learning, which parallels a fear of change and the need to cling to the present situation" (Weeks et al., 2004, p. 8; cf. Harari, 1999). Furthermore, another factor that increases employees' fear of change is that frequently "change is imposed top-down" (Weeks et al., 2004, p. 9). This heightens the natural fear as it is perceived as "a loss of control" (Weeks et al., 2004, p. 9) by workers and also implies "a loss of security" (p. 9). A similar negative relationship between internal process climates and employees' attitudes towards change has also been found by Wanous et al. (2000). They discovered two types of factors that cause the emergence of cynicism about change in organizations. The first type of factors includes personality variables of individuals while the second type addresses external factors that "result [from] one's experience in an organization" (Wanous et al., 2000, p. 136). The external factors, which are valuable for this research, contain three different parts. Primarily, Wanous et al. (2000) determined that "the amount of change previously experienced [depicts an important predictor] because one aspect of cynicism concerns pessimism about change efforts being successful" (p. 136). Consequently, if there has been "little previous change" (Wanous et al., 2000, p. 132) or employees perceive earlier change as failures, the level of cynicism will increase due to an overall feeling of disappointment which typically characterizes internal process climates. Secondly, Wanous et al. (2000) found that also the "role effectiveness of […] supervisor[s]" (p. 136) including, for instance, providing sufficient resources such as information to employees depicts an important antecede to cynicism about change. Consequently, in case of discontentment, "those responsible for making change are blamed for being unmotivated, incompetent, or both" (Wanous et al., 2000, p. 133) which establishes an overall "pessimistic

outlook for successful change" (p. 135). Eventually, the article shows that the amount of participation of employees also has a strong influence on cynicism about change. Similar to Folger & Skarlicki (1999), Wanous et al. (2000) also found that change entails uncertainty and frequently also a lack of understanding which is strongly worsened through limited participation of employees which often occurs in tradition-based internal process climates. Resembling results that support the positive relationship between internal process climates and negatively labeled reactions to change of employees can be found in the study of Andersson and Bateman (1997). However, contrary to the previously analyzed studies, they focus on employees' perceived injustice concerning supervisors. In their scenario-based experiment, Andersson and Bateman (1997) detected that inequitably "high levels of executive compensation" (p. 451) lead to strong cynicism about change in an organization since when "justice perceptions are violated, negative attitudes and distrust towards institutions and leaders can result" (p. 152). Additionally, corresponding to Wanous et al.'s (2000) findings, Andersson and Bateman (1997) determined that "poor organizational performance" (p. 451) concerning change efforts illustrate a further predictor of cynicism in the workplace as "repeatedly observing failed managerial attempts to initiate change" (p. 451) evokes a "sense of betrayal and pessimism" (p. 451). Lastly, another variable that was found by Andersson and Bateman (1997) to generate employee cynicism is "harsh layoffs" (p. 451) because "[a] consequence of the growing use of layoffs as a workforce reduction strategy is job insecurity" (p. 453). Job insecurity depicts a strong indicator for cynical behavior as it creates uncertainty and disturbs employees' desire for consistency which could also be seen in Folger and Skarlicki's article (1999). The following article by Ford et al. (2008) especially addresses the guiltiness of change agents in the process of generating resistance to change. The authors state that a strong indicator for resistance to change of employees can be seen in "breaking agreements, violating trust, misrepresentation and other communication breakdowns, and their own resistance to change" (Ford et al., 2008, p. 365). "[B]y breaking agreements both before and during change and by failing to restore the subsequent loss of trust" (Ford et al., 2008, p. 365) change agents intensify the overall distrust and disappointment of employees in this climate and increase the chances of resistance to change. This illustrates a particularly intense predictor of resistance to change since "past broken agreements have been found to have a negative effect on victims' expectations of future violations" (Ford et al., 2008, p. 365).

4.4.1 Conclusion

In summary it can be stated that all of the eight articles used in this subsection come to congruent results concerning the positive relationship between the internal process climate and negative attitudes towards change including resistance to and cynicism about change. All studies emphasized the strong urge of employees affected by this climate to hold on to long-established procedures and the consequent fear of facing novel situations which might destruct the familiar status quo (see Burton et al., 2004; Håkonsson et al., 2008; Kotter, 1995; Folger & Skarlicki, 1997; Weeks et al., 2004; Wanous et al., 2000; Andersson & Bateman, 1997; Ford et al., 2008). However, while several articles only addressed the present desire of workers to elude change situations due to overall fear of unsteadiness (see Burton et al., 2004; Håkonsson et al., 2008; Folger & Skarlicki, 1997), other authors also addressed more profound explanations including influences from previous lacking or failed change attempts (see Weeks et al., 2004; Wanous et al., 2000; Andersson & Bateman, 1997; Ford, 2008)

and from supervisors including both their competence and also their treatment compared to the one of inferior workers (see Andersson & Bateman, 1997; Ford, 2008).

between group climate and employees' attitude towards change depends on the quality and character of the interpersonal connections as well as the external treatment of the members of

	Readiness for Change	Commitment to Change	Openness to Change	Resistance to Change	Cynicism About Change
Group Climate	Weeks et al., 2004	Bernerth et al., 2007; Lechner & Floyd, 2012; Mayer et al., 2007; Vandenberghe et al., 2002		Bernerth et al., 2007; Folger & Skarlicki, 1999	Bernerth et al., 2007
Developmental Climate	Axtell et al., 2002; Cunningham et al., 2002	Axtell et al., 2002; Chen & Wang, 2006; Elias, 2009; Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002	Miller et al., 1994; Wanberg & Banas, 2000		
Rational Goal Climate	Bouckenooghe, 2010; Holt, 2007; Kotter, 1995	Fedor et al., 2006		Miller et al., 1994	
Internal Process Climate				Folger & Skarlicki, 1999; Ford et al., 2008; Kotter, 1995; Weeks et al., 2004	Andersson & Bateman, 1997; Kotter, 1995; Wanous, 2000

Table II: Distribution of the included articles

5. DISCUSSION

As previously stated, the academic contribution of this research can be seen in detecting novel insights into a field that does not provide mature knowledge yet. This research has explicitly dealt with the different subparts of the organizational climate of enterprises including group climate, developmental climate, rational goal climate and internal process climate (Burton et al., 2004) as well as the wide range of various scales that measure these climactic profiles (e.g. Patterson et al., 2005). It also discussed in detail the differing attitudes and responses of employees that are given rise by these climactic profile towards prospective organizational changes that the employees might encounter. These attitudes consist of readiness, openness, commitment, resistance, and cynicism. Eventually, this structured literature review connected these variables in order to determine how the corporate climate positively and negatively exercises influence over the viewpoint of the workforce towards upcoming change. Consequently, there are considerable implications that can be drawn by managers of real organizations. Primarily, managers that intend to introduce a change in their organization have to take into account that merely launching it or only inform their employees about the introduction without adequately informing them and allowing them to participate in the process, the change effort will surely fail as "employee responses to changes ultimately determine whether the change efforts succeed or fail" (Foster, 2010, p. 4). Prior to confronting employees with change, managers have to detect which climates are mainly present at the workplace as there can be significantly differing attitudes towards change depending or whether there is, for instance, a strong developmental climate or rather a strong internal process climate. Consequently, employees might impulsively happily engage in change activities (see *developmental climate*) or feel disturbed and seclude themselves in order to resist change (see *internal process climate*). Additionally, based on this literature review, it is crucial for managers to realize that certain climates do not always entail the same emotions of employees as, for example, group climate can have both positive and negative influences on attitudes towards change. Since the relationship

a group, this climate may either enhance or even drastically decrease the chance of employees welcoming a change. In case of a fair treatment within a group and adequate support from colleagues and supervisors, group climates may increment readiness for change while it could also be the case that employees back out due to unjust group behavior or it might also be possible that people try to prevent change because of long-established group dynamics which cannot be changed easily.

5.1 Limitations

The main limitation of this literature review can be found in the limited amount of articles that could be and have been processed due to the restricted amount of time and length. Altogether, 58 articles have been used in this structured literature review, however, only 22 have been analyzed in detail and made use of in the previous results section (see Appendix II). It can be assumed that the analyzed studies illustrate a representative overview of the findings related to the answer of the previously determined research question
"How does organizational climate exerts influence on employees' attitude towards change?"
due to their striking conformity. However, it has to be taken into account that the result of this review might change if the amount of data used would be increased.

Furthermore, as a structured literature review has been the utilized method, in this research no meta-analyses have been included. This implies that the results of the different articles have been contrasted and the identified patterns have been detected without statistical methods.

Additionally, the time span in which the thoroughly analysed articles have been published range from 1994 until 2012. Consequently, certain information from, for instance, older studies might have been excluded. However, taking into account the strong congruence found in the various studies, it can be assumed that this literature review records the essence of the findings of the complete range of works related to the research question.

Eventually, an obvious limitation of this literature review is that it covers only the climactic profiles that have been established by Burton et al. (2004). Thus, by adding further profiles, the results might change.

5.2 Directions for Future Research

Taking into consideration the limitations of this literature review, certain directions for future research can be formulated. Primarily, to support the found patterns and to be certainly sure of the overall conformity between the authors of the articles Relating to the different organizational climates and the corresponding attitude development, the pool of analyzed articles needs to be enlarged. A recommendation would be to gather a certain amount of articles from specific decades in order to provide a broader overview and clearly indicate possible trends and patterns.

Another suggestion includes changing or broadening the climactic profiles by Burton et al. (2004) on which this literature review is based. By using an extended framework, more data and insights that might have been missed could be detected.

Finally, in order to reinforce the current results of this review and create statistical power, meta-analyses could be conducted. This would allow contrasting the results of a greater amount of studies and more reliably determine congruent patterns, discrepancy or further unforeseen relationships.

6. CONCLUSION

This structured literature review researched the effects of different organizational climates including group climate, developmental climate, rational goal climate, and internal process climate which have been based on the climactic profiles introduced by Burton et al. (2004) on employees' attitude towards change. The main finding from this research is that there is a strong congruence between the results of the different studies associated with each organizational climate. Especially concerning the developmental climate, the rational goal climate, and the internal process climate, high conformity could be found. In line with this, it can also be seen that the results of the different studies concerning the established climates by Burton et al. (2004) are congruent with the characteristics and outcomes of each climate that have been presumed by Burton et al. (2004) themselves. Different from the other results, however, the findings regarding the group climate clearly stand out. Burton et al. (2004) defined the group climate as not being "very adaptive to external pressures" (p. 71) due to well-practised procedures and "own values" (p. 71). This statement has not been clearly rejected by other studies, however, several of the other analyzed articles noticeably highlight the positive effect of group climates on employees' attitude towards change including the feeling of belonging, and the increased opportunity of obtaining support from superior employees (see Vandenberghe et al., 2002; Weeks et al., 2004; Lechner & Floyd, 2012).

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8. APPENDIX

8.1 Appendix I

Organizational Climate; Attitude Towards Change; Group Climate; Developmental Climate; Rational Goal Climate; Internal Process Climate; Readiness for Change; Resistance to Change; Commitment to Change; Openness to Change; Cynicism About Change; Organizational Climate AND Attitude Towards Change; Organizational Climate AND Readiness for Change; Organizational Climate AND Resistance to Change; Organizational Climate AND Commitment to Change; Organizational Climate AND Openness to Change; Organizational Climate AND Cynicism About Change; Group Climate AND Attitude Towards Change; Developmental Climate AND Attitude Towards Change; Rational Goal Climate AND Attitude Towards Change; Internal Process Climate AND Attitude Towards Change; Organizational Climate AND Group Climate AND Readiness for Change OR Resistance to Change OR Commitment to Change OR Openness to Change OR Cynicism About Change; Organizational Climate AND Developmental Climate AND OR Resistance to Change OR Commitment to Change OR Openness to Change OR Cynicism About Change; Organizational Climate AND Rational Goals Climate AND Readiness for Change OR Resistance to Change OR Commitment to Change OR Openness to Change OR Cynicism About Change; Organizational Climate AND Internal Process Climate AND Readiness for Change OR Resistance to Change OR Commitment to Change OR Openness to Change OR Cynicism About Change; Organizational Climate AND Group Climate AND Developmental Climate AND Rational Goal Climate AND Internal Process Climate AND Attitude Towards Change AND Readiness for Change AND Resistance to Change AND Commitment to Change AND Openness to Change AND Cynicism About Change

8.2 Appendix II

Article	Climate Dimension	Determinant for Climate Dimension	Attitude Towards Change Variable
Andersson & Bateman, 1997	Internal process climate	Unjust top-down behavior in organizations	Cynicism about change
Axtell et al., 2002	Developmental climate	Introduction of new technology and work practices	Readiness for change, commitment for change
Burton et al., 2004	I. Group climate II. Developmental climate, III. Rational goal climate, IV. Internal process climate		
Bernerth et al., 2007	Group climate	Organizational (in)justice between employees	Resistance to change, cynicism about change, commitment to change
Bouckenooghe, 2010	Rational goal climate	Assessment of gap between current situation in the workplace and desired future state	Readiness for change
Chen & Wang, 2006	Developmental climate	Locus of control ➔ Belief of employees to be able to control their environment	Commitment to change
Cunningham et al., 2002	Developmental climate	Employees in active and challenging positions with high ability to exercise control	Readiness for change
Elias, 2009	Developmental climate	Locus of control, employees with strong need for personal growth, internal work motivation to seek out new experiences	Commitment to change
Fedor et al., 2006	Rational goal climate	Gap between current situation in the workplace and desired future state, personal valence	Commitment to change
Folger & Skarlicki, 1999	I. Group climate II. Internal process climate	Organizational (in)justice between employees	Resistance to change
Ford et al., 2008	Internal process climate	Unjust top-down behavior in organizations, violation of trust towards supervisors	Resistance to change
Håkonsson et al., 2008	I. Group climate II. Developmental climate, III. Rational goal climate, IV. Internal process climate		

Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002	Developmental climate	See three-component model of commitment to change	Commitment to change
Holt, 2007	Rational goal climate	List of readiness factors	Readiness for change
Kotter, 1995	I. Rational goal climate II. Internal process climate	I. Importance of creating an urgency of change II. See list of reasons why change efforts fail	I. Readiness for change II. Resistance to change, cynicism about change
Lechner & Floyd, 2012	Group climate	Advantages of teamwork with colleagues and/or supervisors	Commitment to change
Mayer et al., 2007	Group climate	Shared perceptions at group level	Commitment to change
Miller et al., 1994	I. Developmental climate II. Rational goal climate	I. Social information processing model ➔ valuable information from co-workers and supervisors create openness towards change II. Job characteristics model ➔ overlapping between the needs and the actual job characteristics determines the either positive or negative attitude towards the current situation and possible changes of the employees	I. Openness to change II. Resistance to change
Vandenberghe et al., 2002	Group climate	Outcomes of working in a cohesive group and fostering exchange relationships with colleagues and/or supervisors	Commitment to change
Wanberg & Banas, 2000	Developmental climate	Outcomes of employees with high self-efficacy and support from supervisors	Openness to change
Wanous, 2000	Internal process climate	Results of negative experiences with previous change, supervisor and/or the organization in general	Cynicism about change
Weeks et al., 2004	I. Group climate II. Internal process climate	I. Human resources as "the energy, support, and inspiration required to create the perception among employees that an organization is ready for change" II. Employees' fear of change due to change not being rooted in traditional procedures	I. Readiness for change II. Resistance to change