

Commitment Climate

Drivers of Retention Among Mid-Career Faculty of Color

Agenda

1. Study Goals
2. Related Literature
3. Data and Methods
4. Results & Analysis

Study Goals

- Develop a nuanced understanding of how mid-career faculty perceive their workplace and its effect of organizational commitment and retention.
- Determine which dimensions of an organization's climate most strongly affect employee commitment and retention
- Investigate if the relationship between commitment, retention, and underrepresented status is explained by perceptions in workplace climate.

Who are mid-career professionals?

- Workers who have been promoted at least once and received a nearly irrevocable employment commitment.
- Professionals with about a decade long tenure with current workplace and within the first five years of promotion to new role.

What is organizational commitment? Why does it matter?

- Organizational commitment is the extent that workers identify with, are involved in, and enjoy membership in their organization (Allen & Meyer, 1990).
- Workers with high organizational commitment are less likely to leave and more likely to be productive employees (Rhoades, Eisenberger, & Armeli, 2001; Shore & Wayne, 1993).
- The positive relationship between retention, productivity, and commitment is correlated with how employees perceive their work environment (Carr, Schmidt, Ford, & DeShon, 2003; Dunham, Grube, & Castañeda, 1994; Campbell, Dunnette, Lawler, & Edward, 1970).

Sample

- 3,679 Associate faculty with tenure employed at 50 doctorate-granting universities.
 - 76% are white (non-Hispanic) and 12% are Asian, Asian-American, and Pacific Islanders.
 - African-Americans are 4.3 percent, and Hispanics are 4.2 percent of the sample. Native Americans comprise less than 1 percent.
- Respondents were promoted 3.32 years (SD: 1.68) prior to taking survey and with their institution, on average, five and half years before being promoted (SD: 3.16).
- Underrepresented minorities are no more than 20% of a campus' response and on average 10% of respondents per school excluding one HBCU.

Improving Organizational Climate: Two Approaches

1. A strategy-focused approach captures policies, practices, and procedures aimed at organizational goals.

Examples

- work-life-balance policies
- flexible performance evaluations
- diversity hiring initiatives

2. A employee-supportive approach captures internal processes aimed at employee relationships and general well-being.

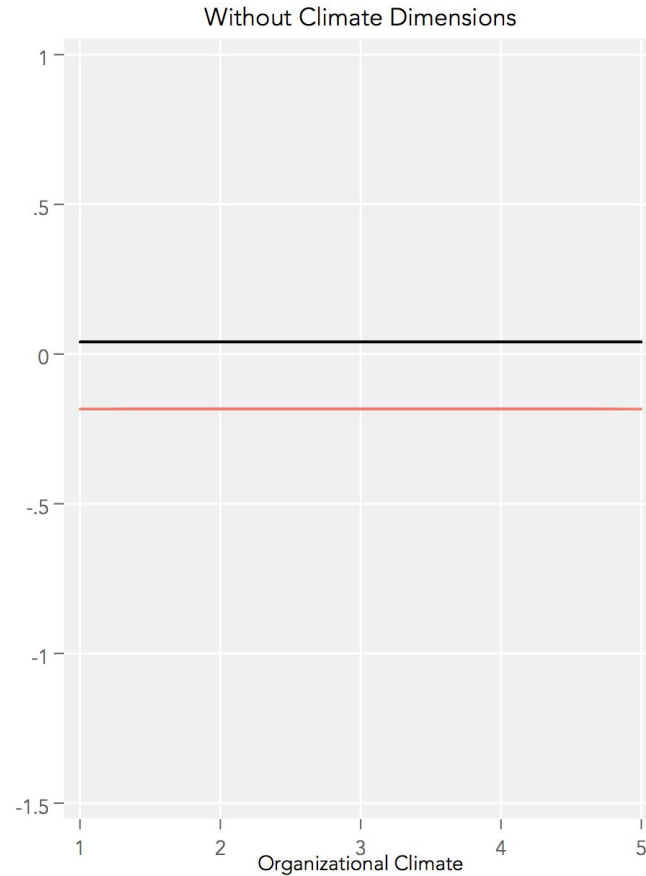
Examples

- “pitching in” when colleagues need help
- creating a collegial work environment
- caring about colleagues’ quality of life

Organizational Commitment - Results

1. Supportive and strategic dimensions of climate are both positively associated with organizational commitment.
2. Supportive climate dimensions are more strongly associated with organizational commitment levels.
 - a. A standard deviation above the mean supportive climate in a workplace is estimated to be .48 points above the average level of organizational commitment on a five-point scale ($p < .0001$).
 - b. A standard deviation increase in mean strategic perception is associated with a .29 mean difference in organizational commitment ($p < .0001$).

The Effect of Commitment on Climate

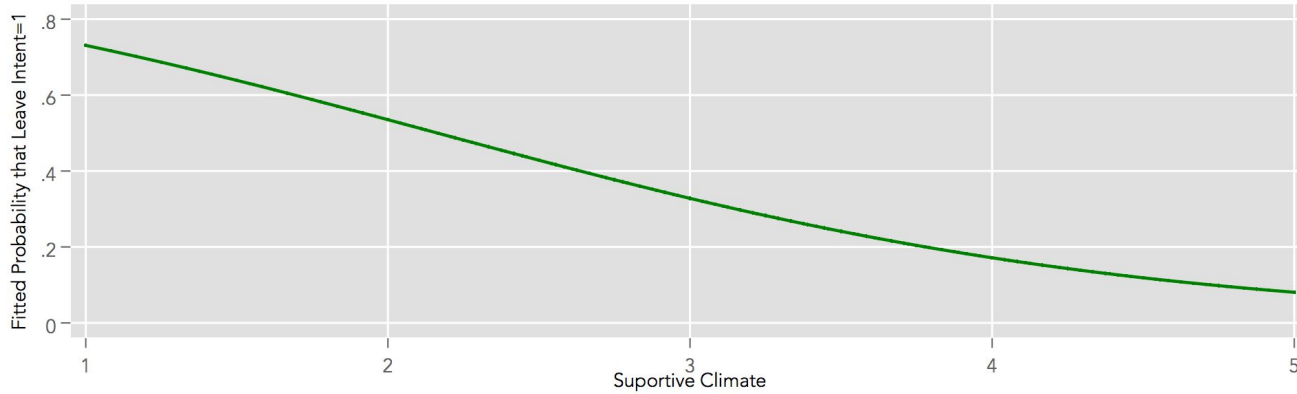
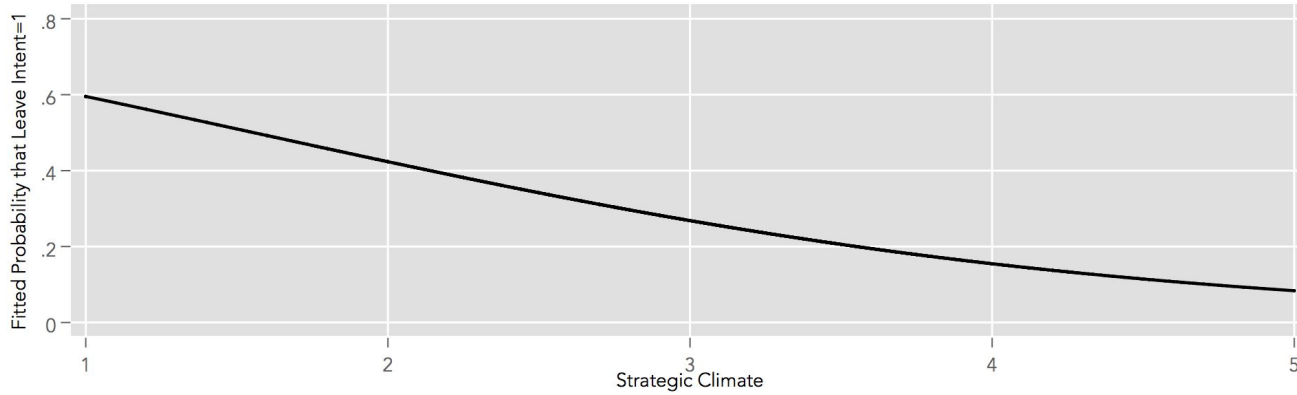


LEGEND:
- Not URM
- URM

Intention to Leave: Results

1. Supportive and strategic dimensions of climate reduce the probability that mid-career professionals exit their organization.
2. A poor supportive climate is more likely to be associated with leave intent.
 - a. Individuals whose perception is in the 1 percentile on either supportive or strategic aspects of climate will differ in the probability of exit by 12 percentage points.

The Effect of Leave Intent on Climate



Critical Takeaways for Researchers

- Workplace climate, not minority status, is associated with leave intent, and controlling for climate weakens the relationship between race and commitment.
 - Studies that do not consider organizational climate when investigating relationships between performance and race can lead to spurious conclusions.
- Climate matters yet all initiatives are not created equally.
 - Organizations that cultivate a climate of collegiality will, on average, exhibit higher levels of commitment than those that focus on strategic goals

Critical Takeaways for Practitioners

- Workplaces that respond to poor organizational climate by launching organizational-wide strategic initiatives rather than encouraging staff to be nice will be less effective at improving retention and commitment.
- Promotion is not enough to keep workers of color because white and minority staff who were recently promoted into the same role continued to view their organization differently.
- Mid-career staff have likely seen strategic initiatives come and go.
- Improving how employees treat each other although possibly more difficult operationalize takes less financial resource than strategic initiatives.

Thank you

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