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LEADERSHIP AND EMPLOYEES' REACTIONS TO CHANGE: THE ROLE OF LEADERS' PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES AND TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP STYLE

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We examined the role of leaders' personal attributes and transformational leadership behaviors in explaining employees' intentions to resist a large-scale organizational change. Through a multilevel analysis of data from 75 school principals and 586 teachers, we found that teachers' intentions to resist the organizational change were negatively related to their principals' openness to change values and transformational leadership behaviors, and positively related to their principals' dispositional resistance to change. Furthermore, principals' transformational leadership behaviors moderated the relationship between teachers' dispositional resistance and intentions to resist the change.

Organizational changes are abundant. Both in the private and public sectors organizations continuously face new challenges and need to adapt to changing environments. There is much variance, however, in the degree to which organizational changes are successful. Numerous studies have been conducted with the aim of identifying the characteristics and conditions that are associated with successful organizational change (cf., Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999). This study falls within this line of work yet focuses on aspects seldom linked with employees' reactions to change. Namely, we consider the role of leaders' personal attributes (i.e., traits,

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values) and behaviors in explaining employees' intentions to resist an organizational change (henceforth resistance intentions).

Until recently, most of the studies aiming to explain successful organizational change have adopted a macro perspective, focusing on factors such as the organization's structure, environment, and strategy (e.g., Fox-Wolfgramm, Boal, & Hunt, 1998). Researchers have implied and often explicitly outlined the actions leaders should take when guiding their organizations through change. Little attention, however, has been given in these studies to the employee's perspective of the change. This is despite growing consensus that a key factor in determining the success of any organizational change involves employees' acceptance of it (e.g., Bartunek, Rousseau, Rudolph, & DePalma, 2006). Such acceptance has been tapped by examining employees' reactions to change, including behaviors and attitudes in the form of affect, cognition, and behavioral intentions (Piderit, 2000). Indeed, a surge of recent studies of organizational change demonstrated the key role of employees' attitudes toward change (e.g., Caldwell, Herold, & Fedor, 2004; Fugate, Kinicki, & Prussia, 2008; Oreg, 2006; Rafferty & Griffin, 2006). Such studies demonstrate relationships between employees' attitudes toward change and job-related outcomes such as turnover (e.g., Fugate et al., 2008; Wanberg & Banas, 2000), OCB (Shapiro & Kirkman, 1999), job satisfaction (Axtell et al., 2002; Oreg, 2006), and psychological well-being (e.g., Amiot, Terry, Jimmieson, & Callan, 2006; Axtell et al., 2002).

Although many studies have been conducted with the aim of predicting these attitudes (e.g., Fedor, Caldwell, & Herold, 2006; Fugate, Kinicki, & Scheck, 2002), only very few have considered the role of leaders, despite the emphasis on leadership that is often articulated in macrolevel studies. Thus, whereas most macrolevel studies of organizational change overlook employees' reactions, most microlevel studies of reactions to change overlook the role of leaders. In this study, we focus on leaders' role in shaping employees' intentions to resist an organizational change. We conduct our examination in the Israeli public school system and consider organization- and individual-level factors. Our aim is to test a theoretical framework in which both employee (i.e., teacher) and leader (i.e., principal) personal attributes are used to explain employees' resistance intentions. Specifically, we consider teachers' change-related traits and leaders' change-related traits and values, and transformational leadership behaviors.

Leadership and Employee Reactions to Organizational Change

Many studies demonstrated the roles of leaders' personal attributes (e.g., trait theories; cf. Yukl, 2010) and behaviors (e.g., the Michigan

and Ohio State research groups, Bowers & Seashore, 1966; Fleishman, 1953; the full-range theory of leadership, Bass & Avolio, 1993) in shaping organizational outcomes. They have been linked with outcomes, such as firm performance (e.g., Waldman, Ramirez, House, & Puranam, 2001), employee well-being (e.g., Seltzer, Numerof, & Bass, 1989), and organizational culture (e.g., Bass & Avolio, 1994; Berson, Oreg, & Dvir, 2008).

However, despite the importance ascribed to the topic of organizational change, in only a small number of studies have leaders' personal attributes or behaviors been examined in the context of organizational change, with very little attention in these studies to employees' reactions. Considering the strong impact leaders have on organizational phenomena, and considering the key role employees' reactions have in determining the success of organizational change (e.g., Bartunek et al., 2006), it would be particularly meaningful to link the two and consider leaders' role in shaping employees' reactions to change. Despite the limited amount of research linking the two, extant conceptual groundwork, along with empirical findings in other contexts, inspire several predictions. We begin by discussing the role of leaders' personal attributes and follow by discussing the role of leader behaviors.

Leader Personal Attributes and Employee Reactions

There are two sets of processes that explain why leaders' personal attributes would be related to employee reactions: Leaders' personal attributes influence the choices and the decisions they make in the organization (Carpenter, Geletkanycz, & Sanders, 2004; Hambrick & Mason, 1984), and, in turn, these decisions influence followers' attitudes and beliefs (Berson et al., 2008; Schein, 1992; Schneider, 1987). With respect to the first process, both values and traits (two aspects of leaders' personal attributes) predispose leaders to certain types of decisions in the organization (e.g., Berson et al., 2008). As we elaborate below, values influence leaders' behaviors and choices through their influence on leaders' interpretations of the organizational reality and the types of behaviors and outcomes they view as desirable and ultimately reward (Hambrick & Mason, 1984; Miller, Droge, & Toulouse, 1988). Similarly, being behavioral predispositions, traits influence the types of behaviors individuals engage in and the decisions they make. For example, leaders who are dispositionally risk averse would be less likely to make organizational decisions that involve risk taking (e.g., MacCrimmon & Wehrung, 1990). The decisions influenced include both those concerning the outcomes and actions to be rewarded, as well as decisions about who to attract, select, or discharge from the organization (e.g., Giberson et al., 2009; Mayer, Kuenzi, Greenbaum, Bardes, & Salvador, 2009).

In turn, the second process involves the influence of these decisions and behaviors on followers' beliefs and attitudes (Avolio, Zhu, Koh, & Bhatia, 2004). This is often done through the formation of the organizational culture (Schein, 1992) and climate (Schneider, 1987), both of which involve organizationally shared beliefs. In explaining how organizational culture is formed, Schein (1992) suggests that leaders, in particular senior leaders (e.g., CEOs, school principals), shape shared beliefs through what they pay attention to, control, and reward. How leaders respond to organizational events and employee actions signals the type of beliefs and attitudes that should be held by organization members. Similarly, by deciding who to attract, select, and discharge from the organization, leaders create organizational climates in which people are similar to one another in their beliefs and attitudes (Schneider, 1987). For example, through the influence of biases such as the similar-to-me effect (Rand & Wexley, 1975), leaders, often not deliberately, attract, select, and retain those who are similar to them.

This latter process, through which decisions influence followers' beliefs and attitudes, is particularly relevant for senior leaders, who determine the organization's strategy and policies. They set the standards for the actions to be rewarded, and despite not directly participating in the selection or retention of most employees, they influence attraction, selection, and retention decisions through the vision they provide and the human resource practices they champion (e.g., Liao & Subramony, 2008). The impact of leaders on followers should be even stronger in organizations such as schools, in which leaders (i.e., principals) enjoy high levels of autonomy and have a strategic role in shaping the organization's vision while maintaining hands-on involvement in the day-to-day management practices, including those relating to attraction, selection, and retention of employees.

In line with the above rationale, several studies empirically demonstrated relationships between leaders' attributes and followers' attitudes. In a recent study, leaders' traits have been found to correlate with employees' justice-related attitudes (Mayer, Nishii, Schneider, & Goldstein, 2007). In another study, leaders' traits were correlated with a variety of employee attitudes, including job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and intentions to leave the organization (Smith & Canger, 2004). Despite the existence of such studies, none that we are aware of linked leaders' personal attributes with employees' attitudes toward organizational change. As noted in our introduction, a better understanding of the correlates of such attitudes is important for the successful implementation of organizational change. Therefore, in this study we consider leaders' change-related values and traits for predicting employees' intentions to resist a given organizational change.

Leader Values and Follower Reactions to Change

Personal values are defined as transsituational sets of priorities that act as guiding principles in people's lives (Hitlin & Piliavin, 2004; Schwartz, 1992). Individual differences in values represent differences among individuals' priorities. Whereas some individuals stress in their lives autonomy and openness to new ideas, others stress factors such as tradition, security, and stability. Among the most rigorously studied value theories is Schwartz's theory of personal values (1992, 2005b). Schwartz's research presents patterns of relationships among 10 values, each of which represents a distinct and stable guiding principal in people's lives. These values, and the relationships among them, have been reproduced in hundreds of samples from more than 70 nations (Schwartz, 2005a, 2005b). The value system established classifies values into four broad value dimensions, which form two distinct contrasts. The first consists of a focus on personal goals (i.e., *self-enhancement*) versus the welfare of others (i.e., *self-transcendence*). The second contrast involves a preference for maintaining the status quo (i.e., *conservation*) versus a preference for novelty and renewal (i.e., *openness to change*) and is thus of particular relevance for this study. As we propose next, the degree to which leaders personally emphasize conservation and openness to change values bears implications for employees' reactions to changes in the organization.

In general, values influence individuals' interpretations of events, attitudes, as well as choices and behaviors (e.g., Bardi & Schwartz, 2003; Meglino & Ravlin, 1998; Oreg & Nov, 2008). For example, individuals who value stability may interpret an organizational change as a threat and therefore resist it, whereas those who value stimulation and renewal may interpret it as an opportunity and will thus be more likely to support it. Accordingly, leaders' values influence the goals they assign and the outcomes they reward and punish. For example, leaders who value stimulation and openness to new ideas are likely to encourage followers to exhibit greater risk taking in their propositions and will accordingly reward innovative and unconventional ideas. In this manner, leaders' values shape organizational policies and norms. In turn, these policies and norms come to influence employees' attitudes. In other words, by setting performance expectations that correspond with their value systems, leaders shape employees' attitudes.

Only a few studies have empirically examined links between leaders' values and followers' reactions. In one study, managers' values were related to employees' organizational citizenship behaviors (Sosik, 2005). In another study, CEOs' values predicted the organizations' cultures, as reflected in employees' perceptions of their organizations (Berson et al., 2008). Employees' perceptions and attitudes in these studies seem to

reflect their leaders' outlook. Such a process may be particularly salient in the context of organizational change in which the increased ambiguity associated with the change highlights the discretion and influence that leaders of organizations possess (Finkelstein, Cannella, & Hambrick, 2008). Under conditions of change, followers look up to their leaders as a source of certainty and may thus be more attentive to their guidance and actions. Support for this argument comes from the charismatic leadership literature (House, 1977), which suggests that followers often treat leaders as saviors who can reduce uncertainty in the context of change and crisis. Hence, we expect employees' reaction to organizational change to reflect their leaders' personal orientation toward change. More specifically, when the leader of the organization values and emphasizes stability, employees are likely to exhibit greater intentions to resist a change than employees of a leader who emphasizes novelty and renewal.

An emphasis on stability is embodied within Schwartz's conservation value dimension. It encompasses values of security, tradition, and conformity and constitutes a motivational force toward the preservation of the status quo. Given what we know about the relationship between leaders' values and follower reactions, leaders' conservation values are expected to be positively related to employees' resistance intentions. In contrast, an emphasis on novelty and renewal is embodied within the openness to change value dimension. It includes values of self-direction and stimulation. Accordingly, leaders' openness to change values are expected to be negatively related to employees' resistance intentions.

Hypothesis 1a: Leaders' conservation values will be positively associated with employees' resistance intentions.

Hypothesis 1b: Leaders' openness to change values will be negatively associated with employees' resistance intentions.

Leader Traits and Follower Reactions to Change

Leaders' orientation toward change can be tapped not only through their values but also through their traits. Contrary to values, which pertain to the goals to which people aspire, traits focus on individuals' typical or "representative" behaviors (Schwartz & Sagiv, 1995). The leadership literature is abundant with studies on leader traits predicting follower ratings and reactions (e.g., Judge, Bono, Ilies, & Gerhardt, 2002; Lord, de Vader, & Alliger, 1986). None of these studies, however, considered change-related attitudes. Naturally, when aiming to predict such change-related attitudes, the examination of leaders' traits should involve those relating to the notion change.

A trait that explicitly pertains to individuals' orientation toward change is dispositional resistance to change (RTC; Oreg, 2003). RTC captures individuals' typical response to the notion of change. Contrary to constructs that tap reactions to a given change (e.g., coping with change; Judge, Thoresen, Pucik, & Welbourne, 1999), RTC pertains to the personality-based orientation toward changes in general. Its measurement scale has been developed and validated through a series of studies, with more than 20 samples across a large number of nations (Oreg, 2003; Oreg et al., 2008). RTC is related to, yet distinct from, other traits such as sensation seeking (Zuckerman, 1994; Zuckerman & Link, 1968), tolerance for ambiguity (Budner, 1962), and openness to experience (Digman, 1990), and has been shown to predict reactions to specific changes above and beyond such traits (Oreg, 2003).

Individuals' dispositional resistance to change has been linked with a variety of outcomes, including occupational choices and interests (Oreg, Nevo, Metzer, Leder, & Castro, 2009), the adoption of new technological advances (Nov & Ye, 2008), and intentions to resist specific organizational changes (Oreg, 2006; Sverdlik & Oreg, 2009). No study that we are aware of, however, has considered leaders' dispositional resistance to change. As with other organizational members, leader's dispositional resistance to change is likely to influence how they respond to specific change situations and to the choices made in the context of change. Similar to the process we described for values, through the emphases and guidelines leaders provide, their dispositional orientation toward change will be translated into employees' reactions. For example, dispositionally resistant leaders are more likely to encourage and reward the maintenance of strict routines and to discourage new ideas and change initiatives. By doing so, these leaders will be signaling the positive value of consistency and stability and the negative value of change. Over time, such signaling is likely to instill a negative orientation toward change among followers. We therefore expect leaders' dispositional resistance to change to correlate with employees' intentions to resist a given organizational change:

Hypothesis 2: Leaders' dispositional resistance to change will be positively associated with employees' resistance intentions.

Transformational Leadership Behaviors and Follower Reactions to Change

Beyond who the leader *is*, much more research has been devoted to examining what a leader *does*. In particular, transformational leadership behaviors may have a role in facilitating employees' acceptance of change. Indeed, there is a recent interest in linking transformational leadership with

employees' reactions to change (e.g., Bommer, Rich, & Rubin, 2005; Herold, Fedor, & Caldwell, 2007; Nemanich & Keller, 2007). In this study we aim to extend current knowledge by considering not only the main effect of transformational leadership but also its role as a moderator of employees' personality–attitude relationships.

There has been extensive interest in transformational leadership behaviors among leaders of organizations (e.g., Boal & Hooijberg, 2000), with specific theoretical formulations regarding the strategic role of transformational leaders in times of change. Given their orientation toward dealing with crisis and change (Bass, 1985), and through the use of the information they gather from external stakeholders, transformational leaders help reframe followers' perception of change to view it as an opportunity rather than threat (Conger & Kanungo, 1998; Shamir, House, & Arthur, 1993). Most of the literature on the role of transformational leaders in effecting change, however, emphasizes their involvement with strategic decisions without considering how their actions influence employees' ultimate reactions to the change.

Transformational leadership behaviors can influence employees' reactions to change through a number of routes. First, transformational leaders stimulate and inspire followers by offering a compelling vision of future changes in the organization (Bass, 1985). Second, they use intellectual stimulation and challenge employees to accept innovative solutions to problems and to challenge the status quo (Bass, 1985; Berson & Avolio, 2004). Transformational leaders are therefore expected to positively impact their followers' reactions to organizational change (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Groves, 2005). However, researchers have only recently begun to empirically explore this relationship.

A number of studies examined constructs that are conceptually related to transformational leadership and linked them with employees' reactions to change. These included studies of the leader–member relationship (van Dam, Oreg, & Schyns, 2008), perceived leader support (Martin, Jones, & Callan, 2005; Rafferty & Griffin, 2006), and visionary leadership (Martin et al., 2005), all of which are part of the broader concept of transformational leadership.

A couple of studies explicitly examined the relationship between transformational leadership and employee reactions to change. In one of them, transformational leadership behaviors were negatively associated with employees' cynicism about organizational change (Bommer et al., 2005). Another study demonstrated the relationship between transformational leadership and the success of mergers (Nemanich & Keller, 2007). In that study, transformational leadership behaviors played a significant role in shaping a climate that reduced employees' resistance to the change. More specifically, transformational leadership was associated with a climate

of creative thinking and an emphasis on goal clarity and was indirectly related to acquisition acceptance (Nemanich & Keller, 2007). In yet another study of 25 organizations undergoing a variety of organizational changes, transformational leadership facilitated employees' commitment to an organizational change (Herold et al., 2007)

In line with these findings, and before turning to examine the moderating role of transformational leadership, we wish to replicate the established relationship between transformational leadership behavior and followers' reactions to change. Beyond replicating this relationship, which has been studied among midlevel managers (often termed leaders *in* organizations, Boal & Hooijberg, 2000), our study adds to previous knowledge by examining this effect among individuals who are both leaders in organizations, with high involvement in day-to-day management, and leaders of organizations. Specifically, we focus on school principals who, although not entirely equivalent to CEOs, still have a great degree of authority and discretion in shaping their organizations and, contrary to most midlevel managers, are accountable to multiple external stakeholders (de Luque, Washburn, Waldman, & House, 2008). Considering the key role attributed to such leaders in managing change, the relationship between transformational leadership and reactions to change is particularly meaningful. Thus, given the conceptual background and empirical findings reviewed above, we hypothesize:

Hypothesis 3: Leaders' transformational leadership behavior will be negatively associated with employees' resistance intentions.

The Moderating Role of Transformational Leadership Behaviors

Beyond its direct influence on follower reactions, transformational leadership may also interact with followers' personal attributes in influencing reactions to change. In this context, we suggest that transformational leadership may moderate the relationships between employees' personality and reactions to change. We therefore begin by reviewing some of the literature linking follower personality to follower reactions to change.

Numerous studies established relationships between individuals' personal characteristics and their responses to changes and innovations (e.g., Lau & Woodman, 1995; Nov & Ye, 2008; Oreg, 2006). For example, employees' locus of control was associated with their willingness to accept a change in their organization (Lau & Woodman, 1995). Relationships have also been found between individuals' dispositional resistance to change (Oreg, 2003) and the acceptance of specific changes. In one study

employees' dispositional resistance was associated with their attitude toward an organizational restructuring (Oreg, 2006). In another study dispositional resistance was negatively associated with the acceptance of a new technological advancement (Nov & Ye, 2008). Thus, personality in general, and in particular dispositional resistance to change, play an important role in explaining individuals' resistance to specific changes.

Early on, however, researchers suggested that the relationship between personality and individuals' specific responses varies across situations, with personality-reaction relationships becoming weaker as situational cues strengthen (Mischel, 1968, 1977). In other words, "some situations are so strong. . .that everyone behaves similarly" (Stewart & Barrick, 2004, p. 67). Indeed, several studies have shown weaker relationships between individuals' personality traits and their specific reactions in the presence of strong situational cues (Barrick & Mount, 1993; Beaty, Cleveland, & Murphy, 2004). For example, the relationships between Big Five (Digman, 1990) traits and individuals' performance were weaker when task guidelines were clearly outlined (Beaty et al., 2004) and when job autonomy was low (Barrick & Mount, 1993).

As we explain below, we suggest that transformational leaders provide strong situational cues, which attenuate the effects of employees' personality on their specific reactions to organizational change. Thus, beyond the direct effects transformational leader behaviors may have on followers' attitudes and organizational outcomes, leadership behaviors may also interact with follower traits in determining followers' reactions. Specifically, transformational leaders motivate followers to transcend their personal orientations at work (Bass, 1985). Such leaders harness followers' self-concept by leading them to identify with a collective goal, such as a change in the organization (Fiol, Harris, & House, 1999; Shamir et al., 1993). Through the vision they articulate, transformational leaders provide a motivational anchor, as in the form of the organizational climate (e.g., Zohar & Tenne-Gazit, 2008), that becomes shared among employees and that muffles the effects of individuals' dispositions. In other words, transformational leadership creates a strong situation (House, Shane, & Herold, 1996; Mischel, 1968) in which individual differences typically play a smaller role in predicting employees' specific reactions (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004). By offering a compelling vision of the future, transformational leaders reduce the uncertainty associated with organizational change and hence leave less room for individual interpretations of the situation. In turn, this yields less variability in individuals' responses. Thus, the role of employees' personal orientation toward change in determining reactions to a given change becomes weaker.

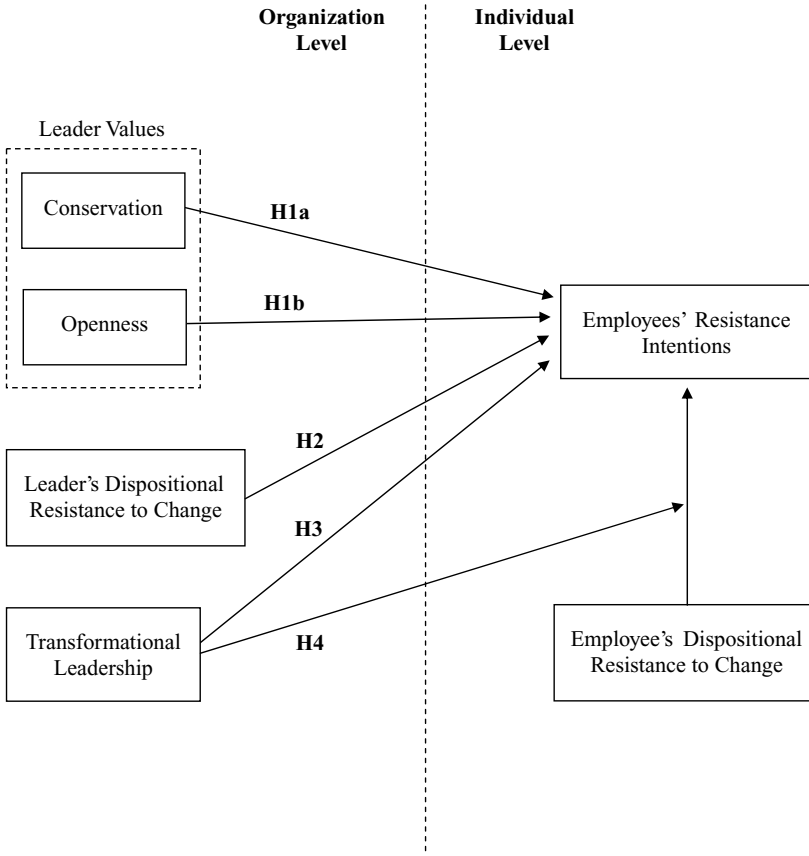


Figure 1: **The Research Model: Antecedents of Employees' Resistance Intentions.**

Hypothesis 4: Transformational leadership will moderate the relationship between employees' dispositional resistance to change and resistance intentions such that this relationship will be weaker as transformational leadership increases.

The study's hypotheses are summarized in the research model presented in Figure 1. At the individual level we examine teachers' dispositional resistance to change and their resistance intentions. We conceptualize principals' personal attributes (traits and values) and behaviors at the organizational level, given that each school has but a single principal, that

each principal is responsible for several teachers, and that our focus is on the effect of principals on their teachers.

Method

The Organizational Context

This research was conducted in the Israeli public school system at the outset of a large-scale organizational change. Following a decline in student performance over the past decade, the Israeli government assembled a taskforce dedicated to the design and implementation of a large-scale organizational restructuring of the school system. Similar taskforces have been established in other countries, such as the United States (e.g., the No Child Left Behind reform, Paige, Hickok, & Neuman, 2002). After more than a year of deliberations, the taskforce filed its final report with recommendations for a restructuring of the school system, bearing implications on numerous factors, including both class characteristics (e.g., class-sizes) and teachers' terms of employment. Among the committee's specific recommendations were stricter requirements and higher standards for teaching candidates, longer work hours, and an increase in the work load. These latter changes were to be accompanied by higher salaries for those meeting the new standards and the threat of termination to those not meeting them. The Ministry of Education then endorsed the taskforce's report and began its implementation. Once school staff members were informed about the new regulations and procedures, teachers throughout the country expressed a myriad of responses, ranging from strong support to fierce resistance. It was at this anticipatory stage of the change process (Fugate et al., 2002) in which we entered the schools. From a researcher's perspective, the substantial degree of variance in teachers' responses made this the perfect time to enter schools and begin our data collection.

The use of schools as the organizations to be studied presents a number of research advantages. First, schools in Israel are highly uniform in their structure, technology, and organizational practices and policies. This facilitates comparisons across organizations and attenuates concerns for confounding effects. Second, only a small number of studies on organizational change have examined multiple organizations (e.g., Fedor et al., 2006; Herold et al., 2007). In previous studies, however, each of the organizations studied has undergone a different change, thus reducing the comparability of the settings studied. Contrarily, in this study we examine a system-wide school reform, to be applied uniformly, which allows for a cleaner investigation of the effects under study.

Third, by studying schools we are answering recent calls for the pursuit of research of public organizations, and in particular schools, which

are of great importance to society and yet are severely understudied in the management context (Ouchi, Riordan, Lingle, & Porter, 2005). Finally, in looking at schools, the leadership role we consider is that of the school principal, who acts as both a leader in the organization, with direct and frequent interactions with employees, and a leader *of* the organization, with high levels of authority and discretion in influencing organizational processes and outcomes. Considering the great difficulty involved in obtaining psychographic (e.g., personality) data from leaders of organizations, the examination of schools, in which principals are somewhat more accessible than executives, provides a logistically easier route for the study of such higher-leadership roles.

A convenience sample (based on location) of approximately 120 schools in central and northern Israel was approached. We obtained complete data from 75 schools. The distribution of demographic data in our sample corresponds with the ethnic distribution in Israel, with 84% of schools from the Jewish sector and the remaining 16% from the Arab sector. Sixty-two percent of the schools were elementary, 8% were middle schools, and 21% were high schools. Principals in the remaining 9% did not report school type. The average number of teachers per school was 41.68 ($SD = 23.32$), and the average number of students was 448.33 ($SD = 221.58$). As we explain below, school and teacher characteristics in our sample closely correspond with the overall school characteristics within the two districts in which our data were collected.

Procedure and Participants

Principals and teachers were approached and asked to participate on a voluntary basis in a study of attitudes toward the recently initiated school reform. In each school, surveys were administered to the principal and a subset of teachers. Principals reported their personal values, dispositional resistance to change, and demographics. After receiving principals' agreement to administer questionnaires, a convenience sample of teachers was recruited for the study in the teacher's lounge, during teachers' midday break. All of the teachers sampled provided ratings of their dispositional resistance to change and their behavioral intentions with respect to the organizational change. In addition, half of the teachers (determined randomly) were asked to rate their principal's leadership behaviors (the other half reported on other variables, collected as part of a separate study). Complete questionnaires were obtained in each school from the principals and 5–10 teachers (mean = 7.81, $SD = 1.43$).

In total, all 75 school principals and 586 teachers participated in the study. Fifty-nine percent of the principals were female, 39% were male, and the remaining 2% did not report their gender. Principals' mean age

was 48.77 ($SD = 7.19$), with a mean tenure as principals of their schools of 14.92 ($SD = 9.74$). Among teachers, 72% were female, 12% were male, and the remaining 16% did not report their gender. Their mean age was 40.50 ($SD = 9.18$), and their mean tenure (in years) was 15.53 ($SD = 9.47$). To evaluate the representativeness of our sample, we compared school characteristics from our sample with school characteristics in the two districts in which we collected our data. Although we were not able to obtain data on principal demographics, this comparison indicated that our data closely corresponded with teacher demographics (i.e., age and gender), as well as with average number of students and teachers in each school.

Measures

Personal values were measured using the 40-item Portrait Value Questionnaire (PVQ, Schwartz et al., 2001). The PVQ includes short verbal portraits of hypothetical individuals. Each portrait describes a person's aspirations that implicitly reflect the importance of a value. The portraits describe persons in terms of what is important to them. For example, the item: "She thinks it is best to do things in traditional ways. It is important to her to keep up the customs she has learned"[1] describes a person who values conservation. The item: "Thinking up new ideas and being creative is important to him. He likes to do things in his own original way" describes a person who values openness to change. Scale items therefore capture individuals' values without explicitly identifying values as the topic of investigation. For each portrait, participants respond to the question: "How much like you is this person?" Response options range from 1 = *not like me at all* to 6 = *very much like me*. Values are inferred from respondents' self-reported similarity to those described in the scale items. The scale has been used in numerous studies and shown to be a reliable and valid measure of values (Oreg et al., 2008; Schwartz et al., 2001).

Seven of the PVQ items tap openness to change, and 13 items tap conservation. Although our hypotheses pertain only to the conservation and openness to change dimensions, we administered the complete values scale so that we can control for individual differences in scale use (Schwartz, 1992). Thus, before calculating value scores, we followed Schwartz's (1992) prescriptions and subtracted the mean score of the entire values scale from each of the specific value dimensions (Schwartz, 1992). Cronbach's alphas in this study were .80 for conservation and .62 for openness to change. Although the reliability coefficient for openness

[1]Separate forms of the PVQ are used for male and female participants.

was somewhat lower than the standard acceptable .7 level, it is within the expected range for values (Schmitt, Schwartz, Steyer, & Schmitt, 1993).

Dispositional resistance to change was measured with Oreg's (2003) 17-item RTC scale. Scale items consist of statements about people's overall orientation toward change. Sample items include: "I generally consider changes to be a negative thing," "When I am informed of a change of plans, I tense up a bit," and "Often, I feel a bit uncomfortable even about changes that may potentially improve my life." The scale measures four dimensions (routine seeking, emotional reaction, short-term focus, and cognitive rigidity), which together comprise the overarching resistance to change disposition. Response options range from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 6 = *strongly agree*. The scale has been used in a variety of contexts and has consistently demonstrated high structural stability and reliability (Oreg, 2003, Studies 2–7; Oreg et al., 2008). Its validity has been established both by demonstrating moderate correlations with related yet distinct constructs (e.g., sensation seeking, risk aversion) and by showing significant relationships between individuals' RTC score and their reactions in specific change contexts, both voluntary and imposed. The scale's alpha reliability coefficient in this study was .86 for the principals' sample and .85 for the teachers' sample. To confirm the scale's factor structure we applied a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). All of the items significantly loaded on their corresponding factors ($p < .01$), and fit indexes provided evidence of good fit (CFI = .95, RMSEA = .052, Browne & Cudeck, 1993; Hoyle, 1995). In this context, we were interested in the overarching orientation toward change and therefore used only the total RTC score and not the RTC dimensions.

Resistance intentions were measured using seven behavioral intention items based on Oreg's (2006) Change Attitudes Scale. The scale taps employees' intentions to resist a given organizational change. Sample items are "I will protest against the change," "I plan to complain about the change to my colleagues," and "I'll speak highly of the change to others" (reverse coded). Items were adapted to refer to the particular organizational change on which this study focused. Respondents rated the extent to which they agreed with each of the items on a 6-point scale ranging from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 6 = *strongly agree*. In previous studies the scale has proved to be a reliable and valid measure of the intentions to resist specific organizational changes (Oreg, 2003, Study 7; 2006; Sverdlik & Oreg, 2009). The scale's reliability coefficient in this study was .86. A CFA indicated satisfactory fit for a single-factor model (CFI = .99, RMSEA = .072, Browne & Cudeck, 1993; Hoyle, 1995)

Transformational leadership behaviors were measured using the 20 items tapping transformational leadership from the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ; Bass & Avolio, 1997). The MLQ has been widely

used to measure transformational leadership behaviors in numerous studies and samples (Bass, 2008; Bass, Avolio, Jung, & Berson, 2003). Consistent with repeated findings on the scale's structure, we used the three-dimensional factor structure (Inspirational Leadership, Intellectual Stimulation, Individualized Consideration), each loading on a higher-order factor (Avolio, Bass, & Jung, 1999; Bass et al., 2003). A CFA verified the scale's structure. All items significantly loading on their corresponding dimension ($p < .01$), and fit indexes were satisfactory (CFI = .95, RMSEA = .067, Browne & Cudeck, 1993; Hoyle, 1995). The overall scale's reliability coefficient (alpha) was .96.

Analyses

Because our hypotheses describe relationships between variables from two levels of analysis (school/principal and teacher), we used hierarchical linear modeling (HLM; Bryk, Raudenbush, & Congdon, 1996) to test them. We first tested the appropriateness of aggregation for the transformational leadership variable. As a test of intragroup rater agreement we used the r_{wg} index (James, Demaree, & Wolf, 1984, 1993).[2] The mean r_{wg} value for the MLQ was .96 (1% was lower than .7). We also looked at intraclass correlations (ICC1 and ICC2; Bliese, 2000), using an ANOVA. The *F*-value was significant, the ICC1 value was .15, and the ICC2 was .72. These aggregation indexes provide evidence for the appropriateness of aggregation (James et al., 1993).

Results

Descriptive statistics and correlations among study variables are presented in Table 1. Hypotheses 1–3 involve cross-level tests, with organization-level predictors and an individual-level criterion. Hypothesis 4 involved a cross-level slopes-as-outcomes model in which an organizational-level predictor (i.e., transformational leadership) was expected to explain variance in individual-level predictor-criterion slopes. Intentions to resist the organizational change constituted the criterion in all hypotheses. As a first step before testing each of the cross-level hypotheses, we ran a null hierarchical model whereby we tested whether differences in the criterion exist across schools. Results indicated significant between-school differences in resistance intentions ($\gamma_{00} = 2.93$, $df = 74$, $\chi^2 = 124.06$, $p < .01$).

[2]For the null distribution we used a rectangular ("uniform") distribution: $\sigma^2\text{null} = (A^2 - 1)/12$, where "A" is the number of response options in the scale (see Cohen, Doveh, & Eick, 2001).

TABLE 1
Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

	n	Mean	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Level 1 variables										
1. Teacher's gender (1= male; 2= female)	548	1.85	.35							
2. Teacher's age	518	40.50	9.19	−.10*						
3. Teacher's tenure (in years)	519	10.86	8.35	−.06	.68**					
4. Dispositional resistance	586	3.25	.77	−.08	−.09	−.05				
5. Resistance intentions	568	2.93	1.00	.00	−.03	−.05	.49**			
6. Transformational leadership ratings	294	3.00	.71	.12*	−.08	.02	−.23**	−.31**		
Level 2 variables										
1. Principal's gender (1= male; 2= female)	73	1.60	.49							
2. Principal's age	71	48.77	7.19	−.27*						
3. Principal's tenure	70	7.89	5.72	.06	.32**					
4. School size (no. of teachers in school)	72	41.11	23.65	−.15	.18	.03				
5. Principal's conservation values	75	−.39	.51	−.21	−.01	.13	−.12			
6. Principal's openness to change values	75	.31	.50	.16	−.13	−.07	.03	−.74**		
7. Principal's dispositional resistance	75	2.70	.72	.13	−.13	−.01	−.18	.33**	−.43**	
8. Transformational leadership (aggregated)	75	2.93	.52	.10	−.06	−.13	−.32**	.08	−.06	−.14

*$p < .05$; **$p < .01$.

To test Hypotheses 1a, 1b, 2, and 3, we employed intercept-as-outcome hierarchical models, with organization-level predictors, and resistance intentions as the Level-1 outcome. Hypotheses 1a and 1b predicted that principals' values of conservation (1a), and openness to change (1b) will predict teachers' resistance intentions. The effect of leaders' conservation values on employees' resistance intentions was not significant. Results for Hypothesis 1b, however, indicated the expected significant negative relationship between principals' openness values and teachers' resistance intentions ($\gamma_{01} = -.21$; $t[73]$ equals; –2.12, $p < .05$). Because of the high correlation between conservation and openness, we wanted to test the effect of a single conservation-openness contrast variable on teachers' resistance intentions. We therefore created a new variable, which was the average of the conservation value and the reverse-coded openness value. Higher scores on this variable reflect an emphasis on conservation versus openness. As we would expect, the effect of this contrast on teachers' resistance intentions was significant ($\gamma_{01} = .23$; $t[73] = 2.71$, $p < .01$), indicating that as principals' values lean toward conservation (vs. openness), their teachers' resistance intentions tend to be stronger. Hypothesis 2, that principals' dispositional resistance to change will positively predict teachers' resistance intentions, was also supported ($\gamma_{01} = .24$; $t[73] = 3.61$, $p < .01$).

To test Hypothesis 3, in which transformational leadership was the Level-2 predictor, we used the aggregated teacher ratings of their principals' leadership behaviors. The hypothesis that principals' transformational leadership behaviors will predict teachers' resistance intentions was supported ($\gamma_{01} = -.35$; $t[73] = -3.48$, $p < .01$).

Next, because of possible overlap among predictors, we tested Hypotheses 1–3 again, this time using a combined model in which we included all of the principal variables (characteristics and behaviors) as predictors.[3] Table 2 summarizes the results of this analysis. Model 1 in Table 2 includes only the control variables and provides a baseline for comparison. As Model 2 in Table 2 demonstrates, effects were significant ($p < .05$) for dispositional resistance to change and transformational leadership. The effect for openness values was only significant at $p < .1$. Additional analyses, with only two predictors included at a time, indicated that openness values lose statistical significance only when dispositional

[3]Given the high (and expected; Schwartz, 1992) correlation between conservation and openness values, multicolinearity presents a problem when including both variables within the same analysis. We therefore ran two additional analyses in which all leader variables, yet in each analysis only one of the value variables was included. These analyses yielded the same pattern of results for all predictor variables, with significant effects for dispositional resistance and transformational leadership, a marginal effect for openness, and no significant effect for conservation.

TABLE 2
Results of HLM Analysis Predicting Teachers Resistance Intentions

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
Variable[a]	Estimate (γ)	s.e.	Estimate (γ)	s.e.	Estimate (γ)	s.e.
Level-1 predictors						
Intercept	2.92**	.05	2.92**	.04	2.92**	.04
Teacher's gender	.00	.11	.03	.11	.15	.08
Teacher's age	−.00	.01	−.00	.01	.00	.01
Teacher's tenure	−.01	.01	−.00	.01	−.01	.01
Teacher's dispositional resistance					.60**	.05
Level-2 predictors						
Principal's gender	.21	.11†	.22*	.10	.07	.09
Principal's age	.01	.01	.01	.01	.00	.01
Principal's tenure	−.00	.01	−.01	.00	−.01*	.00
School size	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Principal's conservation values			−.07	.13	−.14	.13
Principal's openness values			−.21†	.12	−.20†	.10
Principal's dispositional resistance			.17*	.07	.11*	.05
Transformational leadership (aggregated)			−.30**	.11	−.15*	.07
Cross-level interaction						
Transformational leadership (aggregated) × Teacher's dispositional resistance					−.21*	.09
Total $R^{2b,c}$	.01 (.02)		.08 (.06)		.28 (.28)	

[a]Predictors were grand-mean centered.
[b]R^2 values are estimates of the amount of total variance (both Level 1 and Level 2) in the dependent variable captured by the predictors in the model (see Snijders & Bosker, 1999).
[c]Values in parentheses are R^2s calculated using ordinary least squares (OLS) regressions (with principal variable scores assigned down to teachers within the school). Although, given the nested nature of our data, these analyses violate the assumed independence of the error terms (which results in biased parameter tests), the overall R^2 values provide an unbiased assessment of the percentage of variance explained and may be more comparable with effect sizes reported in other studies (Hofmann, Morgeson, & Gerras, 2003).
†$p < .1$; *$p < .05$; **$p < .01$.

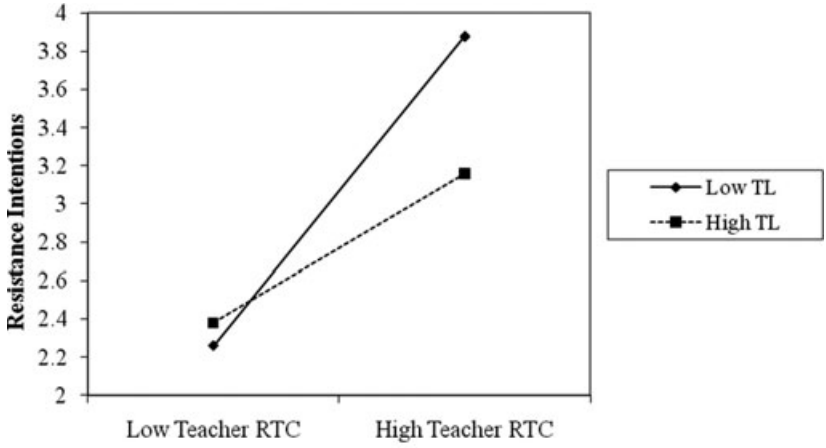
resistance to change is included in the analysis. We further address this point in the Discussion section. Together, principal variables accounted for 7% of the variance in teachers' resistance intentions, above and beyond the controls (total $R^2 = .08$). As can be seen in Table 2 (Model 2), the only control variable that was significant in this analysis was principals' gender, indicating greater resistance intentions among teachers of female principals (this effect was not significant in the baseline model, Model 1).

To begin testing Hypothesis 4, we examined the relationship between teachers' dispositional resistance to change and their intentions to resist the specific change. Because regression slopes could vary across groups (i.e., schools), we used a random coefficients model. In line with previous research findings, the pooled Level-1 slope between teachers' dispositional resistance and their resistance intentions was significantly larger than zero ($\gamma_{10} = .63$; $t[566] = 11.97$, $p < .01$). We then ran Model 3 (Table 2) by adding to Model 2 a slopes-as-outcomes model, whereby principals' transformational leadership behaviors are hypothesized to predict the Level-1 slope of the relationship between teachers' dispositional resistance and their resistance intentions. Results supported the hypothesis and indicated a significant negative effect, such that, as transformational leadership increases, the relationship between teachers' dispositional resistance and their resistance intentions weakens. The addition of the variables in Hypothesis 4 (i.e., teachers' dispositional resistance and the moderating effect of transformational leadership) accounted for an additional 20% of the variance in teachers' resistance intentions, above and beyond the controls and Level-2 main effects (total $R^2 = .28$).

To further assist in interpreting the moderation effect, we plotted the relationship between employees' dispositional resistance and resistance intentions, across high and low transformational leadership principals (using a median split, see Figure 2). As can be seen in Figure 2, in line with our hypothesis, the high transformational leadership condition yielded a milder slope. The rest of the effects in Model 3 maintained their significance levels from Model 2, with the exception that, of the control variables, principals' tenure was now significant, indicating greater resistance intentions among teachers of principals with fewer years of tenure.

Discussion

Our focus in this study was on leaders and their employees' reactions to a large-scale organizational change. Findings support our claims that leaders' traits, values, and behaviors are reflected in their followers' reactions to an organizational change. Specifically, we found that leaders' personal emphasis on stimulation and novelty (i.e., openness values) was



TL = Transformational Leadership; RTC = Dispositional Resistance to Change

Figure 2: **Moderated Effect of Transformational Leadership on the Relationship Between Employees' Dispositional Resistance and Resistance Intentions.**

negatively related to their followers' intentions to resist the organizational change. Correspondingly, leaders' dispositional resistance to change was positively related to followers' intentions to resist the given change. However, when both principals' openness values and dispositional resistance to change were included as predictors, only dispositional resistance maintained its significance. That openness values and dispositional resistance to change are correlated and overlap in their effect on outcomes corresponds with previous research (Oreg et al., 2008; Sverdlik & Oreg, 2009). The fact that only dispositional resistance to change maintained its significance suggests that leaders' dispositional resistance may be a more proximal and immediate antecedent of follower resistance than leaders' values. This is consistent with previous findings in which individuals' dispositional resistance to change mediated the relationship between individuals' values and a number of outcomes, such as their reaction to an organizational change and their willingness to adopt new technology (Oreg & Sverdlik, 2006). Another possible explanation for openness losing its significance may be its low reliability, which detracts from a variable's likelihood of yielding significant effects.

Beyond the effects of leader characteristics, employees of transformational leaders were less likely to report resistance intentions, in comparison with employees of nontransformational leaders. Furthermore, in support

of Hypothesis 4, transformational leadership attenuated the relationship between followers' attributes and resistance intentions.

Our conceptualizations regarding transformational leadership focused on the higher-order transformational leadership construct (Avolio et al., 1999). However, the transformational leadership scale we used comprises the three subscales of inspirational leadership, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. To gain a better understanding of the transformational leadership effects, we reran all of our analyses, this time for each transformational leadership subscale separately. For both the main effect and the moderating effect, only the inspirational leadership subscale yielded (strong) significant effects. Although we would expect all three dimensions of transformational leadership to be relevant in explaining followers' reactions to change, it is not surprising that the strongest effect would be of inspirational leadership. Of the three dimensions, it is the inspirational leadership dimension in which the notion of motivating individuals toward change is most substantially emphasized (Bass, 2008). One of the defining features of inspirational leadership is the vision through which leaders provide direction and sustenance for change, helping employees navigate through crises. Thus, our findings regarding transformational leadership correspond with this emphasized aspect of the inspirational leadership dimension.

One of our hypotheses (1a), was not supported. Contrary to our expectations, there was no significant effect of principals' conservation values on teachers' intentions to resist the change. Overall, relationships between conservation values such as conformity and security have been found to exhibit weaker relationships with behavior in comparison to the relationships between openness values and behavior (Bardi & Schwartz, 2003). More specific to this study, a possible explanation for our nonsignificant finding may have to do with the conservative nature of the Israeli educational system. The Israeli school system is hierarchical, mechanistic, and, often, with a conservative climate (Gaziel, 1994). Within this context, differences in leaders' personal conservatism may be less salient in their impact on followers, compared with differences in leaders' emphasis on creativity and new ideas. In other words, openness values may be more conspicuous across the conservative background of the system and may therefore have a greater impact. That said, one should keep in mind that although the number of organizations in our sample was relatively large compared with most studies of change, the statistical power of our tests is still rather limited. Thus, conclusions from this nonfinding should be drawn only tentatively.

In two instances, control variables were significant. Specifically, when testing Model 2, principals' gender was significant, and when testing Model 3, principals' tenure was significant. Although both gender and

tenure are relevant variables in the context of leadership, considering that neither of these effects repeated itself across the three models, and in particular neither was significant in Model 1, where only the controls were included, we believe that these findings do not present a sufficiently consistent pattern to warrant interpretation.

Although not hypothesized, one might have expected to find some relationship between the leader attributes we measured and leaders' transformational leadership behaviors. In particular, given that transformational leaders inspire change among their followers, one might expect them to also appreciate change personally and accordingly exhibit a personal emphasis on openness to change values and low levels of dispositional resistance to change. However, in a previous study by Sosik (2005), openness values were also not correlated with charismatic leadership. To explain this nonfinding, Sosik suggested that appreciating the importance of change for one's organization does not necessarily coincide with liking change. Nevertheless, research with the explicit aim of understanding transformational leaders' personal orientation toward change should be conducted before a more definitive explanation can be offered.

Theoretical Implications

We believe our findings offer several meaningful theoretical contributions. First, our study combines two highly studied, yet infrequently linked, aspects of organizations: leadership and employee reactions to change. Although organizational scholars associate leadership, in particular transformational leadership, with motivating employees to respond positively to organizational changes, very few studies actually examined this relationship (Herold et al., 2007). By explicitly focusing on this link, we have begun filling a conceptual gap in the literature.

In addition, whereas most earlier approaches to leadership restrict their investigation to either traits (e.g., Zaccaro, Foti, & Kenny, 1991), motives (e.g., McClelland & Boyatzis, 1982), exceptional leader behaviors (e.g., Bass, 1985), or follower characteristics (e.g., House, 1971), our study takes on an integrative framework, within which several of these factors, and others, are incorporated and examined with respect to a central organizational outcome (House & Aditya, 1997). In particular, the interaction we found between leaders' behaviors and followers' traits highlights the importance of such integrative approaches. This finding highlights the conditions under which transformational leadership can effectively influence followers. Namely, whereas transformational leadership theory implicitly assumes a uniform effect across followers and downplays the role of individual differences, the interaction effect we found corresponds with other leadership theories, such as the path-goal theory of

leadership (House, 1971) and indicates that the effect of leadership varies as a function of individual differences among followers (e.g., dispositional resistance to change).

Similarly, our findings also expand our understanding of how situation factors may come to interact with personal factors in forming employees' attitudes toward change. In line with insights drawn from the person-situation debate (Ross & Nisbett, 1991), our findings suggest that employees' personality may have a differential effect on their attitudes and intentions as a function of the leadership environment in which they work (i.e., their leaders' transformational leadership behavior). Although personality traits are typically seen as stable over time and across situations, our findings join several others (e.g., Barrick & Mount, 1993) in showing that the relevance, salience, and impact of traits on behavior may very well vary across contexts.

The study of schools allowed us to examine a given change as it is introduced in a large number of highly comparable organizations. Studies of change tend to focus on changes within a single organization. Some recent multilevel studies examined reactions to change in as many as 34 organizations (Caldwell et al., 2004; Fedor et al., 2006; Herold et al., 2007), yet the organizations in these studies vary in type, structure, and even sector. Furthermore, each organization initiated a different change, and data were often collected at different stages of the change process. All of these factors make the changes studied less comparable. By studying the same change, initiated at the same time, and implemented in organizations of the same type, our design removes many threats of confounding that typically arise in organizational research.

Another contribution of this study is in its focus on leaders who are also leaders *of* organizations (e.g., CEOs) rather than merely leaders *in* organizations (Hunt & Ropo, 1995). To date, most leadership research examined managers *in* organizations, despite the fact that managers *of* organizations are those who have the more meaningful impact on organizational outcomes. Our findings demonstrate how the personal attributes and behaviors of leaders of organizations may resonate in their organizations and among their followers.

Finally, although most pioneering research in the field of management began in public organizations (Simon, 1937; Simon, Thompson, & Smithburg, 1950), and despite the continuing growth in the public sector, management research in this sector is limited (Kelman, 2005). The need for research in public organizations is especially high with respect to the topic of change. Public organizations, and in particular public schools, face constant and challenging reforms, typically initiated by external authorities (see for example, the No Child Left Behind reform in the U.S., Paige et al., 2002). Reactions to these reforms are frequently negative, and

many are stymied at their very inception. By considering changes in the school system, our findings expand our understanding of the resistance processes that often arise in the public sector.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

One limitation of our study concerns its external validity. First, our sample was a convenient sample, thus limiting our confidence of its representativeness of the Israeli school population. Furthermore, although the variables we studied are relevant to organizational types other than schools, and countries other than Israel, before our findings can be generalized more conclusively, additional research is required, conducted in other sectors, industries, and cultural settings. With respect to the country in which data are collected, the effects we found would likely be weaker in countries with greater homogeneity in individuals' orientation toward change. Little research, however, has been conducted about change orientation at the country level. In one study, data on dispositional resistance to change were collected from samples in 17 countries (Oreg et al., 2008). Only small differences were reported, however, in the standard deviations of participants' dispositional resistance to change scores across the 17 countries (using a 6-point Likert scale, the highest standard deviation was .62, in China, and the lowest was .48, in Germany, see Table 3 in Oreg et al., 2008). Further research on reactions to change at the culture level should be conducted before we can make meaningful propositions about cross-cultural differences in the validity of models such as the one we present in Figure 1.

Second, by incorporating Schneider's (1987) ASA model, we suggested that the correspondence between leaders' personal attributes and followers' attitudes may result from leaders' decisions concerning who to attract, select, and discharge from the organization. In our specific case, this implies that principals' personal orientations toward change may have influenced decisions concerning the attraction, selection, and discharge of teachers. It should be noted, however, that unlike most organizations in the private sector, the tenure system that exists in schools in Israel somewhat restricts principals' influence on the recruitment and dismissal of teachers. Nevertheless, even within this restricted framework, principals are still the central decision makers regarding teachers' employment in their schools.

More generally, although our findings correspond with the process through which we explained how leader characteristics and behaviors relate to employees' reactions, this process was not measured directly. As elaborated in the introduction, leaders' personal attributes influence their organizational decisions, which in turn generate an organizational culture

and climate in which employees come to share attitudes that correspond with their leaders' attributes. Although this process was not assessed in this study, there is some evidence that leaders' characteristics and behaviors influence organizational outcomes through their impact on the organizational culture (Berson et al., 2008). Similarly, one could expect that principals' personal orientation toward change and leadership behaviors influence teachers' attitudes toward change through their impact on the organizational change-related culture. Obviously, the validity of this claim must be tested through studies that directly focus on the intermediating mechanisms that link leader characteristics to follower attitudes. One such mechanism may be charismatic leaders' communication skills (Fiol et al., 1999). In a study of U.S. presidents, presidents' linguistic techniques were shown to realign followers' willingness to participate in a social change. Future research could examine whether charismatic managers use unique rhetoric to align employees with the conditions and requirements of organizational change, and whether and how such rhetoric addresses individuals' predetermined personal orientation toward change.

Finally, another limitation has to do with our study's concurrent design. This limitation has two aspects. First, although we believe that leaders' characteristics and behaviors influence followers' attitudes, our design does not allow for a test of causality. However, at least one set of predictors—leader characteristics (i.e., values and traits)—is typically regarded stable over time and across situations. Rather than principals' personal attributes being influenced by their teachers' attitude toward a given change, the opposite directionality, whereby principals' personal attributes are reflected in employees' attitudes, seems more plausible.

Second, a meaningful aspect of organizational change is its dynamic nature (Amburgey, Kelly, & Barnett, 1993; Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999). Although there is certainly value in understanding employees' reactions to change at a given point in time, a more complete evaluation of these reactions requires measurements of employee reactions at various stages of the change process, before, during, and after the change. Specifically, teachers' reactions to the change at the "anticipatory" stage (Fugate et al., 2002), in which we collected our data, are possibly quite different than those one could expect at the "aftershock" stage, which takes place once the change implementation has been completed. Collecting multisource, multilevel data, at several stages of an organizational change, however, is no simple task, in particular given the difficulty of collecting data from multiple organizations, including psychographic data from leaders of organizations. This is even more difficult when looking for comparable organizations, with equivalent changes all being implemented at the same

time. Obviously, any future study to obtain such data would be in position to greatly advance our understanding of the phenomena under study.

Practical Implications

Our findings may yield several practical implications. First, knowing that leaders' personal characteristics have a meaningful impact on followers' reactions to change suggests several routes that could assist in facilitating the change process. Several studies demonstrated how increases in managers' self-awareness were associated with improved performance (e.g., Church, 1997). Accordingly, by increasing their awareness to their personal orientation toward change and to the implications that this orientation may have on followers, managers may be more attentive to how they interact with followers and try to consciously temper their predisposition against change. Furthermore, HR departments may introduce training and mentoring programs to assist dispositionally resistant members, including leaders, prepare for the difficulties they may experience during change situations. This is especially relevant for organizations that need to address continuous change, such as in the high-tech industry or educational organizations, which often face external pressure to reform.

Second, our findings regarding leader behavior, in particular charismatic leadership behaviors, bear implications for leadership development programs. Such programs may include modules that highlight the existence of individual differences among followers, especially differences associated with followers' orientation toward change. Furthermore, leaders may be trained to craft a vision that will guide followers through the change and help them see its advantages. Leaders can identify followers who more readily accept and adapt to change, and encourage them to support their peers who find the change more difficult to adjust to. Such programs may also help train leaders to coach followers and help them to better cope with reforms by offering both emotional support and personal guidance.

In line with numerous other studies that show the managerial advantages of transformational leaders, our study also suggests that these include specific advantages in leading change. In particular, charismatic leaders can help followers' compensate for the dispositional difficulty some of them may have in times of organizational change.

Finally, although leaders can use their transformational leadership style to override employees' resistance to change, HR officials may consider other means for doing so, such as facilitating a culture that promotes change through issue selling in organizational activities such as workshops, training sessions, and other group and individual means of communication (Dutton, Ashford, O'Neill, & Lawrence, 2001).

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