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# A study of organizational trust and related variables among faculty members at HBCUs

James Hollander Vineburgh  
*University of Iowa*

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A STUDY OF ORGANIZATIONAL TRUST AND RELATED VARIABLES AMONG  
FACULTY MEMBERS AT HBCUS

by

James Hollander Vineburgh, Jr.

An Abstract

Of a thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy degree  
in Educational Policy and Leadership Studies (Higher Education) in  
the Graduate College of  
The University of Iowa

May 2010

Thesis Supervisor: Professor Alan B. Henkin

## ABSTRACT

Trust in the workplace has been linked to higher levels of organizational performance and competitiveness. The imperative of variants of trust among a spectrum of institutional types, including colleges and universities, has been deemed to be considered essential for organizational effectiveness, stability and continuity. One variant, organizational trust, may be a particularly important factor during periods of exigency where exogenous forces may function to punctuate organizational equilibrium. This study focuses on organizational trust and associated variables (empowerment, resistance to change, support for innovation, interpersonal conflict, and demographics) as perceived by faculty in the work environment of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). HBCUs and their faculties have received minor attention in terms of research related to the focal variables in this study.

The study depended on an existing database that included perceived responses of faculty at HBCUs to structured items included in survey measures. Selected variables included in the study model were considered. Some 3,070 faculty members working in 73 HBCUs throughout the United States provided the data included in this study.

Secondary analyses revealed that higher levels of empowerment, higher levels of support for innovation, and lower levels of interpersonal conflict were associated with higher levels of organizational trust. The relationship between perceptions of empowerment and organizational trust, moreover, was influenced significantly by levels of resistance to change and support for innovation. Implementable strategies associated with study findings were commended for initiatives designed to strengthen organizational trust in the HBCU context.

Abstract Approved:

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Thesis Supervisor

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Title and Department

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Date

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The University of Iowa

May 2010

Thesis Supervisor: Professor Alan Henkin

Graduate College  
The University of Iowa  
Iowa City, Iowa

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

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PH.D. THESIS

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This is to certify that the Ph.D. thesis of

James Hollander Vineburgh, Jr.

has been approved by the Examining Committee for the thesis requirement for the Doctor of Philosophy degree in Educational Policy and Leadership Studies (Higher Education) at the May 2010 graduation.

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To Maggie, Victoria, James, Mom, Dad, P.T., Marty, Cathy, MJ, Bob, Mary Lou, Jim, Sarah, Katie, Jeff, Bobby, Montana, Heather, Billy, Nicholas, Nate, and Shannon. A special dedication is also made to Roz and Dorothy, who both passed away before they could celebrate this achievement with me.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE

The presence of trust in the workplace is essential to organizational performance and competitiveness in an increasingly global economy (Lamsa & Pucetaite, 2006). Research has demonstrated that an organization's ability to develop trusting relationships is an increasingly important source of competitive advantage (Barney & Hansen, 1994). Organizations that foster internal and external climates of trust reap advantages in the marketplace (Zaheer, McEvily, & Perrone, 1998). Trust has also been linked to organizational outcomes such as higher sales and profits, lower employee turnover (Davis, Schoorman, Mayer, & Tan, 2000), and increased levels of cooperative behavior among employees (Gambetta, 1988). The presence of trust is crucial to all types of institutions, including colleges and universities. Organizational trust has been analyzed from the perspectives of external referents and employees internal to organizations. This study is primarily concerned with the perceptions of organizational trust among employees in historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs). This cross-section of institutions was selected due to a long, complex, and tumultuous existence within the landscape of American higher education. The various attributes associated with their institutional histories as well as the challenges that they face in the present reveal a need to study the perspectives of members of their community. The attitudes and perspectives of HBCU community members are important not only for their own sake, but also because they are part and parcel of the entire spectrum of higher education in the United States, an enterprise that faces a myriad of challenges and bears so much responsibility in terms of producing a healthy, well-educated, and successful society. Given the societal

need for higher education to be effective, it is imperative to study variables that are often examined in the context of organizational effectiveness. This study looks at several of those variables, ultimately exploring relationships with organizational trust. HBCUs have been noted for having many characteristics that could be associated with faculty members' perceptions of trust in their institutions. Because these institutions face obstacles that arguably threaten perceptions of their quality and long-term viability, it is critical to gain a better understanding of their working conditions so that their community members and policy makers can act in ways that maximize their potential and maintain their unique and important place within American higher education.

Many employees have been found to hold increasingly negative views of their organizations (Perry & Mankin, 2007). Lazarus and Salem (2005) suggested that four in five employees are suspicious of management. Reina and Reina (1999) offered a similar assessment, suggesting that organizational trust is at its lowest point since the construct has been measured. Much of the escalating distrust in organizational environments may be traced to highly visible scandals that have impacted both the private and public sectors in recent years (Tzafrir, 2005).

In the private sector, incidents involving Enron, Tyco, Worldcom, and Arthur Andersen serve as reminders of the types of institutions and events responsible for the widespread erosion of trust among the general public (Pillmore, 2003; Gledhill, 2003; Zekany et al, 2004; Conroy & Emerson, 2006). Scandals have occurred, similarly, in institutions of higher education where erosion in levels of trust has been documented (Hayden, 2008). For example, The University of Louisville awarded a California school Superintendent a PhD degree after he was enrolled for only one semester of classes. It

was not seen as coincidental that the Superintendent in question had been involved in the award of a large University research contract just two years prior to “earning” his degree (Wolfson, 2008). The former President of Morris Brown College was entangled in a scandal where she was accused of fraudulently obtaining millions of federal loan and grant dollars to fund lavish vacations for family and friends (Chronicle of Higher Education, 2006). High-level administrators within the University of California system were discovered to have provided millions of dollars in extra compensation to Presidents and administrators without disclosing fiduciary details to the public (American Thinker, 2008). Redden (2007) reported, moreover, that several institutions have been identified as illegally accepting inducements from loan providers who received preferential treatment regarding the provision of financial aid packages to students in return.

The growing perception that public organizations of all types cannot be trusted to serve their societal purposes without sacrificing their integrity can become particularly damaging for colleges and universities (Tzafrir, 2005). Referent publics may come to question organizational effectiveness even where scandal is not involved. Callan and Immerwahr (2008) discussed the public's diminishing trust concerning the altruistic mission of higher education. Their recent focus groups revealed that many of those polled "spoke of higher education as 'a growing business' with 'money coming in from everywhere.'" Today, 52 percent say that colleges mainly care about the bottom line, while only 43 percent see colleges as focused primarily on education. Such results predate the student-loan scandals; perhaps they would be even higher now” (p.1). Such opinions do not bode well for maintaining public trust in higher education. Wellman (2006) found that forty percent of the people he polled in his study did not believe that higher

education was producing the workforce that the country needs. One third of the registered voters who comprised the survey sample felt that higher education had worsened in the last ten years because of perceived losses in quality. Half of the sample indicated the belief that students do not get value for money spent on higher education, a proportion that increased for parents of college-going students.

This study focuses on organizational trust and associated variables as perceived in the work environment of HBCUs. From an internal organizational perspective, related research (Williams, 2005; Hubbell & Chory-Assad, 2005; Ellis & Shockley-Zalabak, 2001) has suggested that certain variables associated with employee views of the work environment may affect employee perceptions of organizational trust. This study is designed to examine organizational trust in terms of relationships with several of these variables: empowerment, resistance to change, support for innovation, interpersonal conflict, and demographics noted in the literature.

#### Definitions of Terms

**Organizational Trust:** “The global evaluation of an organization’s trustworthiness as perceived by the employee. Organizational trust is defined as an employee’s feeling of confidence that the organization will perform actions that are beneficial, or at least not detrimental, to him or her” (Tan & Tan, 2000, p. 243).

**Empowerment:** Empowerment is defined along two dimensions:

- **Structural:** Focuses on the distribution of power and resources among leaders and followers.
- **Psychological:** Focuses on the intrinsic motivation of individuals (Dee, Henkin, & Duemer, 2003).

Resistance to Change: This construct is defined as a three-dimensional “negative attitude towards change, which includes affective, behavioral, and cognitive components” (Oreg 2006, p. 76). The affective dimension focuses on how individuals feel regarding change. The behavioral dimension reflects how people evaluate change. Finally, the cognitive dimension is concerned with how or what individuals think and believe about change. This cognitive aspect is based on past behaviors and future intentions.

Support for Innovation: Innovation is defined as a continuous process of adopting new ideas or behaviors in an organization (Daft, 1982; Damanpour & Evan, 1984).

Interpersonal Conflict: This construct is defined as “a phenomenon that occurs between interdependent parties as they experience negative emotional reactions to perceived disagreements and interference with the attainment of their goals” (Barki & Hartwick, 2001, p. 7).

A review of the literature concerning focal research variables follows the presentation of study research questions, study limitations, hypotheses, and the study model. Methods and procedures for testing proposed relationships are presented in Chapter 3. This study is comprised of secondary analysis of a data set that focused on faculty perceptions of the focal study variables. The respondents were faculty at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). Results of analyses precede a discussion of findings contextualized by the related literature. Implications of findings for workplace and organizational effectiveness are then presented. Where appropriate, implications will be extended to similar organizational contexts within limitations imposed by the study design. The study is designed to contribute to the related literature

on HBCUs as complex organizations in higher education and expand the minimal empirical research available.

### Study Context

#### HBCU History and Context within American Higher Education

HBCUs have been described as the “Garden of Eden of equal opportunity” (Jackson, 2001, p. 107). Despite systemic injustice due to slavery, educational opportunities for African Americans began to arise with the emergence of HBCUs in a few of the northern states as early as 1837 (Anderson, 1988). The founding of several institutions with the explicit purpose of educating African Americans was seen at Cheney University, Wilberforce University, and Lincoln University (Jackson & Nunn, 2003). According to Anderson (1988), the vast majority of HBCUs offered elementary and secondary-level instruction to their students due to the lack of educational opportunities with which most of the students entered these institutions. “Thus, black colleges, unlike their white counterparts, had to spend most of their resources on sub-collegiate level instruction” (Humphries, 1992, p.5). Achieving college-level status was therefore more of an ambition than an immediate actuality for HBCUs at their inception (Anderson, 1988; Roebuck & Murty, 1993). “It is important to note that these institutions were organized in response to the widespread discrimination and resistance on the part of Northern Whites to African Americans obtaining basic and advanced learning experiences” (Thomas & Green, 2001, p. 249).

The development of HBCUs varied greatly depending on whether the institutions were classified as private or public. The public HBCUs were confronted with state and federal laws and regulations that proved problematic in terms of their ability to obtain

adequate financial resources. At the same time, African Americans and their public HBCUs had to cope with the prevailing social and political ideologies and laws of the time which made them second-class in relation to whites and traditionally white institutions of higher education (Jackson & Nunn, 2003).

Private HBCUs, however, enjoyed a more prosperous development because they were funded by white philanthropists as well as secular and sacred groups that were not restricted by the same laws that governed public HBCUs (Watkins, 2001). Private HBCUs therefore had greater impact on American society because they had more freedom from a legal perspective (Gasman, 2007). Despite limited resources in the form of governmental funding, white philanthropists supported private HBCUs largely because they could exercise more control regarding how funds were to be utilized (Mbajekwe, 2006). Gasman (2007) notes that institutions like Spelman obtained a high degree of notoriety and prestige because of philanthropists, sacred groups, and other individuals who gave to the institution.

The Morrill Land-Grant Act of 1862 allotted thirty thousand acres of land to each member of Congress for the explicit purpose of establishing at least one college in their respective states (Cowley & Williams, 1991). These institutions created in 1862 were established primarily to educate whites (Hytche, 1992; Jackson & Nunn, 2003). The education of African Americans was a non-issue because slavery was still legally practiced. Slavery did not end until 1866 when the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteen Amendments were adopted.

The Second Morrill Act of 1890 led to the creation of seventeen HBCUs that were legally designated as land grant colleges and designed to provide educational

opportunities for African Americans (Whiting, 1991). The American government developed the 1890 HBCUs to prevent African Americans from facing continued discrimination in public education. Moreover, every state was required to admit African Americans to existing colleges or mandated to provide separate educational facilities (Samad, 2005). All of the states in the South and border regions elected to establish separate but equal agricultural and industrial schools for African Americans.

Despite the fact that the newly founded HBCUs offered unprecedented educational opportunities for African Americans, Roebuck and Murty (1993) concluded that the public HBCUs were really created by the state governments in the south to reap millions of dollars in federal funds for the benefit of white land-grant universities, to limit educational offerings for African Americans to vocational training, and to keep all of the land grant colleges segregated. Samad (2005) noted that, even though HBCUs and African Americans made considerable advancements throughout the Reconstruction period, their gains were still far outpaced by traditionally white institutions and whites because the prevailing laws and social realities still kept African Americans and their institutions in second class positions. Samad (2005) provided a good synopsis of this reality when he explained that the 1896 Plessy v. Ferguson legal decision defined how American society would operate during the first half of the twentieth century - separate and unequal.

In the aftermath of the Plessy v. Ferguson decision, public HBCUs wrestled with legal and administrative obstacles to acquiring the funding necessary to provide educational opportunities to their constituents, particularly in comparison to what traditionally white institutions encountered. Even though the public HBCUs owed their

existence to the second Morrill Act of 1890, the public institutions created for whites in the 1862 Morrill Act were the ones that actually profited financially from the law that was intended to provide financial support for the public HBCUs (Humphries, 1992; Whiting, 1991).

Despite the legal, political, and social obstacles that HBCUs faced, they made impressive strides during the early part of the twentieth century. "By 1927, seventy-seven black colleges and universities were operating with a total enrollment of 14,000" (Jackson, 2001, p. 51). Between 1925 and 1945, HBCUs garnered increasing levels of philanthropic support (Holmes, 1969).

However, HBCUs and African Americans were still subjugated by Jim Crow laws and the separate but equal philosophy until the 1950s and 1960s, when the Civil Rights Movement began to change the nation socially and legally. The *Brown v. Board of Education* decision in 1954 and the Civil Rights Act of 1964 helped pave the way for legally ending segregation. Unfortunately, these legal victories were tarnished by the race riots in the aftermath of the passing of the Civil Rights Act as well as the assassinations of Medgar Evers, Martin Luther King, Jr., President John F. Kennedy, and Robert Kennedy (Dyson, 2005; Willie & Edmonds, 1978).

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 created a number of laws and policies in an attempt to rectify past social and legal injustices in American society. Affirmative action, first coined by President John F. Kennedy and Vice President Lyndon Johnson, was put in place to end discriminatory practices in the United States (Curry, 1996; Holmes, 1999; Howard, 1997). Marable (1996) wrote: "Affirmative action per se was never a law, or even a coherently developed set of governmental policies designed to attack institutional

racism and societal discrimination. It was instead a series of presidential executive orders, civil rights laws, and governmental programs regarding the awarding of federal contracts and licenses, as well as the enforcement of fair employment practices, with the goal of uprooting the practices of bigotry” (p.3-4). However, attempts to thwart affirmative action have been detrimental regarding the strides that African Americans and other minority groups were making within the context of American higher education (Garcia, 1997). Efforts have been made and continue to be made at the federal and state levels to put an end to preferential admissions practices for minorities (O’Neil, 2002). Examples can be seen in the recent and high-profile legal battles of *Grutter v. Bollinger* and *Gratz v. Bollinger*. These cases focused on affirmative action and raise questions concerning the long-term viability of race-based admissions policies. As a result, HBCUs face potential legal action that could affect their organizational survival (Pluiose, 2006; Roebuck & Murty, 1993; Wenglinsky, 1996). The 1992 Supreme Court case, *United States v. Fordice*, forced the state of Mississippi to justify the existence of its HBCUs or eliminate them. This action was mandated because the existence and maintenance of eight state universities (three of which are HBCUs) was deemed wasteful and also seen as having a segregating effect (Roebuck & Murty, 1993). Since the *Fordice* ruling, the U.S. Department of Education has begun to oversee the desegregation plans of all states with HBCUs to make sure that states comply with the Supreme Court’s ruling. In the wake of the *Fordice* ruling, many educators who support HBCUs have expressed concern that many states will seek to merge HBCUs with predominantly White colleges and universities in order to meet compliance requirements. These educators fear that such

actions would weaken the roles and standing of HBCUs (Roebuck & Murty, 1993; Wenglinsky, 1996).

### Recent Trends

Recently, Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) have been criticized, and even censured, by the AAUP, because of perceived deficits related to academic freedom and shared governance (Gasman, Baez, Drezner, Sedgwick, Tudico & Schmid, 2007). Gasman and colleagues' research has suggested the negative impact of media that calls into question the financial stability, academic quality, and accreditation processes of many HBCUs. Gasman and colleagues have also asserted that negative perceptions of HBCUs may find their origins, in part, in the conceptualization of organizational leadership as autocratic and dictatorial. Robert Millette (2005), an HBCU faculty member, described dictatorial leadership as the "big man/big woman syndrome", and observed that there is often considerable tension between administrators and faculty members. Gasman and colleagues (2007) noted that the disproportionately high number of HBCUs found on the AAUP's censure list resulted from investigations which concluded that administrators at several HBCUs disregarded key tenets of shared governance and acted unilaterally when engaged in key decision-making processes. Gasman and colleagues (2007) detailed additional issues which faculty members at HBCUs encounter that arguably result in a challenging organizational climate.

First, with regard to the perceived difficulties concerning shared governance, the authors noted that the faculty composition at HBCUs is more racially and ethnically diverse than at predominantly white institutions of higher education nationally. With greater faculty diversity, Gasman and colleagues (2007) argued that there is increased

chance of conflict, and less cohesion among faculty members at HBCUs. Lower levels of cohesion may affect faculty members' levels of trust in colleagues as well as in the systems of their institutions. In line with Gasman and colleagues' findings, Gregory (2003) noted that a primary obstacle facing HBCUs is the need to create work environments that employees perceive as more supportive and friendly. Gregory (2003) noted that turnover rates among faculty and presidents are on the rise at HBCUs and that reasons cited for departure included financial crisis, enrollment declines, and low faculty morale (Gregory, 2003). HBCUs, especially the public institutions, are experiencing rapid and frequent turnover of presidents (Jackson, 2001; Mbajekwe, 2006). In the public institutions, the turnover is often attributed to highly-charged political environments and rash decisions made by the governing boards. While the governing boards of the university are seen as having the ability to empower HBCU presidents and create environments that foster change and openness (Fisher, 1991; Willie et al., 2006), the boards tend to focus on the issues threatening their institutions' survival and therefore do not do what is necessary to empower the Presidents to perform effectively and in desirable working conditions (Foreman, 2002; Mbajekwe, 2006). Moreover, it is becoming increasingly difficult to find and retain HBCU presidents because these individuals are being offered jobs that are viewed as less stressful and more rewarding from a financial perspective (Fields, 2002; Jackson, 2001).

Another critical issue at HBCUs relates to the salaries of faculty and administrators. Gregory (2003) found that the average associate professor at an HBCU earns \$7,000 less annually than the average associate professor at other higher education institutions in the United States, while the differences between full professors at HBCUs

versus those at other institutions may be over \$15,000. In contrast, HBCU administrators earn similar and, in many cases, higher salaries than administrators at other institutional types (Gregory, 2003). Given this incongruity between faculty and administrative material rewards, it is not unlikely that some faculty at HBCUs may perceive lower levels of system fairness that may invoke feelings of organizational distrust.

Some of the challenges currently facing faculty members at HBCUs are rooted in patterns that have been observed historically. Thompson (1960) and Johnson and Harvey (2002) noted that the median teaching loads at HBCUs often exceed those at similar institutions. Gregory (2003) corroborated this finding. Thompson and Dey (1998) discovered that HBCU faculty members often reported stressful working conditions arising from time pressures related to heavy teaching loads. They also noted gender differences in these reports, specifically, that Black female faculty may be particularly impacted by stressful conditions when compared with non-Black faculty or male faculty. The 15 hour median load cited in the Thompson study would be considered heavy, even in the absence of other professional duties. Thompson also found that faculty at HBCUs expressed the desire to be involved in more scholarly activities, but perceived a lack of opportunity to engage in research or creative scholarship. These faculty suggested racial barriers to their professional development, as they were often not allowed to join or attend professional associations during this time period. An earlier Thompson (1947) study focused on HBCU faculty cited lack of time and financial resources as reasons for non-participation in professional associations and research pursuits.

Faculty members at HBCUs face other challenges that could have negative implications in terms of organizational trust. One of these challenges relates to consistent

and cohesive standards for scholarship and tenure evaluation processes across academic disciplines. Stoecker (1993) found that faculty in the hard sciences or high consensus fields tended to exhibit higher levels of agreement regarding standards of scholarship than faculty in low consensus fields and soft sciences regarding the tenure process. As a result, the faculty in the hard sciences had more concrete expectations of how the promotion and tenure processes worked. Such discrepancies could play a role in the high levels of conflict and lack of cohesion noted previously by Gasman and colleagues (2007).

On a social level, Johnson and Harvey (2002) reported minimal opportunity for new faculty members to acquire adequate experiences of socialization within their institutions. Therefore, faculty members new to HBCUs have indicated a lack of ability to learn and embrace institutional norms, adjust to institutional conditions, and familiarize themselves with the policies and standard operating procedures with which older, established faculty members are familiar.

HBCUs also face funding challenges that affect the quality of facilities and perceptions of research quality. The federal government has not invested heavily in HBCUs (Baskerville, Berger, & Smith, 2008), especially in important disciplines such as science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). These authors reported that research facilities at HBCUs are not comparable to those on many other campuses due to inadequate financial support. Available evidence suggests that HBCUs might not be as capable of producing well-known and respected faculty in the hard sciences (Baskerville, Berger, & Smith, 2008). This evidence is most likely related to National Science

Foundation reports documenting that HBCUs receive barely over one percent of allotted federal research and development dollars (Baskerville, Berger, & Smith, 2008).

The multitude of challenges that HBCUs face have proven to be insurmountable for twelve institutions that have closed since the mid-1980s (Willie, Reddick, & Brown, 2006). Abelman and Dalessandro (2007) and Nichols (2004) noted that HBCUs have faced these challenging environments and fought for survival since the Civil War.

### Summary of the Study Context

Problems and issues associated with HBCUs and their work environments – historical disadvantages rooted in racist legal and social practices, turnover in key leadership positions, perceived autocratic leadership, problems with shared governance, unequal compensation for heavier teaching loads, inadequate socialization experiences for new faculty, disparate funding levels for research, perceptions of heightened conflict levels among faculty members, and questions of viability from a legal standpoint – suggest a need to examine key attitudinal variables related to the work climates at these colleges and universities. A better understanding is sought in terms of the extent to which faculty trust the systems and people with whom they interact and count on for support and fair dealings, their feelings of empowerment, how much they perceive innovation to be supported, how much conflict they perceive in their places of work, and to what degree their dispositions regarding change have implications for their professional lives. Effects and interactions among variables will be examined.

### Research Questions

The following research questions guide the study:

1. Will higher levels of perceptions of empowerment be associated with higher levels of organizational trust?
2. Will lower levels of resistance to change be associated with higher levels of organizational trust?
3. Will lower levels of interpersonal conflict be associated with higher levels of organizational trust?
4. Will higher levels of support for innovation be associated with higher levels of organizational trust?
5. Will demographic variables (institutional type, age, gender, race, education, rank, teaching experience, administrative responsibility, innovation involvement, field) be associated with levels of organizational trust?
6. Will the relationship between perceptions of empowerment and organizational trust be influenced by levels of resistance to change?
7. Will the relationship between perceptions of empowerment and organizational trust be influenced by levels of interpersonal conflict?
8. Will the relationship between perceptions of empowerment and organizational trust be influenced by levels of support for innovation?
9. Will the relationship between perceptions of empowerment and organizational trust be influenced by demographic variables (institutional type, age, gender, race, education, rank, teaching experience, administrative responsibility, innovation involvement, field)?

### Limitations of the Study

There are several limitations present in this study. First, the results of the study may not be readily generalized to non-HBCUs or other types of organizations, while some implications may be extended with appropriate caveats. Relationships found among the constructs may be applicable only to HBCU faculty who provided responses that became part of the data set accessed. It is also possible that faculty members at HBCUs who may exhibit lower levels of organizational trust may be less inclined to provide responses to written inquiry, may be reluctant to state negative opinions about their institutions, and/or may feel that they have low likelihood of affecting systemic or external problems beyond their sphere of influence. Determination of such conditions is not possible within the limitations imposed both by the data source and secondary analysis.

### Summary

Organizational trust is an important and critical component in the context of organizational effectiveness and survival. Recent events in many types of organizations, including colleges and universities, have eroded trust among employees and external referents. Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) have been found to exhibit organizational characteristics that may affect trust at the organizational level. These characteristics lend support for the inclusion of the selected study variables associated with organizational trust: empowerment, resistance to change, support for innovation, interpersonal conflict, and demographics noted in the literature.

## CHAPTER II

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

When organizational trust is present within an organization, levels of job satisfaction and productivity have tended to be higher among employees while team-building has been shown to occur more effectively (Communication World, 2003). Other researchers (O'Brien, 2001; Reina & Reina, 1999) maintained that organizational trust increases creativity and critical thinking at the employee level. Reina and Reina (1999) also suggested that employee performance tended to surpass the expectations of management and that workers felt greater freedom to express their ideas when leaders created trusting environments in their organizations. Shockley-Zalabak and colleagues (2000) found that organizations with higher levels of organizational trust were more successful and innovative than institutions with lower levels of trust. They suggested that product and service quality were significantly related to levels of organizational trust. According to Gilbert and Tang (1998), organizational trust influenced employees' perceptions of and confidence in their organizations, as well as beliefs concerning whether the organizations were acting in employees' best interests. Conversely, the absence or loss of organizational trust has been associated with: the loss of high-caliber employees to other (and often competing) organizations, a loss of interest among employees in the job and organization, employee retirement, employee complacency, employee defiance, and increased levels of absenteeism and tardiness (Kowalski & Cangemi, 1993). Moreover, Currall and Epstein (2003) noted that it is almost impossible for organizations to regain trust once it has been lost. Organizational trust must be

instilled, largely, through the actions and words of management and leadership; and it must be maintained on a daily basis (Petrovs, 2005).

Given some of the challenging organizational conditions found at HBCUs that revolve around perceptions of leadership, governance, academic freedom, work load, compensation disparities, and resource supply, the following hypotheses are posited:

#### Hypotheses

H1: Higher levels of perceptions of empowerment will be associated with higher levels of organizational trust.

H2: Lower levels of resistance to change will be associated with higher levels of organizational trust.

H3: Lower levels of interpersonal conflict will be associated with higher levels of organizational trust.

H4: Higher levels of support for innovation will be associated with higher levels of organizational trust.

H5: Demographic variables (institutional type, age, gender, race, education, rank, teaching experience, administrative responsibility, innovation involvement, field) will be associated with levels of organizational trust.

H6: The relationship between perceptions of empowerment and organizational trust will be influenced by levels of resistance to change.

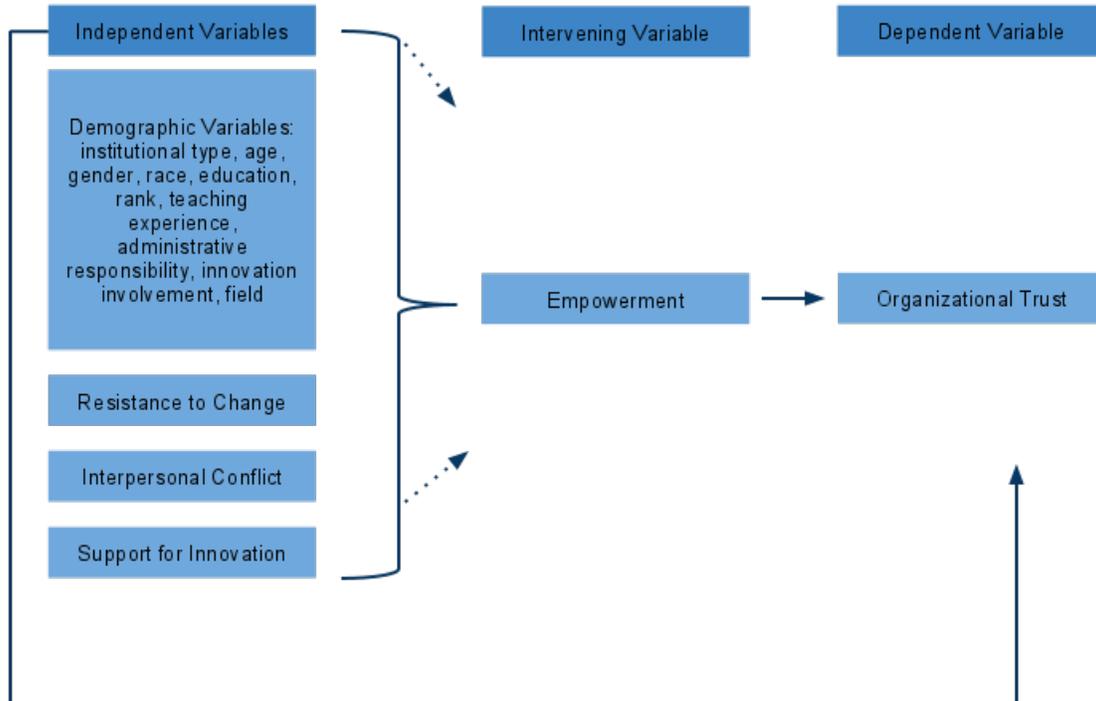
H7: The relationship between perceptions of empowerment and organizational trust will be influenced by levels of interpersonal conflict.

H8: The relationship between perceptions of empowerment and organizational trust will be influenced by levels of support for innovation.

H9. The relationship between perceptions of empowerment and organizational trust will be influenced by demographic variables (institutional type, age, gender, race, education, rank, teaching experience, administrative responsibility, innovation involvement, field).

### Path Model of Organizational Trust

Figure 1: Path Model of Organizational Trust



## Literature Review

### Organizational Trust

Trust is an essential source of social capital within social systems (Fukuyama, 1996) and, therefore, a pivotal element of societal functioning. Viewing trust through the lens of social capital has produced three main streams of analysis that have important implications for organizations. These three streams examined how trust as a form of social capital was related to reducing transaction costs within organizations, increasing spontaneous sociability among organizational members, and facilitating appropriate forms of deference to organizational authorities.

Trust has been viewed as both a psychological state and also as a choice behavior. In terms of a psychological state, Lewis and Weigert (1984) defined trust as the "undertaking of a risky course of action on the confident expectation that all persons involved in the action will act competently and dutifully" (p. 971). Examination within the discipline of organizational science reveals that the rational choice perspective offers the most influential theory in terms of understanding trust and its implications. The rational choice perspective draws largely on the sociological theory of Coleman (1990), the economic theory of Williamson (1993), and the political theory of Hardin (1992). From this perspective, decisions about trust are equated with other forms of risk-based choice in that individuals are presumed to be motivated to make rational, efficient choices. As Schelling (1960) suggested, choice is motivated by a "conscious calculation of advantages, a calculation that in turn is based on an explicit and internally consistent value system" (p. 4).

Luhmann and colleagues (1979) defined system trust (here used as a surrogate for organizational trust) as the appearance that everything is properly in order. This type of trust is necessary for the effective functioning of such things as monetary exchange and political power (Lewis & Weigert, 1984). According to Lewis and Weigert, the absence of the public's trust and confidence in the reliability, effectiveness, and legitimacy of the cultural symbols such as money and laws would lead to the collapse of modern social institutions. Moreover, Durkheim (2008) posited that system trust supports interpersonal trust. Therefore, one could expect that individuals would lose trust in individuals with a corresponding erosion of trust in institutions. This framework for understanding system trust in society provides a useful mechanism for understanding system trust in organizations.

Sztompka (1999) views the relationship between system-level trust and interpersonal trust as one that is not easily separated. Sztompka (1999) wrote that there are several main targets of trust. The most fundamental targets are other individuals with whom we interact. The trust that we endow upon people is typically defined as interpersonal trust. Nonetheless, Sztompka (1999, p. 41) discovered that different authors categorized other types of trust under "social trust," including systems trust. Interpersonal trust generally involves face-to-face communications whereas systems trust can be thought of as faceless and geared toward social objects (Giddens, 1990). However, Sztompka (1999) argued that, "behind all other social objects, however complex, there also stand some people, and it is the people whom we ultimately endow with trust (sometimes we are acquainted with them, but we may also imagine them, have some information about them, obtain second-hand testimony about them, etc.)" (p. 41).

Sztompka (1999) elaborated on this with the following: "When I trust Lufthansa and decide to fly with them to Tokyo, it implies that I trust their pilots, the cabin crew, the ground personnel, technicians, controllers, supervisors, and so forth. I don't need to meet all of them in person to have some image of them, drawn from various sources (including their suggestive commercials, stereotypes of German precision and efficiency, references from friends, etc.)" (p. 41-42). This illustration provides an excellent example of why Sztompka contended that the distinctions between interpersonal and system-level trust were blurry. Elaborating on this perception of the fuzzy distinction between interpersonal and system-level trust, Sztompka (1999) defined another dimension of social trust in which objects are endowed with trust: technological systems. Giddens (1990) defined these as "systems of technical accomplishment or professional expertise that organize large areas of the material and social environments in which we live today" (p. 44). Examples of these types of systems include: telecommunications, water and power, transportation, air-traffic control, computer networks, and financial markets (Sztompka, 1999). Sztompka (1999) maintained that the mechanisms of operations for these systems are often unclear to the general public and are thus taken for granted. In fact, Sztompka argued that trust in these systems has become a necessary part of everyday life.

Sztompka (1999) further analyzed system-level trust by writing, "the concept of a systemic trust seems close to the notion of legitimacy. Following Weber's distinctions, we may say that charismatic legitimacy presupposes personal trust (or at least, what we are calling virtual personal trust: the seeming intimacy and emotional ties with quite distant persons), legal legitimacy presupposes institutional trust (or its special variant, procedural trust)" (p. 45). To summarize, Sztompka (1999) maintained that trust in

people was ultimately at the root of all types of social trust, including system trust. Even in exhibiting what can be defined as system-level trust, one expects beneficial actions from others such as the agents of various institutions and organizations (Sztompka, 1999).

Culbert and McDonough (1986) posited that, "Much of the misunderstanding and confusion as to the importance and centrality of trust as a determinant of organizational effectiveness lies in the fact that few managers recognize how much a smooth-running system depends on members 'internalizing' a constrained and predefined set of goals, values, and assumptions" (p. 177). The same authors (1985) have also labeled this internalization process as commitment to the "dominant reality" of the system. Therefore, attempting to obtain an employee's commitment in an organizational context can be equated with asking the employee to internalize "the dominant reality" of the system (Culbert & McDonough, 1986). Furthermore, Culbert and McDonough (1986) viewed this internalization process as necessary to the long-term success of the organization. "Internalization enables members to act spontaneously and decisively in support of a system without having to stop and debate the advisability of each action" (Culbert & McDonough, 1986, p. 177). The authors further describe this process as similar to what one experiences while driving on a busy freeway, making complex decisions and performing complex actions without needing to stop to contemplate each discrete step. Culbert and McDonough (1986) focused a great deal of their attention on internalization because they believed it to be pivotal to making the decision of whether or not to trust. In their view, employees choosing to trust an organization internalize the goals, assumptions, and values of that organization and its systems. Conversely, employees who

ultimately do not trust the system are thought not to have undergone this internalization process. Culbert and McDonough (1986) believed that employees would be afraid to internalize a notion of the system that favored the needs of management as opposed to a notion that recognized the contributions of subordinates. Therefore, Culbert and McDonough (1985) defined system trust as an individual's willingness to internalize a view of the system as one that would ultimately protect them and recognize their contributions to the organization.

When employees believe that their organizational systems are not trustworthy, they will tend to reduce perceived vulnerability by limiting performance only to those areas that can be assessed objectively (Culbert & McDonough, 1986). The authors noted that other ways to reduce vulnerability include: acting as partisan to the organization, viewing participation as a game, and mirroring those who wield power in the organization.

Finally, Culbert and McDonough (1986) pointed to empowerment as the cornerstone of understanding trust at the organizational level. The authors believed that employees would not internalize a system that did not empower them personally and professionally. This idea lends additional theoretical support to the inclusion of empowerment in the study model.

Recent research (Mayer, Davis, and Schoorman, 1995; McAllister, 1995; Tyler & Kramer, 1996) has focused on relational models of trust in an effort to address the limitations of the rational choice perspective. Critics of this perspective believe that not enough attention was paid to the social and emotional influences on trust, and instead, focused too much on the cognitive aspects. Critics of the rational choice model also

questioned whether it adequately explained how people actually make decisions in a descriptive capacity. In response, Mayer, Davis, and Schoorman (1995), McAllister (1995), and Tyler and Kramer (1996) argued that trust needed to be conceptualized not only as a calculative orientation toward risk, but also as a social orientation toward other people and toward society as a whole. Furthermore, these scholars maintained that an adequate theory of organizational trust had to address the social and relational underpinnings of trust-related choices in a more systematic fashion that provided descriptive power.

When people do not possess the necessary knowledge or experience to trust others, trust within organizations must be either individually negotiated or substitutes for trust must be found (Barber, 1983; Kollock, 1994; Sabel, 1993; Shapiro, 1987; Sitkin & Roth, 1993; Sitkin, 1995). Such substitutes are manifested in the form of contracts or other administrative procedures that are costly and time-consuming for organizations. Trust can reduce these transaction costs by operating as a social decision heuristic. Social decision heuristics are defined as behavioral rules of thumb that can be used when making decisions about how to respond to various kinds of dilemmas (Allison & Messick, 1990). Uzzi (1997) corroborated this by noting that such social decision heuristics can take the place of formal monitoring or measuring devices for gauging and enforcing reciprocity. Uzzi found that individuals using these heuristics spontaneously and unilaterally engaged in a variety of actions that helped solve problems as they appeared. Similar findings have been well documented (Bendor, Kramer, & Stout, 1991; Kollock, 1994; Messick & Liebrand, 1995; Parks & Komorita, 1997) and suggest that

social decision heuristics can lead to substantial payoffs on an individual and group level in organizations.

Spontaneous sociability describes the vast array of cooperative, altruistic, and extra-role behaviors in which members of a social community engage. Such behaviors enhance collective well-being and further the attainment of collective goals (Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, 1997). Messick and colleagues (1983) found that trust, analyzed in terms of individuals' expectations of reciprocity, influenced individuals' willingness to reduce their consumption of a rapidly depleting shared resource pool. They found that, as individuals received feedback that collective resources were becoming more scarce, those who expected reciprocal restraint from others were much more likely to exercise restraint themselves and vice versa. Another significant finding of the study demonstrated that the behavior of low- and high-trusters did not change when resources were plentiful. Parks, Henager, and Scamahorn (1996) also examined the behavior of low- and high-trust individuals. Specifically, the authors looked at how these employees responded to messages of intent from other participants in a social dilemma. They found that low-trusters exhibited decreased levels of cooperation when reacting to a competitive message, but were unaffected by a cooperative message. Conversely, high-trusters reacted to the cooperative message with increased levels of cooperation.

Trust is critical for those in positions of authority. Tyler and DeGoey (1996) remarked that authorities' abilities to manage effectively would suffer immensely if they had to constantly explain and justify their actions. Moreover, it is simply too costly and impractical to monitor the performance of subordinates. Managers cannot see and punish

every act of insubordination, nor can they recognize and praise every cooperative act. As a result, employees must be willing to comply with rules and regulations, defer to organizational authorities, and accept dispute resolution procedures and outcomes if an organization is to operate efficiently and effectively. Tyler's research (1994) showed that individuals are more likely to accept outcomes when they trust an authority's motives and intentions. This finding held true even when outcomes for the individuals were not favorable.

Joseph and Winston (2005) explored associations between employee perceptions of servant leadership and trust in organizational leaders as well as organizational trust. Utilizing the Organizational Trust Inventory (OTI) (Nyhan & Marlowe, 1997), the authors found a strong and positive correlation between perceptions of organizational servant leadership and levels of organizational trust. Additionally, the employees of servant-led organizations in the study indicated higher levels of organizational trust than employees working in organizations where leaders practiced using non-servant styles. This study was theoretically rooted in trust theory that has established the significance of leader behavior in the development of employees' trust in leaders (Bennis & Thomas, 2002; Dirks & Ferrin, 2002; Flaherty & Pappas, 2000; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 1998). This study added empirical support for theoretical models suggesting that servant leadership is a specific leadership type that can elicit trust (Farling et al., 1999; Russell & Stone, 2002). Greenleaf (1977) maintained that servant leadership was a product and an antecedent of trust in leaders and organizations because it increases perceptions of leader trustworthiness. In turn, perceptions of leader trustworthiness should have a reciprocal relationship to leader trust (Zolin et. al, 2004).

In an effort to address the nursing shortage, Laschinger and Finegan (2005) conducted a study of nurses in which they examined the relationships among empowerment, justice perceptions, trust, and respect in the workplace. They found that structural empowerment exhibited a direct and positive association with perceptions of interactional justice which subsequently had a direct, positive relationship with perceptions of respect and levels of organizational trust. Respect demonstrated a direct effect on levels of organizational trust, which then had direct effects on levels of job satisfaction.

Hubbell and Chory-Assad (2005) conducted a study of the relationships between justice perceptions and trust in managers and in the organization as a whole. They discovered that procedural justice significantly predicted organizational and managerial trust. Furthermore, distributive justice predicted managerial trust, but not organizational trust. Interactional justice was not a significant predictor of either trust type. This study drew upon the theoretical work of Ellis and Shockley-Zalabak (2001), who studied managerial and organizational trust, finding that job satisfaction, perceptions of organizational effectiveness, and information that employees received about the organization and specific jobs were associated more with levels of organizational trust than with levels of trust in managers. Ellis and Shockley-Zalabak's study was groundbreaking because it distinguished managerial and organizational trust as distinct constructs.

Jung and Baek (2006) surveyed a Korean government ministry in a study of the relationships among three types of trust: trust among peer officials, trust between lower-level and higher-level officials at the interpersonal level, and organizational trust at the

level of the institution. Ultimately, the purpose of the study was to examine how these three trust types influenced open communications intentions. Using structural equation modeling, the results suggested that, in the analysis of open communications intentions, organizational trust was mediated by the two types of interpersonal trust. This finding was not consistent with the hypothesis that the three kinds of trust would have direct and simultaneous effects on open communication intentions.

Paine (2007) conducted an exploration of relationships among interpersonal trust, organizational trust, and organizational commitment in a technology firm. Organizational trust was measured using Robinson's (1996) measure and commitment was measured with the revised organizational commitment scale (Meyer & Allen, 1991; 1997). Interpersonal trust and organizational trust both demonstrated significant and positive relationships with affective and normative commitment. The findings suggested that affective and normative commitment to the organization would increase with enhanced levels of interpersonal and organizational trust.

Williams (2005) examined the relationship between specific components of nurses' job satisfaction and their levels of organizational trust. The trust theory utilized in this study delineated five dimensions of organizational trust: competence (an employee's perception that colleagues and managers are effective), openness and honesty (perceptions that information is shared accurately, sincerely, and abundantly), concern for employees (perceptions of acts of empathy and tolerance on the part of management, including a concern for employees' safety), reliability (perceptions of consistent and dependable actions on the part of managers), and identification (association/identification with an organization's goals, norms, values, and beliefs). Williams found that four

specific aspects of job satisfaction predicted organizational trust: professional status, autonomy, organizational policy, and interaction. The components of pay and task requirements were not statistically significant.

Ribiere and Tuggle (2005) researched the role of organizational trust in the knowledge management field. This study included ninety-seven organizations engaged in knowledge management and sought differences in levels of organizational trust vis a vis specific methodologies of codification (email, listserves, etc.) and personalization (video conferencing, groupware, etc.). They found support for the hypotheses that organizations with high levels of organizational trust relied more on personalization tools than companies with lower levels of organizational trust and also that companies with higher levels of organizational trust were more successful in their knowledge management initiatives than organizations with lower levels of organizational trust.

### Empowerment

The construct of employee empowerment is critical in the analysis of organizational innovativeness and effectiveness (Conger & Kanungo, 1988; Kanter, 1989). Studies on leadership and management skills (Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Kanter, 1979; Kanter, 1983; McClelland, 1975) suggest that the practice of empowering subordinates is a principal component of managerial and organizational effectiveness. Empowerment has important implications for both managers and subordinates in that it can be viewed both as a psychological state of employees and as a management technique (Conger & Kanungo, 1988; Kanter, 1989; Spreitzer, 1995; Spreitzer, 1996). According to Spreitzer (1996), empowerment encompasses how leaders lead, how individuals react, how peers interact, and how work related processes are structured.

Hollander and Offermann (1990) defined empowerment as the sharing of power. Other researchers have defined it as the process of increasing individual perceptions of control (Kanter, 1983; Keller & Dansereau, 1995) as well as a process of strengthening an individual's perception of self-efficacy (Conger & Kanungo, 1988). Recent research efforts have adopted a cognitive perspective regarding empowerment. Thomas and Velthouse (1990) analyzed empowerment from the perspective of the employee and subsequently divided the construct into four dimensions: an individual's judgment of meaning (the perceived value of his or her work), competence (his or her ability to perform the work), self-determination (choice in initiating and regulating actions), and impact (the ability to effect or influence organizational outcomes). Spreitzer (1995) empirically validated these four dimensions. In her study of mid-level employees from a Fortune 500 industrial organization, she found that personality factors of employees as well as work-context related variables forged psychological empowerment and several of its outcomes. Specifically, she found empirical support for the following hypotheses:

- Self-esteem is positively related to psychological empowerment.
- Access to information about the mission of an organization is positively related to psychological empowerment.
- Access to information about the performance of a work unit is positively related to psychological empowerment.
- Self-esteem and locus of control are distinct from the overall construct of psychological empowerment.

- Antecedents of empowerment include strong sociopolitical support from subordinates, work group, peers, and superior; work climates that emphasize participation; and work units with little role ambiguity.
- The relationships between empowerment, innovative behavior, and managerial effectiveness were significant.

Thus, empowerment is both a process that can be initiated by managers as well as a response on the part of employees that, in essence, validates the successful efforts of the managers to create an empowering experience.

Spreitzer, Kizilos, and Nason (1997) elaborated upon Spreitzer's prior work by conducting an empirical study examining the relationships between the four dimensions of empowerment and three key anticipated organizational outcomes of empowerment: effectiveness, work satisfaction, and job-related strain. Defining empowerment as a four-dimensional construct, Spreitzer et al. (1997) wrote, "No unidimensional conceptualization of empowerment by itself would capture the full essence of the concept. Rather than being antecedents or outcomes of each other, the four dimensions represent different facets of the empowerment construct" (p.679). In their study, Spreitzer and colleagues found that: the meaning dimension of empowerment was positively related to work satisfaction, a sense of competence was related to higher levels of effectiveness on the job, lower levels of strain and self-determination were related to work satisfaction, and a sense of impact was related to effectiveness. In a summary discussion of their findings, Spreitzer and colleagues (1997) wrote, "Managers who saw themselves as having the requisite skills and abilities to make an impact in their work environment and who felt they were able to make a difference by their actions, were seen

as high performers by their subordinates” (p.686). The authors also affirmed that, “the four dimensions of empowerment together are modest, yet differential, predictors of the different anticipated outcomes of empowerment (effectiveness, work satisfaction, and job-related strain)” (p. 689). Moreover, the authors contended that, while some of the dimensions of the construct contributed to the affective domain of empowerment, others contributed more to performance-related aspects. Finally, the authors argued that the study results demonstrated the importance of viewing empowerment as a multidimensional construct and also that this perspective would enable a more clear understanding of how empowerment could be associated with important employee outcomes.

Kraimer, Seibert and Liden (1999) built on Spreitzer’s work by assessing the convergent, discriminant, and criterion-related validity of her instrument’s scores using variables that were conceptually related to empowerment. Kraimer and colleagues conducted a field study focused on nurses at a hospital. Their instrument was comprised of Spreitzer's (1995) 12-item empowerment scale to measure the four dimensions of empowerment, Idaszak and Drasgow (1987) revision of Hackman and Oldham's (1975) Job Diagnostics Survey (JDS), an eight item version of Porter et al.'s (1974) Organizational Commitment scale, and three items to assess career intentions that were adapted from Liden and Graen (1980). Confirmatory factor analysis lent significant levels of support to Spreitzer's four-dimensional conceptualization of empowerment (meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact). Kraimer and colleagues also discovered that the four dimensions of empowerment were differentially associated with

organizational commitment and career intentions. These findings provided evidence for the predictive validity of Spreitzer's instrument.

Additional research studies have found that contextual factors including organizational culture (Sparrowe, 1994) and top level support (Arad & Drasgow, 1994) have an influence on perceptions of empowerment (Liden, Wayne, & Sparrowe, 2000). Liden and colleagues (2000) maintained that two critical contextual factors have been ignored in the study of the construct: relationships between leaders and subordinates found in the leader-member exchange (LMX) literature and relationships among coworkers found in the team-member exchange (TMX) literature. Liden and colleagues (2000) wrote that only a handful of studies have sought to examine the relationship between leaders and employees in relation to empowerment. To address this shortage, the authors conducted a study to construct and test a model of empowerment that integrated job characteristics and social exchange relationships in explaining work outcomes. Specifically, they proposed that empowerment would mediate the relationships among job characteristics, LMX and TMX, and work outcomes. They ultimately found that the meaning and competence dimensions of empowerment mediated the relationship between job characteristics and work satisfaction, the meaning dimension mediated the relationship between job characteristics and organizational commitment, LMX and TMX relationships were directly associated with organizational commitment, and TMX was directly associated with job performance. To summarize their findings, Liden and colleagues (2000) proposed that work satisfaction could be explained by job characteristics via empowerment, but that LMX and TMX combined with job characteristics and empowerment in explaining variation in organizational commitment

and job performance. Overall, their study supported the proposition that attitudes about work may be influenced by employee perceptions of empowerment.

LMX theory further demonstrates that key antecedents of empowerment are found in work relationships between managers and subordinates. Subordinates reporting a high-quality relationship with managers have assumed greater job responsibilities and also expressed contributing more to their units (Liden & Graen, 1980). This feeling of contribution is synonymous with the cognitive dimension, impact. Examining the dualistic LMX relationship as a potential antecedent to empowerment, Keller and Dansereau (1995) found that when leaders or managers provide support for an employee's self-worth and expand negotiating latitude, employees experience empowerment vis-a-vis the ability to make decisions. Within the LMX literature, managerial trust is considered to be a crucial antecedent of high-quality relationships and empowering leader behaviors. Gomez and Rosen (2001) elaborated upon this connection between trust and empowerment by empirically validating that managerial trust was related to employee perceptions of the quality of the leader-member exchange, the quality of the leader-member exchange was positively associated with employee empowerment, and the quality of the leader-member exchange mediated the relationship between managerial trust and employee empowerment.

#### Resistance to Change

Resistance to change can be a major obstacle encountered by organizations during the change process (Miller, Johnson, & Grau, 1994; Piderit, 2000). Extant research suggests that it is inevitable that members of organizations will attempt to resist change during any innovation process (De Dreu & Van de Vliert, 1997). The construct has been

tied to negative outcomes including low levels of employee satisfaction, productivity, and psychological well-being, as well as increased levels of theft, absenteeism, and turnover (Bordia, Hunt, Paulsen, Tourish, & DiFonzo, 2004; Miller et al., 1994). A recent study conducted by Kuokkanen, Suominen, Härkönen, Kukkurainen, and Doran (2009) found that resistance to change was a barrier to empowerment when analyzed from the levels of the individual and the work unit. Due to swift and constant changes in the environment, it is critical for organizations to be adaptable and open to change in order to survive. Furthermore, to implement changes successfully, organizations must have the cooperation of their employees (Porras & Robertson, 1992).

While much of the focus on the construct has been negative in nature, Piderit (2000) acknowledged that there can be positive outcomes associated with resistance to change. On occasion, employee resistance may be connected with feelings of loyalty to their organization (Graham, 1986) or ethical principles (Modigliani & Rochat, 1995).

Organizational research typically examines resistance to change through three distinct lenses: as a cognitive state, as an emotion, and as a behavioral intention (Piderit, 2000). Many studies have restricted their focus to examining the construct along only one of these lines.

For instance, on a cognitive level, some research has demonstrated that employees may develop a negative attitude towards organizational change which subsequently leads to negative interpretations of the change in a general sense (Armenakis, Harris, & Mossholder, 1993; Stanley, Meyer, & Topolnytsky, 2005).

On an affective level, other studies, such as that of Bordia et al (2004), looked at employees' affective reactions (anxiety, agitation, depression) in the face of

organizational change. Vince and Broussine (1996) explored managers' emotional responses to change in a public service organization. Their findings uncovered paradoxical emotions in the midst of the change process. The researchers ultimately concluded that innovative efforts would fail if organizations denied the emotional aspect of changes.

Adopting a behavioral perspective, some studies, such as one conducted by Armenakis and colleagues (1993) have explored the explicit behavior of employees' during periods of change. These behaviors include: expressions of concern, intentional slowdowns, strikes, and even sabotage.

Attempting to synthesize the main streams of thought concerning resistance to change, George and Jones (2001) studied the cognitive and affective components to shed light on the complexity of the change process. These researchers maintained that individual and organizational changes were both critical to a more thorough understanding of the innovation process.

In developing a resistance to change measure, Oreg (2003) conducted a seven-part study, ultimately validating an instrument that analyzed resistance to change at the individual employee level along a four-part structure. The four parts are comprised of routine seeking, emotional reaction to imposed change, short-term focus, and cognitive rigidity. Five years later, Oreg and van Dam (2008) expanded Oreg's earlier work by identifying additional individual difference variables that contribute to resistance to change and also by finding other key variables that are not restricted to the individual level of analysis. In this study, the importance of the quality of leader-member exchange and the daily context in which change takes place were primary foci of the research. The

authors found that the relationships of leader–member exchange and perceived development climate with employees' resistance to a merger were fully mediated by three change process characteristics (information, participation, and trust in management). Furthermore, openness to job changes and organizational tenure showed significant relationships with resistance to change, adding to Oreg's previous findings at the individual level. To summarize these findings, it was found that employees who reported lower levels of resistance to change were those who felt that they had a high-quality LMX relationship, perceived a strong development climate at the organizational level, received more information regarding the changes, had more opportunity for participation, and indicated more trust in management.

A situational perspective of resistance to change has been emphasized in a few recent studies (Armenakis & Harris, 2002; Goltz & Hietapelto, 2002; Lines, 2004). The situational antecedents of resistance to change that have been identified include: trust in management (Oreg, 2006), job autonomy (Watson, 1971), and the abundance and quality of information provided to subordinates (Miller et al., 1994).

Another line of research has suggested that individual dispositions are associated with response to change (Wanous et al., 2000). Judge, Thoresen, Pucik, and Welbourne (1999) found that positive self-concept and tolerance for risk were positively related to support for change. Oreg (2006) also posited that dispositional resistance to change reflected the affective, cognitive, and behavioral propensities of peoples' resistance to change, adding support to the three-tiered theoretical body of literature that dominates discussion of the construct. Oreg (2006) suggested that everyone has different internal tendencies to support or resist change and that these differing dispositions affect views of

change.

### Support for Innovation

Innovation is a crucial characteristic of an organization that greatly impacts its effectiveness, performance, and ability to maintain a competitive advantage (Damanpour & Gopalakrishnan, 2001; West & Anderson, 1996). Organizations that foster innovation and creativity have been shown to perform more successfully in turbulent environments (Orpen, 1990), show more rapid growth, provide greater rates of returns for investors, and deliver higher service quality than organizations that function more traditionally (Damanpour & Evan, 1984; Latting et al., 2004; Mumford, Scott, Gaddis, & Strange, 2002). Innovative environments are credited as being energizing and motivating (Cohen, 1999; Henkin, Davis, & Singleton, 1993), and for enabling organizations to maximize the potential of their human resources (Axtell et al., 2000; D'Agostino, 2000). Other studies (Dee, Henkin, & Pell, 2002; Dee, 2004; Jansen, Eccles, & Chandler, 1994; Latting et al., 2004; Orpen, 1990; Pierce & Delbecq, 1977; Tesluk, Farr, & Klein, 1997; West & Farr, 1989; Young, 1993) have associated innovative environments with higher levels of job satisfaction, motivation, job involvement, trust in management, and organizational commitment; positive perceptions of work life and role clarity; and lower levels of stress, role conflict, and intention to leave the organization. On a social level, innovative behavior is also related to the quality of supervisor-subordinate relationships in organizations (Basu, 1991; Scott & Bruce, 1994). These findings are especially important at the organizational level because the same researchers found that individuals tend to generalize their supervisor-subordinate relationships to their overall views of their organizations.

Innovation has been defined in a myriad of ways. However, common to all are the concepts of process, new ideas, and change. Slappendel (1996) defined innovation as "the process through which new ideas, objects, and practices are created, developed, or reinvented" (p. 107). Van de Ven (1986) defined it as "the development and implementation of new ideas by people who over time engage in transactions with others within an institutional context" (p. 591). Innovations can be associated with an organization's products, programs, practices, and processes, as well as with its people (Daft, 1978; Davis, 1982; Henkin et al., 1993; Herting, 2000; Mathisen & Einarsen, 2004; West & Farr, 1989). Innovations can be singular, systemic, narrowly focused, or far-reaching (Herting, 2000; Pierce & Delbecq, 1977; Zaltman, Duncan, & Holbek, 1973). They can be planned and programmatic as well as spontaneous and brought about by environmental necessity (Damanpour & Evan, 1984; Henkin et al., 1993; West & Anderson, 1996; Zaltman et al., 1973). They can be radical or routine (Abernathy & Utterback, 1978; Damanpour & Evan, 1984; Kirton, 1976; Zaltman et al., 1973) as well as large-scale or small (Axtell et al., 2000; Zaltman et al., 1973).

The construct of innovation has historically been defined as a process that occurs in three, distinct stages: initiation (the conceptualization, recognition and proposal of a new idea), adoption (the process of accepting the necessity of the new idea and then preparing the organization for change), and implementation (when the new idea becomes ingrained within the organization's fabric). It is important to note that these three stages are not necessarily sequential (Van de Ven, 1986; Zaltman et al., 1973). Pierce and Delbecq (1977) as well as Zaltman, Duncan, and Holbek (1973) offer a similar assessment by describing innovation as complex, multifaceted, and multiphased.

Innovations may appear as a result of an organization's attempts to compete with other organizations and maintain competitive advantage in the marketplace. Or, they may surface as the result of an organization's internal needs-identification. For instance, organizations may face dilemmas such as how to operate with limited resources, how to coordinate or control large teams, how to deal with unforeseen circumstances, failures, technological change, new regulations, etc. (Baldrige & Burnham, 1975; Cohen, 1999; Davis, 1982; Henkin et al., 1993; Latting et al., 2004; Mathisen & Einarsen, 2004; Tesluk et al., 1997; West & Anderson, 1996).

Faculty members are the purveyors of innovation in higher education environments. However, as Mintzberg (1979) observed, colleges and university environments tend to present obstacles to innovative efforts. Describing what he referred to as the "professional bureaucracy," Mintzberg (1979, p. 348) suggested that the decentralized structures of colleges and universities put power directly in the hands of workers (the faculty). As such, these faculty members exercise a high level of autonomy regarding their job performance. Therefore, it can be difficult for administrators to control or influence how faculty choose to perform their work. In other words, it can be difficult to get faculty members to change their methods, habits, etc. if they are not inclined to do so. As Mintzberg (1979) warned, a professional bureaucracy tends to be "well suited to producing its standard outputs, but ill-suited to adapting to the production of new ones" (p. 375). Thus, faculty members might favor conservative means and methods while simultaneously tending to resist change efforts (Mintzberg, 1979). Weick (1976) offered a similar analysis, but framed his theory in terms of loose coupling. In a loosely coupled system, all sub-systems are connected, yet highly autonomous and

independent. Bess and Dee (2008) argued that loosely coupled systems tend to resist change because changes may be perceived as threatening to positional authority and power relationships. Compared to organizations in the private sector, higher education institutions are not noted for exhibiting high levels of innovation (Cameron & Smart, 1998). However, shrinking budgets have left universities seeking ways to become more innovative (Van Vught, 1989). Colleges and universities are increasingly taking on the characteristics of, and/or operational norms associated with private enterprise. David Breneman (2005) explains that the entrepreneurial tendencies seen across all institutional types in higher education are the direct result of "the steady decline in the share of operating support provided by state governments. In 1979, state governments provided 50 percent of the operating support for state universities; by 2000, that share had dropped to 36 percent nationally, and for many research universities, the figure had declined to less than 20 percent" (p.4). Grappling in an environment of heavily constrained resources, all higher education institutions compete fiercely for students and faculty. Breneman offered a more recent synopsis of this situation when he described how many public and private universities engage in the equivalent of profit seeking behavior through schools or divisions of continuing education that do not receive the same type of institutional support as other operations within the institution. Instead, these schools or divisions of continuing education are forced to earn a surplus or at least sustain themselves financially. Within such operations, it can be difficult to negotiate the reality that these operations must be profitable to survive on one hand, but still offer quality programs that are representative of other university offerings in terms of quality on the other. In such cases, these profit seeking entities within the "traditional" colleges and universities act in

innovative ways that are typically observed in for-profit organizations. However, the adoption of innovative and entrepreneurial practices can have detrimental effects on the public's trust of institutions of higher education. University-corporate ties have become a major source of distrust among external and internal referents. The classic example of this was the Berkeley-Novartis deal that caused internal and external outcry. Although he stood by the deal, Berkeley chancellor, Robert Berdahl, expressed his own unease at what he called the privatization of the public universities.

### Interpersonal Conflict

Studies typically suggest that conflict among individuals may have negative effects on organizational effectiveness (Jehn, Northcraft, & Neale, 1999) and job performance (De Dreu & Weingart, 2003; Peterson & Behfar, 2003). Conflict is also generally considered to have negative effects on organizational innovation (Massey & Dawes, 2007). Conversely, effective conflict management has been linked to enhanced organizational effectiveness (Likert & Likert, 1976; Rahim, 2001; Weider-Hatfield & Hatfield, 1995). According to Rahim (2001), conflict management can be defined as the use of effective strategies to minimize the dysfunctions that can result from conflict on one hand, while enhancing the constructive functions to enhance learning and organizational effectiveness on the other. In line with Rahim's assessment, Baron (1991), Massey and Dawes (2007), and Tjosvold (1985) found that conflict can be functional and should be promoted under certain circumstances. Individuals may feel free to express their opinions and challenge others' ideas when functional conflict is recognized and facilitated (Baron, 1991; Tjosvold, 1985). When harnessed and used constructively, conflict can prevent "group think," defined as feelings of loyalty or commitment that may

suppress creativity and obscure viable options (Filley, 1970). Functional conflict has been defined as “a constructive challenging of ideas, beliefs, and assumptions, and respect for others’ viewpoints even when parties disagree” (Massey & Dawes, 2007, p. 1122).

Wilmot and Hocker (2001) explained that conflict is “an expressed struggle between at least two interdependent parties who perceive incompatible goals, scarce resources, and interference from others in achieving their goals” (p.41). This idea of interdependence is crucial - without it, conflict would never arise. However, conflict is not restricted to the individual level of analysis. Rahim (2001) noted that conflict can occur within an individual (intrapersonal conflict), between people (interpersonal conflict), and between or among groups of people (intragroup conflict).

Interpersonal conflict is the most common form noted in organizational research and can be further classified into the following subcategories (Rahim, 2001): affective conflict, substantive conflict, conflicts of interest, conflict of values, goal conflict, realistic and nonrealistic conflict, institutionalized and non-institutionalized conflict, retributive conflict, misattributed conflict, and displaced conflict. The two most notable forms that are studied at the level of the organization are substantive/task conflict (occurring when two or more organizational members disagree on issues related to task or content (Rahim, 2001) and affective conflict (occurring in the context of problem-solving when two people realize that their feelings and emotions are not compatible). Jehn (1995) and other researchers (Jehn, 1997; Jehn, Northcraft, & Neale, 1999; Jehn & Mannix, 2001) offer a similar categorization of conflict types. However, their division of conflict types, while similar to Rahim's, is more concise. They provide three conflict types: task conflict (same as Rahim's), relationship/emotional conflict (same as Rahim's

affective conflict), and process conflict (defined as disagreement regarding the processes involved in attempting to achieve goals). Jehn and Chatman (2000) argued that it is critical to understand what they call the proportional conflict composition within individuals and organizations. This proportional conflict composition is defined as the level of each type of conflict compared to the other two types and to the overall level of conflict within the group.

Other research has examined conflict along two lines: task conflict and relationship conflict (Simons & Peterson, 2000). Task conflict consists of disagreement among group members about viewpoints, ideas, and opinions whereas relationship conflict is comprised of perceptions of interpersonal incompatibility (Simons & Peterson, 2000). Studies have suggested that relationship conflict may have negative implications regarding task performance and individual satisfaction (Amason & Sapienza, 1997; Amason, 1996; Jehn, 1995). However, task conflict has been suggested as having positive effects where organizational effectiveness is concerned (Amason & Sapienza, 1997; Simons & Peterson, 2000).

Conflict has been analyzed as intrapersonal or interpersonal (Thomas, 1992). Intrapersonal conflict is thought to exist when individuals are forced to choose between incompatible options (Thomas, 1992). Intrapersonal conflict has been associated with role conflict and low levels of performance at the organizational level (Behrman & Perreault, 1984). Interpersonal conflict has been defined as “a phenomenon that occurs between interdependent parties as they experience negative emotional reactions to perceived disagreements and interference with the attainment of their goals” (Barki & Hartwick, 2001, p. 7). These researchers additionally maintained that interpersonal

conflict might have negative effects on organizational performance. Spector and Jex (1998) reported that interpersonal conflict was related to job satisfaction, turnover intention, and depression. Frone (2000) subdivided interpersonal conflict into two distinct categories: interpersonal conflict with supervisors and conflict with colleagues. Frone found that interpersonal conflict with supervisors was associated with job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention while interpersonal conflict with coworkers was associated with depression, self-esteem, and other negative symptoms.

The idea that conflict could and should be managed was not a popular idea until recently in the organizational literature. Except for Mary Parker Follett (1924) and a select few researchers in the early twentieth century, it was common opinion that conflict could only result in dysfunction and should therefore be avoided to the greatest possible extent. However, the view that conflict could only carry negative consequences began to change in the 1960s as researchers started to embrace the notion that conflict had inherent constructive functions for individuals and organizations. This shift resulted in a change in terminology. What was once termed conflict resolution evolved into what is now known as conflict management (Litterer, 1966; Miles, 1980; Rahim & Bonoma, 1979).

Following Follett's lead, contemporary thought concerning effective conflict management recognizes the need for different types of leadership behaviors that are dependent upon contextual variables and ultimately require cooperative subordinates. Blake and Mouton (1964) provided an early model of conflict management. They proposed that conflict could be handled in five ways: by withdrawing, smoothing, compromising, forcing, and confronting/problem solving. Furthermore, they viewed these five methods as occurring along the two dimensions of concern for production and concern for people. Thomas

(1975) built upon the work of Blake and Mouton by constructing a similar model where conflict management could encompass the following strategies: competing, avoiding, accommodating, collaborating, and compromising. For Thomas, these methods could be identified along the two dimensions of assertiveness (concern for the self) and cooperativeness (concern for others).

The various conflict types do not all operate in the same fashion and therefore have a wide range of implications for people and organizations. For example, relationship conflict has repeatedly been shown to be destructive to performance and morale (De Dreu & Van Vianen, 2001; Jehn, 1997; Jehn, 1995). Conversely, studies indicate that a degree of substantive conflict enhances the participative leadership process in a manner that strengthens employee involvement and maximizes team potential (Amason, Thompson, Hochwarter, & Harrison, 1995). Overall and across conflict type, contemporary theory holds that a moderate amount of conflict is beneficial to organizations and the decision-making processes of teams (Amason & Sapienza, 1997; Jehn, 1997; Rahim, 2001). The idea that conflict can be beneficial and also something that can be managed has tremendous implications for organizational leaders. Leader-member exchange (LMX) theory focuses mainly on the dyadic relationship between leaders and followers and how these relationships are associated with important aspects of employee attitudes. Gerstner and Day (1997) conducted a meta-analysis of twenty-five years of empirical research on LMX theory and found that LMX is positively related to greater job satisfaction among subordinates, objective performance, and organizational commitment (Dansereau, Cashman, & Graen, 1973; Dansereau, Graen, & Haga, 1975; Graen, Novak, & Sommerkamp, 1982). Gerstner and Day's research also uncovered a negative relationship

between LMX and role conflict and turnover. Gerstner and Day (1997) maintained that LMX is typically associated with positive performance-related and attitudinal variables.

Interpretations of conflict and its effective management vary along demographic lines and also according to organizational type. For example, people from Japan have been found to tend to avoid confrontation in interpersonal conflicts (Barnlund, 1975; Lebra, 1976; Ozaki, 1978). Japanese employees were also found to be more likely than Americans to avoid topics that they perceived as threatening to personal relationships (Barnlund, 1975). Neff (1987) found a relationship between styles of conflict management and gender. Gelfand, Leslie, and Keller (2008) discussed how various forms of conflict cultures can be found in different types of organizations and further elaborated upon how these various forms can be constructive or detrimental to organizational effectiveness and functioning. Gelfand, Leslie, and Keller conceptualized four distinct forms of conflict management that correspond to different organizational cultures. These four forms are dominating conflict cultures, collaborative conflict cultures, conflict-avoidant cultures, and passive–aggressive conflict cultures.

Dominating conflict cultures view open confrontation as an appropriate way of managing conflict. In this paradigm, truth is eventually revealed through open conflict. Dominating conflict cultures create the potential for innovation because they foster the active expression of divergent and competing opinions (Ancona & Caldwell, 1992; Bantel & Jackson, 1989; De Dreu & West, 2001). Additionally, dominating conflict cultures can lead to faster decision-making when compared to other conflict cultures. However, dominating conflict cultures also have much detrimental potential. Specifically, employees in such a conflict culture are apt to experience greater levels of stress, burnout,

and turnover. Moreover, because of its individualistic nature, dominating conflict cultures may promote flawed decision-making and continued conflict escalation as a result of a lack of careful consideration of alternative courses of action (Ancona & Caldwell, 1992; Bantel & Jackson, 1989; De Dreu & West, 2001).

Collaborative conflict culture embraces norms of managing conflict that are agreeable and active. In this paradigm, employees are empowered to actively manage conflicts in a cooperative manner that ultimately serves the interests of the group. The core belief of collaborative conflict cultures is that the whole is more than the sum of its parts. Like dominating conflict cultures, collaborative conflict cultures can enhance innovation and creativity. However, the way in which this is achieved differs from the dominating style in that innovation and creativity are reached through open discussion of alternative views in a supportive environment (Chen, Liu, & Tjosvold, 2005; Chen, Tjosvold, & Su, 2005). Collaborative conflict cultures will thus be more adaptable to change because of the emphasis on active listening and a desire to reach solutions that benefit the group. On the flip side, however, the process of seeking the input of all members and carefully considering multiple perspectives can be time-consuming and therefore inhibit the ability to make decisions efficiently and cost-effectively.

Conflict-avoidant culture emphasizes conflict management norms that are agreeable and passive. In this paradigm, it is crucial to maintain order and control as well as to encourage interpersonal relationships and organizational harmony. Like passive-aggressive conflict cultures, employees in conflict-avoidant cultures do not perceive themselves as empowered to deal with conflict and are discouraged from dealing with conflict in the open. This conflict culture draws from the pre-Follett era ideas suggesting

that conflict is dangerous and to be avoided at all costs. Because open conflict and discussion are suppressed, this paradigm can be potentially the most efficient of the four conflict culture types because no time is lost on debate. Conflict-avoidant cultures can also be very predictable and controlled on the surface level. Unfortunately, conflict avoidant cultures are likely to be low on adaptability because the tendency is not to rock the boat. Moreover, the tendency not to share information that characterizes conflict-avoidant cultures can inhibit innovation and creative decision-making. Finally, despite what appears calm and controlled on the surface, conflict-avoidant cultures can perpetuate unresolved conflicts that really do exist.

The passive–aggressive conflict culture encompasses conflict management norms that are both disagreeable and passive. Similar to the dominating conflict culture, this paradigm is disagreeable in nature. Like the conflict avoidant culture, employees do not feel empowered to deal with conflict in the open. However, organizational harmony is not the driving force behind this approach. Instead, the passive-aggressive nature of conflict management is steeped in competitive behaviors. In passive–aggressive conflict cultures, typical behaviors for dealing with conflict include giving the silent treatment, intentionally not sharing information, sabotaging or slowing the work of others, or exhibiting withdrawal behaviors related to people and tasks (Baron, Neuman, & Geddes, 1999; Buss, 1961; Geddes & Baron, 1997). Passive–aggressive conflict cultures are replete with most of the negative outcomes found in the other three types, yet devoid of most of the positives. Passive–aggressive conflict cultures often lead to low levels of organizational performance. They are also associated with high levels of stress, burnout, turnover, cynicism, the stifling of ideas and innovation, and, ultimately, the boiling-over

of suppressed conflict.

Educational institutions are often hierarchical organizations that are noted for providing little opportunity for dealing with conflict openly. Parsons (1983) maintained that “the demands placed on administrator, teacher, and student in this hierarchical, authoritarian system leave little room for direct expression of anger” (p. 177). Faculty members frequently experience role conflict because they have a great deal of independence and autonomy within the teaching context, but are constrained in other ways due to a high degree of accountability to administrators and other constituents of the educational system (parents, students, professional organizations, etc.). Parsons argued that the goals and norms of the educational system are often at odds and therefore clash within complex bureaucratic and hierarchical structures. He maintained that this reality often creates passive-aggressive conflict cultures in educational institutions.

Universities are classic examples of organizations that find its members practicing a wide variety of professions, collaborating via distance, and disagreeing over organizational direction. As a result, subcultures often form. Subcultures tend to form when the members of the organization perform a variety of functions (Boisnier & Chatman, 2003; Trice & Beyer, 1993), are separated from each other physically (Sackmann, 1992), and differ in opinion regarding how the organization should conduct business during periods of rapid change (Kozan, 2002). In higher education, drastic changes in economic, legal, and political conditions constantly cause leaders and administrators to examine funding mechanisms, service delivery methods, etc. Subcultures are easily identified according to role (administrator, faculty, student, staff, academic discipline, etc.). Subcultures seem unavoidable in universities. However, they

are not necessarily bad in terms of organizational climate. Subcultures can be beneficial or detrimental to organizations depending on their alignment with the strategic goals of the organization. It is imperative to understand the conflict cultures of each subculture and to attempt to utilize conflict management strategies that fit the respective cultures. For example, a collaborative conflict culture might develop in a medical research center at a university that thrives on innovation and competition. In this research center, effective conflict management strategies might include open discussion, active listening to the viewpoints of several parties, etc. Yet, in an administrative office like the registrar, a conflict-avoidant culture might be more useful and appropriate due to an emphasis on efficiency. Here, the tendency would be not to rock the boat, to share less information, and to attempt to suppress open conflict.

Conflict has also been studied in the context of other variables in this study, namely empowerment and organizational trust.

Related to empowerment, conflict has been shown to have negative effects (Short & Johnson, 1994). Short and Johnson's research suggested that individuals experiencing conflict in an organization tended to feel powerless or alienated. In their study of teachers, these authors specifically found that higher levels of intrapersonal conflict were negatively related to perceptions of empowerment.

Janssen (2004) explored the intervening effects of conflict on the relationship between empowerment and commitment. He found that teachers perceiving high levels of empowerment can exhibit low levels of commitment when they experience conflicts with superiors. He therefore found support for the hypothesis that the relationship between organizational conflict and empowerment would be negative.

Related to organizational trust, conflict has showed negative effects (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999). These authors hypothesized that conflict among organizational members would have negative effects on organizational trust and found support for their hypothesis. Sztompka (1999) added support to Hoy and Tschannen-Moran's findings by positing that people who experience conflict with management may end up distrusting the organization because perceptions of trust in the systems of organizations are commonly linked to perceptions of trust in the people managing those organizations.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

This chapter details the methodological procedures employed to examine the relationship between organizational trust and the intervening and independent variables: empowerment, resistance to change, support for innovation, interpersonal conflict, and demographics (institutional type, age, gender, race, education, rank, teaching experience, administrative responsibility, innovation involvement, field). The chapter begins with a description of the characteristics of the study population and sample data. Then, the measures used to examine the focal constructs are discussed. Questions of validity and reliability are addressed, as well.

#### Study Population

The sample was drawn from the universe of faculty members who work in 73 HBCUs throughout the United States and who agreed to participate in the study.

#### Data Collection

The principal investigator from a public, land-grant university created and distributed an online survey to collect data. Some 19,697 faculty members from 73 cooperating HBCUs were invited to participate via email. The present study consists of secondary use of the data. The data set was obtained from a principal investigator at a public, land-grant university. The data set contained no records on individual human subjects (either direct or linked code numbers). Moreover, none of the results from the primary or secondary analysis will ever be submitted to the FDA. Because these conditions have been met, this study does not fall under the category of human subjects research and therefore did not require IRB approval. Secondary analysis of already

aggregated data sets (e.g., meta analysis) does not require IRB review since the investigator does not obtain individual human subject information.

### Instruments

**Organizational Trust:** Organizational trust was measured using Moye's (2003) adaptation of an instrument that Bryan (1995) modified from Butler's (1991) and Moorman, Zaltman, and Deshpande's (1992) original instruments. The Cronbach alpha of this scale was reported at .97 in Butler's initial study. Moorman, Zaltman, and Deshpande's instrument was designed to assess trust in the context of market research. In their study, the Cronbach alpha of the organizational trust subscale was .84. Bryan modified these instruments in an attempt to study trust relationships between individuals and organizations in higher education. Consequently, Bryan's adaptation is considered to be an appropriate choice for this study. Bryan's adapted scale achieved a reliability coefficient of .88. In Moye's study, the adapted organizational trust inventory registered a Cronbach alpha level of .913.

**Empowerment:** Perceptions of empowerment were measured with Spreitzer's (1995) four-dimensional measure. Spreitzer (1995) expanded upon the work of Tymon (1988) in constructing the items to measure meaning. To measure the competence dimension, items were adapted from Jones's (1986) self-efficacy scale. Hackman and Oldham's (1980) autonomy scale was used to measure self-determination. Impact was assessed using Ashforth's (1989) helplessness scale. Overall, a Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient of .72 (for the industrial sample) and .62 (for the insurance sample) was reported. Test-retest coefficients for each of the four dimensions were all satisfactory, as well. To further validate the multiple dimensions of the construct, factor

analysis performed on both study samples confirmed convergent and discriminant validity.

Resistance to Change: This construct was measured using Oreg's (2003) instrument. The measure consists of four sub-categories: routine seeking, emotional reaction to imposed change, short-term focus, and cognitive rigidity. Because Oreg (2006) has defined the construct along behavioral, affective, and cognitive dimensions, he suggested (2003) that routine seeking was related to the behavioral dimension, emotional reaction and short-term focus corresponded to the affective dimension, and cognitive rigidity was associated with the cognitive dimension. The instrument registered a Cronbach alpha level of .87.

Support for Innovation: This construct was measured with an instrument developed by Scott and Bruce (1994), the "climate for innovation" measure. Scott and Bruce adapted an instrument that was initially developed by Siegel and Kaemmerer in 1978. Climate was defined as an individual's "cognitive interpretation of an organizational situation that has been labeled psychological climate" (Scott & Bruce, 1994, p. 582). Scott and Bruce subdivided the climate construct into two categories: support for innovation (sixteen items), and resource supply (six items). Siegel and Kaemmerer's original measure contained more than sixty items.

Support for innovation measures how individuals perceive organizations regarding their openness to change, support for new ideas, and tolerance of diversity. Resource supply refers to how people perceive the distribution of resources at the organizational level: personnel, funding, and time. The Cronbach alpha registered .92 for the support for innovation subscale and .77 for the resource supply subscale.

Interpersonal Conflict: This construct was measured by three items that did not originate from an established instrument. Study participants were asked to indicate levels of interpersonal conflict among faculty and administrators in a subjective manner. Noted levels of conflict served to indicate perceptions of organizational and environmental conditions.

To test the construct validity of the focal constructs, an exploratory factor analysis was conducted. Each construct was divided into separate dimensions based on eigenvalues that had scores higher than one. Varimax rotation was then used to determine significant factor loadings. Any items with factor loadings lower than .4 were omitted from the construct.

Each instrument (except for the items used to measure interpersonal conflict) used in the survey has showed acceptable levels of reliability in prior research. Nonetheless, alpha levels were calculated based on data from this study.

### Statistical Methodology

Statistical analyses were conducted to identify significant factors associated with organizational trust (dependent variable) among faculty members at HBCUs. The intervening variable was empowerment. Independent (predictor) variables consisted of resistance to change, support for innovation, interpersonal conflict, and demographics (institutional type, age, gender, race, education, rank, teaching experience, administrative responsibility, innovation involvement, field).

Before analyzing the data using factor analysis, ordinary least squares analysis, one-way analysis of variance, and path analysis, it was necessary to test several assumptions:

- Multicollinearity
- Normality
- Linearity
- Homoscedasticity
- Independence of Residuals

According to Meyers, Gamst, and Guarino (2006), factor analysis provides an effective method for isolating single components within complex constructs that are composed of multiple dimensions. The technique offers an elegant way to explain the relationships between variables. Meyers and colleagues explain that variables correlated with one another but independent of other subcomponents are typically grouped into a single factor.

Ordinary least squares analysis (OLS) rests on the assumption that variables are normally distributed. This technique explores the relationships among independent, intervening, and dependent variables (Hays, 1994). While controlling for other variables, this statistical method estimates the effects of one independent variable on the dependent variable. These effects are presented in the form of beta coefficients. SPSS software was utilized to perform this portion of the analyses.

One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) is perhaps the most commonly used technique for comparing the means of groups of measurement data when there is one continuous variable and one categorical variable (McDonald, 2009). Numerous observations of the continuous variable are made for each value of the categorical variable. The method involves calculating the mean of observations within each group and then comparing the variance among these means with the average variance within

each group. “The test statistic is...the ratio of the variance among means divided by the average variance within groups, or  $F_s$ . This statistic has a known distribution under the null hypothesis, so the probability of obtaining the observed  $F_s$  under the null hypothesis can be calculated” (McDonald, 2009, p. 123). SPSS software was utilized to perform this portion of the analyses.

Path analysis (alternatively known as structural equation modeling) seeks to determine relationships based on examining correlations among three or more variables. Path models are sets of hypotheses examined within the context of temporal causal relationships (Meyers et al., 2006). According to this team of investigators, the technique does not represent an attempt to circumvent the experimental approach. Instead, path analysis is grounded in theory and correlation and is deemed appropriate for testing causal models. This statistical method allows the investigator to concurrently study the effects of independent-intervening variables and intervening-dependent variables. Direct and indirect effects are displayed in the form of estimated standardized regression coefficients. AMOS was the software application used to perform this portion of the analyses.

## CHAPTER IV

### DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Chapter four includes the data analysis and study findings. Specifically, the construction, validation, and reliability of the instruments will be examined. Then, the results of the statistical analyses to test the hypotheses will be presented.

The following symbols were used to represent the study variables (Table IV-1):

Table IV-1: Symbols of Study Variables

<b>Name of Variable</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
Emp	Empowerment
OrgTrst	Organizational Trust
DspChng	Resistance to Change
SppInnv	Support for Innovation
OrgCnflt	Interpersonal Conflict
Gen	Gender
Age	Age
Ra_AA	Race (African American)
Ra_C	Race (Caucasian)
Ra_AP	Race (Asian-Pacific Islander)
Ra_Hisp	Race (Hispanic)
Ra_Ind	Race (American Indian-Alaskan Native)
Ra_oth	Race (Other)
Race	Race
Edu	Education
Rank	Rank
Ttyrs	Years of teaching experience (including teaching experience at your current institution and at any other institution)
Ctyrs	Years of teaching experience at your current university (college)

Table IV-1-continued

CAdmin	Administrative responsibilities such as chair/dean/provost at your current college (university)?
PAdmin	Administrative responsibilities such as chair/dean/provost at any other college (university)?
InvInno	Level of involvement in implementing innovations during your work at this university (college)?
Field	Field
IT1	Institutional Type (2 or 4-years)
IT2	Institutional Type (Public or Private)

### Instrument Construction and Validation

A principal components factor analysis with varimax rotation was utilized to assess the construct validity of all of the study instruments. Varimax rotation can yield factors that are more interpretable than what can be produced via initial extraction. In the final step of the procedure, the rotated factor matrix is interpreted (Meyers et. al, 2006). Each construct was categorized according to sub-dimensions with eigenvalues greater than one. The results of the factor analysis are found in table IV-2. Twelve factors were identified. Items with a factor loading below .40 were omitted (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1989).

Component one was comprised of fourteen items representing support for innovation. Eight items were omitted. Component two consisted of seven items representing organizational trust. The factor loadings ranged from .619 to .851 and no items were omitted. Component three was made up of twelve items representing resistance to change. Six items were omitted. Components four and seven contained nine total items representing empowerment. Empowerment spanned these two components because the construct has been subdivided into structural and psychological components. Component nine consisted of three items representing interpersonal conflict. The factor loadings ranged between -.725 and -.811.

Table IV-2: Principal Component Analysis with Varimax Rotation

	Component											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
V1_01	.055	.049	.092	.840	.012	.067	.076	.034	-.030	-.007	.024	.201
V1_02	.090	.117	.105	.784	.080	.111	.097	.030	-.036	.039	-.008	.207
V1_03	.089	.076	.096	.840	.040	.098	.072	.022	-.043	.003	.000	.221
V1_04	-.046	.034	.136	.853	-.027	.047	.133	-.046	.035	-.023	.068	-.164
V1_05	-.055	.035	.144	.847	-.028	.035	.158	-.028	.040	-.032	.070	-.182
V1_06	-.070	-.011	.111	.712	-.042	.031	.193	-.023	.072	-.054	.031	-.251
V1_07	.141	.114	.054	.302	.112	.171	.809	.009	.062	.014	-.004	-.014
V1_08	.102	.109	.069	.283	.088	.161	.841	-.010	.028	.021	.000	.003
V1_09	.165	.126	.051	.254	.154	.227	.803	.001	.015	.014	.008	.018
V1_10	.128	.193	.081	.237	.089	.792	.149	-.014	.027	-.019	.038	.020
V1_11	.204	.157	.031	.075	.155	.876	.184	.007	.021	.022	.008	-.023
V1_12	.208	.146	.034	.094	.147	.882	.183	-.012	.032	.005	.025	.005
V3_01	.219	.619	.043	.062	.325	.066	.071	-.008	.101	.030	-.002	.047
V3_02	.189	.776	.042	.001	.245	.068	.068	-.032	.134	.063	.002	-.027
V3_03_R	.311	.680	.103	.054	.096	.042	.023	-.010	.055	.097	-.008	-.014
V3_04	.247	.733	.068	.152	.144	.109	.084	-.006	.101	.009	.013	.081
V3_05	.227	.844	.050	.060	.211	.093	.078	-.001	.116	.061	.002	-.019
V3_06	.242	.851	.069	.056	.219	.097	.059	-.007	.124	.063	.008	-.006
V3_07_R	.278	.708	.119	.001	.117	.055	.006	-.005	.069	.135	-.002	-.096
V4_01_R	.016	.021	.487	.161	-.096	-.019	.062	.024	-.022	-.066	.175	.287
V4_02_R	.099	-.037	.342	.035	-.105	.044	.017	.141	-.018	.030	.598	.011
V4_03_R	.016	.045	.527	.154	-.075	-.009	.030	.081	-.049	-.035	.441	.236
V4_04	-.131	-.018	.037	.030	.148	.030	-.055	-.009	.032	.006	.675	-.103
V4_05_R	.109	.065	.442	.113	-.103	-.025	.084	.073	-.027	-.040	.508	.122
V4_06_R	.020	.046	.707	.003	.027	-.010	.058	-.008	.042	.029	.075	-.272
V4_07_R	.047	.046	.755	.028	.047	.029	.068	.055	.035	-.010	.028	-.306
V4_08_R	.098	.123	.620	.001	.050	.007	.012	.143	-.005	.031	.054	-.354
V4_09_R	.084	.048	.670	.073	.024	.026	.007	-.021	.021	.003	.020	-.045

Table IV-2-continued

V4_10_R	.055	.092	.732	.054	.018	.030	.010	.057	-.008	-.048	.205	-.021
V4_11_R	.031	.018	.771	.099	.009	.043	-.003	.060	.025	.022	-.001	.066
V4_12_R	.020	.034	.720	.101	-.006	.031	-.011	.119	.017	.059	-.045	.244
V4_13_R	.041	.003	.707	.107	.004	.021	6.122E-5	.073	-.024	.048	-.061	.178
V4_14_R	.046	.053	.405	.067	.030	.040	-.011	.610	-.018	-.024	.103	.094
V4_15	-.086	-.030	-.236	-.043	.072	.014	.029	.419	-.073	-.069	.270	.059
V4_16_R	.050	.016	.288	.047	-.012	.010	.003	.718	.008	-.012	-.044	.033
V4_17_R	.060	-.026	.161	.028	-.042	.002	-.005	.792	-.004	-.039	-.015	.019
V4_18_R	.072	-.050	-.048	-.090	-.067	-.054	-.009	.631	-.022	.099	.042	-.136
V5_01	.426	.388	.052	.074	.512	.139	.138	.004	.060	-.004	.022	.209
V5_02	.454	.393	.042	.048	.515	.173	.153	-.011	.084	-.003	-.008	.213
V5_03	.457	.348	.004	.047	.486	.147	.148	-.026	.089	-.022	-.006	.171
V5_04_R	.665	.094	.034	-.038	.096	.076	.153	.081	-.022	.033	.031	-.008
V5_05_R	.704	.279	.104	-.028	.227	.076	.151	.002	.080	.019	-.023	.008
V5_06	.442	.495	.013	.019	.451	.127	.062	-.004	.122	.030	-.011	.036
V5_07_R	.703	.270	.082	-.008	.161	.054	.090	.039	.090	.030	-.032	-.040
V5_08_R	.763	.253	.103	.004	.199	.080	.093	.025	.077	.017	.000	-.052
V5_09_R	.735	.290	.090	-.005	.223	.063	.097	.031	.083	-.011	.033	.005
V5_10	.482	.490	.023	.029	.435	.109	.042	-.018	.110	.008	-.014	.046
V5_11	-.580	-.147	-.016	-.004	-.227	-.063	-.055	-.041	-.139	-.144	.065	-.092
V5_12_R	.617	.053	.022	.096	.003	.059	-.189	.008	.004	.128	.015	-.171
V5_13_R	.683	.295	.047	.062	.205	.058	-.073	.017	.100	.118	.016	.051
V5_14	.340	.417	-.012	.015	.576	.118	.023	.009	.081	.064	-.031	.019
V5_15	.216	.415	.010	.003	.590	.041	.002	-.003	.081	.187	-.020	-.130
V5_16	.217	.271	.043	-.043	.671	.065	.071	-.036	.074	.153	.035	-.185
V5_17_R	.171	.146	.005	-.030	.118	.023	.004	-.017	.076	.844	-.040	.027
V5_18_R	.158	.183	.039	-.034	.136	-.021	.032	.019	.087	.821	.031	-.042
V5_19	.166	.082	-.020	-.019	.671	.059	.146	-.045	.041	.045	.056	-.072
V5_20	.298	.236	-.046	.002	.662	.052	-.013	.009	.091	.037	-.035	.009
V5_21	.321	.283	-.024	.046	.569	.043	.005	-.006	.096	.010	-.008	.137

Table IV-2-continued

V5_22_R	.614	.300	.094	-.010	.288	.080	.082	.022	.113	.063	-.021	.093
V6_01	-.129	-.112	.011	-.032	-.050	-.029	-.011	.028	-.811	-.006	-.012	.048
V6_02	-.210	-.311	-.019	.009	-.190	-.026	-.039	.017	-.725	-.093	.024	.016
V6_03	-.134	-.206	-.036	.004	-.152	-.016	-.043	.037	-.747	-.094	.011	-.053

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

To summarize, the principal components factor analysis with varimax rotation yielded twelve factors. Component one represented support for innovation. Component two represented organizational trust. Component three represented resistance to change. Components four and seven represented empowerment. Component nine represented interpersonal conflict. Components 5, 6, 8, 10, 11, and 12 were not included in the study due to low factor loadings and subsequent lack of theoretical support.

#### Reliability of the Instruments

To measure the reliability of the instruments, Cronbach's coefficient alpha was calculated. This method has been recognized as an effective and widely-used approach to determine the internal consistency of study instruments (Cortina, 1993). The following example explains the method. If a scale comprised of one hundred items was considered reliable, then dividing the scale into two subgroups of fifty questionnaires would also yield reliable subscales. In other words, the reliability of both groups of fifty will be high if the original 100-item scale had a high level of reliability. Theoretically, the original scale could be split in half in a multitude of ways, allowing for the calculation of a variety of alpha coefficients. According to Cortina (1993), it is the mean of all possible split-half reliability coefficients that determines the coefficient alpha. Typically, a high alpha coefficient indicates that the various scale items are attributable to a single factor (Cortina, 1993).

The Cronbach alpha for each factor is shown in the table below (Table IV-3). Each instrument demonstrated a high level of reliability. The Cronbach alpha for empowerment was .892. Resistance to change registered a Cronbach alpha of .849. The

Cronbach alpha level for organizational trust was .920. Finally, the Cronbach alpha level for support for innovation was .924.

Table IV-3: Reliability of the Instruments

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Reliability</b>
Empowerment	.892
Resistance to Change	.849
Organizational Trust	.920
Support for Innovation	.924

Cronbach alpha coefficients of .70 or higher are usually viewed as acceptable in published research. However, there are numerous published studies where reliability coefficients range from .50 to .60 (Nunnally, 1967). Because the Cronbach alpha coefficients in the present study were determined to be .849 and higher, all instruments demonstrated more than acceptable scale reliabilities.

#### Assumption Tests

Five assumptions were tested before conducting ordinary least square, ANOVA, and path analyses: multicollinearity, normality, linearity, homoscedasticity, and independence of residuals. First, examination of covariance was used to test the assumption that the independent variables were not excessively correlated. According to Neter (1996), if the variables exhibited multicollinearity, there would be increased standard errors of the parameter estimates and a subsequent decrease of the unique effects of the variables. Next, the normality assumption was tested by utilizing the probability-probability plot (P-P plot). Examination of the plot revealed normality. Then, the

assumption of linearity was checked by curve fitting with R-squared difference tests.

Fourth, the Goldfeld-Quandt test was conducted to test the homoscedasticity assumption.

Finally, the Durbin-Watson coefficient was used to test independence of residuals. In

summary, the data revealed no violation of the five assumptions.

### Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive characteristics pertaining to the attitudinal study variables are listed in table IV-4, below. The variables included the dependent variable (organizational trust), the intervening variable (empowerment), and the independent variables (resistance to change, support for innovation, interpersonal conflict, and demographics). Overall, the respondents in the present study perceived moderate levels of organizational trust (mean = 3.29 with a maximum score of 5.0), high levels of empowerment (mean = 4.43 with a maximum score of 5.0), moderate levels of support for innovation (mean = 3.05 with a maximum score of 5.0), low levels of resistance to change (mean = 3.99 with a maximum score of 5.0), and high levels of perceptions of interpersonal conflict (mean = 2.90 with a maximum score of 4.0).

Table IV-4: Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Empowerment	2981	1.00	5.00	4.4329	.64423
Organizational Trust	2915	1.00	5.00	3.2874	.96650
Resistance to Change	2846	1.00	5.00	3.9918	.64882
Support for Innovation	2772	1.14	5.00	3.0472	.79745
Interpersonal Conflict	2843	1.00	4.00	2.8985	.59615
Valid N (listwise)	2409				

In the aggregate, faculty respondents perceived moderate levels of organizational trust and support for innovation, high levels of empowerment, high levels of interpersonal conflict within their institutions, and low levels of resistance to change.

#### Demographic Characteristics

The demographic characteristics of the respondents appear in table IV-5. The demographic variables included: institutional type (2- or 4-year), institutional type (public or private), gender, age, race, highest level of education attained, rank, total years of teaching experience, years of teaching experience at current university, administrative responsibilities at current college/university, administrative responsibilities at other colleges/universities, involvement in implementing innovation, and field.

Table IV-5: Demographic Characteristics

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Frequencies (%)</b>
<b>Institutional Type (2- or 4-Year)</b>	
4-Year	2959 (96.4)
2-Year	111 (3.6)
<b>Institutional Type (Public or Private)</b>	
Public	1995 (65.0)
Private	1075 (35.0)
<b>Gender</b>	
Male	1146 (37.3)
Female	1837 (59.8)
Missing	87 (2.8)
<b>Age</b>	
20-29	115 (3.7)
30-39	503 (16.4)
40-49	716 (23.3)
50-59	1083 (35.3)
60 years or more	571 (18.6)
Missing	82 (2.7)
<b>Ethnic background/Race</b>	
African American	1796 (58.5)

Table IV-5-continued

Caucasian	753 (24.5)
Asian-Pacific Islander	102 (3.3)
Hispanic	44 (1.4)
American Indian-Alaskan Native	12 (.4)
Other	160 (5.2)
Missing	203 (6.6)
<b>Education</b>	
Bachelors	466 (15.2)
Masters	479 (15.6)
Masters+	485 (15.8)
Doctorate	1413 (46.0)
Missing	227 (7.4)
<b>Rank</b>	
Instructor	282 (9.2)
Assistant professor	568 (18.5)
Associate professor	495 (16.1)
Professor	379 (12.3)
Other	1248 (40.7)
Missing	98 (3.2)
<b>Total years of teaching experience</b>	

Table IV-5-continued

1 year or less	322 (10.5)
2 to 4 years	311 (10.1)
5 to 7 years	309 (10.1)
8 to 10 years	262 (8.5)
11 or more years	1311 (42.7)
Missing	555 (18.1)
<b>Years of teaching experience at current university</b>	
1 year or less	481 (15.7)
2 to 4 years	630 (20.5)
5 to 7 years	367 (12.0)
8 to 10 years	241 (7.9)
11 or more years	752 (24.5)
Missing	599 (19.5)
<b>Administrative responsibilities at current college/university</b>	
No	2046 (66.6)
5 years or less	498 (16.2)
6 to 10 years	183 (6.0)
11 to 15 years	89 (2.9)

Table IV-5-continued

16 to 20 years	39 (1.3)
21 or more years	48 (1.6)
Missing	167 (5.4)
<b>Administrative responsibilities at other colleges/universities</b>	
No	2481 (80.8)
1 year or less	69 (2.2)
2 to 4 years	154 (5.0)
5 to 7 years	93 (3.0)
8 to 10 years	38 (1.2)
11 or more years	69 (2.2)
Missing	166 (5.4)
<b>Involvement in implementing innovation</b>	
Never	340 (11.1)
Rarely	529 (17.2)
Sometimes	1304 (42.5)
Often	770 (25.1)
Missing	127 (4.1)
<b>Field</b>	
STEM	654 (21.3)

Table IV-5-continued

Social/ Behavioral Sciences	400 (13.0)
Humanities	366 (11.9)
Business/ Law	214 (7.0)
Education	393 (12.8)
Other	954 (31.1)
Missing	89 (2.9)

Among study respondents, 96.4% worked in four-year institutions while 65% were employed in public institutions. A total of 59.8% of the respondents were female. More than one-third (35.3%) of the respondents were between the ages of 50 – 59. Some 58.5% of the respondents were African American. Among respondents, 77.4% possessed a master's or doctoral degree. In terms of rank, 46.9% of the respondents listed their rank as assistant, associate, or full professor. Some 42.7% of the respondents had eleven or more years of teaching experience. Approximately one-quarter (24.5%) of the respondents had taught at their current universities for eleven or more years. Two-thirds (66.6%) of the respondents had no administrative experience at their current institutions, while 80.8% of the respondents had no administrative experience at other institutions. Some 84.8% of the respondents had been involved in implementing innovation. Data indicated that 21.3% of the respondents worked in the STEM fields. In terms of discipline, this group comprised the highest overall percentage of respondents in the study.

Overall, the characteristics of study respondents were proximally similar to those of HBCU faculty members who have been the subjects of recent research (Provasnik et al, 2004; Betsey, 2007). Parallelisms suggest the extent to which results and inference of this study may be extended to the larger population of HBCU faculty.

### Regression Analysis: OLS

Ordinary least squares (OLS) regression analysis was utilized to test the effects of the independent and demographic variables on the intervening and dependent variables: empowerment and organizational trust, respectively. Both of these variables were regressed on the demographic variables. The results of the relationships showing significance are depicted in Table IV-6.

Table IV-6: Regression Analysis (OLS)

<b>Attitudinal Variable</b>	<b>Demographic Variable</b>	<b>Beta (<math>\beta</math>)</b>	<b>Level of Significance</b>
Empowerment	Age	.090	p < .001
Empowerment	Level of Education	.061	p < .001
Empowerment	Total Years of Teaching Experience	.095	p < .001
Empowerment	Total Years of Teaching Experience at Current Institution	.088	p < .001
Empowerment	Administrative Experience at Current Institution	.071	p < .001
Empowerment	Involvement in Implementing Innovation	.123	p < .001
Empowerment	Resistance to Change	.220	p < .001
Empowerment	Organizational Conflict	-.108	p < .001
Empowerment	Support for Innovation	.251	p < .001
Organizational Trust	Age	.117	p < .001
Organizational Trust	Level of Education	-.149	p < .001
Organizational Trust	Administrative Experience at Current Institution	.066	p < .001
Organizational Trust	Involvement in Implementing Innovation	.122	p < .001
Organizational Trust	Interpersonal Conflict	-.432	p < .001

The following demographic variables had significant effects on empowerment: age ( $\beta = .090, p < .001$ ), level of education ( $\beta = .061, p < .001$ ), total years of teaching experience ( $\beta = .095, p < .001$ ), total years of teaching experience at current institution ( $\beta = .088, p < .001$ ), administrative experience at current institution ( $\beta = .071, p < .001$ ), involvement in implementing innovation ( $\beta = .123, p < .001$ ), resistance to change ( $\beta = .220, p < .001$ ), levels of interpersonal conflict ( $\beta = -.108, p < .001$ ), and support for innovation ( $\beta = .251, p < .001$ ). Higher levels of empowerment were observed among faculty members who were older, had attained higher levels of education, acquired more years of teaching experience, taught for longer at their current institutions, had more administrative experience at their current institutions, were more involved in implementing innovation, were more open to change, perceived lesser degrees of interpersonal conflict, and perceived higher levels of support for innovation.

The following demographic variables had significant effects on organizational trust: age ( $\beta = .117, p < .001$ ), level of education ( $\beta = -.149, p < .001$ ), administrative experience at current institution ( $\beta = .066, p < .001$ ), involvement in implementing innovation ( $\beta = .122, p < .001$ ), and levels of interpersonal conflict ( $\beta = -.432, p < .001$ ).

To summarize these findings, levels of organizational trust were higher among respondents who were older, had attained lower levels of education, had more administrative experience at their current institutions, were more involved in implementing innovation, and who perceived lower levels of interpersonal conflict at their institutions.

### Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was utilized to test the effects of the nominal demographic variables on the intervening and dependent variables: empowerment and organizational trust, respectively. Both of these variables were regressed on the demographic variables. The results are shown in Table IV-7.

Table IV-7: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

<b>Independent Variable</b>	<b>Dependent Variable</b>	<b>F-Level</b>	<b>Level of Significance</b>
Institutional type (two- and four-year institutions)	Empowerment	.182	.670
Institutional type (public and private institutions)	Empowerment	1.350	.245
Gender	Empowerment	.010	.922
Race	Empowerment	2.331	.097
Field	Empowerment	1.120	.290
Institutional type (two- and four-year institutions)	Organizational Trust	4.383	.036*
Institutional type (public and private institutions)	Organizational Trust	3.317	.069
Gender	Organizational Trust	12.485	.000***
Race	Organizational Trust	69.347	.000***
Field (STEM or Non-STEM)	Organizational Trust	10.473	.001***

Note: \*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < .001$

Institutional type (two- and four-year institutions) did not have significant effects on empowerment. However, faculty members from two-year institutions had a slightly higher mean score than respondents from four-year institutions.

Institutional type (public and private institutions) did not have significant effects on empowerment. However, faculty members from private institutions had a slightly higher mean score than faculty members who worked in public institutions.

Gender did not have significant effects on empowerment. Nonetheless, female faculty members reported a slightly higher mean score than male respondents in the present study.

Race did not have significant effects on empowerment. Those respondents who indicated that their race was neither African-American nor Caucasian reported the highest levels of empowerment. African-Americans had the second highest mean score, while Caucasians exhibited the lowest mean score.

Field did not have significant effects on empowerment. Nonetheless, STEM faculty showed a higher mean score than non-STEM faculty members.

Institutional type (two- and four-year institutions) had significant effects in terms of organizational trust. Faculty members at two-year institutions exhibited a higher mean score than faculty at four-year institutions that was significant at the  $p < .05$  level.

Institutional type (public and private institutions) did not have significant effects on organizational trust. However, faculty members from private institutions had a higher mean score. Here, the relationship tended toward significance at the  $p < .05$  level by registering a significance level of  $p < .069$ .

Gender had significant effects on organizational trust. Female faculty members reported a higher mean score that was significant at the  $p < .001$  level.

Race had significant effects on organizational trust at the  $p < .001$  level. Post hoc tests (Table IV-8) were conducted to analyze the differences among groups. African-American faculty members exhibited the highest levels of trust, followed by racial groups other than African-American and Caucasian. Caucasians had the lowest mean score.

Table IV-8: Post Hoc Tests

Multiple Comparisons

Trust

Scheffe Test

(I) Race_ M	(J) Race_ M	Mean Difference (I- J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1.00	2.00	.48273*	.04174	.000	.3805	.5850
	3.00	.27159*	.05883	.000	.1275	.4157

Table IV-8-continued

2.00	1.00	-.48273*	.04174	.000	-.5850	-.3805
	3.00	-.21114*	.06453	.005	-.3692	-.0531
3.00	1.00	-.27159*	.05883	.000	-.4157	-.1275
	2.00	.21114*	.06453	.005	.0531	.3692

\*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Field had significant effects on organizational trust at the  $p < .001$  level. Non-STEM faculty members reported a higher mean score than respondents working in the STEM disciplines.

### Path Analysis

The AMOS (SPSS) software application was used to test the effects of the independent variables (resistance to change, support for innovation, interpersonal conflict, and demographics) on the intervening variable (empowerment) and dependent variable (organizational trust), and to examine the effects of the intervening variable (empowerment) on the dependent variable (organizational trust). The results are presented in Table IV-9. These results are then followed by the study findings that depict to what extent the hypotheses were supported.

Table IV-9: Estimated Regression Coefficients ( $\beta$ ) from the Structural Model

	Empowerment	Organizational Trust
Institutional Type (4yr)	-.009	-.031*
Institutional Type (private)	.019	.006
Gender (female)	.007	.009
Race (Ca)	.030	-.126***
Race (others)	.042*	-.047***
Age	.017	.084***
Education (non Doc)	-.031	.064***
Rank (non Prof)	-.020	.003
Total Years	.046	-.014
Current Years	.038	.015
CAdmin	.000	.011
PAdmin	-.009	.007
InvInno	.031	-.030*
Field (non Stem)	-.010	.004
Resistance to Change	.201***	.026
Interpersonal Conflict	-.020	-.176***
Support for Innovation	.207***	.582***
Empowerment		.078***

Note: \*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < .001$

Support of Hypotheses:

Given the results of the above path analysis, the following findings pertaining to the hypotheses are asserted (Table IV-10):

Table IV-10: Support of Hypotheses

<u>Hypothesis</u>	<u>Finding</u>
H1: Higher levels of perceptions of empowerment will be associated with higher levels of organizational trust.	Supported and significant at the $p < .001$ level
H2: Lower levels of resistance to change will be associated with higher levels of organizational trust.	Not Supported
H3: Lower levels of interpersonal conflict will be associated with higher levels of organizational trust.	Supported and significant at the $p < .001$ level
H4: Higher levels of support for innovation will be associated with higher levels of organizational trust.	Supported and significant at the $p < .001$ level
H5: Demographic variables (age, gender, race, education, rank, teaching experience, administrative responsibility, innovation involvement, field) will be associated with levels of organizational trust.	Partially Supported

Table IV-10-continued

<p>H6. The relationship between perceptions of empowerment and organizational trust will be influenced by levels of resistance to change.</p>	<p>Supported and significant at the <math>p &lt; .001</math> level</p>
<p>H7. The relationship between perceptions of empowerment and organizational trust will be influenced by levels of interpersonal conflict.</p>	<p>Not Supported</p>
<p>H8. The relationship between perceptions of empowerment and organizational trust will be influenced by levels of support for innovation.</p>	<p>Supported and significant at the <math>p &lt; .001</math> level</p>
<p>H9. The relationship between perceptions of empowerment and organizational trust will be influenced by demographic variables (age, gender, race, education, rank, teaching experience, administrative responsibility, innovation involvement, field).</p>	<p>Partially Supported (only by race)</p>

To summarize the study findings, five of the nine hypotheses (H1, H3, H4, H6, and H8) were supported and significant at the  $p < .001$  level. Higher levels of perceived empowerment were associated with higher levels of organizational trust. Lower levels of interpersonal conflict were associated with higher levels of organizational trust. Higher levels of support for innovation were associated with higher levels of organizational trust. The relationship between perceptions of empowerment and organizational trust was significantly influenced by levels of resistance to change. The relationship between perceptions of empowerment and organizational trust was influenced significantly by levels of support for innovation.

Two hypotheses (H5 and H9) were partially supported. Many of the demographic variables (age, level of education, administrative experience at current institution, involvement in implementing innovation, perceptions of levels of interpersonal conflict, institutional type (two- and four-year institutions), gender, race, and field) were significantly associated with levels of organizational trust. The relationship between perceptions of empowerment and organizational trust was influenced only by race.

Two hypotheses (H2 and H7) were not supported by the study findings. Here, lower levels of resistance to change were not significantly associated with higher levels of organizational trust. Moreover, the relationship between perceptions of empowerment and organizational trust was not significantly influenced by levels of perceived interpersonal conflict.

## CHAPTER V

### DISCUSSION

Chapter five includes a summary and discussion of the major findings of the present study. Then, implications of the findings are explored. This study focused on perceptions of organizational trust among employees in historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs), as well as associations of organizational trust with the independent and intervening variables (empowerment, resistance to change, support for innovation, interpersonal conflict, and demographics) posited in the study model.

#### Summary of Hypothesis Tests

Statistical analyses (OLS, ANOVA, and path analysis) were conducted to test nine hypotheses. Of the nine hypotheses, five were supported, two were partially supported, and two were not supported.

Hypothesis one, positing that higher levels of perceptions of empowerment would be associated with higher levels of organizational trust was supported and significant at the  $p < .001$  level.

Hypothesis two asserted that lower levels of resistance to change would be associated with higher levels of organizational trust and was not supported.

Hypothesis three stated that lower levels of interpersonal conflict would be associated with higher levels of organizational trust. This hypothesis was supported and significant at the  $p < .001$  level.

Hypothesis four maintained that higher levels of support for innovation would be associated with higher levels of organizational trust. This hypothesis was supported and significant at the  $p < .001$  level.

Hypothesis five, stating that demographic variables (institutional type, age, gender, race, education, rank, teaching experience, administrative responsibility, innovation involvement, field) would be associated with levels of organizational trust, was partially supported. Of these demographic variables, the following had significant relationships with organizational trust: age, level of education, administrative experience at current institution, involvement in implementing innovation, institutional type (two- and four-year institutions), gender, race, and field.

Hypothesis six, positing that the relationship between perceptions of empowerment and organizational trust would be influenced by levels of resistance to change, was supported and significant at the  $p < .001$  level.

Hypothesis seven asserted that the relationship between perceptions of empowerment and organizational trust would be influenced by levels of interpersonal conflict and was unsupported.

Hypothesis eight maintained that the relationship between perceptions of empowerment and organizational trust would be influenced by levels of support for innovation. This hypothesis was supported and significant at the  $p < .001$  level.

Hypothesis nine stated that the relationship between perceptions of empowerment and organizational trust would be influenced by demographic variables (institutional type, age, gender, race, education, rank, teaching experience, administrative responsibility, innovation involvement, field). Race was the only variable that showed support for this hypothesis. No other significant relationships were found.

### Empowerment and Organizational Trust

Empowerment was a significant and positive predictor of levels of organizational trust among the respondents. Empowerment was defined along two dimensions (structural and psychological). The structural element of the construct focuses on the distribution of power and resources among leaders and followers, while the psychological element focuses on the intrinsic motivation of individuals.

This study result is consistent with prior research by Culbert and McDonough (1986) who viewed empowerment as the cornerstone for understanding trust at the organizational level. These authors maintained that employees would not internalize a system that did not empower them personally and professionally. Similarly, Laschinger and Finegan (2005) found that structural empowerment had a direct and positive association with perceptions of interactional justice that, in turn, was positively associated with perceived levels of organizational trust among nurses. Given asserted linkages, leadership in HBCUs may wish to consider the utility of policies and arrangements that facilitate higher levels of faculty member involvement in decision-making and governance systems that have been found to be associated with strengthening feelings of institutional attachment and trust (Paine, 2007; Dirks & Ferrin, 2001; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000).

### Resistance to Change and Organizational Trust

Resistance to change was not a significant predictor of organizational trust among study respondents. This construct is defined as a three-dimensional “negative attitude towards change, which includes affective, behavioral, and cognitive components” (Oreg 2006, p. 76). The affective dimension focuses on how individuals feel regarding change.

The behavioral dimension reflects how people evaluate change. Finally, the cognitive dimension is concerned with how or what individuals think and believe about change. This cognitive aspect is based on past behaviors and future intentions.

While the construct of organizational trust, “the global evaluation of an organization’s trustworthiness as perceived by the employee and an employee’s feeling of confidence that the organization will perform actions that are beneficial, or at least not detrimental, to him or her” (Tan & Tan, 2000, p. 243), has not been theoretically associated with resistance to change in the literature, the lack of support for this relationship is noteworthy considering the associations that have been found between resistance to change and managerial trust (Oreg, 2006). Oreg found that trust in management was a situational antecedent of resistance to change. Here, trust in management is more closely aligned with interpersonal rather than organizational trust. The absence of any significant association in the present study may be explained, in part, by a line of research suggesting that individual dispositions are associated with response to change (Wanous et al., 2000). Judge, Thoresen, Pucik, and Welbourne (1999) found that positive self-concept and tolerance for risk were positively related to support for change. Oreg (2006) posited that dispositional resistance to change reflected the affective, cognitive, and behavioral propensities of people in terms of resistance to change. Internal propensities that have been cited as sources of resistance to change may be asynchronous with those influencing perceptions when organizational trust is the focal variable.

### Interpersonal Conflict and Organizational Trust

Lower levels of interpersonal conflict were significantly associated with higher levels of organizational trust in this study. Interpersonal conflict was defined as “a phenomenon that occurs between interdependent parties as they experience negative emotional reactions to perceived disagreements and interference with the attainment of their goals” (Barki & Hartwick, 2001, p. 7).

The findings of the present study are consistent with the work of Hoy and Tschannen-Moran (1999) who found that conflict among organizational members had a negative impact on levels of organizational trust. Similarly, Sztompka (1999) suggested that people who experience conflict with management may end up distrusting the organization because perceptions of trust in the systems of organizations are commonly linked to perceptions of trust in the people managing those organizations.

Gasman and colleagues (2007) suggested that there is increased chance of conflict as well as less cohesion among faculty members at HBCUs. Meaningful involvement of faculty in community-building deliberations and cohesion-building, collaborative activities linked to organizational issues of personal significance may serve to mediate frictions. This could lead, in turn, to diminution of manifest levels of conflict and higher levels of organizational trust.

### Support for Innovation and Organizational Trust

Support for innovation was a positive and significant predictor of organizational trust in the present study. Innovation was defined as continuous process of adopting new ideas or behaviors in an organization (Daft, 1982; Damanpour & Evan, 1984).

The findings in the present study are consistent with prior research that has shown that innovative environments can be energizing and motivating (Cohen, 1999; Henkin, Davis, & Singleton, 1993). Innovative environments can also facilitate efforts to maximize the potential of an organization's human resources (Axtell et al., 2000; D'Agostino, 2000). Other studies (Dee, Henkin, & Pell, 2002; Dee, 2004; Jansen, Eccles, & Chandler, 1994; Latting et al., 2004; Orpen, 1990; Pierce & Delbecq, 1977; Tesluk, Farr, & Klein, 1997; West & Farr, 1989; Young, 1993) have associated innovative environments with higher levels of job satisfaction, motivation, job involvement, trust in management, and organizational commitment; positive perceptions of work life and role clarity; and lower levels of stress, role conflict, and intention to leave the organization. While few studies focus specifically on the relationship between support for innovation and organizational trust, the work of Basu (1991) and Scott and Bruce (1994) do provide some relevant explanatory suggestions relevant to findings in the present study. They suggest that, on a social level, innovative behavior is associated with the quality of supervisor-subordinate relationships in organizations, and that individuals tend to generalize supervisor-subordinate relationships to their overall views of their organizations. The respondents in this study who perceived high levels of support for innovation may have extended positive relationships with supervisors to generalized perceptions of their institutions. The positive and significant relationship found in this study in terms of support for innovation and organizational trust suggests the need for further examination of interpersonal effects on perceptions of the organization.

### Demographic Variables and Organizational Trust

The hypothesis that demographic variables would be associated with levels of organizational trust was partially supported. Among these demographic variables, the following had significant relationships with organizational trust: age, level of education, administrative experience at current institution, involvement in implementing innovation, institutional type (two- and four-year institutions), gender, race, and field.

Older faculty members showed more trust in their institutions. Older faculty may constitute a significant resource for HBCUs, especially where opportunities for high levels of meaningful interaction with younger faculty are provided. Such interactions may yield positive results in terms of mediating perceptions of organizational trust that have effects on individual behaviors.

Faculty members with administrative experience at their current institutions also expressed higher levels of organizational trust. Respondents with more administrative experience, generally, showed higher trust levels. Organizational trust may be linked, in part, to the level of faculty's understanding of administrative latitudes, responsibilities, and discretion. Increased opportunities for some faculty involvement in administration on a rotational basis may provide a foundation for strengthening organizational and interpersonal trust relationships.

Respondents indicating higher levels of involvement in innovation reported higher levels of organizational trust. Here, those faculty members who were more active in innovative work also perceived that their institutions were more supportive of innovation. In the present study, it was found that support for innovation was a positive and significant predictor of organizational trust. Evidence to date suggests the need for

further research that explores the relationship between faculty members' involvement in innovative activity and their perceptions of institutional support for innovation.

Among racial groups, African-Americans reported the highest levels of organizational trust. Caucasians reported the lowest levels of organizational trust. Recall that HBCUs are historically rooted in the Second Morrill Act's efforts to educate and serve African Americans (Whiting, 1991). The 1890 Morrill Act was implemented by the government, in part, to deal with discrimination in public education (Samad, 2005). The traditions emanating from such origins may be reflected in African-American faculty member perceptions, feelings of attachment, and attitudes that are manifest in reported levels of trust in the institutions.

On a disciplinary level, non-Stem Faculty members indicated higher levels of organizational trust in this study. This finding may be associated with the well-documented limitations of federal investment in HBCUs (Baskerville, Berger, & Smith, 2008), especially in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields. These authors cited inadequacies related to the quality of research facilities at HBCUs. It can be argued that this lack of investment is largely an exogenous factor with few internal residuals in terms of HBCUs. It is posited, however, that detrimental effects of funding deficiencies may have internal impact in terms of organizational trust, especially where resource deficiencies constrain the extent to which HBCU administrators can strengthen environments that promote and foster innovative work.

#### Resistance to Change and Empowerment

The relationship between perceptions of empowerment and organizational trust was significantly influenced by levels of resistance to change in this study.

The findings of the present study are consistent with Kuokkanen, Suominen, Härkönen, Kukkurainen, and Doran's (2009) study of the effects of organizational change on work-related empowerment, employee satisfaction, and employee motivation. In this study, it was observed that resistance to change was a barrier to empowerment when analyzed from the perspective of the individual and the work units.

Respondents in this study expressed low levels of resistance to change as well as high levels of empowerment. Given this finding and considering the need for innovation at HBCUs, future research should explore linkages between these variables and actual involvement in innovative work. Such a line of research may yield important information useful in the planning and deployment of faculty development programs.

#### Interpersonal Conflict and Empowerment

The relationship between perceptions of empowerment and organizational trust was not significantly influenced by levels of interpersonal conflict among study respondents.

This finding is of particular interest when one considers prior research that has shown negative effects of conflict in terms of empowerment (Short & Johnson, 1994). Short and Johnson's findings suggested that individuals experiencing conflict in the organizational setting tended to feel powerless or alienated. In their study of teachers, Short and Johnson found that higher levels of conflict were negatively associated with perceptions of empowerment. The concept of regulated conflict yielding healthy tensions linked to motivation, initiative, and empowerment would be particularly relevant in this instance (Massey & Dawes, 2007; Amason, Thompson, Hochwarter, & Harrison, 1995; Baron, 1991; Tjosvold, 1985), especially since trust and empowerment have been linked

to productivity. Additional research on these linkages in the HBCU context is recommended.

#### Support for Innovation and Empowerment

The relationship between perceptions of empowerment and organizational trust was significantly influenced by levels of perceived support for innovation. This finding is consistent with that of Spreitzer (1995), who found significant relationships among empowerment, innovative behavior, and managerial effectiveness. In the present study, respondents reported moderate levels of organizational trust and support for innovation, yet high levels of empowerment. Leaders at HBCUs are encouraged to explore ways to create work environments that are perceived as supportive of risk-taking and initiatives linked to innovative work - venues in which feelings of empowerment may be expressed in productive ways.

#### Demographic Variables and Empowerment

The hypothesis that the relationship between perceptions of empowerment and organizational trust would be influenced by demographic variables (age, gender, race, education, rank, teaching experience, administrative responsibility, innovation involvement, field) was partially supported. Race was the only demographic variable that had a significant effect on the relationship between empowerment and organizational trust. Related research suggests that “the only significant diversity in academic ranks in this country exists in black colleges and universities” (Slater, 1993, p. 67). Given the comparatively high levels of faculty diversity in HBCUs, work environment initiatives linked to, or dependent on faculty empowerment and/or organizational trust may wish to consider potential effects of diversity on interpersonal relationships. Such relationships

may be affected, additionally, by related cultural variables as well as correlates and antecedents of both empowerment and organizational trust.

### Implications for Practice

The findings of this study, considered in the context of related research, suggest a range of practical implications for HBCU faculty and administrators. This section focuses on the major findings of the present study and actionable alternatives available to these institutions. Practical implications are supported by related literatures.

Among the faculty respondents in the present study, higher levels of perceptions of empowerment were significantly associated with higher levels of organizational trust. Spreitzer (1996) analyzed empowerment in terms of how leaders behave, how individuals react to leader behavior, how peers interact, and how work-related processes are structured. Here, there is an emphasis on socialization as well as the explicit activities of leaders. HBCU leaders may consider the value of providing means to enhance purposive interactions among faculty and between faculty and administrators. By clearly and effectively communicating the positive intent of decisions and initiatives, for example, leaders could positively impact both morale and confidence in the organization, writ large. HBCU leaders should consider a range of people-centered communication strategies that reflect emphases on consideration (in contrast to initiating structure), benevolence, and intentions laden with trust (Butler, 1991; Gabarro, 1978; McKnight & Chervany, 1996). HBCU leadership can design and implement ways to provide significant levels of support and guidance to new faculty members, for example, in an effort to encourage constructive interpersonal communication among faculty members as well as between faculty members and administrators. Such efforts would support the

development and maintenance of positive personal relationships that ultimately build and strengthen trust. In turn, an abundance of trust relationships would likely minimize transaction costs, mitigate dysfunctional conflict, enhance commitment, and promote levels of risk-taking that could produce higher levels of innovation (Paine, 2007; Dee, Henkin, & Pell, 2002; Barber, 1983; Kollock, 1994; Sabel, 1993; Shapiro, 1987; Sitkin & Roth, 1993; Sitkin, 1995).

Six and Sorge (2008) offered additional behavioral practices that HBCU leaders can adopt that would likely enhance perceptions of empowerment and trust among faculty members. Their recommendations emanate from Relational Signaling Theory (RST) and are predicated on the proposition that human behavior is guided by the social rules within the context of organizations (Witteck, 1999). RST theory has demonstrated that the consistent exchange of positive relational signals is associated with positive affect as well as enhanced levels of group cohesion, commitment, and trust (Lawler et al., 2000).

HBCU leaders can endeavor to increase levels of empowerment and trust by supporting institutional cultures in which relationships are perceived as important. Here, critical components include expressing care and concern for the needs of others as well as defining explicit norms and values at the group and organizational levels that reflect expectations regarding the types of behaviors that are acceptable.

HBCU leaders can facilitate relational signaling among colleagues that is unambiguous in nature. Policies should be enacted to promote signaling skills that will ultimately lead to enhanced levels of trust and self-confidence among employees (Deutsch, 1973), and recognize the utility of social interaction and communication skills

development (Johnson & Johnson, 1995; Riggio, 1986). Furthermore, opportunities should be provided for colleagues to meet each other informally outside of the normal work environment (Lindenberg, 2003).

HBCU leaders should emphasize faculty socialization on an explicit level to help new faculty members understand and internalize the values, principles, systems, and processes of their institutions. The objective in this suggestion is linked to study findings related to older faculty members who showed higher levels of organizational trust and appear well prepared to help younger faculty acclimate to their institutions. The end sought, in this instance, is a more cohesive scholarly community where expectations, policies, values, and operating procedures are understood, acceptable, and accepted.

Additionally, HBCU leaders should seek alternative means to advance professional development despite resource constraints that are particularly evident in these underfunded institutions. Collaborative networks for professional development involving similarly situated institutions may be formed to pool resources and assure the continuation of professional development opportunities, even under conditions of fiscal exigency. Leaders are reminded that professional development and work performance are dependent, in part, on processes associated with strengthening an individual's perception of self-efficacy that is linked, in turn, to perceptions of empowerment (Conger & Kanungo, 1988; Spreitzer, Kizilos, & Nason, 1997; Spreitzer, 1995).

It is important for HBCU leaders to recognize that they must lead by example. Empowerment is defined, in part, in terms of the explicit managerial behaviors of power sharing (Hollander & Offermann, 1990) and increasing employee perceptions of control (Kanter, 1983; Keller & Dansereau, 1995). The behaviors of leaders and administrators

may be as important as the policies that they enact to promote empowerment and trust-building (Mühlau & Lindenberg, 2003). Whitener (2001) endorsed this assertion when he suggested that “employees interpret human resource practices and the trustworthiness of management...as indicative of the personified organization’s commitment to them” (p.532).

A major finding in the present study was that lower levels of perceived interpersonal conflict were significantly associated with higher levels of organizational trust. When conflict is not managed appropriately, heightened levels of controversy tend to produce internal conflict and uncertainty that organizational members often attempt to reduce (Tjosvold, 1985). Educational institutions have been described as organizations that are ill-equipped for dealing with conflict openly (Parsons, 1983). Engaging in constructive controversy in group settings has been commended as a productive strategy in terms of its effectiveness in countering the dysfunctional effects of controversy (Tjosvold & McNeely, 1988; Tjosvold, Wedley, & Field, 1986) - an organizational inevitability at HBCUs and other institutions. Constructive controversy may function to encourage and support open-mindedness, shared understanding, and good decision-making (Tjosvold et al., 1986). HBCU leaders may consider such concepts as they engage campus constituencies and work to maintain productive, healthy tensions (Amason, Thompson, Hochwarter, & Harrison, 1995).

HBCU leaders may reflect on the value of opportunities for conflict mediation available through governance systems that provide arenas where administrators and faculty may engage in discussion in efforts to devise policy-based, mutual-means approaches to solutions of more contentious issues. Pope and Miller (1998) suggested

that increased opportunities for faculty to participate in governance activities, coupled with more open communication between faculty and administrators, could lead to a diminution of conflict levels with positive effects on trust-building.

Conflict is often present anytime people are engaged in interdependent activities (Wilmot & Hocker, 2001). HBCU leaders may promote the establishment of group norms that encourage innovation through constructive interpersonal communication in the context of collaboration. Collaborative work and group norms may yield tendencies toward conflict avoidance, a circumstance that can deter efforts in terms of innovation (Ford, 1996). The same is true for norms that support the quelling of dissent and independent thought (Janis, 1972). Leaders should be aware of the distinction between norms that enable innovation and those that may encourage higher levels of conformity and less divergence of thought - essentially, groupthink (Janis, 1972). Given the need for more individual initiative and innovative work efforts at HBCUs, it is recommended that leaders design and facilitate coherent mechanisms for advancing innovation. An example of such a mechanism would be the promotion of team-based initiatives that support collaborative conflict cultures in which innovation and creativity are achieved via the open discussion of competing views in supportive environments (Chen, Liu, & Tjosvold, 2005; Chen, Tjosvold, & Su, 2005). Collaborative conflict cultures are more adaptable to change because of the emphasis on active listening and a desire to reach solutions that benefit the group.

Kezar and Eckel (2003) conducted research in an attempt to tackle the problem of how to implement change strategies to guide higher education institutions, their leaders, and other community members. Their suggestions for practice are drawn from the

concepts of organizational sense-making. According to organizational sense-making theory, organizations are ambiguous entities where actors create meanings and construct realities that influence action. Organizational members must gather information, interpret meaning, negotiate importance, and evoke symbols to create organizational realities (Bolman & Deal, 1991; Birnbaum, 1988; March, 1994). This research on sense-making and the change process, in general, are critical in the examination of innovation and support for it. The strategies promoted by Kezar and Eckel are also applicable to a major finding of the present study - that the relationship between perceptions of empowerment and organizational trust was influenced significantly by levels of resistance to change. High levels of resistance to change can negatively impact an organization's capacity for innovation and diminish value-added effects of empowerment and organizational trust. HBCU leaders may initiate activities to mitigate proclivities toward the maintenance of the status quo. Specifically, such activities include the encouragement of venturing and risk-taking achievable in a context of rhetorically sensitive communication (Miller et al., 1994; Oreg & van Dam, 2008; Judge, Thoresen, Pucik, & Welbourne, 1999). Additionally, they may elect to provide opportunities for people involved in change efforts to present their ideas and strategies publicly in forums that strengthen trust-building, encourage feedback, and support community-wide involvement.

#### Implications for Future Research

The study model used in this research should be applied to a broader sample of institutional types to determine what results may be confirmed as unique to HBCUs or more universal across a spectrum of postsecondary organizations by category.

Reported levels of involvement in innovation and perceptions of support for innovation both showed significant relationships with levels of organizational trust in this study. However, the relationship between reports of involvement in innovative work and perceptions of organizational support for innovation was not examined in this research. The relationship between those variables should be explored in future studies.

Finally, additional study variables may be included in a modified study model; particularly, interpersonal trust. The suggestion is linked to Sztompka's (1999) assertion that the relationship between organizational trust and interpersonal trust is one that is not easily separated.

#### Summary and Conclusion

This study focused on perceptions of organizational trust among employees in historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs), as well as organizational trust's relationship with the independent and intervening variables posited in the study model: empowerment, resistance to change, support for innovation, interpersonal conflict, and selected demographic predictors.

The major findings of the present study were that higher levels of perceptions of empowerment were associated with higher levels of organizational trust; lower levels of interpersonal conflict were associated with higher levels of organizational trust; higher levels of support for innovation were associated with higher levels of organizational trust; the relationship between perceptions of empowerment and organizational trust was influenced significantly by levels of resistance to change; and the relationship between perceptions of empowerment and organizational trust was influenced significantly by levels of support for innovation.

Many of the findings in the present study were consistent with the findings of past research. The study does add theoretical dimension and support to the study of associations between empowerment and organizational trust, interpersonal conflict and organizational trust, resistance to change and empowerment, and interpersonal conflict and empowerment.

Perhaps the most important contribution of the present study was in the associations found among support for innovation, empowerment, and organizational trust. The strength of association among these variables may be particularly important in terms of practical implications for HBCUs, particularly considering challenges that these institutions presently confront in the context of fiscal exigency and related demands for efficiency while maintaining quality and effectiveness (Baskerville, Berger, & Smith, 2008).

HBCUs continue to provide educational opportunities to a base of constituents who have historically been denied equal opportunities. While some of the challenges that these institutions face are directly attributable to conditions and circumstances beyond their control, others can be addressed by administrators and faculty members who work together and interact with trust and confidence in the benevolent intent of the other. Trust has been linked to energized work environments (Shockley-Zalabak et al., 2000) and to the capacity to make the changes necessary to adapt to changing conditions and ensure organizational continuity (Culbert & McDonough, 1986). In a competitive higher education marketplace (Bok, 2003), HBCUs must work to protect and advance their long-term, distinctive role (Nichols, 2004) as essential institutions in the mosaic of postsecondary institutions.

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