



Journal of Organizational Change Management

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Article information:

To cite this document:

Sibel Caliskan, Idil Isik, (2016) "Are you ready for the global change? Multicultural personality and readiness for organizational change", Journal of Organizational Change Management, Vol. 29 Issue: 3, pp.404-423, <https://doi.org/10.1108/JOCM-07-2015-0119>

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Are you ready for the global change? Multicultural personality and readiness for organizational change

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to investigate employee readiness for their organizations' global change and the predictive effect of their personality and perception of change.

Design/methodology/approach – Participants were from work groups that are known to have various levels of contribution to the globalization process in a retail company. Following focus group study, surveys of multicultural personality (MP), organizational change (OC) perception, and individual readiness for global change were conducted.

Findings – Results showed that the participants from the work groups with higher involvement in global work evaluated themselves more in terms of MP characteristics, with a more positive perception of OC process and climate, and more readiness for change. There was no effect of MP on OC perception or readiness for change. Perceived OC partially mediated the relationship between the perceived global content of the job and individual readiness for change.

Research limitations/implications – The sample is relatively small which limits the external validity of the findings.

Practical implications – Results revealed the importance of recruiting the right employees and corporate communication during the globalization process among all work groups.

Originality/value – This study is one of the first that integrates OC in the process of globalization with employees' MP. Further, it elaborates on how the perception of and readiness for OC differs across diverse work units throughout the globalization process.

Keywords Globalization, Organizational change, Readiness for change, Multicultural personality, Work groups

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

Uncertainty of boundaries with globalization increases number of competitors and international environment of organizations. In this sense, organizations should answer two questions before adapting to the new global world: whether the organization wants to go global and ready for it, and the best way for the expansion (Richard *et al.*, 2009). A clear planning and vision, i.e., shared picture, which is accepted by every employee in the implementation of change is crucial in this process otherwise financial and individual consequences of the expansion will be disastrous (Belasco, 1990). Trust in management, perceived organizational support, participation in decision making, communicating the need for change influence the level of employees' support for change (Armenakis and Bedeian, 1999; Ezerman, 1987; Vithessonthi, 2005). Employees' involvement in change reduces resistance since understanding the need for change and perceived ability to change are critical (Armenakis *et al.*, 1993; Wanberg and Banas, 2000). Previous professional change experiences, practice in diverse professions, theoretical and practical knowledge



about the change help to deal with the real life change process as well (Monica and Liviu, 2013).

The studies of employee attitudes toward change use constructs like readiness for, resistance toward, commitment to, openness to, and adjustment to change (Bouckenooghe, 2010). Armenakis *et al.* (1993) defined the change readiness as the individual's "beliefs, attitudes, and intentions regarding the extent to which changes are needed and to the organization's capacity to successfully undertake those changes" (p. 681). Change readiness is considered as an attitude affected by the content (i.e. organizational structure, strategic orientation, and performance system), process (i.e. actions at external environment or individual levels during implementing the change), context (i.e. the impact of internal/external factors like technological developments or previous change experiences) of the change to be implemented, and the characteristics of the individual who is being asked to change (Armenakis and Bedeian, 1999; Holt *et al.*, 2007; Walker *et al.*, 2007). Receptivity of employees is crucial during this process since the employee attitudes are among the major issues to be considered while planning the change (Armenakis and Bedeian, 1999), and among the managerial strategies to deal with the resistance (Ezerman, 1987).

The organizational change (OC) during global transition, represents a conversion of dominant culture of the organization to a more flexible, complex, and multi-level culture (Jackson, 2006). As organizations internationalize, they integrate diverse identities and cultures into the work systems; individual characteristics that are adaptable to the multicultural environment and supportive attitude toward OC become important to deal with the change (Chen and Wang, 2007). Literature shows that the multicultural dispositions' profound effect on effectiveness in an international context is recognized (Van der Zee and Brinkmann, 2004) and organizations are strongly recommended to consider personality characteristics while selecting the change recipients for global positions and/or provide employees with training programs to cope with such a change (Oreg *et al.*, 2011). The workforce's intercultural competencies were found to be positively correlated with performance in international assignments (Repečkienė *et al.*, 2011). Similarly global mindset is positively correlated to the performance of international tasks (Levy *et al.*, 2007). Cultural sensitivity, global citizenship, and resilience (Fernández and Sánchez, 2011); language skills and international experiences are also mentioned as the indicators of the success in international assignments (Caligiuri *et al.*, 2009; Kim and Slocum, 2008).

These studies show that multicultural characteristics enable international assignees to be open to new cultures and handle stressful situations abroad, and forecast success in international jobs and adjustment into the cross-cultural job contexts. However, only a few attempts have been made to measure the multicultural personality characteristics (social initiative, flexibility, emotional stability, open-mindedness, cultural empathy) of employees in the context of OC. Van der Zee and Van Oudenhoven's (2000) effort to gauge individual readiness of employees is among these unique initiatives. Their research that measures individual readiness through multicultural personality questionnaire (MPQ) shows that social initiative correlates with international working experiences, travel experiences, and interaction with individuals from different cultural backgrounds. Flexibility predicts orientation for an international career (Van der Zee and Van Oudenhoven, 2000). Emotional stability and open-mindedness were found to be related with the number of foreign languages spoken (Korzilius *et al.*, 2011). Multicultural dispositions are available more in employees who do work in international environment (i.e. expatriates, international

students, and employees) with high international experiences and language skills (Korzilius *et al.*, 2011; Van der Zee and Brinkmann, 2004; Van der Zee and Van Oudenhoven, 2000; Van Oudenhoven *et al.*, 2003). These findings indicate the importance of the workforce's characteristics in international assignments (Rafferty *et al.*, 2012; Van der Zee *et al.*, 2003).

This relationship between the personality characteristics and adjustments to international assignments and environments imply that a similar relation may occur between the personality and attitudes toward the OC in the globalizations process and employee readiness for change. Although there are studies which associate attitudes toward change with personal characteristics (Chen and Wang, 2007) and the importance of work groups' perception over change (Rafferty *et al.*, 2012), studies that associate OC in the process of globalization with employees' multicultural personality (MP) are not available.

Moreover, we have not come across any research that investigates the differences in the perception of and readiness for OC across diverse work groups that have various characteristics which facilitate multicultural interaction, and involvement in the process of globalization. Presumably, the characteristics of work groups and departments both being affected by and at the same time contributing to change process should have a role as predictor of OC perception. The comparison of diverse functional work groups according to their expected level of engagement in the international business might be taken as an effective research strategy to amplify the sensitivity of the measures (Ellis, 2010; Işık, 2014). Therefore, the current level of international conduct at work group level is considered a critical factor to understand OC perception even though current literature does not have distinct focus on that predictor. Since for whom participate in and know more about the change, this process is more understandable and acceptable (Armenakis *et al.*, 1993; Monica and Liviu, 2013; Wanberg and Banas, 2000), attitudes of the work groups with more involvement in activities related to global processes and change initiatives may be different than the others with lower global task orientation. Eventually, it is presumable that diverse work groups with various level of involvement in the change process may differ in their perception of change and their readiness for change.

Research aim, model, and hypotheses

The objective of the study is to examine the employee perceptions on and attitudes toward the OC of an international retailing (IR) company which is in the global transition in line with the corporate-level global vision. Employee MP characteristics, job characteristics (i.e. work group differences based on international engagement in business), and the level of international contact that they engage throughout their duties (i.e. perceived global content of the job) are considered as the individual determinants of the readiness for global expansion of the company.

The climate and process of change aligning the global vision are also included in the study to compare individual and departmental-level differences in employee perception of change. Age, sex, marital status, education, department, job status, tenure, language proficiency, and international experience are included as control variables in terms of their relation with the personality and change perception.

Following the need, the current study aims to investigate the influence of members' MP and work group characteristics on the perception of OC climate and process, and the readiness for OC to go global. Based on Rafferty *et al.* (2012), we applied a multi-level perspective by adding individual, work group, and organizational levels to

study OC in the targeted organization which is a ready-to-wear clothing company from the retailing industry. Three major functional departments were selected according to their level of engagement in the international business on the continuum of the core role in the global expansion to the focus on local operations. We consider MP characteristics (individual level), and perceived global content of the job (work level) as the main determinants of the perception of OC for getting global (organizational level) and individual readiness for this process (Figure 1).

Based on the specified aim of the study and the research model, the following hypotheses were formulated:

- H1. There will be differences in international experiences, language proficiency, and perceived global content of the job across work groups.
- H2. Employees from different work groups will have different MP levels.
- H3. MP will be predicted by international experience and language proficiency.
- H4. Employees from different work groups will have different OC perceptions.
- H5. Employees from different work groups will have different levels of readiness for change.
- H6. MP will determine the readiness level of participants and this relationship will be mediated by the perception of OC.
- H7. Perception of OC will mediate the relationship between the perceived global content of the job and the readiness for change.

Research methodology

Target organization

This study was conducted in a Turkish ready-to-wear international retail company[1], which has been operating in Turkey since 1991. RetaComp has more than 2,000 employees working at their headquarters and more than 15,000 employees in its stores. It is a well-known brand and a leader of the sector with more than 350 local stores by 2014 and 74 stores in different countries. The study was conducted in a single company since OC processes are unique to each company because of their visions, needs, structure, culture, and sector. In depth analysis of one organization was preferred that would bring robust results.

Three departments were selected purposefully from a series of meetings with the HRM department according to their level of contribution to the global expansion of RetaComp. This sampling strategy is expected to provide clear comparisons (Patton, 1990).

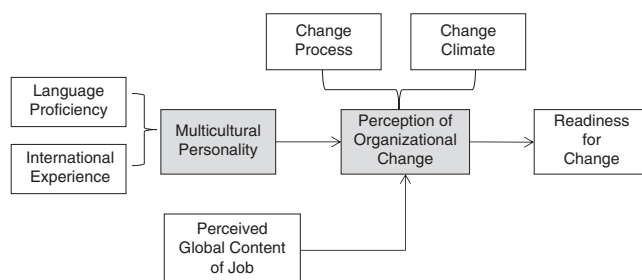


Figure 1.
Research model

Therefore, the selected work groups with different levels of strategic importance in the process of globalization were: first, IR as the core group to actualize global vision, second, supply chain (SC) with its increasing strategic importance in expanding abroad operations, and third, national retailing (NR) which provides human resource to other departments based on its supreme experience in retailing but less visible in terms of its strategic importance in the globalization process.

To get a better sense of internal processes of targeted organization regarding the OC efforts and initiatives for globalization, a focus group study was conducted with the participation of three representatives from each work group. Qualitative analysis of the focus group data revealed that members describe RetaComp as a company with unbiased work environment where interaction with diverse groups is achieved. They emphasized that working with diverse cultures requires adaptation of individual perspectives. One participant indicated that they learn how to relocate their culture abroad and they are aware that non-adaptability and resistance to change would mean elimination by the system. It was also noted that under the condition of globalization, OC is a necessity and top management's vision and commitment into this process is crucial. Participants highlighted the global mindset when it comes to international businesses. Being able to work with diverse groups and being adaptive while integrating their organizational culture abroad is expected on every level and unit of the organization. It was also mentioned that NR, SC, and IR work groups contribute to RetaComp's change to attain the objectives of globalization not only by their expertise but also by their exchange of resources in the form of human resources and mindsets.

Participants

The targeted population from the selected departments was 250 current employees ($n_{IR} = 60$, $n_{SC} = 90$, $n_{NR} = 100$). The overall participation rate was 74.4 percent ($n = 186$). In total, 83.33 percent of IR ($n = 50$), 68.89 percent of SC ($n = 62$), and 72 percent of NR ($n = 72$) employees participated (missing = 1 percent) (men = 60 percent, women = 37 percent, missing = 3 percent). The mean age was 30.21 ($SD = 4.76$, min = 23, max = 68 years), 81.2 percent of them had an undergraduate degree, and mean tenure was 4.94 years ($SD = 3.47$) in RetaComp. In total, 77.4 percent of them had managerial responsibility.

The proportion of participants who speak a foreign language is 90.76 percent. The average number of foreign languages is $M = 1.23$ ($SD = 0.97$). The most common foreign language is English (90.8 percent). Their self-evaluation of language proficiency on a six-points Likert scale shows that 15.7 percent of the participants evaluated their command of English as non-fluent, and 55.6 percent evaluated themselves as higher than the intermediate level ($M = 3.66$, $SD = 1.51$). The proportion of the participants who had previous experience in a foreign country was 46.2 percent. Those who went abroad had more than five visits (40.5 percent of participants) evaluated their experiences positively ($M = 4.37$, $SD = 1.06$) on a six-points Likert scale. Participants generally had traveled abroad either for vacation (46.28 percent), business (27.27 percent), or education (26.45 percent) reasons.

Instruments

The survey form consisted of questions on participants' work group, demographic characteristics, international experience, and global content of their jobs. International experiences were measured by the mean number of abroad visits and the evaluation of

their experience. These two questions were aggregated so that the high score indicated more exposure to international interactions.

Moreover, the proportion of daily global work, the frequency of international business trips per year, and the perception about their jobs' contribution to RetaComp's internationalization process were aggregated as well. This new variable was named "perceived global content of the job" which ranged on a six-point Likert scale from local to global. High score indicated more global work.

As the first major tool Van der Zee and Van Oudenhoven's (2000) MPQ was used. The MPQ consists of 91 items with five subscales: flexibility, cultural empathy, open-mindedness, emotional stability, and social initiative. Participants were asked to evaluate the statements on five-points Likert scale from not at all applicable (1) to totally applicable (5). The second tool was Bouckenoghe *et al.*'s (2009) organizational change questionnaire (OCQ) that consists of subscales which provide information about the "climate" of change that addresses internal circumstances under which change occurs, and the "process" of how the change is handled. The OC was defined as internationalization attempts of the company in line with their vision. Items contained five-points Likert scale answer format from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). The OCQ also has a component on "readiness for change" which was modeled as the outcome measure in our research and it was analyzed without merging in the climate and process dimensions of the original scale.

Procedure

Kağnıcı (2011) and Kondakçı *et al.* (2010) previously translated the MPQ and OCQ into Turkish and administered it to samples of university students. The data were collected online on Qualtrics. The initial pages of the survey provided both the instructions and informed consent.

Analysis and results

Data analysis of the survey was done by using descriptive, correlational, and inferential statistics in SPSS 17. Principle component analysis (PCA), ANOVA, *t*-test, and multiple regression analysis were used. For all ANOVA tests, Tukey HSD was used for *post hoc* comparison purposes.

Factor structure of MPQ, OCQ, and readiness for change scale

Initially, the factor structures of the MPQ, OCQ, and readiness for change scales were investigated with the aim of data reduction. PCA with Varimax rotation was applied iteratively. The items with factor loadings lower than 0.40, items that were loaded to multiple components and those that decreased the overall and factorial internal consistency were removed from the item pool.

As the outcome of this analytic process on MPQ scale (KMO = 0.844; Bartlett test, $\chi^2 = 2,006.80$, $df = 378$, $p = 0.000$), a shorter version emerged with 28 items with five factors that explains 55.22 percent of the total variance. Factors were named as follows: "assertiveness," "social initiative," "emotional stability," "open-mindedness," and "flexibility." Except assertiveness, the other four factors had the same items as the original subscales so that original names were kept (Table I).

PCA of OCQ (KMO = 0.898; Bartlett test, $\chi^2 = 1,397.180$, $df = 136$, $p = 0.000$) emerged two factors. The loadings of the items were consistent with the original

	Factor loadings	Eigen values	Total variance explained (%)	Cronbach α
MPQ total			55.22	0.89
Assertiveness (8 items)		7.65	14.22	0.84
Has a solution for every problem	0.76			
Can put setbacks in perspective	0.73			
Tries out various approaches	0.71			
Considers problems solvable	0.65			
Is open to new ideas	0.61			
Is self-confident	0.55			
Is able to voice other people's thoughts	0.52			
Sets others at ease	0.51			
Social initiative (7 items)		2.29	13.91	0.84
Makes contacts easily	0.76			
Is inclined to speak out	0.71			
^a Finds it difficult to make contacts	0.70			
Easily approaches other people	0.70			
^a Waits for others to initiate contacts	0.64			
Is easy-going in groups	0.60			
Likes to speak in public	0.60			
^a Has ups and downs	0.82			
^a Is under pressure	0.79			
^a Gets upset easily	0.71			
^a Is sensitive to criticism	0.64			
^a Is apt to feel lonely	0.51			
^a Is insecure	0.45			
Emotional stability (6 items)		2.16	10.50	0.76
^a Has ups and downs	0.82			
^a Is under pressure	0.79			
^a Gets upset easily	0.71			
^a Is sensitive to criticism	0.64			
^a Is apt to feel lonely	0.51			
^a Is insecure	0.45			
Open-mindedness (4 items)		1.99	8.53	0.74
Is interested in other cultures	0.76			
Gets involved in other cultures	0.72			
Finds other religions interesting	0.72			
Takes other people's habits into consideration	0.61			
Flexibility (3 items)		1.37	8.05	0.72
^a Avoids adventure	0.78			
^a Dislikes traveling	0.70			
Enjoys unfamiliar experiences	0.54			

Table I.
Factor analysis
of multicultural
personality
questionnaire

Notes: $n = 186$. ^aReversed items

sub-dimensions, i.e. “process of change,” and “climate of change.” The final structure had total 17 items with two factors that explains 53.28 percent of the total variance (Table II).

The analysis of nine items from readiness for change scale ($KMO = 0.848$; Bartlett test, $\chi^2 = 697.088$, $df = 36$, $p = 0.000$) emerged “supportive attitude toward change,” and “optimism” as the components that explain 63.54 percent of the total variance (Table III).

Descriptive statistics of all the components are given in Table IV.

	Factor loadings	Eigen values	Total variance explained (%)	Cronbach α
OCQ total			53.28	0.90
Process (10 items)		5.47	32.16	0.90
We are sufficiently informed of the progress of the change	0.86			
There is good communication between project leaders and staff members about the organization's policies toward the change	0.81			
Departments are consulted about the change sufficiently	0.76			
Our department's senior managers coach us very well about implementing the change	0.75			
Our department's senior managers pay sufficient attention to the personal consequences that the change could have for their staff members	0.71			
Changes in international process are always discussed with all people concerned	0.69			
Our department's executives are perfectly capable of fulfilling their new function	0.69			
Decisions concerning work are taken in consultation with the staff who are affected	0.68			
Staff members were consulted about the reasons for the change	0.60			
Corporate management team consistently implements its policy in all departments	0.47			
Climate of change (7 items)		3.59	21.10	0.81
Corporate management team supports the change process unconditionally	0.79			
Corporate management team has a positive vision of the future	0.79			
Corporate management team fulfills its promises	0.77			
Corporate management team is actively involved with the change	0.61			
Information provided on the change is clear	0.60			
Our department's executives focus too much on current problems and too little on their possible remedies	0.57			
My manager does not seem very keen to help me find a solution if I have a problem	0.50			

Table II.
Factor analysis of
change questionnaire

Note: $n = 186$

Differences in the work groups' international experiences, language proficiency, and perceived global content of the job

The first hypothesis predicted that there will be differences in international experiences, language proficiency, and perceived global content of the job across the work groups. As predicted, international experience level ($F(2, 181) = 26.839, p < 0.001, M_{IR} = 4.86, SD_{IR} = 3.34, M_{SC} = 2.71, SD_{SC} = 3.46, M_{NR} = 1.00, SD_{NR} = 1.71$) and language proficiency level ($F(2, 181) = 205.730, p < 0.001, M_{IR} = 5.40, SD_{IR} = 0.61, M_{SC} = 3.85, SD_{SC} = 1.02, M_{NR} = 2.78, SD_{NR} = 0.81$) differed significantly across the work groups. For international experience, *post hoc* comparisons of the three groups indicated that the IR has significantly higher international experience than both the SC ($M_{dif} = 2.15, p < 0.001$) and NR ($M_{dif} = 3.86, p < 0.001$). Also, the SC's international

Table III.
Factor analysis of
readiness for change

	Factor loadings	Eigen values	Total variance explained (%)	Cronbach α
Readiness overall			63.54	0.82
Supportive attitude		3.94	43.78	0.89
I am willing to put energy into the change process	0.88			
I am willing to make a significant contribution to the change	0.84			
I experience the change as a positive process	0.82			
I want to devote myself to the change process	0.79			
I find the change refreshing	0.76			
I have a good feeling about the change project	0.71			
Optimism		1.78	19.76	0.61
^a Plans for future improvement will not come too much	0.79			
^a The change project that is supposed to solve problems around here will not do much good	0.74			
^a I think that most changes will have a negative effect on the clients we serve	0.66			

Notes: $n = 186$. ^aReversed items

Table IV.
Descriptives of MPQ,
OCQ, and
readiness for
change components

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Min	Max
MPQ overall	3.85	0.47	2.32	4.93
Assertiveness	4.21	0.47	2.25	5.00
Social initiative	3.93	0.66	2.00	5.00
Open-mindedness	3.74	0.70	1.50	5.00
Emotional stability	3.35	0.80	1.00	5.00
Flexibility	3.87	0.85	1.00	5.00
OCQ overall	3.11	0.62	1.18	4.59
Process of change	3.13	0.75	1.00	4.80
Climate of change	3.07	0.64	1.14	4.29
Readiness to change overall	3.68	0.70	1.44	5.00
Supportive attitude toward change	3.78	0.76	1.00	5.00
Optimism	3.46	0.99	1.00	5.00

experience was significantly higher than the NR ($M_{dif} = 1.71, p = 0.002$). For language level, the IR had significantly higher language proficiency than both the SC ($M_{dif} = 1.54, p < 0.001$) and NR ($M_{dif} = 3.12, p < 0.001$); the SC has also significantly higher language proficiency than the NR ($M_{dif} = 1.58, p < 0.001$).

Table V gives the proportion of daily international tasks for each work group. In total, 74 percent of the IR employees devoted 61 to 100 percent of their times in international activities. The majority of NR employees' (94.4 percent) involvement in international tasks was between 0 and 20 percent, and SC employees' majority (77.4 percent) showed involvement between 0 and 60 percent. The work group that reported the highest frequency of visits abroad per year was IR as expected. In total, 48 percent of IR employees had more than four visits annually. In total, 71 percent of the SC and 98.6 percent of the NR employees had no international visit in a year.

One-way ANOVA showed that the perceived global content of the job differed significantly across the three departments ($F(2, 180) = 188.088, p < 0.001, M_{IR} = 4.50$,

Table V.
Distribution of daily
international tasks
and yearly abroad
visits by
work groups

	n_{IR}	n_{SC}	n_{NR}	n_{TOTAL}	%
<i>% of daily international tasks</i>					
0	2	12	64	78	42.39
10-20	0	11	4	15	8.15
21-40	0	25	0	25	13.59
41-60	9	9	0	18	9.78
61-80	21	2	0	23	12.5
81-100	16	1	0	17	9.24
Missing	2	2	4	8	4.35
<i>No. of annual abroad visits</i>					
0	15	44	70	129	70.49
1	2	5	0	7	3.82
2	0	3	0	3	1.64
3	8	6	0	14	7.65
More than 4	24	3	0	27	14.75
I live in abroad	1	0	0	1	0.56
Missing	0	1	2	3	1.09

$SD_{IR} = 1.22$, $M_{SC} = 2.60$, $SD_{SC} = 0.93$, $M_{NR} = 1.29$, $SD_{NR} = 0.50$). *Post hoc* comparisons indicated that the IR employees perceived the global content of their job significantly higher than both the SC ($M_{dif} = 1.90$, $p < 0.001$) and NR ($M_{dif} = 3.20$, $p < 0.001$). Also, the SC's perceived global content of the job was significantly higher than the NR ($M_{dif} = 1.31$, $p < 0.001$).

MP and its relationship to work groups, perceived global content of the job, international experience, and language proficiency

The second hypothesis predicted that the MP characteristics will differ across the work groups. One-way ANOVA showed that there is a significant main effect of the work groups on the MPQ score of the participants ($F(2, 181) = 49.106$, $p < 0.001$). *Post hoc* analysis showed that IR had significantly higher MPQ overall score than SC ($M_{dif} = 0.20$, $p = 0.018$) and NR ($M_{dif} = 0.66$, $p < 0.001$). Also, the SC had significantly higher MPQ overall scores than the NR ($M_{dif} = 0.46$, $p < 0.001$) as seen in Table VI.

There was a significant difference among the three work groups for assertiveness and open-mindedness as well. IR had significantly higher assertiveness and open-mindedness than SC ($M_{dif} = 0.24$, $p = 0.008$; $M_{dif} = 0.32$, $p = 0.035$) and NR ($M_{dif} = 0.49$, $p < 0.001$; $M_{dif} = 0.73$, $p < 0.001$). Also, the SC's assertiveness and open-mindedness was significantly higher than the NR's ($M_{dif} = 0.24$, $p < 0.004$; $M_{dif} = 0.41$, $p < 0.001$).

Moreover, both IR ($M_{dif} = 0.58$, $p < 0.001$; $M_{dif} = 0.72$, $p < 0.001$; $M_{dif} = 1.03$, $p < 0.001$) and SC ($M_{dif} = 0.54$, $p < 0.001$; $M_{dif} = 0.50$, $p < 0.001$; $M_{dif} = 0.81$, $p < 0.001$) work groups have significantly higher scores of social initiative, emotional stability, and flexibility than the NR as the *post hoc* comparisons showed. However, the IR and SC did not differ significantly for these subscales ($p > 0.10$).

Table VII shows the Pearson correlation coefficients between the MP, its sub-dimensions, perceived global content of the job, international experience, and language proficiency level of the participants.

The third hypothesis asserts that the MP will be predicted by international experience and language proficiency. Multiple linear regression analysis supported the predicted effect of language proficiency ($\beta = 0.457$, $t = 6.946$, $p < 0.001$, $F = 48.247$,

	Work groups	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	SD	<i>F</i> (2, 181)	<i>p</i>
MPQ mean	IR	50	4.18	0.42	49.11	0.000
	SC	62	3.98	0.33		
	NR	72	3.52	0.39		
Assertiveness	IR	50	4.49	0.44	19.21	0.000
	SC	62	4.24	0.38		
	NR	72	4.00	0.46		
Social initiative	IR	50	4.18	0.64	18.76	0.000
	SC	62	4.14	0.54		
	NR	72	3.60	0.64		
Emotional stability	IR	50	3.71	0.78	15.36	0.000
	SC	62	3.49	0.77		
	NR	72	2.99	0.70		
Open-mindedness	IR	50	4.12	0.70	19.64	0.000
	SC	62	3.80	0.58		
	NR	72	3.39	0.65		
Flexibility	IR	50	4.36	0.56	39.50	0.000
	SC	62	4.13	0.52		
	NR	72	3.32	0.94		
OCQ overall	IR	50	3.37	0.58	6.86	0.001
	SC	62	3.02	0.59		
	NR	72	2.98	0.61		
Process of change	IR	50	3.46	0.72	6.85	0.001
	SC	62	3.02	0.77		
	NR	72	2.99	0.71		
Climate of change	IR	50	3.25	0.69	2.88	0.059
	SC	62	3.03	0.61		
	NR	72	2.98	0.61		
Readiness for change overall	IR	50	4.01	0.71	10.22	0.000
	SC	62	3.65	0.63		
	NR	72	3.46	0.77		
Supportive attitude	IR	50	4.10	0.78	7.44	0.001
	SC	62	3.75	0.71		
	NR	72	3.58	0.73		
Optimism	IR	50	3.83	0.91	5.91	0.003
	SC	62	3.45	0.97		
	NR	72	3.21	1.01		

Table VI.
ANOVA results for
the difference among
work groups' MPQ,
OCQ, readiness for
change, and their
subscale scores

Notes: IR, international retail; SC, supply chain; NR, national retail

$p < 0.001$, $R^2_{adj} = 0.204$), and international experience ($\beta = 0.216$, $t = 3.001$, $p = 0.003$, $F = 9.009$, $p = 0.003$, $R^2_{adj} = 0.041$) on MP. In total, 20.9 percent of the variance in the MP was explained both by the language proficiency and international experience ($\beta = 0.455$, $t = 6.120$, $p < 0.001$, $F = 23.993$, $p < 0.001$).

Perception of OC and work group differences

Our fourth hypothesis was related to the prediction that there is differential OC perception due to the employees' work groups. The analysis showed that there is a significant effect of the work groups on the OCQ overall score of the participants ($F(2, 181) = 6.864$, $p = 0.001$). *Post hoc* comparisons showed that the people from IR had significantly higher positive overall OC perception scores than both the SC ($M_{dif} = 0.35$, $p = 0.007$) and NR ($M_{dif} = 0.38$, $p = 0.002$). However, the SC and NR did not differ

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
1. Perceived global content of job															
2. International experience	0.51***														
3. Language Proficiency (English)	0.69***	0.46***													
4. MPQ overall	0.46***	0.22**	0.46***												
5. Assertiveness	0.33***	0.11	0.30***	0.74***											
6. Social initiative	0.28***	0.09	0.28***	0.78***	0.47***										
7. Open-mindedness	0.33***	0.34***	0.39***	0.60***	0.36***	0.33***									
8. Emotional stability	0.36***	0.14*	0.28***	0.71***	0.35***	0.39***	0.23**								
9. Flexibility	0.39***	0.17*	0.42***	0.62***	0.39***	0.40***	0.28***	0.25***							
10. OCQ overall	0.23**	0.12	0.16*	0.11	0.14	0.10	0.03	0.08	0.01						
11. Process of change	0.24**	0.14	0.15*	0.14	0.17*	0.12	0.05	0.08	0.04	0.93***					
12. Climate of change	0.14	0.05	0.11	0.03	0.05	0.03	-0.01	0.06	-0.06	0.78***	0.49***				
13. Readiness to change overall	0.24**	0.17*	0.26**	0.11	0.14	0.01	-0.02	0.08	0.20**	0.53***	0.38***	0.61***			
14. Supportive attitude toward change	0.22**	0.15*	0.22**	0.13	0.15*	0.06	0.03	0.06	0.20**	0.59***	0.50***	0.54***	0.90***		
15. Optimism	0.17*	0.13	0.21**	0.03	0.06	-0.07	-0.09	0.08	0.12	0.20**	0.02	0.44***	0.73***	0.35***	

Notes: $n = 186$. * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$

Table VII.
The correlation analysis of work orientation, international experience, language proficiency, MPQ, OCQ, and readiness dimensions

significantly ($M_{dif}=0.04$, $p=0.936$). The perception of change process was significantly different across the three work groups ($F(2, 181)=6.867$, $p=0.001$). IR had significantly higher positive perception of change process than both SC ($M_{dif}=0.43$, $p=0.006$), and NR ($M_{dif}=0.46$, $p=0.002$). However, perceptions related to the climate of change did not differ significantly (Table VI).

Readiness for change and work group differences

Our fifth hypothesis was related to the differential readiness for change across the work groups. As the descriptive statistics in Table VI represents, One-way ANOVA showed that there is a significant main effect of the work groups on the readiness for overall change ($F(2, 181)=10.224$, $p=0.000$); supportive attitude toward change ($F(2, 181)=7.439$, $p=0.001$), and optimistic perspective ($F(2, 181)=5.907$, $p=0.003$). *Post hoc* comparisons indicated that the IR had higher overall readiness than both SC ($M_{dif}=0.35$, $p=0.015$), and NR ($M_{dif}=0.55$, $p=0.000$). On the sub-dimensions of readiness, IR is significantly more supportive than SC ($M_{dif}=0.35$, $p=0.039$), and NR ($M_{dif}=0.52$, $p=0.000$). In contrast, IR and SC are not different on their optimistic perspective ($M_{dif}=0.37$, $p=0.107$); but IR is significantly more optimistic than NR ($M_{dif}=0.61$, $p=0.002$). However, the SC and NR did not differ significantly across overall readiness ($M_{dif}=0.19$, $p=0.204$), supportive ($M_{dif}=0.17$, $p=0.354$), or optimistic attitude ($M_{dif}=0.24$, $p=0.332$).

Effect of MP on perception of OC and readiness for change

In the sixth hypothesis, we predicted that MPQ will determine the readiness level of participants and this relationship will be mediated by the perception of OC. However, the Multiple Regression Analysis showed that MPQ is not a significant predictor either for the perception of OC ($\beta=0.113$, $t=1.537$, $p=0.126$, $F=2.361$, $p=0.126$, $R^2_{adj}=0.007$) or for the readiness for change ($\beta=0.110$, $t=1.495$, $p=0.137$, $F=2.236$, $p=0.137$, $R^2_{adj}=0.007$). Therefore, the predictive effect of MPQ on readiness for change was not supported and testing for mediation was not conducted.

However, as Table VII presents even if the effect sizes are small, assertiveness is significantly correlated with process of change ($r=0.17$, $p<0.05$) which is the component of perception of OC. A significant correlation was also observed between assertiveness and the supportive attitude toward change ($r=0.15$, $p<0.05$) which is the component of readiness for change. Similarly correlations between the flexibility and readiness for change overall, and flexibility and supportive attitude for change were significant as well. In both cases correlation levels were $r=0.20$ ($p<0.05$).

Mediating effect of attitude toward OC between the perceived global content of the job and readiness for change

H7 predicted that the perception of OC will mediate the relationship between the global content of the job and the readiness for change. A series of Multiple Regression Analysis were conducted and the Baron and Kenny's (1986) procedure was followed to test the mediating effect. This analysis showed that there is a partial mediation.

The regression of perceived global content of the job on readiness for change ($\beta=0.240$, $t=3.339$, $p=0.001$, $F=11.147$, $p=0.001$, $R^2_{adj}=0.053$), and the regression of the perceived global content of the job scores on OC (the mediator) were both significant ($\beta=0.232$, $t=3.22$, $p=0.002$, $F=10.377$, $p=0.002$, $R^2_{adj}=0.049$). Regression of OC on readiness was also significant ($\beta=0.528$, $t=8.433$, $p=0.000$,

$F = 71.118$, $p = 0.000$, $R_{adj}^2 = 0.275$). However, when controlling for the mediator ($F = 37.295$, $p = 0.000$, $R_{adj}^2 = 0.284$), global content of the job's level of significance decreased ($\beta = 0.125$, $t = 1.939$, $p = 0.054$), as the mediator's effect was still significant ($\beta = 0.417$, $t = 7.735$, $p = 0.000$). These results suggest that global content of the job has a small effect, and the perception of OC has a large effect size as a predictor of readiness for change. The relationship between the global content of the job and readiness for change is partially mediated by the perception of OC.

Discussion and conclusion

The results showed that MP, perception of OC, and readiness for change differed across the work groups that have a different level of involvement in international tasks. Also, perceived global content of the job, international experiences, and language proficiency differed across these three work groups. Thus, more global the work orientation, the more they have international experience and language proficiency to meet international job requirements (Caligiuri *et al.*, 2009; Kim and Slocum Jr, 2008). International experience and language proficiency showed significant effect on MP; but no effect of MP on OC and readiness for change was found. Finally, perceived OC mediated the relationship between perceived global content of the job and readiness for change. Therefore, as the work content gets global, members have more supportive attitude toward change, maximize their participation to the change process; readiness and commitment to the change is higher, and the work environment is perceived as more positive since their optimism is higher. These findings are in line with the available literature (Armenakis *et al.*, 1993; Monica and Liviu, 2013; Wanberg and Banas, 2000).

International experience fed by the content of the job and the personal international exposure strengthen the MP. People with higher language proficiency and international experience are also more multicultural that they easily adapt to multicultural environments and deal with problems based on cultural differences and intercultural interactions (Korzilius *et al.*, 2011; Van der Zee and Brinkmann, 2004; Van der Zee and Van Oudenhoven, 2000; Van Oudenhoven *et al.*, 2003). The conceptualization of international retail as an opening door for globalization, where the employees are in the center of daily international business and diverse cultures (Hutchinson *et al.*, 2007) is one of the reasons why international retail employees are found to be more assertive and open-minded than others in this study. They are the ones who should be open-minded and self-assertive at most to adapt to diverse cultures and stand up to the problems depending on diverse work habits. Moreover, international retail and SC employees have more social initiative, more emotional stability and flexibility compared to national retail employees since they are the contact people who interact with international customers and executives back in the headquarter or in international assignments (Harvey *et al.*, 2013). These significant differences across the work groups provide evidence for the criterion validity of MPQ as well. There is no prior study reporting the concurrent validity of MPQ. Our results support the strength of MPQ to differentiate the work groups that have diverse levels of contribution to RetaComp's globalization.

We observed that international retail employees differed in terms of their perception of OC for globalization from other departments. Thus, international retail employees believed that OC is well managed in terms of the change process and work climate, and also they are individually ready and committed for the change. Results imply that international retail employees are more aware of internal and outside environment and changes since their involvement and role in the globalization are higher in line with their global work orientation (Azuma, 2004). Even though SC and national retail

employees seem to have less positive attitude toward change, their global awareness should also be another consideration since these work groups have operationally significant roles in the globalization at different levels.

From a multi-level perspective of change readiness in terms of individual, work group, and organizational readiness of Rafferty *et al.* (2012), employees' perception of change, beside work group differences determined partially the level of readiness for change. Although attitude toward OC did not differ depending on overall MP, assertiveness on its own has a correlation with the change process perceptions. Assertiveness are positively related to perception of change process and also with the more supportive attitudes toward change. We also recognize that flexibility as a personality dimension has significant correlation with readiness for change overall and supportive attitude toward change in specific.

As previously mentioned, we do not recognize the prominence of the studies addressing predictive role of MP characteristics on the perception of OC in the literature. This might be due to either lack of interest on this connection or this relationship might be taken as granted so that attempts to do research on this link might be missing. But more plausible argument might be based on "file drawer problem" (Rosenthal, 1979), i.e., the research papers with non-significant results have lower probability to be published in academic journals. A future meta-analytic research including the unpublished manuscripts and thesis may remove this obscurity. In this context our findings that highlight lack of MPQ's predictive role either on the readiness level of participants or the perception of OC open a window to this discussion. Our research shows that in the given sample of a Turkish retail company which is in the process of globalization, employees' MP characteristics do not determine the OC perception and their readiness for change by itself.

It is obvious that globalization of businesses has a considerable impact on organizations. While the international characteristic of organizations might range from an export strategy to multinational and even to transnational one, for the managers of the companies with the intention to operate in international markets it is a critical task to analyze organizations' and members' readiness to shift to global operations (Richard *et al.*, 2009). Development of the tools and techniques to support scientific and systematic way of doing this is a challenging task. Thus, the current study's findings on the readiness for globalization are bringing some elaboration of organizational and individual factors in this task. Rizvi (2010) highlights the strategy, visionary thinking, and planning in the globalization process. The assessment of international opportunities and "embracing the new markets" via a clear visionary statement increases organizational readiness to achieve this goal. It is recommended that the management should "construct a plan" to prioritize the markets or regions to start an effective implementation of the expansion plan. If why, what, and where to accomplish global goals and strategies are not well defined, costs in terms of money and credibility await the companies. Moreover, understanding the strategy and knowing the region to expand influence the commitment level and the implemented activities in the internationalization process (Ezerman, 1987; Johanson and Vahlne, 1977; Klohs, 2012).

Since the human capital is the most valuable resource in the globalization process as well (Lanfeard, 2012), the contribution of human resources management departments is fundamental especially for; first, the recruitment of new resources to serve to the new or diverse cultures and markets along with organizational expansion, second, the talent development for expatriate assignments, third, the establishment of the core values to build a "one firm" understanding, and fourth, channeling talents for the global projects to

review readiness of the organization and support the transition (Richard *et al.*, 2009). Thus, having a global vision to get beyond neighborhood, strategic management, and recruiting or training talent for internationalized work environment are important to foster the competitiveness of firms globally and increase the readiness of the employees.

Research and managerial implications

One of the important contributions of our research to the related literature is the high reliability scores of the scales in this study comparing to the original findings of Van der Zee and Van Oudenhoven (2001), and Bouckennooghe *et al.* (2009). Current study strengthens the utility of the scales also in Turkish and indicated the success of the translation. It is also the first study that these scales are used in Turkish with employees' rather than students as participants. Moreover, results showed that MPQ is a valid tool in discriminating the people across the work groups. Since job incumbents are selected and appointed to the positions based on their fit to the job requirements, current sampling strategy, as it increases sensitivity of the measures, may also decrease the salience of personality's impact on readiness for change and perception of change. The effect of personality here seems to be indirect through the work groups instead of being direct.

Results showed that the international retail employees' MP helps them to be more aware of internal and external changes since their involvement and role in the international orientation of organizations are higher (Azuma, 2004). Even though SC and national retail employees seem to have a less positive perception of change, their global awareness should be another consideration since these work groups have operationally significant roles at different levels in the globalization process. Consequently, it is crucial to decrease discrepancies depending on the global content of the job and increase the corporate knowledge and global awareness of all employees about what for and why their organization initiates change. In this sense, structured talent pools and cultural diversity training programs may be substantial for the adaptation and integration of employees to different cultures. Moreover, internal corporate communication methods may contribute to the global change by treating the best internal work environment.

The literature highlights that corporate communication creates a common mindset for the unity of internal and external communications, which become more important during readiness for OCs (Christensen and Cornelissen, 2010). Since there is a global change in the organization, increasing corporate communication to spread the awareness of "brand image" about where the organization is currently in the global business world and where it is going will increase the inclusiveness of all employees to the change process. Using interactive "new" media (e.g. portals, websites), which is based on the web to communicate with employees and stakeholders, will contribute building a strong brand (García *et al.*, 2012). A web-2.0 based or mobile communication channels, which may show the number of stores and the employees abroad, and the tools to reach out the "know-how" of other employees, will strengthen the global identity in the eyes of employees by adding on readiness for change.

Limitations and further research

Melting data from different organizations with diverse vision, scale of business, size, and culture was considered as the source of confounding effects and single organization became the target for this research. This was a trade-off for the restricted

variance in a single organization. Moreover, work groups were also purposefully selected to serve to the research objectives to increase the sensitivity of the research tools during hypothesis testing (Ellis, 2010). But both of these sampling preferences restrain the generalization of the findings. Another important limitation in this study is that effect sizes were small to moderate level. The variance of the answers for the survey may have occurred in a wider range, if it had been collected from diverse organizations, and this in turn may have enlarged the effect sizes.

Although MP characteristics do not determine the OC perception and their readiness for change, this relation may exist in different sectors and different cultures at organizational and society level so that this issue deserves further research. For the future studies, we recommend the comparison of a local, an international and a global organization that would bring a valuable contribution to the literature. Objective measures like successful number of stores abroad, the turnover rate of human resources, and the number of expats transferred could also be included in future studies to evaluate the performance of globalization at the corporate level.

Note

1. From here on, it will be referred to as RetaComp.

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2. SchultzJoseph Samuel, Joseph Samuel Schultz, SjøvoldEndre, Endre Sjøvold, AndreBeate, Beate Andre. 2017. Can group climate explain innovative readiness for change?. *Journal of Organizational Change Management* 30:3, 440-452. [[Abstract](#)] [[Full Text](#)] [[PDF](#)]
3. Haroon Bakari, Ahmed Imran Hunjra, Ghulam Shabbir Khan Niazi. 2017. How Does Authentic Leadership Influence Planned Organizational Change? The Role of Employees' Perceptions: Integration of Theory of Planned Behavior and Lewin's Three Step Model. *Journal of Change Management* 17:2, 155-187. [[CrossRef](#)]