

Case Study of the Regional Resource Center Program: A Study of Organizational Change

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine the policy, social, and behavioral dynamics of how the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) funded Regional Resource Centers (RRCs) evolved from individual centers into a national RRC Program. A critical instance study was used to examine the dynamics of how the RRCs have evolved into the national RRC Program, reflecting on policy context which led to the formation of the national Program, the challenges encountered, those that remain and the prospects of institutionalizing organizational change for the future. The investigation incorporated concepts related to Lewin's (1951) traditional perspective of organizational change as contemporary views incorporating Social Identity Theory (SIT). The case study approach used in this investigation involved data collection and analytic methods which encompass aspects of traditional change theory via a Force Field Analysis (FFA), while the method used to capture the more affective components of change was the Organizational Change Recipients' Beliefs Scale (Armenakis et al. 2011). Select staff interviews were also conducted in order to gather more qualitative data to better understand the underpinnings of the change process.

This case study revealed a number of common driving and restraining forces that impact the organization's ability to establish equilibrium and move beyond a phase of transition. The convergence of data sources confirmed the identification of driving and restraining forces, which included the Program structure, trust, evaluation, and governance. Five major themes emerged from staff interviews that support the identification of a number of driving and restraining forces. The themes include: importance of relationship building, the role of communication in development of the organization, alignment of Program and state work, RRCP structure and its impact on organizational growth, and professional development. Findings also confirm the current status of the RRCP with regard to organizational socialization, role conflict and resolution, and intergroup relations.

Implications for policy include; implications of shared leadership in an organizational change model, the need for an appropriate funding model to support the RRCP, and the establishment of clear policies and procedures for the organization. Future research implications include; an analysis of which policies, practices and procedures significantly contribute to the organizational move to refreeze, the identification of driving and restraining forces in other organizations that are similarly funded but required to work as one entity, research efforts to examine the impact of the organizational change, and in particular the change in delivery of technical assistance to states, on how states' systems of general supervision have been better able to implement the accountability requirements of IDEA 2004, and whether or not the change in organizational model for the Regional Resource Centers contributed to OSEP's ability to provide technical assistance to states.

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List of Acronyms

AYP- Adequate Yearly Progress
APR—Annual Performance Report
ESEA- Elementary and Secondary Education Act
ERIC- Educational Resources Information Center
FFA-Force Field Analysis
GAO- Government Accounting Office
IDEA 2004—Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act
IEPs- Individual Education Plans
LA-Part C Lead Agency
LEA—Local Education Agency
MSIP— Monitoring and State Improvement Planning (Division of OSEP)
NASDSE- National Association of State Directors of Special Education
NCLB – No Child Left Behind Act
OCRBS-Organizational Change Recipients’ Beliefs Scale
OSEP—Office of Special Education Programs
PBIS- Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports
RCC- Regional Comprehensive Center
RDA-Results Driven Accountability
RRC-Regional Resource Center
RRCP-Regional Resource Center Program
RTI-Response to Intervention
RTP-Research to Practice (Division of OSEP)
SIT- Social Identity Theory
SEA—State Education Agency
SPP—State Performance Plan

Chapter 1: Study Overview

Synopsis

Ever since the passage of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 2001 (PL 107-110), widely known as the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), significant federal policy initiatives and resources have been devoted to the demonstration of educational accountability. For the very first time, the U.S. Department of Education could exercise sanctions for schools identified as “In Need of Improvement.” Shortly thereafter, Congress passed the Individual with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (P.L. 108-446), popularly referred to as IDEA 2004. Similar to NCLB, IDEA 2004 was what policy experts would refer to as a law “with teeth”—that is, giving the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), under the authority of U. S. Secretary of Education, the ability to place sanctions on U. S. States and Territories that fail to meet accountability requirements for students on Individual Education Plans (IEPs).

While IDEA 2004 provided OSEP with more enforcement options, a reciprocal effect has been the increased obligation of that federal agency to provide technical assistance and support to Part B State Education Agencies (SEAs) and Part C Lead Agencies (LAs)¹ deemed to be *In Need of Improvement*. Simply put, like many federal educational agencies, OSEP is required to do more—with an increased burden to provide support to SEAs. OSEP has had to adjust internally as well as seek out external sources of support in order to leverage its organizational capacity to facilitate the implementation of the accountability requirements of IDEA.

One source of support sought out by OSEP has been through the nation’s Regional Resource Centers (RRCs). Prior to the passage of IDEA 2004, each RRC operated autonomously, providing information dissemination and technical assistance services to

¹ Note that throughout this dissertation, the terms “SEA” and “states” will be used to encompass services to all relevant programs under IDEA, including Part C and 619 programs, irrespective of the state agency in which they may be housed (e.g. Department of Health).

the specific interests of SEAs within the region without a common mission or strategic direction. In order to understand the RRCs role in relationship to OSEP's need for additional support to States, one must understand what technical assistance is. Blasé (2009) has indicated that there is no common definition for the term "technical assistance". However, one definition of technical assistance within education states that it is "the timely provision of specialized advice and customized support to resolve specific problems and increase clients' capacity" (Barton, 2004).

With the enactment of IDEA 2004, however, RRCs were required to shift direction to support OSEP's efforts in implementing the accountability requirements of IDEA 2004, most notably, through the State Performance Plan (SPP) and Annual Performance Report (APR). This represented a shift from a general level of information sharing to addressing the highly specific requirements of the SPP and APR developed by States. This essentially was a galvanizing force in which a common mission was needed to address national priorities. As such, the accountability requirements of IDEA 2004 were instrumental in transforming the RRCs of the past into what is today referred to as the national Regional Resource Center Program (RRCP). Instead of a loosely-coupled configuration of regional programs, the RRCP now operates under a common mission and strategic plan largely focused on the delivery of technical assistance activities to support SEAs in meeting the accountability requirements of IDEA 2004. Part C Lead Agencies carry out the regulatory requirements for serving infants and toddlers with disabilities ages birth to three.

A critical instance case study will be used for this study, a methodology frequently employed by the U. S. Government Accounting Office (GAO) to appraise federal programs. A critical instance approach is most often used to study cause and effect factors of a unique object (e.g., organization, socio-political issue) and are not necessarily intended to be generalizable to other objects, although this evaluation may reveal findings helpful to others faced with similar types of organizational change. The critical instance study will be used to examine the dynamics of how the RRCs have evolved into the

national RRC Program, reflecting on policy context which led to the formation of the national Program, the challenges encountered, those that remain and the prospects of institutionalizing organizational change for the future.

This study will be incorporate Lewin's (1948) three-stage conceptual framework of organizational change (e.g., unfreeze, transition, and refreeze) to provide an overarching rationale for the study from a traditional organizational change perspective. In addition, a more contemporary view of organizational change adapted from Social Identity Theory (SIT) will be used. Both frameworks will be utilized to guide the construction of the problem statement, literature review, data collection and data analysis activities.

Introduction

Ever since the publication of *A Nation at Risk* by the National Commission on Excellence in Education (1983), the trajectory of America's educational policy has trended toward the issue of educational accountability. Since that time, federal initiatives such as the 1994 *Improving America's Schools Act (IASA)*, the 1997 *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments (IDEA)*, *America 2000*, and *Goals 2000: Educate America Act* spurred many State Education Agencies (SEAs) to begin work on establishing academic standards and implementing standards-based testing systems throughout the 1980s and 1990s. Perhaps the greatest manifestation of an accountability initiative that had become a central focus of federal policy was the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 2001 (PL 107-110), also referred to as NCLB. This law, more than any other federal education legislation since the National Defense Education Act of 1958 (PL 85-864), contained a number of accountability provisions which significantly expanded the role and authority of the U. S. Department of Education. With what many agreed as the increasing federalization of the nation's education system (Heise, 2006) NCLB has been, and continues to be, one of the most hailed and most criticized federal education initiatives.

Despite the ongoing debate around NCLB and proposals to amend it under current reauthorization initiatives, one thing is clear—the federal role in education and its focus

on accountability is unlikely to be diminished anytime soon. However, even those who believe that increasing the federal role in education as something positive must also be cognizant of the consequences placed on federal infrastructures and resource capacity to ensure effective implementation of any legislation sure to contain a large number of mandates and regulatory directives.

The literature is replete with evidence which suggests that one of the biggest challenges of NCLB has been for SEAs to marshal the resources necessary to implement the law (Sunderman, Kim & Orfield, 2005; Center on Education Policy, 2007; Carlson Le Floch, Boyle, & Bowles Therriault, 2008). Less prominent, but equally important, are policy studies that have been conducted to examine how NCLB has impacted federal agencies. Even though SEAs and Local Education Agencies (LEAs) are primarily responsible for implementing the nuts and bolts of NCLB, the U. S. Department of Education is mandated to play an important role in the provision of technical assistance to support these efforts. As education accountability requirements increase in both frequency and intensity so too does the stress on the federal agency infrastructure.

Increasing involvement in education extracts a toll on human and other resources to ensure that the delivery of effective technical assistance and information dissemination is available to those responsible for implementing the law. Currently, much of the literature is focused on state capacity to implement federal education laws (Center on Education Policy 2007; Gottfried, Stecher, Hoover & Cross 2011; Sunderman & Kim, 2007), but little attention is given to looking at federal capacity. That is, the extent to which the U. S. Department of Education is able to influence and support SEAs in the implementation of education laws. For example, in a report issued by the Center on Education Policy (2007), only two (2) of fifteen (15) SEAs reported that guidance from the U.S. Department of Education in implementing NCLB was helpful. As another example, a critical instance case study conducted by the Government Accounting Office (GAO) found that the U. S. Department of Education's "monitoring tools and reporting requirements do not fully address issues of compliance" in relation to NCLB

implementation (GAO 2007). While some might choose to interpret these findings simply as the U. S. Department of Education's lack of ability to support SEA implementation efforts, a more convincing argument would be that the increasing federal role in education has significantly stretched human resources. An example of this can be seen in the Monitoring and State Improvement Planning (MSIP) Division of OSEP, the section responsible for monitoring SEA implementation of IDEA. Although Section 616 of IDEA 2004 contains numerous provisions regarding compliance issues, the number of MSIP staff to monitor did not seem to increase commensurate with these added responsibilities.

One way federal agencies have been able to leverage their capacity has been to fund national, regional, and state technical assistance centers for the purpose of supporting implementation efforts. In regards to NCLB, for example, the U. S. Department of Education has funded a number of Regional Comprehensive Centers (RCCs) with an explicit charge of assisting SEAs in the implementation of NCLB. The RCCs represent just one way of how the Department leverages its resources as a means of reinforcing SEA and LEA efforts to implement NCLB. Additional sources of technical assistance to carry out federal initiatives also come from entities such as Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC), Equity Assistance Centers, National Research and Development Centers, Regional Educational Laboratories, and others. Federal resources are also prominent at the state level as well to support specific types of initiatives such as reading and literacy, technology, tech prep programs, and many others.

The discussion of how the U. S. Department of Education has leveraged its resources to support implementation efforts parallels with what has occurred with Regional Resource Centers and its relationship with OSEP. In this case, the catalyst for change was the passage of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (P.L. 108-446). One might choose to look at the passage of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (P.L. 108-446) as an extension on behalf of federal lawmakers to include provisions for demonstrating accountability. This law, referred to

as IDEA 2004, contains some very important accountability provisions not encountered in any previous iterations of the law which have major implications for both SEAs and LAs, and consequently, for the RRCs.

While not entirely analogous with NCLB, similarities can be drawn with IDEA 2004. For example, like NCLB, the accountability provisions of IDEA 2004 require the State to annually report, in this case, via the Annual Performance Report (APR), on the performance of every LEA in relation to targets indicated on the State Performance Plan (SPP). As such, the annual public reporting required by IDEA 2004 is much like how local schools have to report on Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) under NCLB. Another way the two laws are related is in the enforcement actions the U. S. Department of Education may take when it has been determined the designated entity (e.g., SEA, LEA, school) has not implemented the law as required. For example, in the case of NCLB, a school may be designated as *In Need of Improvement*, followed—if need be—by other types of options (e.g. corrective action, restructuring).

IDEA 2004 also contains graduated enforcement options that the U. S. Department of Education may take—through the auspices of OSEP—in cases where it has been determined a SEA has encountered difficulties in implementing the requirements of IDEA 2004. Such options include being designated as *Needs Assistance*, *Needs Intervention*, or *Needs Substantial Intervention*. SEAs that meet OSEP criteria are identified as *Meets Requirements*. Determinations are made annually by OSEP under the authority of the Secretary of Education (IDEA 34 CFR §300.603(b)).

Specifically, Section 616 of IDEA 2004 is where many of these accountability provisions are articulated. This section provides details about the monitoring, technical assistance, and enforcement activities which can be applied in each of the Determinations categories. For example, under the category of *Needs Intervention*, OSEP can:

Advise the State of available sources of technical assistance that may help the State address the areas in which the State needs assistance, which may include assistance from the Office of Special Education Programs, other offices of the

Department of Education, other Federal agencies, technical assistance providers approved by the Secretary, and other federally funded nonprofit agencies, and require the State to work with appropriate entities (IDEA 34 CFR §300.603(b)).

Within Section 616, technical assistance includes such strategies as seeking the advice of experts, identifying professional development on evidence-based instructional practices, and collaborating with higher education or one or more of the fifty two (52) OSEP-funded technical assistance centers. As indicated above, OSEP has the authority to direct the use of State-level funds to the area or areas in which the State needs intervention. Even though Section 616 has made enforcement options available to OSEP never seen in earlier versions of the law, it has also resulted in a corresponding increase in its responsibilities to provide SEAs with an array of technical assistance supports to help them attain the category of *Meets Requirements*. Clearly, every SEA wants to achieve the status of *Meets Requirements*. Being designated in a lower category is stigmatizing, and most SEAs are anxious to do whatever is necessary, often including looking to OSEP, to provide the range of technical assistance options to remedy the situation. However, in the case of issuing Determinations, the demand can easily exceed the supply of technical assistance options which can be offered. While the provision of technical assistance has long been a feature of OSEP's services to SEAs, the obligations under IDEA 2004 have significantly intensified in scope. As such, OSEP has had to seek other sources of support in order to help it meet its technical assistance obligations.

Statement of the Problem

To meet the increasing technical assistance responsibilities imposed by Section 616, OSEP has strategically leveraged its resources in order to address the technical assistance needs of SEAs. One way that OSEP has established much of its technical assistance capacity over the years has been through the establishment of what is known as the Technical Assistance and Dissemination Network (i.e., TA & D Network). Consisting of over 50 centers and programs, the purpose of the TA & D Network is to provide information dissemination and technical assistance to address issues related to IDEA

2004 (e.g., assessment, data collection and reporting, dispute resolution, professional development).

While the TA & D Network plays an important role in the implementation of IDEA 2004, particularly in their information dissemination efforts, the technical assistance capacity of most centers is limited. For example, many of these centers are not funded at the level that would allow them to provide frequent, face-to-face technical assistance to SEAs across the nation. In addition, many centers within the TA & D Network are charged with a very focused scope of work, such as increasing the availability of accessible instructional materials, developing and disseminating training for preservice trainers of special educators, and scaling up Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and Response to Intervention (RtI) practices. Finally, the mission of some of the centers within the TA & D Network are only peripherally related to the implementation of IDEA 2004 (e.g. IRIS Center for Training Enhancements, Personnel Improvement Center—PIC). As such, the only centers distributed regionally across the U. S. and its Territories in which face-to-face technical assistance is consistently available is through the RRCs.

Up until the advent of IDEA 2004, RRCs operated fairly autonomously, a loosely-coupled configuration of centers whose work focus was clearly regional, with little organizational capacity to address national priorities. As a collaborative force for the delivery of technical assistance related to common national priorities, the RRCs capacity might have been described as circumscribed, infrequent, and slow to respond (Weick, 1976). Even the work done regionally was marked by variability. Even though RRCs engaged in information dissemination and technical assistance activities in the SEAs in their respective regions, the nature and range of this work was highly variable, with little uniformity with regard to articulating a collective mission or organizational direction. Instead, each RRC operated fairly independently of one another, serving SEAs in different ways, often deferring to SEAs to identify their technical assistance needs. In many cases, these needs did not always align with either IDEA or OSEP priorities,

resulting in wide service delivery variation and the manner in which resources were allocated. In addition, oversight by OSEP was minimal since there were no specific criteria which clearly described the nature and range of technical assistance to SEAs. This organizational model operated for several decades, and while evaluation information reported during that time generally indicated SEAs, by and large, looked favorably on the services provided by the RRCs (Academy for Educational Development, 1994; Kochhar-Bryant, 2000), it also might be hypothesized that SEAs were satisfied with RRC services because they were free to dictate their own needs.

However, as indicated previously, the passage of IDEA 2004 signified a major change in OSEP's responsibilities for providing technical assistance. Instead of addressing idiosyncratic needs identified by SEAs, RRCs are now required to focus on cross-cutting national priorities identified by OSEP, based on data obtained from the Annual Performance Reports (APRs). As a result, RRCs were no longer able to operate in a regional vacuum. Instead, a national collaboration of RRCs, working with OSEP, was deemed essential to meet the accountability requirements of IDEA 2004. This need for change was first made clear by OSEP leadership at meeting of RRC Directors during the October 2007 conference of the National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE). The RRC Directors were provided with an overview of OSEP's new obligations under IDEA 2004 and were urged to develop a service delivery model to address national priorities. This was the first formal attempt on behalf of OSEP leadership to unfreeze the current organizational structure of the RRCs in order to implement the necessary changes to adapt to future needs and expectations of SEAs.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine the policy, social, and behavioral dynamics of how the Regional Resource Centers evolved into the national RRC Program. To do so, it will incorporate concepts related to Lewin's (1951) traditional perspective of organizational change as contemporary views incorporating Social Identity Theory (SIT). The study hypothesis states that RRCP Leadership and staff are supportive of the

transformation from regionally based centers to one national program designed to deliver consistent and high quality technical assistance to State Education Agencies (SEAs). In order to establish the initial change process and garner staff support, specific strategies were implemented to establish the RRCP. These strategies included (1) the establishment of a Leadership team to guide policy development and implementation and resource allocation to support Program activities, (2) the design and use of one strategic plan, (3) the development of one common evaluation plan, and (4) the creation of a uniform professional development plan for staff. The establishment of these four strategies were designed to reinforce the Program outcomes of (1) utilizing streamlined communication, (2) implementing common policies and practices, and (3) informing the use of a common language for all staff. The study hypothesis informed the development of the study questions, research design and data collection instrumentation.

Questions that this dissertation will address include:

1. What are the forces for and against transforming the RRCs into a national RRC Program?
2. How has the RRC Program changed with regard to organizational socialization (Van Dick, Ullrichw, & Tissington, 2006; Wanous & Reichers, 1984), role conflict and resolution (Ashforth & Mael, 1989), and intergroup relations?

The purpose of this study is to provide OSEP program managers and RRC Program leadership with information about the context, strategies, and consequences of the transformation of the regionally-focused technical assistance centers into a national program aligned with OSEP priorities. Once again, while a feature of the critical instance case study is not necessarily to generalize, it is anticipated that this study will be of interest to educational policy researchers, analysts, federal program administrators, and technical assistance providers as well.

Limitations of the Study

This study is confined to interviewing, surveying and conducting a Force Field Analysis of Regional Resource Center Leadership and staff. It focuses on identifying the forces for and against transforming the RRCs into a national Program and understanding how the RRCP has changed with regard to organizational socialization. The critical instance case study approach utilized in this study limits the generalizability of the conclusions, although may provide insight for future study.

In addition to the concerns about the limitations of generalizability of this study, another limitation concerns the issue of a response set as it relates to the notion of socially desirability. This phenomenon occurs when survey respondents try to answer questions in such a way that they will be perceived in a socially desirable way. That is, respondents may want to obtain social approval from the individual(s) collecting the data. Survey research literature identifies three prominent types of response sets: social desirability, acquiescence, and “naysaying” (Krathwohl, 1993; Borg & Gall, 1989). More contemporary literature refers to this phenomenon as Socially Desirable Responding (SDR) and is typically defined as “the tendency to give positive self-descriptions... and define response biases as any systematic tendency to answer questionnaire items on some basis that interferes with accurate self-reports. Examples are tendencies to choose the desirable response or the most moderate response or to agree with statements independent of their content” (Paulhus 2002). To control for the issue of Response Set/ Socially Desirable Responding, the survey invitation that accompanied the survey (See Appendix A) provided for assurances that promote respondent accuracy and included a clear statement of confidentiality. In addition, the same assurances were utilized with the staff interviews as well.

A final limitation of this study is that it primarily addresses Part B and technical assistance provided to State Education Agencies. It does not address specific components of Part C services provided to State Lead Agencies.

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

Organizational Change

Over the past several decades, a considerable body of research literature has amassed on the subject of organizational change. While much of this information has been used to describe organizational change in relation to the business and enterprise sectors of our society, the conceptual framework for understanding this phenomenon has been taken from various fields of the social sciences, particularly sociology and psychology. One of the earliest theorists that examined organizational change was Kurt Lewin (1947). Widely recognized as the “father of social psychology” (Marrow, 1970), Lewin’s contributions have extended far beyond social psychology to include the fields of philosophy of science, organizational development and industrial psychology, psychology of prejudice and group processes. Based on a study using six criteria (number of citations, recognitions and awards, etc.), Lewin was ranked as the 18th most eminent psychologist of the 20th Century (Haggbloom, Warnick, Warnick, Jones, Yarbrough, Russell, Borecky, McGahhey, Powell, Beavers, Monte & Emmanuelle, 2002).

This study will be constructed using Lewin’s organizational change theory which posits three stages within a holistic model: (1) Unfreeze, (2) Transition, and (3) Refreeze (Lewin, 1951). Lewin’s ideas have undergone questioning from contemporary complexity theorists who tend to view change as less of a planned process and more of a non-linear, chaotic process (Kanter, Stein, & Jiek, 1992; Dawson, 1994; Slyhre, 2002). Burnes (2004) and others (MacIntosh & MacLean 2001; Elrod & Tippett, 2002) however, have put forth a convincing argument for the continuing relevance of Lewin’s work by integrating the three-stage model with that of complexity theory (Weick, 1976). Suggesting that Lewin’s three-stage model is a good example of modern organizational development theorists simply going “back to the future,” Burnes (2004) indicated that Lewin’s work can serve as an overarching theory for adopting complex approaches to organizations. Irrespective of the varied perspectives which have been expressed

regarding Lewin's work, it continues to stand as one of the most cited and highly regarded theories to explain organizational change.

At first glance, a deceptively simple framework, Lewin's notion regarding the freezing, transition, and refreezing stages of organizational change are embedded with some very nuanced and complex concepts integrating the disciplines of social psychology, sociology, and organizational development. One such concept is that of *force field*, the notion that human behavior is based on what is referred to as "quasi-stationary equilibria, supported by a large force field of driving and restraining forces" (Schien, 2006). Within this force field, efforts to induce change result in a countervailing force to maintain equilibrium, eventually manifesting itself as resistance to change and countermeasures to address resistance (Bovey & Hede, 2001). Hence, it is the give and take of these forces in which change occurs.

However, before any change can be initiated, it is necessary to set the conditions for which change is to occur. In other words, there needs to be some force or condition which will cause the organization to *unfreeze*. These conditions can represent a wide range of phenomena, for example, an organization that consistently finds itself losing market share, a school chronically identified as needs intervention under AYP, or even by legislative or administrative edict that dictates "You *will* change." In this study, it will be argued that the primary motivation which resulted in the unfreezing of the Regional Resource Center network was driven by OSEP's need to provide technical assistance to SEAs as obligated under Section 616 of IDEA 2004. OSEP directed the RRCs to change in order to meet the increasing need for the provision of consistent and targeted technical assistance to SEAs.

The second stage—*transition*—involves the processes which facilitate or inhibit the replacement of old behaviors with new ones. Once unfreezing has taken place and key individuals have accepted that change will occur, transition marks the time when people within the organization take on new roles and obligations. Within the RRC Program, for example, a Leadership Team was formed to guide the work of the national program.

Also, Priority Teams were created to address national priority issues across centers. In addition, a RRC Program Logical Model was developed and aligned to a five-year strategic plan, guided by the OSEP Cooperative Agreement. Essentially, all of the RRCs engaged in restructuring activities in order to implement the national Program. Transition is considered to be a time of uncertainty. While the initial unfreezing has taken place, people within organizations still need to seek ways of reestablishing their sense of equilibrium by adopting behaviors consistent with the change. It is also the stage where resistance occurs. Given the critical make or break nature of the transition stage, effecting substantive change requires much time and work.

Lewin's third stage is where *refreezing* takes place. This stage is where the change is institutionalized—the point where everyone recognizes it is the “way we do business.” Refreezing is key to avoiding slippage, that is, where organizations drift back to the old ways, essentially undoing the intended change (Kritsonis, 2005). Because the RRC Program continues to be in the transition stage, the refreezing will likely occur in the ensuing years.

One type of organizational change in particular will serve as an example to illustrate and highlight elements of change which serve to facilitate or impede change applicable to the RRC Program—that of mergers. As a result of the sweeping changes seen in the global economy, organizational mergers have increased significantly over the past several decades and have become an area of intense study for organizational development researchers. The notion of using research from merger studies as an analog for the RRC Program is simple. Instead of discussing change from the assumption that the RRC program is a relatively homogenous association of centers with a shared mission and scope of work, it is accurate to describe the centers as more heterogeneous in their mission and organizational operations. Thus, the change that has already occurred in the RRC Program, and the change that will continue to take place, is perhaps best described within the context of the merging of a collection of different organizations rather than as a homogeneous entity with a shared organizational culture.

Social Identity Theory

It is difficult to discuss organizational change purely in the abstract. While there are helpful psychological and sociological theories, like Lewin's, to guide such a discussion, it is necessary to operationalize the unit of measurement to be examined. For the purposes of this study, an organization is a social unit, comprised of individuals that join together in a systematic way to accomplish some type of outcome. Because social units are comprised of individuals, it will be helpful to discuss Lewin's three-stage model within the context of describing social behaviors of individuals

The fields of social psychology and sociology have contributed much to our understanding of Social Identity Theory (SIT). In the past several decades, SIT has been embraced by organizational development researchers to help explain phenomena relating to organizational change particularly in relation to studying the effects on individuals undergoing a merger (Cho, 2007; Ullrich, Wieseke, & Rolf 2005; Van Knippenberg, Van Knippenberg, Monden, & Lima, 2001).

The primary idea behind SIT is that individuals tend to define their personal identity in relation to selected social categories with which they are affiliated. Individuals may select multiple social organizations (e.g., religious, educational, recreational) with which they have an affinity and will align their behavior accordingly as a member of that group. In other words, an individual's sense of identity is wrapped up in the beliefs and norms of the organization, referred to as organizational identification (Van Knippenberg, Van Knippenberg, Monden, & Lima, 2001). According to Hogg & Abrams (1988),

The more an individual conceives of the self in terms of the membership of a group, that is, the more the individual identifies with the group, the more the individual's attitudes and behaviour are governed by this group membership.

Within the organizational development literature, much of SIT revolves around the complex concepts of beliefs, attitudes of those advocating for change and those who are expected to participate in or implement the change. Kraut (1996) asserts that while such terms as beliefs, attitudes, and opinions are sometimes used to differentiate mere feelings,

that is some type of objective reality, he states that “feelings and perceptions represent our world, and we act upon them just as if they were our objective reality.” Thus, beliefs, attitudes, and opinions influence subsequent behaviors and can help us to better understand the dynamics of organizational change.

In addition to beliefs, attitudes, and options, another one of the tenets of SIT is that comparisons are made among various groups and status is assigned in terms of ingroups and outgroups. Simply put, ingroups represents individuals who share common interests, beliefs and attitudes. These shared interests lead to a feeling of solidarity with the group and help build the perception that the individual is a member of an exclusive community. Within SIT, an ingroup can be defined as a family, a department within an organization, or even an entire religion. Ingroups are contrasted with outgroups. Outgroups represent those individuals who do not share the same beliefs as the members of ingroup and may represent the opposition within which ingroup members must compete. A scenario that might emerge using this ingroup-outgroup perspective is that two departments (e.g., finance and sales) may have different views about strategic direction of an organization and will compete to get their vision adopted. What results from this competition is that one group eventually emerges as the dominate group whose members constitute the ingroup and their opposition as the outgroup.

As indicated previously, research which has examined mergers of organizations will be a valuable source of information that can be used to understand changes which have occurred within the RRC Program. It is noteworthy that Cho, (2007) makes the observation that about 70% of mergers fail. In analyzing this low rate of success, SIT has been used by organizational development researchers to help explain why so many efforts fail (Cho, 2007; Ullrich, Wieseke, & Rolf 2005; Van Knippenberg, Van Knippenberg, Monden, & Lima, 2001). For example, SIT helps us to understand the why resistance to change occurs depending on the group (i.e., ingroup—outgroup) with which an individual is affiliated.

A considerable body of literature has emerged about the subject of resistance to change led by two types of perspectives. On one hand, there is the view that resistance should not necessarily be seen as negative or something to be overcome (Dent & Goldberg, 1999; Ford & Ford, 2010; Piderit, 2000). These views have emerged over the past two decades, in particular, to counter the vast amount of literature in which resistance is seen as negative and something to be overcome. According to Dent & Goldberg (1999), the negative perspective regarding resistance to change has evolved over the past forty years and fails to account for the dynamics of change. In fact, after observing 100 companies for over a decade, Kotter (1996) claimed that he saw little evidence of employee resistance. Instead, he posited that change was difficult for some because some organizations fail to establish an effective leadership coalition, communicate a vision, and act upon the vision, among several other transformation steps. As a result, those who are expected to implement the change are seen as resistant, not because they naturally resist change, but because of the change being poorly communicated and implemented. While Schliemann (1996) did indicate that “resistance to doing things in new ways” was a barrier to change, he also observed that inappropriate or ineffective culture, poor communication of purpose, incomplete follow-through, lack of management agreement on strategy, and insufficient skills to support change were also found to serve as barriers in the over 100 companies he studied. Schliemann’s (1996) findings appear to reinforce the aforementioned five belief factors advocated by Armenakis et al. (2007) and his colleagues in developing an instrument to measure organizational change.

A distinction must be made between resistance to change and basic human motivations. For example, Dent and Goldberg (1999) clearly acknowledge that while individuals will resist loss of status or loss of power, they contend that these feelings are not necessarily equivalent to a willingness to resist change itself. They stress that difference is not simply semantic—in some respects, the need for change and the actions that must be taken to effect change will vary widely depending on individual perceptions and group affiliation.

The more dominant view expressed in the literature involving resistance to change is that it does represent a barrier to be overcome. One of the most well-known models is a four-stage model put forth by Jaffe, Scott, and Tobe (1994). They suggest that change is first marked by *denial*—individuals simply do not believe that change is necessary or that it will not be implemented (e.g., “this too shall pass”). Once it is discovered that change will occur, *resistance* follows—marked by efforts to delay or postpone implementation or by leveraging relationships with decision-makers, hoping to convince them that the change is unwarranted or inappropriate. These stages are followed by *exploration* and *commitment*, where new behaviors are learned, practiced, and eventually, embraced.

Agócs (1997) expanded these ideas by identifying specific types of change resistance behaviors:

1. Denial of the need for change which includes (a) denial of the credibility of the message and (b) attacks on messengers and their credibility.
2. Refusal to accept responsibility for dealing with the change issue.
3. Refusal to implement the change that has been agreed to.
4. Repression, actions which led to the dismantling of change that has been initiated.

Agócs (1997) views on resistance to change are particularly germane to this study because her perspective examines resistance on behalf of *decision-makers* involved in the change process, not so-called “rank and file” employees which a good portion of the resistance literature focuses on. Thus, she discussed institutionalized resistance to organizational change whereby she defines the term:

Resistance is understood to be a process of refusal by decision makers to be influenced or affected by the views, concerns, or evidence presented to them by those who advocate change in established practices, routines, goals or norms within the organization. (p. 918)

Resistance to change can be viewed from different perspectives, and both have merit for understanding the dynamics of organizational change of the RRC Program. To some

extent, it simply seems to be contingent upon an individual's perspective and group affiliation. For some individuals, organizational change is seen as healthy and adaptive while the need for change will simply not be obvious to some, which makes it a complex and difficult process (Cawsey & Deszca, 2007). Perhaps one of the frequent warnings of researches in the field is that organizational change is both time and resource intensive. As individuals, we do not all perceive the world in the same way.

In the case of the RRCs, the stimulus which prompted organizational change came from OSEP and with only one exception, most of the RRCs had operated for decades under loosely coupled rules of organizational behavior. Hence, it was critical to get the Director of each RRC to support the change initiative. However, as Agócs (1997) observed, institutional resistance to change by decision-makers played a major factor in the manner in how change occurred with regard to duration and commitment.

Case Study Context

History of the RRCs

The RRCs have historically been a mechanism used by OSEP to support SEAs in the implementation of federal special education laws. First authorized for funding through an amendment to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 under Part A—Assistance to States for Education of Handicapped Children Act (U. S. Congress, 1967), the RRCs were the first federally funded program designed to support policy efforts of what was then the Bureau of Education of the Handicapped (BEH), now called OSEP. In this capacity, RRCs were tasked with responsibilities which are commonly referred to as direct services. That is, RRC staff conducted assessments, determined eligibility and developed educational plans for children and youth with disabilities. Much of this work was conducted regionally, within a state, or at the LEA level.

Today, many of these functions are assumed by LEAs or regional special education service entities within SEAs. The role of the RRCs changed significantly, however, with the passage of The Education of All Handicapped Children Act (EAHCA) of 1975 (PL

94-142). Widely recognized as the first iteration of IDEA (i.e., Individuals with Disabilities Education Act), the EAHCA was instrumental in changing the mission and scope of the RRCs from a direct service provider to one with an exclusive focus on technical assistance to SEAs and later, Part C Lead Agencies (Part C LAs). As a result, the RRCs primary responsibility throughout the decade of the 1970s was to support SEAs in developing a service delivery infrastructure to support the implementation requirements of the EAHCA.

OSEP's desire for the RRCs to focus on priorities related to the State Performance Plan and Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR) is reflected in the Cooperative Agreements, first in 2004 and then in 2009 (Office of Special Education Programs, 2009). These Cooperative Agreements are explicit in dictating the primary mission of each RRC:

Collaboratively provide coordinated and research-based technical assistance (TA) to State Education Agencies (SEAs) and Lead Agencies (LAs) to help them: (1) meet Federal accountability requirements under IDEA; (2) implement systems of general supervision that improve results and functional outcomes for children with disabilities; (3) work with the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP)-funded TA centers, as appropriate, to develop, identify, and implement evidenced-based tools and practices to increase the likelihood that SEAs and LAs will meet their state performance plan (SPP) targets in the priority areas described in Section 616.

Work of the RRC Program

The RRC Program consists of six centers that serve all fifty (50) states and the U. S. Territories and Outlying Areas (e.g., Guam, Virgin Islands). The centers include: Mid-South Regional Resource Center (MSRRC), Northeast Regional Resource Center (NERRC), North Central Regional Resource Center (NCRRC), Mountain Plains Regional Resource Center (MPRRC), Southeast Regional Resource Center (SERRC), and the Western Regional Resource Center (WRRC). In general, centers that comprise the RRC Program are hosted by Institutions of Higher Education—the only exception is a

center managed by a nonprofit corporation. Typically, each center is staffed by 10-15 full- and part-time individuals, along with administrative support and outsourcing as necessary with technical experts and consultants. The roles and responsibilities of the RRC Program are best described in two ways: (1) the roles and responsibilities associated with national Program goals, and (2) the roles and responsibilities associated with serving SEAs and LAs within each region. While not necessarily mutually exclusive in terms of goal attainment, the distinction is helpful in conveying what the RRC Program does and its unique role in providing technical assistance.

The core work of the RRC Program revolves around assisting SEAs and Part C LAs to meet federal IDEA requirements, with an emphasis on the development and implementation of State Performance Plan and Annual Performance Reports (SPP/APR) that lead to improve academic and functional outcomes for children and youth with disabilities. This work is exemplified in through Article I of Cooperative Agreement with OSEP. As such, the RRCs' main role is working to support accountability, with the SPPs/APRs serving as a locus for the delivery of tools, products, and services in the following areas: (1) Technical Assistance (TA), (2) Leadership and Coordination (LC), (3) Knowledge Development (KD), and Program Initiatives (PI). The RRC Program is the primary structure MSIP uses to provide or reinforce technical assistance to SEAs and Part C LAs with regard to compliance and improvement issues of IDEA. The work of the RRC Program is to achieve the four goals described in the RRC Program Logic Model (see Appendix B):

1. SEAs and Part C LAs meet federal accountability requirements
2. SEAs and Part C LAs implement effective systems of general supervision
3. SEAs and Part C LAs develop accurate and meaningful State Performance Plans and Annual Performance Reports (SPP/APRS)
4. SEAs and Part C LAs report that the technical assistance provided by the RRC Program is of high quality, relevant, useful, and efficient

In addition to describing the goals of the RRCP, logic model also outlines the strategies, outputs, and outcomes to be attained as a result of consolidating services and merging centers into on national Program in order to provide high quality technical assistance to States. The methods and strategies to achieve these goals are articulated in a five-year RRC Program Strategic Plan that also includes details regarding timelines, person(s) or group responsible, needed resources, and products and deliverables.

What distinguishes the RRC Program from other technical assistance providers is clearly reflected in the logic model goals- that is, helping SEAs to implement effective systems of general supervision and in the development of accurate and meaningful SPP/APRs that demonstrate accountability. Except in a peripheral way, no other Center within the TA & D Network has the direct responsibility for supporting all states and U. S. Territories and Outlying Areas with regard to general supervision and with all Part B and Part C SPP/APR indicators. To be clear, the term general supervision encompasses all of the mechanisms available to SEAs and LAs (e.g., people, systems, resources) to implement the federal requirements of IDEA. Components of an effective general supervision system include the following: SPP/APR improvement planning, policies and procedures, technical assistance, professional development, effective dispute resolution, integrated monitoring activities, improvement, correction, incentives, and sanctions and fiscal management.

With regard to pursuing its national agenda, the RRC Program operates under the guidance of a jointly created RRC Program Strategic Plan, a plan in which shared resources, including staff, are used to address cross-cutting issues deemed to have a national priority. The primary mechanism to address such issues is through the implementation of a number of Priority Teams. As the name implies, Priority Teams are formed as a result of an annual analysis of Annual Performance Reports (APRs) submitted by U. S. States and Territories. The RRC Program, in collaboration with OSEP, discuss the results of this analysis to identify priority areas of technical assistance. Priority Teams are not static—even though compliance issues which SEAs and LAs have

found to be problematic have not changed significantly from year to year. The annual analysis of APRs provides the RRC Program and OSEP with continuous feedback with which to ensure that key priority areas are addressed. Current Priority Teams of the RRC Program can be seen in Table 1: Description of RRCP Priority Teams.

Table 1: Description of RRCP Priority Teams

Priority Area	Derived from Long-term Desired Result or Effect	Components
<i>Fiscal</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understanding of federal program management requirements so they are able to identify areas for improvement. ▪ Meeting compliance with federal requirements. ▪ Developing effective fiscal accountability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Developing a basic level of understanding around requirements for RRCP state liaisons ▪ Delineation of components of effective state fiscal systems ▪ Help states find innovative strategies for accessing funds
<i>State Accountability Systems (B)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Developing systems of accountability that meet federal expectations for both results and compliance. ▪ Addressing issues of equity and disproportionality equity when developing and implementing accountability for learning. ▪ Assessing their capacity to implement proposed improvement initiatives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Disproportionality and issues specific to equity ▪ Result Driven Accountability (RDA) ▪ SEA flexibility waivers (specifically implications for students with disabilities) ▪ General education and special education collaboration ▪ Partnerships with EI
<i>State Accountability Systems (C)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Aligning Early Intervention results accountability with other Federal ED efforts and initiatives. ▪ Support States in efforts to develop State systems that reflect the Part C statute and recent changes to Part C regulations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Quality service resources ▪ EI and special education partnerships ▪ Part C regulations ▪ Results Driven Accountability
<i>Data Driven Decision Making & Improvement Planning</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Posing questions that effectively guide data analysis. ▪ Using available data to identify critical issues and gaps. ▪ Using available data to identify priorities for focus of improvement efforts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Build capacity of state liaisons to use tools and processes that have been developed for data analysis

Each Priority Team consists of core and resource members. The role of core team members, consisting of 3-5 individuals is to “do the work,” that is, RRC Program staff, OSEP staff, and invited members of other TA & D projects lead the process of developing tools, products and services. The work of the Priority Teams is overseen by two 1.0 FTE Co-Coordinator who coordinate activities related to the RRC Program Strategic Plan. As such, the Co-Coordinator manage day-to-day responsibilities of the RRC Program’s national agenda. The Co-Coordinator work under the direction of the OSEP Project Officer to ensure that the strategic plan activities are implemented as intended and maintain synchronous, facilitated communication as members of the Leadership Team.

Management of the RRC Program

The RRC Program is overseen by a Leadership Team that includes Directors from each of six regional centers, along with the aforementioned Co-Coordinator and the OSEP Project Officer. The Leadership Team is charged with setting the overall strategic direction of the RRC Program and making decisions about resource sharing among centers. This group meets face-to-face approximately quarterly, or more frequently as needed, and through monthly conference calls. Consistent with the two major roles of the RRC Program indicated earlier, Leadership Team responsibilities revolve around decision-making in relation to: (1) achieving national program goals and (2) ensuring the needs of SEAs and Part C LAs are met within each region in relation to the national priorities. Thus, the Leadership Team engages in collaborative planning to address the RRC Program national priorities and the individual center Director is responsible for the day-to-day management of each center, including personnel, budgets, and specific or unique issues which arise within their respective region. The Leadership Team makes decisions of national concern by consensus along with confirmation by the OSEP Project Officer. Because oversight of the RRC Program is within the purview of OSEP’s Division of Monitoring and State Improvement Planning (MSIP), the Project Officer has the option to modify or veto decisions made by the Leadership Team.

Funding of the RRC Program

The RRC Program is a technical assistance program funded by the U. S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) within the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS). Each center within the RRC Program is funded \$1.3 million per year, for an annual total of \$7.8 million across all six centers. These funds are distributed through Part D of IDEA as part of technical assistance and dissemination initiatives. Each center is funded for a five (5) year cycle.

OSEP consists of two major Divisions. One is the Division of Research to Practice (RTP) which administers the Part D discretionary grants to support national initiatives related to research and innovation, personnel preparation, parent training and information, technology, media services, and evaluation aimed at improving educational results children, and youth with disabilities. The RRC Program is supported through IDEA Part D funds. Currently, the RRC Program accounts for about 3% of the total allocation of Part D funding. The other is the Monitoring and State Improvement Planning Division (MSIP) which administers Part B and Part C formula grants to States. Part B includes services for school-aged children ages 3-22, while Part C represents early intervention programs and services for infants and toddlers with disabilities birth through 2 years of age. Although funded through Part D of RTP, the RRC Program is overseen by MSIP because it is responsible for ensuring compliance with federal requirements related to Part B and Part C of IDEA. Providing technical assistance to help SEAs and LAs meet the provisions of IDEA has been, and continues to be, the most important part of the RRC Program's mission. Because the RRC Program is funded through Part D, it is a member of the OSEP-funded Technical Assistance and Dissemination (TA & D) Network, a system of centers funded under Part D dedicated to providing technical assistance around critical issues related to the implementation of IDEA.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Methodological Approach and Research Questions

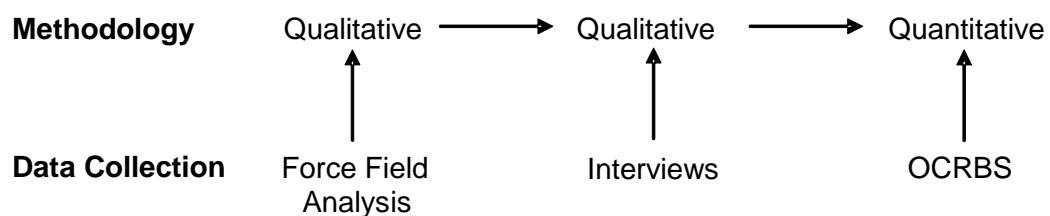
The general approach used in this case study involved data collection and analytic methods which encompass aspects of the more traditional change theory of Lewin (1958) and those developed by contemporary organizational change theorists that emphasize the more affective components of the change process (Armenakis et al. 2011). It is important to stress that these approaches are not mutually exclusive of one another since they are both based on perceptions of either the change advocates or those that are expected to participate and implement the change. The difference, rather, is in the methodology. In the case of Lewin (1951) the method used for this study was a *Force Field Analysis* (FFA), while the method used to capture the more affective components of change was the *Organizational Change Recipients' Beliefs Scale* (Armenakis et al. 2011). Select staff interviews were also be conducted in order to gather more qualitative data to better understand the underpinnings of the FFA and OCRBS data. It should be noted that in this study, the researcher is a participant observer of the RRCP, as an employee of one of the regional centers.

In the investigation of increasingly complex educational, social, and psychological phenomena, a growing number of researchers are turning to the use of multiple methodologies. By using different sources and methods at various points in the research process, the researcher can build on the strength of each type of approach used in a mixed method design and simultaneously, minimize inherent weakness in any one method. Moreover, using a variety of methods to approach a phenomenon can strengthen the validity of results. Often referred to as “triangulation,” it serves as means of strengthening findings while reducing limitations and biases (Campbell and Fisk, 1959; Cook, 1985; Denzin, 1978). Denzin states that the logic of triangulation is based on the assertion that no single method ever adequately solves the problem of accounting for all rival causal factors. Because each method can reveal different aspects of empirical “reality,” employing multiple methods can help to provide a more comprehensive picture

of observed phenomenon. For example, Greene, Caracelli, and Graham (1989) found that using mixed methods investigative purposes, researchers tend to gain a fuller understanding of the construct of interest. In another examination of using mixed methodologies to triangulate results, Greene and Caracelli (1997) state that “mixing different types of methods at the technical level, or the level of method, is not problematic and can often strengthen a study...and that all methods have limitations and biases; using multiple methods can help to counteract some of these biases” (p.7).

This case study employed a mix method design to achieve triangulation. One such method included the use of Force Field Analysis to identify the driving and restraining forces of change within the organization. In addition, RRCP staff were asked to complete a twenty six (26) item survey, with an additional two (2) demographic items, designed to measure the progress of organizational change from the perspective of the change recipients. Finally, data were collected through individual staff interviews to better understand which strategies and operations hinder and/or support staff’s ability to perform their job during the organizational change. Figure 1 represents the conceptual framework for data collection activities (Creswell, 2003).

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework for Data Collection



A case study methodology was selected for this study because it allows the focus of the research to be on the rich description of the phenomenon being studied within a bounded system (Merriam, 1998). Case study research seeks to describe a specific case in-depth by creating a context picture of the case (Patton, 2002). The case study allows

the research to focus on both the context of the phenomenon and the actual practice within the bounded system.

As indicated, three methods were used for this study: (1) a Force Field Analysis, (2) a survey designed to measure the progress of organizational change from the perspective of the recipients of change (OCRBS), and (3) select staff interviews. These strategies were used to address a number of research questions. Specific questions that provide the framework for this research include:

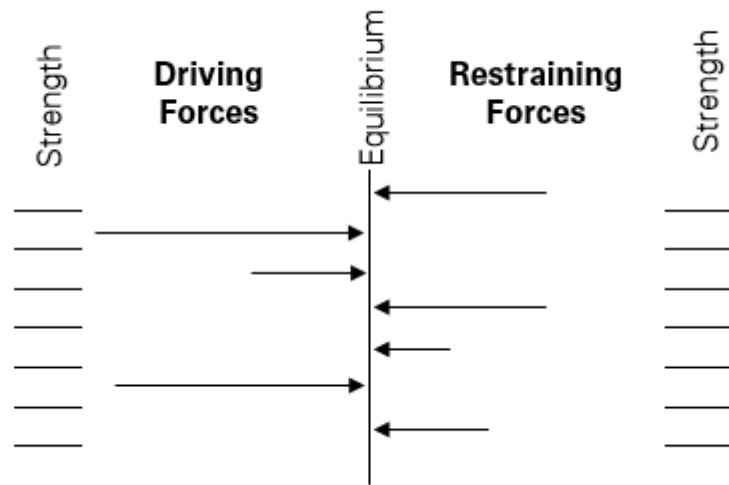
1. What are the forces for and against transforming the RRCs into a national RRC Program?
2. How has the RRC Program changed with regard to organizational socialization (Van Dick, Ullrichw, & Tissington, 2006; Wanous & Reichers, 1984), role conflict, and resolution (Ashforth & Mael, 1989), and intergroup relations?

Instrumentation

Force Field Analysis

Force Field Analysis (FFA) was introduced by Kurt Lewin (1951) as a method of “implementing changes in structure, technology, and people (Huse, 1980).” Used by thousands of public and private organizations for over six decades, FFA has become a ubiquitous tool for evaluating the forces that influence change. Like Lewin’s conceptual framework of unfreeze, transition, and refreeze, FFA offers a simple, but elegant instrument for the identification of forces that drive change. Despite its apparent outward simplicity, Lewin (1951) conceptualized FFA from well-developed and proven concepts of the physical sciences, such as using vectors to assess relative strengths (Thomas, 1985). Shown in Figure 2, FFA forces are identified under two types of forces in relation to the current state of equilibrium or status quo: (1) driving forces and (2) restraining forces. Driving forces are those issues which support change, while restraining forces represent those issues that are likely to inhibit change.

Figure 1. Force Field Analysis



The current status of the organization is represented by the column labeled Equilibrium. Driving and restraining forces are represented by the arrows or vectors. The arrows depict the relative strength of each force type by its size—the longer arrows represent greater strength. Strength is estimated by the members of the group involved in the FFA activity, using a Likert-type classification scheme ranging from 1-5 or 1-7, where a 1 indicates “weak” and 5 or 7 indicate “strong.” These ratings are summarized and serve as the benchmark representing either “Change” or “No Change.” If, for example, an organization conducted an FFA and calculated the relative strengths where restraining forces were clearly higher than driving forces, one might conclude that the desired change has not occurred or a proposed change is likely to fail. In this event, leadership will need to analyze the results of the FFA to determine which driving forces can be strengthened and which of the restraining forces can be minimized. The procedure for developing the Force Field Analysis is discussed in the section titled *Data Collection Procedures*.

Organizational Change Recipients' Belief Scale

The *Organizational Change Recipients' Belief Scale* (OCRBS) was developed by Armenakis et al. (2007) as a tool to measure the progress of organizational change from

the perspective of the recipients of change; that is, those who are expected to participate and implement the change. According to Armenakis et al. (2007), the OCRBS can be used as a barometer of change, an assessment of beliefs that influence change, and a basis for developing an action plan to improve buy-in on behalf of the change recipients. Consisting of twenty six (26) items with an additional two (2) demographic items added by the researcher, the OCRBS is grounded in assessing the beliefs of individuals. Armenakis et al. (2007) contend that a belief “is an opinion or a conviction about a truth of something that may not be readily obvious or subject to systematic verification.” As such, perceptions are shaped by beliefs and these, in turn, influence behavior.

In their efforts to measure organizational change, Armenakis, Bernerth, Pitts, & Walker (2007) contend that beliefs play a key role, suggesting that an organizational outcome, event, or act “is subject to being believed by others.” Thus, individual belief systems about organizational change represent a powerful force which must be acknowledged by those seeking change. In an effort to develop an assessment scale to measure organizational change, Armenakis, Bernerth, Pitts, & Walker (2007) researched forty one (41) journals to identify “belief factors” to serve as the foundation for their instrument. Upon the identification of twenty six (26) items, they field-tested the instrument in four separate studies, conducting inter-item analysis, exploratory, and confirmatory factor analysis to identify five factors, which included:

Discrepancy (D)—Those who are expected to participate in the change must believe that a need for the change exists. The discrepancy represents the difference between current and desired performance and the perception that the change is legitimate. Otherwise, the change may be perceived as arbitrary or unnecessary.

Appropriateness (A)—The perception that the proposed change will resolve the discrepancy between current and desired performance. Even if the discrepancy has to be widely agreed upon, those who are expected to participate in the change must believe that the actions and activities proposed will effectively address the discrepancy.

Efficacy (E)—Those who are expected to participate in the change must believe that both they and the change advocates possess the skills necessary to effect the desired change.

Principal Support (PA)—The belief among those that are expected to participate in the change believe that change advocates will be supportive of their efforts. For example, change advocates must demonstrate behavioral integrity and show their support by consistently “walking the talk.”

Valence (V)—The belief that the change will result in intrinsic or extrinsic benefits for those who are expected to participate in the change. Extrinsic benefits are those related to such awards as increased salary or other job-related incentives while intrinsic benefits are those related to higher-order personal needs, such as attaining a greater level of self-actualization (Maslow, 1971).

The twenty six (26) item *Organizational Change Recipients’ Belief Scale (OCRBS)* is shown in Appendix C.

Staff Interviews

Individual staff interviews were conducted following the completion of data collection activities related to the development of the Force Field Analysis and prior to the *Organizational Change Recipients’ Belief Scale (OCRBS)* being administered. The purpose of these interviews was to expand on findings from the FFA, to explore staff perspectives of the change process and to identify strengths and weaknesses in the implementation of the change process. Staff were asked to respond to the following questions:

1. What RRCP activities or strategies support or hinder your ability to successfully perform your job during this organizational change?
2. How are the changes in operations improving or hindering the performance of the RRCs?

3. What strategies does Leadership utilize to implement the organizational change in a consistent manner?
4. What changes in policy, practices, operations or training do you feel would have the most impact on bringing the six RRCs together to increase consistency of TA practice?
5. What are the intended and unintended consequences of undergoing this organizational change initiative?

The Staff Interview Invitation and Interview Protocol can be found in Appendices A and D, respectively.

Description of Participants

Data was collected from four principal sources: (1) members of the RRCP Leadership Team, who completed a Force Field Analysis (FFA), (2) selected RRCP staff who completed a Force Field Analysis, (3) selected staff of the RRC Program who completed interviews regarding the implementation of policies and procedures developed by the RRCP from the inception of the change model, and (4) selected staff and Leadership Team of the RRC Program who completed the *Organizational Change Recipients' Belief Scale* (OCRBS). In the first and second cases, FFA data was collected from members of the RRC Program Leadership Team (N = 9) and RRCP staff (N=8) respectively. Membership of the first group included the six RRC Directors, two Co- Coordinators, and the OSEP Project Officer. The second group who completed the FFA consisted of two staff each from centers 1, 2, and 3 and one staff each from centers 4 and 5. No staff from center 6 participated in the FFA. Eighteen (18) staff from across the Program were invited to participate in the FFA activity.

A non-random, purposive sample was utilized to select two (2) RRCP staff from each Regional Resource Center (N=12) to participate in interviews and who met the following criteria:

- Staff who have varying levels of experience providing technical assistance

- Staff who have varying years of service in a Regional Resource Center
- Representation from the various job roles within the RRCP
- Staff who do not serve on the RRCP Leadership Team

Staff were chosen from the same roster used to select the sample for the OCRBS. Eleven staff members participated in interviews. Procedures for confidentiality were shared with all staff participating in the interviews and survey.

RRC Program staff and Leadership Team members who completed the OCRBS were selected from the most current RRC Program Staff Roster and included Leadership Team members, State technical assistance providers, Priority Team conveners and team members, members of the Information Research Cadre, and the Information Technology Cadre. To reach the initial goal of obtaining survey information from thirty six (36) RRC Program members, all staff names were included in the sample. A random sample of six (6) individuals from each RRC was selected. Twenty two (22) individuals completed the survey for a response rate of 61%.

Data Collection Procedures

The procedure for collecting FFA data involved inviting members of the RRCP Leadership Team and RRCP staff to participate in a group process to identify driving and restraining forces in relation to the stimulus question: *“What are the forces that facilitate or inhibit change of the RRCP Program?”* An independent consultant was employed to facilitate these group activities, assisted by a recorder. To introduce this topic, the facilitator briefly explained the purpose of the study and provided an overview of Lewin’s (1958) conceptual model of unfreezing, transition, and refreezing. In addition, the facilitator explained the Institutional Review Board (IRB) consent process as well as collected related documents relevant to this process.

Participants were provided with materials to record ideas that were eventually shared with other members of their FFA group. As such, the general procedure involved individual reflection followed by a group sharing session. In general, the data collection procedure for FFA closely paralleled the steps outlined by Wells (2008):

1. Identify and gain consensus on the current state of equilibrium.
2. Identify and list driving forces to support change.
3. Identify and list restraining forces that hinder change.
4. Estimate the strength of influence using a numerical scale (e.g., 5 = Strongly Agree and 1 = Strongly Disagree).
5. Aggregate the driving and restraining forces to determine whether change is viable.
6. Discuss action strategies that address how the change can be affected by decreasing the strength of the restraining forces or increasing the strength of driving forces.

The FFA consumed approximately one-half day per group. The facilitator and recorder assumed responsibility for generating a report of the results that were incorporated into the findings and discussion sections of this study.

Two (2) staff from each Regional Resource Center (RRC) were selected to participate in the semi-structured interview process. Staff selected to participate were emailed an invitation and asked to respond indicating their willingness to participate. All staff invited to participate had the option to decline participation. If a staff member declined to participate another staff member at that RRC was selected and invited to participate. Interviews were scheduled using a web-based scheduling tool. Participants were sent the interview protocol (see Appendix D) to review and think about in advance of their scheduled interview. Interviews were completed in one hour. Interviews were conducted using Gotomeeting.com. Participants were provided a call-in number to use and were informed that the interviews will be audio recorded. In addition, participants were asked to write down their ideas on the staff interview protocol. The protocols were collected and served as a secondary source of information. Interviews were transcribed and indexed using the qualitative computer software program Atlas Ti. This program was used to help identify general themes that emerged from the interviews.

Data collection procedures that were used for the *Organizational Change Recipients' Belief Scale (OCRBS)* were conducted by using a web-based survey. The OCRBS items were entered into a web-based survey format (i.e., *QuestionPro*) and quality assurance testing was conducted to identify problems, bugs, etc. Once the web-based survey was finalized, it was e-mailed to eligible participants described in the section *Description of Participants*. A brief overview of the study was presented in order to provide the appropriate context. In an attempt to address the issue of Response Set and Socially Desirable Responding, participants were informed that a unique identification code was assigned to each survey so that demographic and other identifying characteristics could be analyzed without highlighting individual information. Upon their consent to participate in this study, participants completed the OCRBS.

Survey directions provided to respondents indicated that they should first complete the demographics section of the survey by selecting the response for each item that best described their status. Following the completion of the demographic section of the survey, respondents were asked to rate each survey item on scale from one (1) to seven (7) with a one indicating “strongly disagree” and a seven indicating “strongly agree”. Once the respondents completed the survey items, they were asked to hit the “submit” button on the survey to record their answers.

Data Analysis

Data from the FFA was analyzed to identify the driving and restraining forces related to the organizational change which has occurred within the RRC Program. As part of the FFA group activities, the facilitator asked members of the Leadership Team and RRCP staff to rate the relative strengths of each force type. These data were summed to assess the quantitative aspects of the FFA. The descriptions of each of the driving and restraining forces that have been identified were shared with the Leadership Team and RRCP staff to develop action strategies that are likely to be successful in addressing the primary question—“What are the forces that facilitate or inhibit change of the RRCP Program?” In addition to aggregating the data to assess the quantitative aspects of the

FFA, qualitative analyses were conducted on comments provided by each Leadership Team member and RRCP staff relative to force type that is identified. The data was analyzed for common themes and characteristics that were identified. These data were used as part of the triangulation process with the staff surveys and interviews and to provide contextual information with regards to each driving and restraining force.

Each interview session was transcribed and entered into the qualitative software package Atlas Ti. Interview protocols were also collected from participants to serve as a secondary source of data. Initial analysis included reading through interview transcripts to identify categories for the Atlas Ti coding system. A coding system was developed that captured specific definitions of codes to confirm that data within the code represented the same criteria, ensuring reliability and validity. Strategies utilized in the coding process included techniques for developing codes and revising codes (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Coded information was reviewed in relation to the primary research questions as well as the results of the FFA and OCRBS to identify any commonalities. Codes and code descriptions can be found in Appendix E.

Data from the *Organizational Change Recipients' Belief Scale* (OCRBS) was analyzed by calculating aggregated frequencies and percentages of participant responses on the 7-point Likert-type scale. Frequencies and percentages were calculated for each factor area of the OCRBS (i.e., D = Discrepancy, A = Appropriateness, E = Efficacy, PS = Principal Support, and V = Valence). In addition to frequencies and percentages, means and standard deviations were also calculated for each factor area.

A Chronbach's Alpha coefficient was calculated to check the internal consistency of respondent ratings. A Chronbach's Alpha is a statistic which indicates a relatively high level of reliability among survey respondents, In addition to this statistic; a one-way ANOVA was also calculated, along with a post-hoc Scheffe comparison to determine the extent to which ratings differed between the five subscale areas. Several types of tables were generated to provide summary statistics by item and for each subscale which show the means, standard deviations, and standard error of the mean for each item of the

OCRBS ordered by subscale. Finally, Chi Squares and Kappa ratios were calculated to study differences and levels of agreement for two dichotomous groups, the RRCP Leadership Team and RRCP staff.

The methods section of this study provides information on the methodological approach and research questions that guide this investigation. The research design, corresponding data collection procedures and analyses are presented. Information regarding case study methodology, triangulation and sample methods are described. Data collection includes the use of a Force Field Analysis, semi structured interviews, and Organizational Change Recipients' Beliefs Scale (OCRBS) survey. Quantitative and qualitative analyses procedures are presented.

Chapter 4: Findings and Results

A critical instance case study, used for this study, is most often employed to study “cause and effect” factors of a unique object (e.g., organization, socio-political issue), and is not necessarily intended to be generalizable to other objects, although this study will likely contain findings that may be helpful to others faced with similar types of organizational change. The critical instance case study was used to examine the dynamics of how the RRCs have evolved into the national RRC Program, reflecting on policy context which led to the formation of the national Program, the challenges encountered, those that remain, and the prospects of institutionalizing organizational change for the future.

This chapter is organized by sections of findings and results generated from data collection activities. First, the results of a Force Field Analysis procedure are described, where driving and restraining forces are identified for two groups: RRCP Leadership Team and RRCP staff. Additionally, contextual information is provided for each force identified by each group. Second, the results of the Organizational Change Recipients' Belief Scale (OCRBS) are presented. Third, results are reported from a series of staff interviews which generated themes related to relationship building, the role of

communication in the development of the organization, the alignment of Program and State work, the RRCP structure and how it impacts organizational growth, and professional development needs of Program staff.

Results of Force Field Analysis

Leadership Team: Force Field Analysis Results

A group activity was conducted where members of the RRCP Program Leadership Team were asked to identify driving forces which facilitated the RRCP’s transformation into a national Program and restraining forces to achieving that goal. The Leadership Team identified five (5) driving forces and seven (7) restraining forces. As part of this activity, they were also asked to assign a score from 1 to 5 for each type of force, where a “1” indicated a weak force and “5” represented a strong force. The results of these ratings are displayed in Table 2. Note that the driving forces and restraining forces columns

Table 2: Leadership Team Force Field Analysis Results

Strength	Driving Forces	Restraining Forces	Strength
4.33	OSEP	Decision Making Authority	4.44
4.25	Staff	Customer Identification	4.0
3.89	Use of Technology	Policies & Procedures Established	3.89
3.87	Program Structure	Trust in Team Members	3.85
3.67	Leadership Team	Communication	3.78
		Evaluation	3.5
		Leadership Team (Team vs. Group)	3.06
20.01			26.52

highlighted in this table are mutually exclusive and are not intended to infer any type of relationship. As shown in the table the strengths of the driving forces ranged from 4.33 to 3.67 (highest to lowest respectively). Strength levels for the restraining forces ranged from 4.44 to 3.06. Data were aggregated for both the driving forces and the restraining forces resulting in a final strength score of 20.01 for driving forces and a final strength score of 26.52 for the restraining forces. These results indicate that, based on the data collected from the Leadership Team, equilibrium has not yet been achieved in the organization. The context and rationale for each of the ratings is described below in order of the magnitude of the strength of the driving or restraining force.

Leadership Team: Driving Forces

Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP): Leadership Team members indicated that OSEP was a driving force in supporting the organizational change occurring across the RRCs. In particular, the respondents highlighted the directive from OSEP to move through the change process as well as the opportunity for the RRCs to create a vision for what the change process and culminating organizational model should include. In winter 2008, OSEP indicated support for the vision set forth by the six RRCs by endorsing the proposed outcomes contained in the document entitled *A Proposal to Restructure the Regional Resource Center and Federal Center Program*. The team highlighted the two key outcomes identified in that report; that is, how OSEP would benefit by (1) having a resourceful and knowledgeable partner to support field operations and (2) by making available a national Program that is able to marshal its collective resources to quickly and efficiently respond to new and emerging national issues to support states in the implementation of IDEA 2004. There was a consensus among Leadership Team members that these two outcomes have been essentially achieved as evidenced by the frequency with which OSEP calls on the RRCP to support new and emerging issues identified by the Department.

RRC Staff: The staff who comprise the Regional Resource Center Program were identified by the Leadership Team as a force that push for and promote change in the

organization. The staff serve as change drivers who implement the change process across all six centers. In particular, the Leadership Team highlighted that staff are committed to the Program concept, but emphasized the need for all Program staff across centers to support and enhance their work.

Another theme which emerged regarding staff as a driving force for organizational change was a consensus among team members that it was critical to the success of the Program to have “new voices” and leadership demonstrated from across the Program—not just at the Leadership Team level. One Leadership Team member stated, “Staff are willing and confident to assess honestly to determine if we are doing this for a purpose and if so, what goals will we be achieving.” Leadership Team members also indicated that staff valued the increased access they had to the expertise of others which would likely facilitate the delivery of higher quality technical assistance provided within and between regions as well as having the opportunity for technical assistance to develop at the grassroots level. One team member commented, “Staff are moving toward shared learning and uniform capacity building that will ensure everyone is equipped and prepared to deliver quality technical assistance.” Leadership Team members concluded that RRCP staff are knowledgeable and use that knowledge to address national priorities and in the development of tools, products, and services to their states.

Use of Technology: Leadership Team members indicated they recognized the use of technology by the RRCP as a force for change. They indicated that under the previous organizational structure, where centers operated fairly autonomously, each center had its own website, project management site, and technical assistance planning database. As a result, it was not possible to ascertain what each center was working on or to share information on technical assistance plans across centers which established different reporting protocols. Leadership Team members indicated the need for a common technological interface that supported the work of the RRCP across six centers, an activity which occurred as a direct result of the establishment of the national Program. The Information Research Cadre (IRC) and the Technology Cadre (TC), formed with

personnel from across the RRCP, developed the Knowledge Management System (KMS). The KMS is the aggregation of subsystems and modules which permit staff to enter, analyze, and disseminate technical assistance information and work collaboratively from remote sites to achieve the outcomes of the RRCP Strategic Plan. It is both a data source and a virtual workspace that can also be accessed, as permissions allow, by other OSEP-funded TA&D partners and OSEP itself to monitor RRCP technical assistance activities. The KMS also serves as a collaboration tool for technical assistance initiatives.

In addition to the KMS, the Leadership Team also acknowledged the contributions of such social networking and project platforms such as Google Groups, Adobe Connect, and Basecamp. These platforms allow staff across the RRCP to engage in discussion groups related to specific topics as well as create and present information via web conferencing and monitor the activities of the Priority Teams. Members from the Leadership Team indicated that such technology solutions provide the opportunity for staff from across the Program to engage in collaborative technical assistance development and problem solving.

Program Structure: The Leadership Team identified the Program organizational structure as a driving force in moving the six centers towards one national Program. The team discussed a number of components of the structure that contribute to the success of organizational change including having a strong project officer from OSEP, having one strategic plan that outlines the work across all six centers, and having a common evaluation plan that assesses the fidelity of implementation of the strategic plan. As such, members of the Leadership Team agreed that a critical component of the establishment and sustainability of the RRCP was the development, implementation, and evaluation of a five-year strategic plan. The plan serves both as a roadmap for work to be completed and as a project management tool to monitor progress of strategic objectives in relation to RRCP initiatives.

Team members also indicated the manner in which the RRCP has reorganized staff across centers to support the delivery of technical assistance. Specifically, RRCP Priority Teams were identified as a key component to the reorganization initiative. Each Priority Team represents cross-regional RRC staff responsible for the completion of action plan activities generated from a review of Annual Performance Reports (APRs) and verification visit reports to identify priority focus areas for the RRCP. Participants in the Leadership Team also discussed the importance of the Information Research Cadre that supports Priority Teams efforts by conducting research on specific technical assistance areas and the Technology Cadre, a cross-regional group that focuses upon the implementation of technology solutions for the delivery of technical assistance and sharing of information between centers. Finally, the Leadership Team discussed the importance of the RRCP resource sharing agreement that has been established to allow for a more equitable distribution of fiscal resources across all centers to support Program-wide collaboration efforts.

Leadership Team: The Leadership Team members also identified themselves as a driving force in the development of an organization focused on the Program. The team indicated that the overall success of the RRCP is dependent on having an effective Leadership Team. As such, they expressed the commitment to engaging in continuous collaborative efforts in order to maintain focus on the work of the RRCP and to work to resolve issues and challenges that arise. However, several team members questioned the current capacity of the Leadership Team to effectively work towards the change to a national Program. To address this issue, members indicated that more frequent face-to-face meetings among Leadership Team members will result in gaining greater clarity of mission and generate more transparency in decision making, ultimately leading to greater capacity among team members.

Leadership Team: Restraining Forces

Decision Making Authority: The restraining force identified by the Leadership Team as being the most influential restraining force that would keep the RRCP from

reaching full organizational capacity was the issue of decision making authority. In their discussion about decision making authority across the RRCP, it has not yet been clarified about whom, within the Leadership Team, gets to make which types of decisions. One team member indicated that the Leadership Team has yet to “use decision making effectively to engage in real strategic planning.” Another asserted that a particular challenge was the lack of responsiveness of the Leadership Team’s current capacity to make decisions for “just in time work,” oftentimes perceived as a slow and arduous process which leaves staff without clear direction. An additional challenge identified with regard to decision making authority is the determination of “who” gets to make which decisions “when” and the extent to which staff on Priority Teams can make decisions on activities and work without bringing it to the Leadership Team for deliberation and final approval. The team agreed that there is not a clear policy and process for how decisions are to be made and at what level certain decisions should be made.

Customer Identification: A second restraining force identified by the RRCP Leadership Team is the challenge of identifying the RRCP customer. Members discussed how the RRCP gets its direction from a number of different entities including OSEP, the SEA, and occasionally, from the OSEP-funded TA&D Network. As such, members indicated that it is not always clear as to who the primary customer of the RRCP services is or should be. Team members observed that requests for assistance and identification from various entities that have different agendas and priorities can often be a source of tension for the RRCP.

The Leadership Team identified three principal target audiences that benefit from RRCP technical assistance services. The group determined that SEAs, including Part C Lead Agencies, are the RRCP’s primary customers. This audience includes state special education directors, administrative staff, coordinators, specialists, and others involved in state-level improvements and systems change initiatives related to the implementation and accountability requirements of IDEA 2004. In addition to State Agencies, Local Education Agencies (LEAs) were also identified as target audiences, although they were

not determined to be a primary recipient of RRCP services. This audience includes LEA general and special education coordinators, teachers, and related services personnel where targeted technical assistance services are provided at the request of the SEA. OSEP was also identified as a customer. This audience includes the Project Officer and other federal agency MSIP and RTP staff. With the advent of the national Program, the RRCP responds to specific requests from OSEP, participates in (and leads as requested) Communities of Practice (CoPs), and engages in other technical assistance, evaluation, data synthesis, and reporting as required. The RRCP considers OSEP to be a key audience with regard to its role in providing guidance and directing its work through the Cooperative Agreement as “OSEP-specific” requests. In this capacity, the RRCP has responded to specific OSEP requests involving the planning, design, and implementation of national and regional technical assistance initiatives and various other directed tasks which leverage the technical assistance support of the RRCP in supporting OSEP priorities. Several members contended that the RRCP should have spent more time building its own capacity because they felt that time and resources devoted to developing and implementing the national Program detracted from the frequency and intensity of direct technical assistance provided to SEAs. In summary, there was a consensus among Leadership Team members that a challenge for the RRCP was to find the balance between providing high quality technical assistance to SEAs—its primary customer, but at the same time, quickly and capably responding to OSEP-specified requests—its funding agency.

Policies & Procedures Established: Another restraining force identified by the Leadership Team was the lack of clearly established policies and procedures to guide the overall operations of the RRCP. For example, the team indicated that currently, there were no clear and consistent guidelines upon which decisions can be made. To address this issue, members of the team agreed that the establishment of policies and procedures would minimize variance across centers and regions and would empower the Leadership Team and RRCP staff alike to work in a more productive manner.

The Leadership Team indicated they functioned as a “policy making board” for the RRCP and, as such, are responsible for setting policies and “giving the green light” on specific rules and practices within the organization. However, a number of team members reflected about how challenging it sometimes was to institutionalize policies and procedures established. For example, one Leadership Team member discussed the use of set-aside funds (funds which OSEP requires each center hold in reserve for an OSEP-specific request) and how, even though a policy has been established for the use of those funds, the Leadership Team continues to debate how, and in what ways those funds can be used. The Leadership Team member added that this was only one example where the team has ostensibly established a policy or protocol, but then revises or changes it at a later time to accommodate a particular need. As a result, the team member concluded that many established policies are unevenly implemented across centers and within the RRCP.

Trust Among Leadership Team Members: A common restraining force identified by Leadership Team members participating in this Force Field Analysis activity was the challenge of maintaining high trust levels between centers because of what are perceived to be varied organizational contexts with the six regional centers of the RRCP. Members discussed the extent to which the unique characteristics and needs of each regional often served to drive individual centers to modify their work flow to meet what they contended were specialized needs of SEAs within their region. One Leadership Team member indicated that this was often perceived by other centers as not “being a team player” and detracted from supporting the work of the RRCP. Leadership Team members also alluded to the challenge of maintaining trust among a team that meets asynchronously. This means that even though the Leadership Team meets intermittently on a face-to-face basis, there remains a need for decision-making in a continuous manner. However, in doing so, making a decision requires a consensus of all members of the Leadership Team. As such, everyone on the Leadership Team feels compelled to “weigh in” on a decision, which often results in slowing down the work of the Priority Teams and other RRCP initiatives. To address this challenge, one team member stated that a “commitment to the work needs

to accommodate a commitment to trust that others will do the work well when we can't be there.”

Lack of transparency also contributes to challenges of trust among and between Leadership Team members. For example, some members of the Leadership Team discussed that they often did not know what types of technical assistance each center was delivering in their respective regions. Team members all acknowledge that, despite the formation of the RRCP, there remains widespread variability across centers, and at times, was interpreted by one or more centers as another center “not sharing” a new idea or concept with their colleagues within the context of a national Program. One member observed that “We don't know that much about each other's centers and that is problematic. There may be an underlying reason for that but it is still problematic.”

Finally, team members indicated that one of the main reasons that there are trust issues among the Leadership Team is that the RRCP is made up of six individual centers that engage in the federal competitive grant process. Each center writes its own grant proposal and secures funding on behalf of its host agency. Several Leadership Team members acknowledge it was often more challenging to engage in activities that benefit the Program as a whole rather than their individual center. Also, in preparation for the grant submission process, centers may choose not to share all new ideas or activities believing that they may be decreasing their own chances in the competitive grant process.

Communication: An additional restraining force to RRCP institutionalization identified by the Leadership Team is the lack of an effective structure for communicating events and initiatives as they occur across the RRCP. Participants discussed the need for developing a communication structure that would provide up-to-date information about state technical assistance activities, specifically indicating the need to know what types of technical assistance are being provided and how it is being implemented. Members emphasized the need for the development of a “learning community” for RRCP technical assistance providers where they will have the capability to share technical assistance

practices and strategies they have found to be particularly effective, as well as discuss challenges in the delivery of technical assistance. One Leadership Team member reported that “A Learning Community would help us lose the distinction between Program work and State technical assistance work. Staff need to know that these are one in the same thing and this may be achieved through communicating what is happening in states and how our structure supports that work.”

Team members also discussed the challenge of establishing effective communication across various groups within the RRCP, such as Priority Teams. Leadership team members indicated that part of this challenge was that different groups (e.g. Leadership Team, Priority Teams, Cadres) needed and wanted different types of information, including some individuals who claimed they wanted to know “everything” occurring across the Program. Team members indicated that currently there is no mechanism capable of meeting every communication and information sharing need. However, team members did acknowledge the benefit of conducting monthly teleconferences with the entire RRCP staff and use of the intranet as a mean for sharing information regarding the work that is being done across the Program.

Evaluation: Leadership Team members identified the RRCP evaluation as a restraining force to full implementation of the national Program. While team members acknowledged the RRCP evaluation was quite comprehensive and was capable of assessing the implementation of the Program itself, it was not perceived as an effective source for providing formative evaluation data at the individual center level. As such, participants indicated that it was difficult for them to make “mid-course corrections” at their specific centers if they were not provided with timely evaluation data that informed them on the quality of technical assistance services and other aspects of the evaluation specific to their region.

Leadership Team (Team vs. Group): The final restraining force identified by the Leadership Team was a discussion about the extent to which they worked as “team” or as a “group.” The concept behind the notion of *Team vs. Group* is that a “team” maintains

specific commitments around norms, goals, and responsibilities. On the other hand, a “group” represents a loosely coupled collection of individuals who may not always have shared commitments and function with little formality. Several Leadership Team members posed questions about the degree to which they acted as a team; that is, whether they truly share commitments around norms, goals, and responsibilities. One member indicated that a challenge occurs when one or more of the Leadership Team members continuously challenge the commitments, norms, and responsibilities which were generally accepted among other Leadership Team members.

RRCP Staff: Force Field Analysis Results

Similar to the procedures used for conducting the Force Field Analysis with the RRCP Leadership Team, The RRCP Staff Force Field Analysis activity generated six (6) specific areas that were identified as driving forces in the transformation of six Regional Resource Centers moving to one national Program. The RRCP staff also identified five (5) restraining forces. Information regarding the context and detail of each driving and

Table 3: RRCP Staff Force Field Analysis Results

Strength	Driving Forces	Restraining Forces	Strength
4.42	Leadership of Project Officer	Leadership Team Governance	3.57
4.21	Collaboration	TA Delivery by Center vs. Program	3.57
3.48	Management of Work	Trust	3.43
3.57	Program Structure	Developing the Archetype	3.14
3.29	Technical Assistance Delivery	Competition	3.14
2.71	Marketing		
21.68			16.85

restraining force is presented below by order of strength of the force. Table 3 represents the summary of the RRCP Staff Force Field Analysis. Note that the driving forces and restraining forces columns highlighted in this table are mutually exclusive and are not intended to infer any type of relationship. As indicated previously, the participants identified six (6) driving forces to institutionalizing the RRCP as an organization and identified five (5) restraining forces to organizational institutionalization. The strengths of the driving forces ranged from 4.42 to 2.71 (highest to lowest respectively). Strength levels for the restraining forces ranged from 3.57 to 3.14. Data were aggregated for both the driving forces and the restraining forces resulting in a final strength score of 21.68 for driving forces and a final strength score of 16.85 for the restraining forces. These results indicate that equilibrium has not yet been achieved in the organization, according to data collected from RRCP staff. The discussion section of this investigative report will address implications of the results of this Force Field Analysis.

RRCP Staff: Driving Forces

Leadership of Project Officer: RRCP staff members who participated in this activity indicated that the most influential driving force in institutionalizing the RRCP as an organization was strong leadership of the OSEP Project Officer who initiated the change process among the six Regional Resource Centers. Staff members felt that the Project Officer's innovative vision provided guidance, support, and leadership in the development of a new organizational archetype, premised on the belief that leadership was distributed across all levels of the organization, not limited to the Leadership Team. One participant reported:

[He] inspired us to move in the Program by always supporting our suggestions for the model but also for providing concrete and constructive feedback relative to our change process. He always supported staff in taking a leadership role in the design and implementation of the Program.

RRCP staff stressed the importance of having a strong willed Project Officer who is able and willing to provide direction on "where the organization should go" as the change

process evolves. One RRCP staff commented on the Project Officer's "ability to have a strong will that is able to bend and form things the way they should be based, on OSEP's vision."

Collaboration: In addition to identifying the leadership of the RRCP Project Officer as a significant driving force in establishing the RRCP, staff members also reported that the level of collaboration demonstrated by staff was noteworthy as an indicator of success. Staff members discussed what they considered to be three key aspects of collaboration. First, they emphasized the collaboration with each other; that is, peer-to-peer collaboration that occurred across the RRCP. In general, respondents indicated that this level of collaboration facilitated sharing of best practices, technical assistance, and related events occurring in SEAs across regions. Second, staff members commented how the work of the Priority Teams has led to significantly higher level of collaboration across the RRCP. Prior to the change, staff members in each center were expected to be knowledgeable of multiple policy issues, technical assistance strategies, and accountability requirements for implementing the IDEA. Since the advent of the RRCP, however, there became the recognition that staff do not need to have "all" the expertise in one region, but could look across the entire RRCP to leverage the expertise from a "resource pool" of individuals working on cross-regional Priority Teams. RRCP staff also emphasized the clear advantages of being able to experience more frequent professional development opportunities by interacting with their peers to learn and apply new skills and promote strong collegial relationships. As one RRCP staff stated:

We have a better idea of what we do and what we should do-it speaks to vision and what our task really is- we know what to expect from each other and know that we can count on each other to support our delivery of technical assistance, if we need it.

A third aspect of collaboration cited by RRCP staff were opportunities that have occurred with OSEP with regard to the design of technical assistance and implementation strategies. RRCP staff reported that the transition to a national Program has increased the

ability of RRCP staff to engage with OSEP on a more frequent basis. As one staff member stated:

We have more of one voice in working with OSEP...this is because of the involvement of our Project Officer...and OSEP has noticed a difference [in us] as a result of becoming a Program. I just feel more connected to our Project Officer and OSEP staff.

Respondents indicated that, historically, there had not always been a strong connection between staff of the individual RRCs and OSEP. Generally, only the Directors from the individual RRCs had access to OSEP. Many expressed the opinion that this change in phenomena occurred largely as a result of the RRCP Project Officer, who expressed a strong belief that leadership was distributed throughout the Program. One RRCP staff member stated that, “OSEP is speaking to us in one voice as a Program, and that is new for us, and very important.” However, several RRCP staff noted that recent changes in the Program have led to fewer opportunities to interact with OSEP and that communication is increasingly being focused on members of the RRCP Leadership Team.

Management of Work: RRCP staff members reported that the ability to better manage their work was a driving force. For example, staff discussed how they have a much clearer idea of what the work of the RRCP is in relation to the redesigned organizational structure, mission, and strategic plan. Respondents identified protocols that are in place to support their work including a tool designed to help them prioritize technical assistance activities. In addition, RRCP staff indicated that the Knowledge Management System (KMS) has helped them by serving as a project management platform for recording specific information relative to actions taken to accomplished technical assistance plan goals and objectives.

Program Structure: The organizational structure of the RRCP was identified as the third most influential driving force in the establishment of the RRCP as a national

Program. RRCP staff identified five key areas of the RRCP structure that support it as an organization:

1. RRCP staff participants reported that the Priority Teams were a significant structural component to the RRCP to ensure consistency in the delivery of technical assistance in relation to OSEP national priorities. The primary purpose of the Priority Team is to identify technical assistance strategies to address national priorities by conducting reviews of the work of other OSEP-funded TA & D Centers, OSEP guidance (e.g., “Dear Colleague” letters, memorandums), SPP/APR reviews, TA needs assessments, and prior TA requests from SEAs. As a result of these efforts, Priority Teams identify and disseminate information about tools, products, and services that support SEAs in their efforts to meet IDEA requirements. One RRCP staff stated: “The Priority Teams help to organize our work and assists in team work across the Program which allows for consistency of message and to prioritize our work.” In addition, RRCP staff discussed the importance of professional development opportunities that are conducted by the various Priority Teams. These include webinars to RRCP technical assistance staff and the creation of technical assistance documents used to develop and frame delivery strategies around specific, “high need” technical assistance areas (e.g. Disproportionality). As a result, RRCP staff indicated that they felt more prepared and more confident in their ability to provide technical assistance in the priority areas.
2. RRCP staff identified the role of the RRCP Coordinator(s) as a critical component of the Program structure that has served as a driving force in the implementation of the RRCP. The previously discussed document, A Proposal to Restructure the Regional Resource Center and Federal Center Program, submitted to OSEP in 2008 identified the need for a coordinating entity to guide the work of the national Program. In addition to administrative and accountability oversight, the RRCP Coordinators manage priority setting activities as well as Priority Team activities and serve as RRCP liaisons to the broader OSEP-funded TA & D Network. RRCP staff indicated that the communication and collaboration established between the RRCP and the TA & D Network was critical in establishing essential partnerships

that facilitate the entire workscope of the RRCP. RRCP staff participants also discussed the important role of the RRCP Coordinators in maintaining ongoing and frequent communication with OSEP staff (e.g., TA collaboration calls, communication with State Contacts, OSEP Project Officer).

3. An additional component of the organizational structure identified by RRCP staff was the development of the Knowledge Management System (KMS). Staff discussed how the KMS ensures cohesion and consistency by providing universal means for reporting the frequency and intensity of technical assistance activities within each center. Respondents indicated that the KMS provides a “jumping off point” which allows all authorized RRCP staff to view the nature and range of technical assistance activities across the RRCP as well as within individual centers. One RRC staff member stated that “the KMS serves as a dynamic tool that fosters examination of our practices and the work we do and the collaboration...staff have full access to all information that has been collected.” Participants also indicated that increased integration with technology solutions in the future will lead all RRCP staff into better alignment and strengthen the organization.
4. Another component of the organizational structure that was identified as contributing to the success of the national Program is the strategic use of RRCP fiscal resources. A number of participants discussed the importance of the Leadership Team holding themselves accountable for providing support to the RRCP. The RRCP staff was clear, however, that support was not just provided through contributions which fund conferences and other types of events, but how important it was that the Leadership Team considers resources that directly contribute to the RRCP success, such as personnel. Also, RRCP staff discussed that engagement in the strategic use of fiscal resources also provided transparency for the Leadership Team—that is, by having all centers share their quarterly expenditures with each other. RRCP staff indicated the strategic use of fiscal resources is something which facilitates the Leadership Team’s effort to work together to identify and support common areas of work and collaboration. However, some participants reported that the strategic use of fiscal resources and

resource sharing, at times, may not always be equitable for each center based on the needs of the states in the particular regions. It was noted, for example, that it simply costs more to provide technical assistance in some regions, such as the Pacific Basin. In addition, RRCP staff also noted that each center has personnel costs not comparable with other centers. Finally, RRCP staff reported that there is a perception that some personnel have widely varying job responsibilities and time commitments to their respective RRC. As a result, it is difficult to determine how much they are able to contribute to the national Program. Finally, it remains unclear about how an individual center can access an individual from another center who could benefit from particular expertise in the delivery of technical assistance.

5. A final component of the RRCP structure that was discussed was the use of a common set of performance measures monitored by one evaluator across the RRCP. It was reported that the use of a common evaluation helped RRCP staff in focusing their work and that all centers were being assessed on the same measures, with data being collected and reported in a consistent manner. However, some staff reported that they are not sure how useful the measures are since the evaluation largely focuses on the national Program as a whole but does not provide formative or summative evaluative information for individual centers. However, most RRCP staff agreed that the common performance measures and evaluation plan allowed staff to obtain a Program-wide view of evaluation results that shows the collective performance of the RRCP in relation to meeting the goals and objectives of the strategic plan.

Technical Assistance Delivery: An additional driving force in the change from six individual centers into one national Program focused on the delivery of technical assistance. As discussed in other sections of this dissertation, OSEP directed the RRCs to engage in a more consistent approach to the delivery of technical assistance. RRCP staff reflected on how some SEAs in different regions interpreted different “messages” from their RRCs regarding the nature and range of technical assistance that would be provided to them as a result of reorganization. This became somewhat problematic once SEAs

discussed these “mixed-messages” with their peers in other states. As a result, a number of SEAs across the RRCP began raising concerns about inconsistencies in the delivery of technical assistance within their respective RRCs. To address this issue, OSEP required the RRCs to develop a plan that would eliminate any inconsistencies and clear up any misunderstandings. RRCP staff reported that the development of the plan was a significant step in establishing the RRCP because it led to a more uniform understanding and implementation of technical assistance across centers. As such, RRCP staff indicated that they now have a much better understanding of what can be provided for technical assistance across and within centers.

Marketing: The final driving force identified by RRCP staff was marketing of the national Program. Staff reported that branding the RRCP was important because it forms a unified identity for RRCP staff and allows clients to see the organization as one Program rather than six distinct entities. RRCP staff also asserted that marketing the Program has also allowed some SEAs to begin accessing the resources of the RRCP rather than what their individual center can provide. Staff indicated that through effective marketing and branding of the RRCP, they are better able to talk from a “single voice” about the vision of the RRCP.

RRCP Staff: Restraining Forces

Leadership Team Governance: RRCP staff identified the Leadership Team as the strongest retraining force in supporting organizational change within the RRCP. Respondents emphasized that one challenge for the team was figuring out how to govern a national Program after being directed by OSEP to establish a national Program. Prior to the establishment of the RRCP, individual center staff had a much more participatory approach to the development of policies and practices within their centers. RRCP staff members commented that, more recently, the RRCP appears to be moving in more bureaucratic direction. For example, some RRCP staff contend that OSEP now tends to communicate with the Leadership Team rather than engaging with staff across all levels of the RRCP. In addition to communication between the Leadership Team and OSEP,

participants in this Force Field Analysis activity emphasized that they now have less of a “voice” in the design of the RRCP as they have had in the past. They indicated that whatever input they had into Program is channeled and filtered through Leadership Team. However, RRCP staff did indicate that new opportunities are now being initiated in which they are able to share information about their work and provide input on RRCP activities. One such opportunity identified by the RRCP staff was the establishment of the technical assistance liaisons calls, which seem to offer a new channel for sharing information about technical assistance activities with OSEP.

TA Delivery by Center vs. Program: RRCP staff identified the tension between center- and Program- focused technical assistance as a restraining force. RRC staff indicated that, as a result of working within the framework of the RRCP, things can, at times, “get bogged down” as one RRCP staff member stated with regard to the delivery of technical assistance through the RRCP. For example, some technical assistance initiatives need to go through the approval process established by the Leadership Team, which often does not occur in a timely manner. RRCP staff also discussed the challenge of maintaining a regional focus for their work while at the same ensuring a consistent level of service delivery across the RRCP. In one case, an RRCP staff member reported that it was challenging to deliver “customized” technical assistance which might be perceived as being outside the realm of RRCP expectations. RRCP staff also indicated that the Program has to be better at leveraging resources to promote the delivery of technical assistance in a timely manner. Other RRCP staff conveyed concerns about the extent to which the RRCP has been a factor in the perceived loss of regular “one on one” technical assistance delivered by each individual center.

Trust: RRCP staff indicated that trust was a restraining factor which held back the change process. In particular, RRCP staff discussed the lack of trust in governance by the Leadership Team. For example RRCP staff discussed the tension among the Leadership Team when they interact with each other and the lack of trust the Leadership Team exhibits toward staff in being able to make what are widely perceived to be simple and

straightforward decisions to complete some type of action. RRCP staff reported this lack of trust that often manifests itself in slowing the work down and timeliness in being able to get things done. Staff attributed much of the lack of trust to the “new” organizational structure of the RRCP where Leadership Team members are not always sure of the parameters of their decision-making responsibilities.

Developing the Archetype: The fourth restraining force identified by RRCP staff were challenges associated with the development and implementation of what has been termed the “RRCP Archetype.” Staff respondents discussed the challenges of creating a new model in the delivery of technical assistance while also having to engage in the workplace norms under the traditional model. Specifically, RRC staff indicated there was no organizational and funding model of similar technical assistance funded projects from which to learn. Participants reflected on the need to continually adapt to new circumstances and challenges but seemed confident that the RRCP has been given the opportunity to “plow the road,” as one RRCP staff member said, to transform the organization as an example for others to replicate. A final point in the discussion regarding the development of an archetype with RRCP staff was the consensus that both RRCP staff and the Leadership Team alike will not have complete knowledge of the barriers that will be faced until they are encountered. As such the RRCP will need to experiment with various types solutions before determining what works best for the organization.

Competition: Competition was identified as the final restraining force in this Force Field Analysis activity. RRCP staff indicated that although the RRC Program is made up of six separate centers, each center is responsible for writing their own grants. Respondents indicated that competing for funding dollars can create a notion of competition between centers and with other technical assistance centers. One RRCP staff member indicated that each center has its own “pockets of individual capacity” and that this can sometimes lead to a competitive environment between staff from different centers. However, other RRCP staff indicated that there is also a healthy tension between

how the RRCP shares people and work across regions and that this forces each to look at what others are doing to improve services to states. One respondent commented “We are in a natural competition with each other. We want to know if we are we doing a good job. And we really want to know how OSEP sees us...it’s just natural.” Another RRCP staff member summed up the conversation by saying “We want to shine in our own RFP but we also want to shine on behalf of the Program and sometimes that causes some tension.”

Competition also exists within each center’s own region, especially when it is time to re compete for the funding. Some staff emphasized that it is good that grants are managed locally because there are regional differences and that it is critical that centers are able to find the balance for the individually focused work while still being part of the RRC Program. Finally, staff discussed the accountability for each grant that is awarded and that this falls within the jurisdiction of the host agency. Each center is responsible for addressing reporting requirements and fiscal management relative to the grant award. Because of these two significant aspects of grant management, staff feel that competition between centers is inevitable.

Results for the Organizational Change Recipients’ Belief Scale (OCRBS)

The Organizational Change Recipients’ Belief Scale (OCRBS) was developed by Armenakis et al. (2007) as a tool to measure the progress of organizational change from the perspective of the recipients of change; that is, those who are expected to participate and implement the change. According to Armenakis et al. (2007), the OCRBS can be used as a barometer of change, an assessment of beliefs that influence change, and a basis for developing an action plan to improve buy-in on behalf of the change recipients.

The Organizational Change Recipients Belief Scale (OCRBS) was distributed as an on-line survey to a random sample of 36 Program staff across the 6 regional centers of the RRCP. Of the 36 staff who were requested to complete the survey, 22 did so, resulting in a participation rate of 61%. Table 4 shows the general characteristics of those who completed survey, including RRC region served, job role, and length of employment within an RRC. The table shows that 50% of the respondents (N = 11) identified

Table 4: Characteristics of OCRBS Survey Respondents

Job Role	Frequency	Percent
Center Support Staff	2	9
Technology/Information	2	9
Technical Assistance Provider	11	50
Administrative	7	32

Years Employed	Frequency	Percent
1-3 Years	4	18
3-5 Years	3	14
5-8 Years	5	23
8-10 Years	3	14
More than 10 Years	7	32

Regional Resource Center Region	Frequency	Percent
Northeast RRC	4	17
Mid-South RRC	1	4
Southeast RRC	4	17
North Central RRC	5	22
Mountain Plains RRC	4	17
Western RRC	4	17

themselves as Technical Assistance Providers, while 32% indicated they served as Administrators. The remaining 18% of the respondents were equally split in terms of their job roles as Technology/Information or Center Support Staff. Approximately one-third, or 32% of the respondents (N = 7) indicated they have been working as an RRC staff member for more than 10 years. Likewise, a combined total of 37% of the respondents (N = 8) indicated they worked for an RRC for a minimum 5 years to a maximum of 8 years. Combining the cell percentages for the 1-3 Year and the 3-5 Years categories accounted for about one-third of the respondents (N = 7). Table 4 displays the number and percent of respondents representing the various regions of the RRC Program

across the United States. The Northeast, Southeast, Mountain Plains, and Western RRCs each accounted for 17% of the respondents ($N = 4$), while the North Central RRC had 22% ($N = 5$) and Mid-South RRC had one (4%). Data obtained from the on-line survey showed that respondents spent an average of 5 minutes and 47 seconds to complete the survey.

To check the internal consistency of respondent ratings, a Chronbach's Alpha coefficient of .87 was calculated, a statistic which indicates a relatively high level of reliability among survey respondents. Even though little variability was observed, a one-way ANOVA was also calculated, along with a post-hoc Scheffe comparison to determine the extent to which ratings differed between the five subscale areas. As described in the Methodology section, the OCRBS subscales include: Valence—the belief that the change will result in intrinsic or extrinsic benefits for those who are expected to participate in the change; Discrepancy—the difference between current and desired performance that the change is legitimate; Appropriateness—the perception that the proposed change is appropriate for the organization; Efficacy—the belief that personnel possess the skills necessary to effect the desired change; and Principal Support—the belief that leadership shows support by consistently “walking the talk.” The ANOVA was not found to be significant ($F(4,21) = 1.833, p > .05$) and post-hoc pairwise comparisons between subscales also revealed no significant differences. As such, the subscale results of the OCRBS show relative consistency in terms of item ratings. Summary statistics for both Chronbach's Alpha and ANOVA are detailed in Appendixes F and G.

Several types of tables were generated to provide summary statistics by item and for each subscale. Table 5, for example, shows the means, standard deviations, and standard error of the mean for each item of the OCRBS ordered by subscale. The mean values were calculated from the seven-point Likert scale which represented the ordinal categories of “Strongly Agree” (1), “Agree” (2), Somewhat Agree (3), “Undecided” (4), “Somewhat Disagree” (5), “Disagree (6), and “Strongly Disagree” (7). As such, the

Table 5: Means, Standard Deviations, and Standard Error of the Mean for OCRBS Items

Subscale	Item Number and Description	Mean	SD	Standard Error
Valence	1. Change will benefit me.	2.00	1.00	0.21
	6. Fulfillment for me.	2.57	1.24	0.26
	11. Will earn higher pay.	5.61	1.67	0.35
	16. Increase self-accomplishment.	3.09	1.53	0.32
	21. Same fringe benefits.	2.13	1.32	0.28
Discrepancy	5. Need the change.	1.96	0.77	0.16
	10. Need improve we operate.	2.17	0.65	0.14
	15. Need to improve effectiveness.	1.91	0.60	0.12
	20. Change to improve operations.	2.00	0.60	0.13
	25. Need to improve performance.	2.13	0.87	0.18
Appropriateness	3. Have favorable effect.	2.04	0.88	0.18
	8. Improve organization.	2.17	0.94	0.20
	13. Correct for the situation.	2.39	0.99	0.21
	18. Appropriate for organization.	2.09	0.73	0.15
	23. Change will prove best.	2.43	0.90	0.19
Efficacy	4. Implement the change.	2.13	1.14	0.24
	9. Implement change job.	2.17	0.78	0.16
	14. Successfully perform job duties.	2.00	0.90	0.19
	19. Can implement change.	2.35	0.83	0.17
	24. We have the capability.	2.26	0.86	0.18
Principal Support	2. Peers embrace change.	2.52	0.85	0.18
	7. Leaders are walking the talk.	3.13	1.49	0.31
	12. Leaders support change.	2.96	1.52	0.32
	17. Majority dedicated to change.	2.48	1.04	0.22
	22. Immediate manager in favor.	2.26	0.96	0.20
	26. Manager encourages me.	2.04	0.88	0.18

higher the value, the more likely one was either undecided or disagreed with what was implied by the item statement. As noted, the data in Table 5 reflect little variability with regard to most items, with only a few exceptions that will be discussed in the following narrative.

In order to generate a visual display that would facilitate a “quick,” but accurate impression of the results, it was necessary to reduce the seven categories of “Strongly Agree,” “Agree,” “Somewhat Agree,” “Undecided,” “Somewhat Disagree,” “Disagree,” and “Strongly Disagree” by combining them into three categories: “Agree” (by combining “Strongly Agree,” “Agree,” and “Somewhat Agree”) “Undecided” (not combined with any other category), and “Disagree” (by combining “Somewhat Disagree,” “Disagree,” and “Strongly Disagree”). These three categories are depicted in Figure 3, showing the combined percentages of Agree, Undecided, and Disagree, all summing to 100% for each item. Items were grouped according to their respective subscale.

Figure 3. Clustered Categories of Agree, Undecided, and Disagree for OCRBS Items

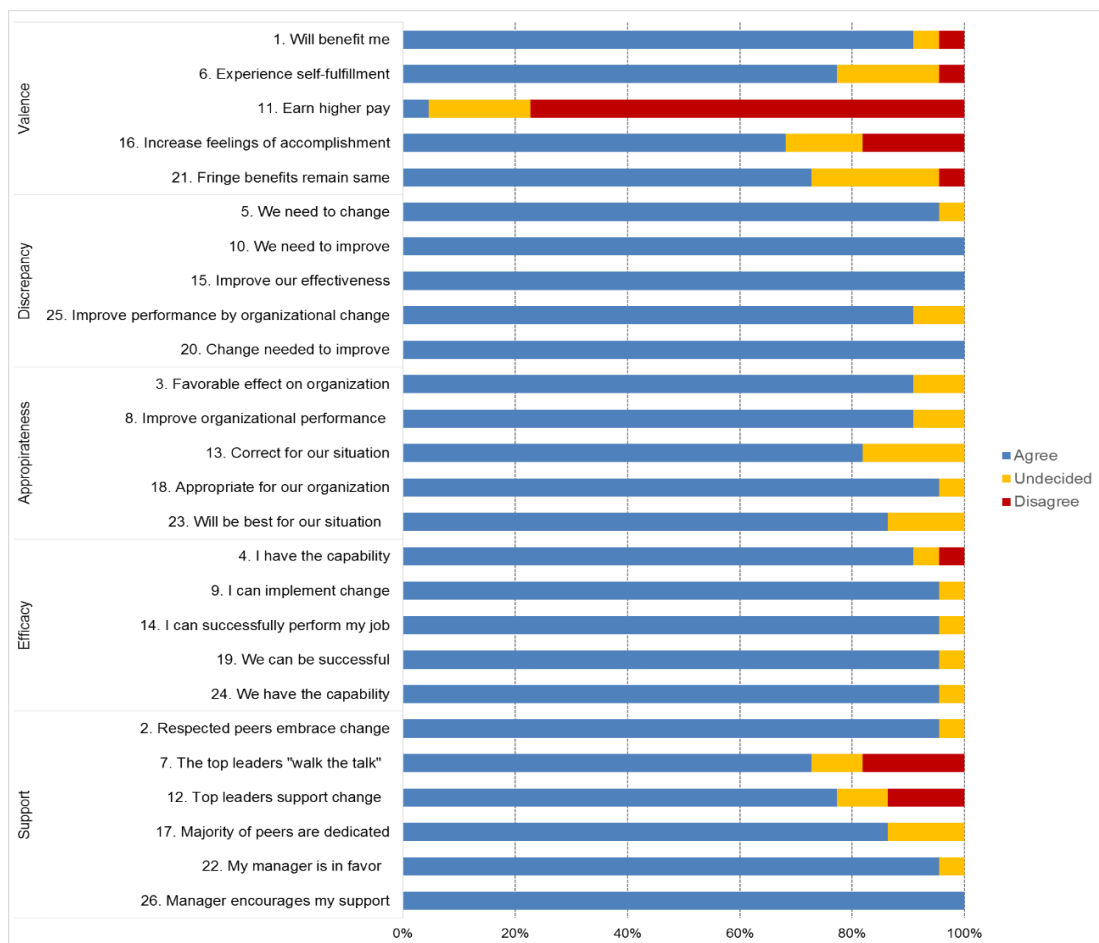


Figure 3 shows that, overall, respondents largely agreed with the majority of items of the OCRBS, which consistently indicates support for the change to the national Program. Most of the variability on the OCRBS was observed on the Valence subscale, where most respondents agreed that “the change will benefit me,” but it would not necessarily result in earning higher pay. As such, most of the benefits derived by respondents based on the results of the Valence subscale were those which anticipated intrinsic, rather than extrinsic benefits. Another subscale which showed some degree of variability was that of Principal Support. While most respondents tended to agree that the “top leaders walk the talk,” there were also a number of those who were “Undecided” or simply indicated “Disagree” with this statement. Similar results were observed on an item in which respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement with regard to whether top leaders supported the change.

To examine the extent to which ratings may have varied according to job role, specifically between those who worked in the “field” versus those who held administrative or coordinator roles, respondents were partitioned into two groups: Staff Group and Leadership Group. Individuals who comprised the Staff Group were those who indicated their job role as “Center Support Staff,” “Technology and Information Staff,” or as a “Technical Assistance Provider.” The Leadership Group was formed by those who indicated their job role administrative duties. In a comparison of item means of each group, a Pearson correlation of .92 was calculated, an indication that both groups assigned ratings similarly and with a high level of agreement. This level of agreement was evident when a table was constructed which showed item means and standard deviations for each group (See Appendix H). As described previously, the ratings of both groups were recoded to produce dichotomous groups to study differences and levels of agreement through the application of Chi Squares and Kappa ratios. In this case, the recorded categories consisted of a series of 2 X 2 tables representing Staff-Leadership and Agree-Disagree. However, because the ratings of both groups were so similar, many times identical, it was decided to dispense with these analyses since they would not likely reveal any useful insights other than reiterating the consistency of ratings between the

two groups. A table of frequencies and percentages was nevertheless generated and included in Appendix I to show how closely respondents of each group rated the Agree-Disagree options.

Results for RRCP Staff Interviews

This section describes five qualitative themes which emerged from an analysis of RRCP staff interviews based on the interview questions. The interview protocol can be seen in Appendix D. The themes include the: (1) Importance of Relationship Building, (2) Role of Communication in the Development of the Organization, (3) Alignment of Program and State Work, (4) RRCP Organizational Structure and How It Promotes Organizational Growth, and (5) Professional Development. Each theme addresses some aspect of the primary research questions and serve as the third source of triangulation in the description of this case study.

Importance of Relationship Building

The most prevalent theme that emerged across all interview questions was the importance of relationship building to the success of the RRCP. Staff identified a number of structures currently in place that foster relationship building and discussed the importance of relationships to the work of the RRCP. A number of staff indicated that annual face-to-face all-staff meeting was critical to the development and maintenance of strong relationships. Many reported this annual meeting provided an opportunity to network with colleagues both professionally and socially and allowed new personnel the opportunity to build their own network of professional relationships with colleagues from across the RRC Program. Comments from interviewees include:

Working on a national level as Program, face time is very important. . .annual meetings as we come together are critical for facilitating Program work, facilitating the development of relationships and trust to work virtually. These have been really important in developing relationships.

Annual meetings support relationships. . .I draw on those relationships. . .having thought partners across the nation and being able to bounce off colleagues things

that work for states...more organic sharing that comes from developing these personal relationships.

The annual face-to-face meeting brings people together to get know each other, build trust with each other. When you have a Program where there is, and could be competition, the trust is important.

The annual staff meeting where we all meet face-to-face is a support in developing a national organization and its' great to have some face to face time to do some work with your peers and develop those relationships.

Some staff indicated that more frequent face-to-face meetings would be beneficial to building relationships and that meeting only once a year can be challenging. If we were able to meet in person more than once per year as a staff, we could further develop and strengthen our professional relationships with colleagues across the RRCP.

In addition to the annual staff meeting, staff reported that other mechanisms are in place to support relationship building across the RRCP. In particular, a number of interviewees reported that monthly all-staff teleconferences and the monthly SEA liaison calls serve as vehicles for supporting and maintaining professional relationships across the RRCP. One interviewee stated that “The annual face-to-face meeting and staff calls are all ways to help us collaborate. I don’t want to work alone—we are all so much better when we can play off each other’s ideas. I really like functioning at a Program level.”

As interviewees discussed the relevance of strong relationships to their work within the RRCP, many also indicated the importance of building and improving relationships with both SEAs and OSEP staff. Staff considered these relationships to be a key part to the organizational structure of the RRCP, suggesting this new archetype can serve as a model for how SEAs and OSEP may go about the process of working across agencies and divisions. Representative comments of RRCP staff included:

We have developed stronger relationships with each other and have learned to work well together. This has been viewed as model for States in how they do their own work. We are modeling how to work across agencies and divisions.

As a result of our organizational change, we have a strengthened relationships with our Project Officer under the new structure and I think that OSEP is paying attention to how to work across groups-to learn from what we are doing.

In addition, many respondents indicated that trust was a key factor to establishing strong professional relationships. Comments included:

Monthly state liaison calls also help to communicate what is happening. This structure will allow for staff to share issues and challenges-this would allow for trust between colleagues.

We need to feel trusted and protected. Our environments are pretty competitive so trust is critical but hard to attain.

Overall, staff across the RRCP reported that strong relationships and trust were critical to the success of the RRCP and allowed them to attain high levels of job satisfaction. According to one staff interviewee, “The learning over this project period has been tremendous. We have built relationships that have helped us be better at our jobs and provide higher quality technical assistance.” Another observed that “Collaboration increases job satisfaction...I am working with people who like to work on the same areas that I like and I like working with the people I work with.” Once again, the formation of strong professional relationships and trust were viewed as central to job satisfaction and successful collaboration.

Role of Communication in Development of the Organization

Another theme that emerged from interviews with RRCP staff focused on the role of communication within the organization. Staff discussed the various levels of communication, including communication with OSEP and the Leadership Team, with attention to the issue of “who needs to know” what information and how that information is communicated. Several interviewees deliberated on the challenge of communicating a consistent message about the RRCP and what the organization means for clients and other stakeholders. Each topic within this theme is discussed below.

The RRCP staff who were interviewed emphasized the importance and need for more regular and uniform communication with OSEP, including the Project Officer and OSEP State Contacts. Staff reported that if communication was occurring on a regular basis, RRCP staff with the responsibility for the delivery of technical assistance would be better able to explain more clearly SEAs parameters around the provision of technical assistance. Staff also indicated that increased communication with OSEP would assist RRCP State liaisons in clearly understanding new policies and procedures that would also help to ensure the consistent delivery of information to SEAs. A number of interviewees suggested that the greater opportunities for creating a dialogue about policies and procedures would help to reduce individual, idiosyncratic interpretations of such policies and procedures. One interviewee commented:

There were some wonderful things that occurred at the beginning of this change but I don't think that structuring an organization in a way that is hoping to bring consistency of information to States can be successful. We are dealing with a myriad of personalities and State issues. If the centers get the same information at the same time then we would provide consistent information. This is more on the OSEP side—how we get information from them and who, at OSEP, we get the information from. There is a lot of interpretation coming from individuals, depending on personalities and how they interpret information. Structuring an organization is not necessarily going to get rid of this. We can't create a canned version of how we do our TA. We need to have formalized ways to communicate with OSEP so we are all on the same page.

Another staff member shared this comment:

I think that absence of a strategy hinders us and we need to have more communication with OSEP. I feel like we have discussions but we have to be thinking of things that are higher profile or level. We do a lot of discussion and deliberation and if we had a tighter communication link with OSEP so that we could get immediate feedback we could be more efficient in our work. We could have a more formalized process for talking with OSEP. We need consistent communication with OSEP in order for us to be consistent in our messaging to States.

Even with a desire expressed for more frequent and structured communication with OSEP, a number of staff members reported that, under the current cooperative agreement, there has been much stronger support and communication from the Project Officer than in the past, with one RRCP staff member indicating “the Project Officer has always been an advocate for us and our newest Project Officer is the same way at this point in time.”

In addition to discussing the need for more regular communication with OSEP, RRCP staff also discussed the current status of communication with the Leadership Team. Comments from staff appeared to reflect a schism in how they perceive communication with the Leadership Team. For example, some RRCP staff indicated that they would like more frequent communication from the Leadership Team as an entity, not just from their Director, while others stated that the Leadership Team was transparent and communicating on a regular basis with staff about the policies and procedures of the RRCP. The differing perceptions of staff are highlighted with these comments from two staff members:

I have wanted to hear more from the Leadership Team as an entity-the Leadership Team is functioning in the Leadership role and communication from them would be more helpful so I am not always hearing it from only my director. The coordinators do a great job of letting everyone know what is happening but having a greater connection to the Leadership Team might be helpful.

Directors bring back discussions about key messages to individual centers. Directors really have worked hard to make sure that staff are aware of issues that the Leadership Team may be dealing with and that they are trying to work through. This goes back to the transparency.

Staff report that they have seen a change in how the Leadership Team tries to communicate its activities to all members of the RRCP organization. Many discussed new strategies that are being implemented to help improve communication both to and from the Leadership Team. Such strategies include the opportunity to listen in (e.g. “fishbowl”) on monthly Leadership Team teleconferences, opportunities to attend quarterly Leadership Team meetings, and having access to minutes transcribed from

Leadership Team meetings. According to one staff member, there has been a significant improvement in communication with the Leadership Team, stating:

They are trying to be very transparent and that will improve the consistency. We are now invited to listen in to calls of the Leadership Team. Sometimes over the last couple of years there has been a lack of information about what is happening at the Leadership Team level. Some folks hear something that maybe I didn't hear right away. What I have learned is that I believe that each director tells their staff about proposed changes and there is consistency in getting the message out but the timing of sharing information might be different.

Staff generally felt that the new strategies being implemented by the Leadership Team would likely enhance transparency of their work and result in more consistency of information distributed across all centers.

One of the challenges identified by interviewees concerned the notion of "who," within the RRCP, needs to know what information. A number of staff reported that they would like to keep abreast of "everything" occurring across the RRCP while others indicated that they only wanted to know the information needed in order to perform their job. Staff discussed various strategies currently in place to help address the challenge of communicating various types of information to individuals across the RRCP. These include monthly State liaison calls, annual all-staff meetings, monthly staff meetings, and Priority Team teleconferences. Comments related to these strategies included:

Lack of communication would be the main one-a real challenge for us-although communication is improving. We have put things in place to help with this. The monthly State liaison calls also help to communicate what is happening.

We need to improve in this area still. Our monthly calls, annual meetings and our meetings are critically important and serve as our communication mechanisms. If we are agreeing to certain decisions and we follow through on those decisions we will also get consistency.

The communication protocols-with our new structure in the Priority Areas, we have so many great collaborators but we need to figure out who needs to know

what, timing for getting information out, and ID, more formally, some of those communication loops. This would help us to know that more people are really getting the information that they need. This is a challenge in any organization.

In their discussion about the role of communication within the RRCP, a number of staff stressed the need for consistency of communication and messaging across the RRCP. In general, staff suggested that the RRCP has not been effective with regards to sharing information with SEAs and other stakeholders (partners within of the TA & D Network, National Association of State Directors of Special Education, Infant & Toddler Coordinators Association, others) about why the organizational redesign was occurring and what it meant to SEAs relative to the delivery of technical assistance. In the words of one staff member:

In our zeal to work as a Program, maybe every state in the country didn't get the same message on how we are going to do that-some of the messages that states got were negative in that they thought they weren't getting their "state specific TA"-at least they thought so. It was a lack of communication and clear direction on how we should work as a Program and how it would improve services to our states.

Another staff member provided a strategy to address the communication issue with the states the RRCP serves. She suggested that:

The one thing that is missing is a communication plan that would help us with consistency. Messaging is more consistent but we still need some work on this. Messaging to our states and a communication plan can help with this. Letting the states know what we do and how we work together-we need to target who we share the message with. There can be flexibility in how the message is delivered but there are key messages that all states need to hear and we need to be thoughtful of who needs to hear what messages. Who is our audience? It's the states.

RRCP staff also alluded to some degree of confusion with regard to "who" to communicate with at the RRCP level when members of the TA & D Network need to collaborate on a technical assistance activity. Respondents recalled examples of when

other TA & D centers wanted ‘to reach out the RRCP, but were not clear on who to reach out to’ as one interviewee observed. Several RRCP staff claimed the lack of clear protocol with regard to who or what entity served as the first line of communication often resulted in tension between the center Directors and RRCP Coordinators. According to one staff member:

When we say we are a national Program there is an expectation that the Program has a voice. Who do the directors from other TA centers call to collaborate? The face of the Program can be unclear sometimes to other TA centers. This is a struggle within the Leadership Team—who gets to serve as the face of the Program?

As a result, it remains unclear as to whether one should communicate with the Leadership Team, the Directors of each center, or the RRCP Coordinators.

Alignment of Program and State Work

In addition to building strong relationships with SEAs and establishing clear lines of communication as prerequisites to ensure the RRCP emerges as an effective and sustainable organization, RRCP staff also identified the need to address the challenge of managing, or “balancing” work between what is generally referred to as “Program” or “state.” In many cases, where the term “Program” is used, it refers to the work of RRCP—including Priority Teams and their associated Core Teams, Cadres, and other activities conducted across multiple centers. “State” work generally refers to the work that is done in SEAs, such as direct and indirect technical assistance activities usually on behalf of one’s own RRC. As such, the topic of Program vs. state work is often discussed as a dichotomous choice—either one devotes efforts to the national Program or to serving SEAs within their own region. Specifically, RRCP staff discussed issues associated with being able to clearly discern Program work from state work. Some interviewees claimed that the time dedicated to building the national Program reduced the amount of time that could have been spent addressing SEA issues within their region. One interviewee described the challenge by stating:

It's hard to build the national Program while maintaining the time and effort we provide to our clients—an unintended consequence is that it takes time to build this new structure, and I think that states would find that frustrating. How do you carve out time to create the national Program without having a perceived lapse in providing services to states?"

Another RRCP staff commented on the challenge of trying to prioritize their work designated as "Program or state":

As we become a Program, it increases the workload. Between being a TA liaison [for an SEA] and also having to figure out the logistical work for the RRCP as a whole, that is what is challenging to me. The struggle is that we create all of this work, but do we really use what we create, like TA tools? I struggle with which things take precedent. How do you prioritize?

As staff discussed the challenge of managing Program work and the delivery of SEA technical assistance, many reported they felt that the creation of the RRCP resulted in additional workload for staff as well as the Leadership Team. One interviewee whose primary role was to provide technical assistance to SEAs, reported that "it has resulted in an increase in workload and put more strain on all, even the leadership...the Program has created a double layer of work and responsibility."

Not all staff were in agreement with the notion that the establishment of the Program has resulted in additional work responsibilities for staff and leadership. One interviewee, whose primary role also involved providing technical assistance services to SEAs, provided a different perspective. She claimed that as the RRCP has evolved, so has the increase in collaboration with her colleagues across RRCs which gives the opportunity to provide better services states. She commented:

There has definitely been an increase in individual collaboration. It's clear that some people have taken the concept of the Program, have flourished, and ran with it. I have to reach out and meet other people to use their expertise so that I might provide better services to my states. Some people are better at this than others.

Other staff agreed with the notion that emergence of the national Program structure has helped to improve the delivery of technical assistance to SEAs. In particular, some interviewees emphasized “all” the work they do, whether it is RRCP, regional, or state-specific, is intended to support states in meeting IDEA requirements, asserting that the “Program vs. state” debate is largely based on a false dichotomy. A number of staff agreed that all work they engage in should be relevant to their role as technical assistance providers in support of RRCP technical assistance initiatives. One interviewee summed up her thinking about this by saying:

For some reason I get a sense that after we reorganized, people viewed our work as either Program work or state work, and that it can’t be both. There shouldn’t be a distinction between what we do as a Program and what we do in our state. If we are developing an ad hoc team to conduct a think tank around a particular issue, a breakdown may occur if we don’t align that work with our State work. We need to make our work relevant to our state liaison work. All of our work is to help us perform as state liaisons. We need to make connections to our Program work and liaison work. What is in it for me and how is this going to help me with my work. We shouldn’t be thinking that I am doing this for the Program, but won’t help me with my State work.

In addition to discussing the perceptions related to Program and state work, several interviewees reported that RRCP staff are more likely to support the concept of the national Program structure; that is, as one interviewee stated “all centers working in tandem to provide better services to states, and the Leadership Team is not always consistent in their message of support for this organizational change.” Another RRCP staff member agreed with that observation and further stated:

The Leadership Team never fully bought into the Program. Staff have supported the Program but leadership does not. On the surface, they talk as if they are for a Program yet they continue to compete with each other. [The Leadership Team] continues to sabotage the Program because they don’t believe in the Program.”

The lack of support for the RRCP on behalf of leadership appears to be largely based on RRCP staff perceptions that RRC Directors work to promote their individual centers,

continue to compete with each other, and work to foster a culture within their own center rather than supporting the development of a Program-wide culture. Several staff attributed these types of behaviors to center Directors' challenge of leadership and decision making processes under the new organizational structure. Comments include:

They didn't respect structures set up by Program. Many of the leadership don't believe in the Program and continually promote their own centers.

Is everyone buying into the fact that we are a Program or do folks put their individual center's needs first? I don't think everyone has bought into the Program idea, especially the leadership.

We are all so different...that makes it difficult. Different attitudes from people, that's hard to change. Attitude about cultures and values at centers are very hard to change. It's really hard to come together as one Program with the differing attitudes and values of the individual leadership team members.

One staff member summarized the challenge occurring between staff support of the Program structure and perceptions of how leadership interacts with the Program by saying "Staff are so accepting of the concept of the Program. The success of the Program is a result of the staff, not the Leadership Team. It is a result of the worker bees and is carried on with dignity and purpose. We would've all been dead in the water if we followed the Leadership Team."

RRCP Structure and How It Impacts Organizational Growth

Another theme that emerged from staff interviews focused on the overall structure of the RRCP and how the structure both promotes and impedes organizational growth. Staff reported that the RRCP Leadership Team, RRCP Coordinators, and Project Officer continue to assess and refine its structure to better address state needs and apply lessons learned about "what's working" and "what's not working." Staff also indicated that the collaboration that has resulted from the Program structure has increased individuals' ability to provide high quality technical assistance. Comments on the refinement of the RRCP structure include:

The continued refinement of the infrastructure is very positive...we revisit what we are doing and make changes as needed. We are more fluid and able to bring people into the fold more frequently. We engage in continued learning process and applying lessons learned as we review our structure. How can we use staff knowledge and experience? We continue to do that.

The collaboration across centers has been really rich and the TA I provide has benefited from the Program structure-my ability to tap into others' knowledge and skills is greater because of the structure.

One of the main components of the RRCP structure discussed by several staff was the Leadership Team and how the collaborative leadership model affects Program activities. It was evident that staff were divided regarding the importance of the Leadership Team as well as the functioning of the team. For example, several interviewees expressed concern about the decision making ability of the Leadership Team, particularly with regard to their ability to be transparent both with each other and with RRCP staff. A number of staff also expressed concern over the time it takes the Leadership Team to finalized decisions that impact Program work. Several interviewees indicated that decisions are rarely made "just in time" to ensure that there are no gaps between actions necessary to complete Program objectives. Some RRCP staff suggested that varying leadership styles and feelings of power and control often hinder the ability of the Leadership Team with making decisions in a timely and consistent manner. One interviewee insisted the RRCP missed many opportunities to engage colleagues in other TA & D centers in the development of new tools and products to support SEA initiatives because of the inability of the Leadership Team to make a decision approving the work. According to one staff who was interviewed:

There can be real benefits to having a collaborative leadership but sometimes it is a challenge with a 7 to 8 member Leadership Team that are involved in trying to make a decision. Decisions that could be made quickly sometimes take a long time to make. As a team lead there is confusion on where to go. I was asked to work with another TA center, but I had to coordinate with the Leadership Team to get a response. The delayed decision prohibited the RRCP from participating

in framing the conversation with the TA center. This has fed into the perception that it will take the RRCP a long time to figure this out, so we will figure it out for them. We are then reacting to a framework, rather developing the framework.

Another interviewee agreed with the concern over the timeliness of decision making by the Leadership Team by saying:

The Program has done a lot to facilitate consistency. The message is consistent but there is a pause between consistent messages. A concrete example is the priority areas. We have been talking about them for a long time. This happened last summer and we are half through the year and just figuring out the priority areas. There was definitely a pause. This has been the experience-challenge with timeliness with decision making and communication around decisions.

Although a number of staff expressed concerns over the ability of the Leadership Team to make timely decisions, others reported that there has been a targeted effort on behalf of some team members to ensure transparency to staff and explain why some issues took longer than others to be resolved. Staff remarked on specific strategies that had been instituted to allow for greater transparency such as “fishbowling” of monthly Leadership Team calls, where staff are permitted to listen into the calls, but are not allowed to make comments or suggestions regarding the discussions. In addition, a number of staff remarked on the recent change to Leadership Team structure in which the Priority Team leads were invited to participate in the Leadership Team’s quarterly two day meetings. One interviewee commented that “they are trying to be very transparent and that will improve the consistency. We are now invited to listen in to calls of Leadership Team. Over the last couple of years there has been a lack of information around what is happening at the Leadership Team level but that seems to be changing.”

In addition to discussing the decision making ability of the Leadership Team, staff also discussed nuances regarding the structure and makeup of the team as well. Interviewees discussed the pros and cons of having a Leadership Team that consists of each center Director, two RRCP Coordinators and the Project Officer. Several emphasized the importance of including other perspectives on the team, particularly with

regard to the development of Program work. Some interviewees insisted that representation of staff had already been achieved through the RRCP Coordinators and Project Officer, suggesting that their presence on the Leadership Team provide a perspective on behalf of all staff and were not focused on the needs of any one individual center. However, some RRCP staff discussed the changing role of the RRCP Coordinator, suggesting that the role was slowly regressing into what might be characterized as a “secretarial position” for the Leadership Team and was no longer representative of RRCP staff. One RRCP staff member observed that “The coordinator position used to be such a “positive” and just what was needed to make it [the RRCP] successful. Now, we have a secretarial position for the Directors.” Another staff member commented that having the Coordinator and Project Officer as an integral part of the Leadership Team “made everyone more accountable.” Finally, one staff member perceived a lack of support of RRC Directors on the Leadership Team, stating:

The Directors don’t support the main structures that are clearly defined. They feel that their authority had been impinged upon. They don’t like having a middle person and want to have an opportunity to make all decisions. This has created tension for staff in general.

Staff also discussed the changing role of the RRC Directors over the course of the five year grant cycle and how the changes have been challenging for some. In the past, RRC Directors had the authority to make decisions about their own individual centers and, in most cases, were the final voice in the decision-making process. Under the RRCP structure, directors now engage in collaborative leadership and decision-making. Respondents suggested that it was challenging for some directors to manage their centers while engaging in RRCP planning and implementation activities. One interviewee indicated that the Program has resulted in some RRC Directors having to change their “skill set” to support Program development. A number of staff suggested that the major challenge for RRC Directors was the transition from being a center “manager” into becoming “leader,” that is, engaging in innovative thinking and doing things in new ways. One interviewee summed up the discussion by saying:

The role of center Director changed quite a bit. It is a lot to manage a center as well as be very involved as a Leadership Team member. There is a lot of work to be done and the Leadership Team may be taxed with trying to manage both. It's about reshaping the expectations for Directors. A great center Director does not make a great Program leader in some cases. This changes some of the skill sets and styles you might see because they now have to serve in a leadership role rather than manager.

However, other staff suggested that the change to the Program has allowed their center's Director to become more of a leader and to engage in leadership activities by thinking differently about how their center "does business." Several suggested that some RRC Directors have had to adjust their management style by sharing staff across centers, allowing staff to take on leadership roles within the RRCP, and working with others in a more collaborative manner. One interviewee indicated that in order for leadership to emerge at the Program level, it has to begin at the center level by stating:

Leadership support. I think it has to begin at the individual RRC level before it can be at the Program level. The Leadership Team provides support to cross-center collaboration and working toward establishing new initiatives. New structure and processes have been in place and are a new way to do business. This has to start at the home center. The Director needs to be very open to have conversations with you about your ideas, like how to be effective in the delivery of technical assistance and what supports you need to do that. The Director has to be open to the realignment of responsibilities to allow you to do your work better and how to use staff in a different way. This leads to collective conversations across the Program that have a national perspective. Having the support of the director to do something different and shape what it looks like and having access to the resources to do work differently.

In addition to discussing the Leadership Team as one of the main components of the RRCP structure, a number of staff discussed the importance of the Priority Teams in implementing the work of the RRCP, particularly in relation to the delivery of technical assistance to SEAs that is considered of high quality. In particular, interviewees suggested that the Priority Teams have provided a mechanism for the RRCP to become

more focused in its work and as a major catalyst for the provision of high quality technical assistance. In the past, interviewees indicated the RRCs would usually agree to support a SEA with any request submitted. Under the new structure that includes the Priority Teams, RRCP staff are able to articulate what services can be provided to SEAs. One staff member reported that:

We have gone from the mantra that everything we do is a priority. Now we have to focus our priorities....[We need] to translate priority area work into regional and state work. We have made a connection to how it all fits together.

Another staff member conveyed the same sentiment by stating:

The focus on the priorities and what we are engaging in during the year really helps us from going off in six different directions and allows us to be better define our work with States.

In discussing the importance of the Priority Teams, a number of interviewees observed that Priority Team work was very similar to that of a Community of Practice (CoP), where individuals with a common interest assemble to address a specific problem or issue. According to one staff member, “the Priority Teams have been really helpful in terms of building a CoP across regions, working with colleagues, and creating solutions for states.” Respondents also indicated that Priority Teams help to create a more defined group with expertise to work on a topic and provide useful tools in the delivery technical assistance to SEAs.

Another aspect of the RRCP structure in which staff indicated support for organizational growth was the opportunity for RRCP staff at various levels of the organization to make decisions. For example, they discussed how Priority Teams provided a venue for them to make decisions about the work and how it should be accomplished. They also suggested that there were opportunities to recommend new ideas and ways to approach the work. According to one person who participates on a Priority Team:

I like to think about the support to see that decisions are made at multiple places in the Program. We all want to say we have some control in our work and I appreciate the fact that we welcome new ideas. I think about the leadership in the team I am working with and figuring out what our work looks like. I like having the opportunity to take the initiative to do something different. This is all part of our culture now and supports our organization as a whole.

Even though staff reported that they had increased opportunities to make decisions relative to the work of the RRCP, some still expressed concern about the Leadership Team and their decision making procedures. One staff member expressed her concern by saying:

We need to continue to engage staff in decision making. Sometimes decisions are made that cannot be applied in the field and once made there is a strong reluctance to change. The Priority Teams gave staff the authority to make decisions about the work. The Leadership Team then made decisions despite what staff thought. The Leadership Team need to honor the input from staff and the decisions we make.

Thus, even though that many RRCP staff agree Priority Teams have provided staff with increased decision-making responsibilities, some expressed concern that such opportunities may erode as the Program continues to evolve in the future.

Professional Development

The final theme that emerged from the interview data focused on professional development activities of the RRCP. Several topics related to professional development were discussed, including the need for new staff orientation, opportunities for cross-cutting professional development, and the establishment of a formal coaching and mentoring Program. Each is discussed below.

A number of staff emphasized the need for a formal process for orientation of new staff. Interviewees indicated there is much to learn about how the RRCP operates, including its policies and procedures, its relationship with OSEP, and its collaboration with other technical assistance partners and other stakeholders. Interviewees also stressed

the importance for new RRCP staff in understanding the roles and responsibilities of the state liaison as a means ensuring consistency in the delivery of technical assistance. Finally, staff reported that it would help to include information in a new staff orientation that focused on the history of how the six RRC have evolved as a national Program. Staff reported many of the materials needed were already available, but needed to be organized into a formal process for orientation. One staff discussed this issue by saying:

There is a lack of a consistent orientation for new staff and this hinders new staff from getting started in their job. We need a consistent orientation to the Program-resources available-who does what, etc.

Another interviewee supported this statement by saying:

I think that with new staff a Program level orientation would go a long way with increasing consistency. We are all at different places when we come in. We do that in our office but need to do it for the Program.”

Staff also emphasized the need for continued coaching and mentoring for new staff once the formal new staff orientation process is completed.

Interview respondents also discussed the importance of having the ability to have access to individuals with various types of expertise from other centers to assist in the provision of technical assistance. In particular, a number of staff reported that their participation in Priority Team work enhanced their understanding of a particular topical area (e.g., fiscal, disproportionality) and they could serve as a resource to other RRCs. A number of RRCP staff indicated that expertise from a Priority Team member would relieve some of the pressure of feeling like they needed to know “everything” about a topic where a SEA may request technical assistance. According to one technical assistance provider, Priority Teams:

Provide a structure for people from different centers to get together to work on a task and this allows people to share their expertise. The scope of work is so large that we can't all be experts in every area and the work demands are such that there is not always time to develop skills in the time that is allotted to complete

the task. It gives us greater credibility on our products and tools and takes stress of staff as they deliver technical assistance.

Another staff member reinforced this observation by stating:

The Program structure has strengthened the ability to provide TA on specific areas-there are a number of colleagues you can bounce ideas off and this helps to create the provision of cross center collaboration which leads to better service to States. I learn so much from my colleagues.

Interview respondents were able to identify a number of activities occurring that enhance professional development across the RRCP. Priority Teams, for example, are one such structure that provides opportunities for professional development. In particular, a number of interviewees discussed the work of the Fiscal Priority Team and how they have engaged in intensive professional development around the fiscal requirements of IDEA. This is a team of six RRCP staff from across all centers that have an in-depth understanding of the fiscal requirements of IDEA. Technical assistance providers from across the RRCP can engage this team in the provision of technical assistance with a State when they need to focus on fiscal requirements. Some staff reported that they would prefer more formalized professional development around the provision of technical assistance, such as training in facilitation skills and meeting planning.

Staff also discussed some of the more informal ways in which professional development is provided to the RRCP. One such strategy used are monthly technical assistance provider calls. These calls are designed to serve as informal discussions about what technical assistance is being provided to SEAs and effective strategies being used in the delivery of technical assistance. In addition, the calls serve as a “brainstorming” session to address issues that may arise in specific SEAs. One interviewee commented on how this call was beneficial to him by saying “The state liaison calls will help to improve each individual’s TA. We are encouraged to talk about our technical assistance activities and learn about new TA strategies. This builds support in individual RRCs. I have learned a number of strategies for effectively working with states.” Staff also commented

that the monthly all-staff calls provide an informal opportunity for professional development since these call usually include a portion of time devoted to new activities occurring within the Priority Teams or across the RRCP.

Finally, respondents reported that the RRCP has done some preliminary work on drafting a professional learning plan that outlines the annual professional development areas. They emphasized the need for a continued learning process and the importance of applying lessons learned to inform the review of the RRCP structure. One staff member stressed the significance of having a professional learning plan by saying “We need to reflect on how we use staff knowledge and experience—we continue to do that—and we learn the most effective ways of enhancing our skill sets. We have done a better job of organizing and supporting staff than in the previous cooperative agreement. The expectations have increased.”

Summary of Findings and Results

In this chapter, findings were presented from three data collection procedures conducted as part of this case study investigation. Through the application of a Force Field Analysis procedure, driving and restraining forces were identified for two groups: RRCP Leadership Team and RRCP staff. Contextual information was discussed for each driving and restraining force identified. In addition, findings from the Organizational Change Recipients’ Belief Scale (OCRBS) were presented. Finally, findings from staff interviews designed to examine perceptions of what strategies and activities contributed to the development of the RRCP as well as those that hindered the development of the RRCP were presented. In Chapter Five, the findings and results of data collection procedures in relationship to research questions presented for this investigation will be reviewed and discussed. In addition, policy and future research implications of this research will be discussed.

Chapter 5: Discussion and Implications

Chapter Five presents a summary and discussion of this study, including a recapitulation of the literature review, research questions, methodology, and findings. Each research question posed in this study is addressed, along with a description of relevant findings and their relationship to what has been discovered in the research literature. The study concludes with a discussion of implications for future policy and research considerations.

Summary of Literature Review

The literature review conducted for this study examined traditional as well as contemporary organizational change theory, Social Identity Theory (SIT), including research on mergers of organizations. Lewin's (1951) organizational change theory which contains three stages within a comprehensive model (i.e. Unfreeze, Transition, and Refreeze) was described as an overarching framework to explain the transformation process involved in organizational change. In order to explore the social behavior of individuals as it relates to Lewin's model of change, literature related to SIT was described. Researchers have embraced SIT as a way to help explain phenomena relating to organizational change particularly in relation to studying the effects on individuals undergoing a merger (Cho, 2007; Ullrich, Wieseke, & Rolf 2005; Van Knippenberg, Van Knippenberg, Monden, & Lima, 2001). Within organizational change literature, SIT offers a way of examining the beliefs and attitudes of those advocating for change as well as those who are expected to participate in it. A basic foundation of SIT is that individuals define their identity in relation to their social categories with which they are affiliated, in this case, the organization. SIT has been used over the decades to explain why so many organizational mergers fail—about 70%. In some cases, mergers fail because of resistance (Cho et al., 2007). Two perspectives on the resistance to change were reviewed. One view suggests that the resistance to change should not necessarily be seen as negative or something to be overcome (Dent & Goldberg, 1999; Ford & Ford, 2010; Piderit, 2000). Historically, however, the more prominent view has been that

resistance to change does represent a barrier to be overcome (Agócs, 1997; Jaffe, Scott, and Tobe, 1994).

Summary of Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this case study, as presented in Chapter One, was to examine the policy, social, and behavioral dynamics of how the Regional Resource Centers have evolved into the national RRC Program. To do so, the investigation incorporated concepts related to Lewin's (1951) traditional perspective of organizational change as contemporary views incorporating Social Identity Theory (SIT). Several types of strategies were implemented to establish the RRCP. These included: (1) the establishment of a Leadership Team to guide policy development, Program implementation and resource allocation, (2) the design and implementation of a five-year strategic plan, (3) the development of a Program-wide evaluation plan, and (4) the creation of a uniform professional development plan for staff. These strategies were designed to reinforce the RRCP outcomes related to establishing streamlined communications, implementing common policies and practices across centers, and developing a standard terminology to be used by all RRCP staff. This dissertation addressed two primary research questions:

1. What are the forces for and against transforming the RRCs into a national Program?
2. How has the RRCP changed with regard to organizational socialization, role conflict and resolution, and intergroup relations?

Summary of Methodology

A case study approach was used for this investigation which involved multiple data collection and analytic methods to address the two research questions. A Force Field Analysis (FFA), was conducted which encompassed principles of traditional change theory while the Organizational Change Recipients' Beliefs Scale (Armenakis et al. 2011) was used to capture the more affective components of change. Also, staff interviews were conducted in order to gather qualitative data to better understand the overall context of the change process.

The use of a Force Field Analysis was designed to identify the driving and restraining forces of change within the organization, as identified by two groups—the RRCP Leadership Team and a group of selected RRCP staff. Driving and restraining forces were identified by each group participating in the FFA. Participants utilized a Likert-type classification scheme to assess the weakness and strength of each identified force. The ratings were summarized and served as the benchmark representing either “change” or “no change.” In addition, RRCP staff were asked to complete a twenty six (26) item survey designed to measure the progress of organizational change from the perspective of the change recipients—that is, the staff themselves. To accomplish this task, RRCP staff were administered an online version of the OCRBS survey. Data were analyzed by calculating aggregated frequencies and percentages for items under five factor areas represented on the scale. Means and standard deviations were also calculated for each item and comparisons were made with regard to leadership vs. nonleadership roles. Data were also collected through individual staff interviews to better understand which strategies and operations hinder and/or support staff’s ability to perform their job during the organizational change. Staff interviews were transcribed and coded using Atlas Ti, a qualitative data analysis program. Themes which contained common elements were identified in relationship to research questions. Multiple methods were used to address the research questions of this study in order to strengthen the validity of results.

Research Question One Findings

Question One: What are the forces for and against transforming the RRCs into a national RRC Program?

This study revealed RRCP Leadership Team and RRCP staff identification of driving and restraining forces that do not fall neatly into Lewin’s (1951) three stages of Unfreeze, Transition, and Refreeze. One might argue, perhaps, that the model might be modified to accommodate a fourth category—“Thaw”—although this proposed “stage” is probably subsumed within the Transition stage. The reasoning for this modified category will be explained later in this section. Clearly, we know that within the last five years the

six centers of the Regional Resource Center Program have gone under significant organizational change. The impetus for this change did not emerge within the centers, but as directive of the U. S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), which has funded the RRCs since the late 1960s and has the authority to make decisions about the Technical Assistance and Dissemination (TA & D) programs under Part D of the IDEA. The message was simple, “You *will* change from six autonomous centers into one national Program.” This was the force that caused the organization to unfreeze. Because the RRCs had virtually no other choice, the period of “unfreezing” was relatively short—about six months. That is, it took about six months before all of the RRC Directors recognized that OSEP was “serious” and expected measurable outcomes from this effort. Since that time, it’s probably fair to say the emergence of a national Program effort—the Regional Resource Center Program (RRCP)—more simply referred to as, “the Program,” has largely found itself in a state of Transition. As described in Chapter 1, Transition represents the stage where “old” behaviors are replaced with the “new,” where people within the organization take on new roles and obligations.

The results of this study support the notion that the RRCP remains in Transition. This is particularly evident in the results obtained through the Force Field Analysis (FFA) activity conducted with members of the RRCP Leadership Team and the RRCP staff. The Leadership Team, for example identified more restraining forces with higher “strength” levels which impeded organizational Refreezing, the third stage, where change is institutionalized. In contrast, RRCP staff tended to identify driving forces, also with greater levels of strength that are moving the organization toward full implementation. Differences between the Leadership Team and RRCP staff were thematic throughout, showing clearly the perceptions of each group vary, sometimes intensely. Even in cases where similarities were found among the two groups, the context varied widely. For example, the one driving force similarly identified by both groups was the RRCP organizational structure. Both groups agreed that the organizational structure served as a driving force in moving the six centers towards one national Program. However, the context differed considerably. On one hand, the Leadership Team reported that the most

important aspect of the RRCP structure included having a common Project Officer, having one strategic plan and having one common evaluation plan that assessed the impact of the RRCP strategic plan. While they also recognized Priority Teams as an important part of the organizational structure, they were not like the RRCP staff, who reported that the most important aspect of the RRCP structure was the establishment of the Priority Teams. In staff interviews, it was found that RRCP staff considered Priority Teams as a Community of Practice (CoP), indicating that Priority Teams used cross-regional group expertise to work on a specialized topic which resulted in the development of useful strategies and tools for the delivery technical assistance to SEAs. RRCP staff also indicated that the role of the RRCP Coordinator(s) in the day-to-day management and other aspects of the Program was important. This sentiment was also reinforced by the results of RRCP staff interviews. However, this role of the RRCP Coordinator(s) was not mentioned by members of the Leadership Team in the FFA as a key aspect of the organizational structure.

Both groups also commonly identified a number restraining forces, including Trust, Evaluation, and Leadership Team Governance. Once again, it was found the context varied for each group. Leadership Team members discussed challenges of trust with regard to having to know what is occurring in other centers to ensure that members of the team are all “playing by the same rules.” In addition, the Leadership Team indicated that maintaining trust in such a team is challenging, meeting only quarterly and often asynchronously (e.g., teleconferences, online communication platforms such BaseCamp, GoogleGroups). Similarly RRCP staff identified trust as a restraining force, and while they too recognized a lack of trust among the Leadership Team itself, they also asserted the Leadership Team did not always trust staff to make even simple decisions about their work. RRCP staff suggested that this lack of trust can, and often does, slow down work processes.

It was of interest to find that both the Leadership Team and RRCP staff FFA identified the Leadership Team as a restraining force. In their discussions about this

issue, the Leadership Team expressed uncertainty about how well, and even whether, they truly function as a group. Specifically, they discussed the extent to which all had a common commitment to shared values, goals, and norms. The Leadership Team also reflected on the degree to which some members were representing their own individual needs rather than that of the RRCP. RRCP staff also spoke forthrightly about the challenge of governing a national Program with a Leadership Team comprised of nine separate individuals. Staff reported being challenged with whom to talk to within the Leadership Team and that the team has made the RRCP system more bureaucratic. Interviews conducted with RRCP staff confirm these perceptions. For example, some staff suggested that the creation of the RRCP resulted in additional workload for both staff as well as the Leadership Team. One interviewee remarked that “it [the RRCP] has resulted in an increase in workload and put more strain on all, even the leadership... the Program has created a double layer of work and responsibility.” Recently, one of the issues that the Leadership Team has been focused on is improving the communication flow between the team and the RRCP staff. For example, in the interest of demonstrating greater transparency, RRCP staff are allowed to “fishbowl” monthly Leadership Team calls. Also, the Priority Team leads have been invited to participate in quarterly meetings held by the Leadership Team.

It was generally found that driving forces identified by the Leadership Team tended to focus on groups who were considered to be “change drivers” to the national Program, including OSEP, RRCP staff, and the Leadership Team itself. As such, they tended to highlight the importance of the organizational structure of the Program and use of technology as key driving forces in helping to institutionalize or Refreeze the Program. On the other hand, RRCP staff were more likely to report driving forces as those things which enhance their ability to deliver quality services to SEAs. They also saw the role of OSEP Project Officer as key, one which demonstrated leadership and vision when the Unfreezing occurred. They also seemed more likely to embrace the concept of cross-center collaboration and focus on the importance of consistency in delivery of technical assistance services.

While a number of differences were observed among the Leadership Group and RRCP staff on the FFA activity, the results of the Organizational Change Recipients' Belief Scale (OCRBS) revealed little in the way of helping to explain these differences. In general, the results of the OCRBS showed that change recipients—those who must implement the change—are overwhelming supportive of the change from individual RRCs to a national Program. Summary statistics showed for example, that most selected the categories of “Strongly Agree” and “Agree” on a 7-point Likert-type scale as reflected by an overall mean rating of 2.42 with a standard deviation of 0.73. This means that, with little observed variation, survey respondents mostly indicated their agreement with 26 statements distributed among five factor areas, Valence, Discrepancy, Appropriateness, Efficacy, and Principal Support. When survey data were collapsed into dichotomized categories labeled “Agree” and “Disagree” and “Leadership” and “Staff,” it was found that respondents demonstrated 100% agreement on 19 of 26 OCRBS items, with a Pearson correlation of .92. Thus, unlike the results of the FFA, the results of the OCRBS show that RRCP personnel, whether they serve in a “leadership” or “staff” role are very likely to support the transformation of the RRCs into a national Program. It might be speculated perhaps, that while some individuals may have differences in the way the RRCP is being implemented, most are generally supportive of “change,” particularly if completed by one who is convinced they will “look” good or visionary. While it is difficult to ascertain the extent to which one might engage in the response set of “faking good” on the OCRBS, it is nevertheless something to consider.

The results from the FFA data and staff interviews indicate that equilibrium has not yet been achieved to a point where one could assert that Refreezing has occurred. Much of the disequilibrium seems to be due to varying degrees of perceptions among members of the Leadership Team and the RRCP staff. While it is only reasonable to expect that different groups with different roles and responsibilities would identify different priorities, the seemingly marked contrast in the perceptions of these two groups deserves greater attention. Specifically, it will be helpful to examine elements of Social Identity Theory (SIT) to perhaps elaborate on what has been observed in the Force Field Analysis

and staff interviews. In particular, the research around “resistance” is relevant here, particularly with regard to the Leadership Team.

While many believe that resistance to change is often found at the grassroots, “worker” level, the work of Kotter (1996) clearly shows that more often than not, this is not the case. Rather, he asserts after having observed over 100 companies, little evidence is seen of employee resistance. Rather, he posits that change is a difficult process because organizations fail to establish an effective leadership coalition, communicate a vision, and act upon that vision. The work of Schliemann (1996) appears to support Kotter’s (1996) research, and indicate that while acknowledging “resistance to doing things in new ways” was a barrier to change, he also observed that inappropriate or ineffective culture, poor communication of purpose, incomplete follow-through, lack of management agreement on strategy, and insufficient skills to support change were also found to be factors. The results of this study show little evidence of RRCP staff resistance. With a few exceptions, the results suggest RRCP staff almost universally embrace the Program. But with the advent of the RRCP there have been, and still remain, multiple issues concerning communication, decision-making, and timeliness of action among members of the Leadership Team. In fact, in interviews with RRCP staff, it was found that some staff believed that members of the Leadership Team needed to acquire a “new skill set” in order to move the Program from Transition to Refreeze.

It is important to stress that the term “resistance” used here and elsewhere in this discussion is not used in a pejorative sense, but rather as a term which has utility in understanding human behavior through the lens of Social Identity Theory. What is important to understand here is what drives individuals and groups to think and behave as they do, often fully unaware that they may merely be exhibiting patterns of behavior that have already been well-established in the SIT literature. For example, as described in Chapter 1, one of the most well-known models of resistance has been put forth by Jaffe, Scott, and Tobe (1994) who have observed that change is often first marked by denial (e.g., “this too shall pass”), followed by efforts to delay, and once these fail, lead

exploration and commitment, where new behaviors are learned, practiced, and eventually, embraced. For those who have observed the implementation of the RRCP over the last five years, this model seems to describe the path of the Leadership Team, a group that has overcome much, but still faces challenges with regard to commitment and demonstration of behaviors that would lead one to conclude that the RRCP has reached the Refreeze stage.

Earlier in this section it was mentioned, somewhat glibly, that Lewin's (1951) model include a "Thaw" stage. What was meant by this is a proposed period between the Transition and Refreeze stages in which regression may occur. Organizations are not static, and after five years of implementing the RRCP, changes occur in both staff and leadership which can eventually change the course of direction for the Program. While both leadership and RRCP staff widely acknowledge the continuing development of the Program, there is also opportunity for slippage, particularly among new RRC Directors and RRCP staff not familiar with the genesis of the Program or the many challenges that arose in the course of its development. As a result, every so often one hears of a "new" idea that amounts to little more than "old wine in a new bottle," and represents a step back from the organizational structure of the Program. However, sometimes these ideas quickly gain currency, especially among those who were most resistant to the Program. As personnel changes will no doubt continue to occur, one might posit that the collective "institutional memory," as it were, will eventually erode to a point where the RRCP might find itself in a "thaw" for a long period of time. In summary, the results of this investigation clearly show a number of factors which serve as driving forces and as barriers with regard to transforming the RRCs into a national Program.

Research Question Two Findings

Question Two: How has the RRC Program changed with regard to organizational socialization, role conflict and resolution, and intergroup relations?

Generally, findings from this investigation reveal that the RRC Program has undergone a number of changes with regard to organizational socialization, role conflict

and resolution, and intergroup relations as centers move to a national Program. Evidence shows that the RRCP has worked to establish organizational socialization. However, the organization has not addressed the issue of role conflict and resolution in a uniform manner. Current findings suggest a somewhat higher rate of intergroup relation issues with Leadership Team members than was identified across other groups within the RRCP.

Organizational Socialization

The term “organizational socialization” is often to describe the process of socialization used for new staff (Jones 1986; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979), but the concept is also useful in describing the learning processes under which staff must go to adapt to organizational change. For example, Wanous, Reichers, & Malik (1984), suggest that organizational socialization may occur when new groups are established but consist of current employees of the organization. As a result of establishing the national Program, both leadership and RRCP staff alike have undergone various levels of organizational socialization. In the case of RRCP staff, members may not be “new” to their particular center, but may be new to others in other centers as a result of cross-cutting work activities such as the Priority Teams. As such, staff may need to experience some level of organizational socialization to adapt to the makeup and responsibilities of the newly established groups. In the case of the RRCP, these new group were created to address certain aspects of the redesign work of the Program. In addition to the Priority Teams, these groups also include the Information Research Cadre (IRC) and Technology Cadre (TC), all newly configured to accommodate the needs of the RRCP. Since the inception of the RRCP, individuals from across all six centers have come together to contribute to these groups. Prior to this time, RRCP staff worked in relative isolation in their respective centers with their fellow colleagues. Along with the formation of new groups, however, has been the need to establish new organizational norms with regard to work responsibilities, communication protocols, and coordination activities.

Organizational socialization process also applies equally to the Leadership Team. Under what has been termed the “new archetype,” RRC Directors have also needed to “learn the ropes” of collaborating with other Directors and engaging in new decision-making practices for the benefit of the Program. The Leadership Team itself was established under the auspices of implementing the national Program, calling for people to learn new behaviors, sometime quite different than how they have acted in the past. Clearly, for the RRC Directors, the perceived loss of autonomy has been a source of tension, manifested as a lack of trust, not only with other Leadership Team members, but with RRCP staff as well. This was evident in both the FFA and staff interviews. For example, Leadership Team members were clear they needed to work on issues of trust with their fellow team members and RRCP staff indicated that a lack of trust results in the inability among staff to make even simple decisions. A number of SIT researchers have emphasized the critical need to establish organizational trust. Golembiewski and McConkie (1975), for example, have stated “perhaps there is no single variable which so thoroughly influences interpersonal and group behavior as does trust.” While some might take the view that establishing trust will “come with time” as a result of interpersonal interactions, Limerick and Cunningham (1993) assert that “trust does not come naturally and it has to be carefully structured and managed.”

Among the organizational socialization actions that both the Leadership Team and RRC staff need to acquire as “new behaviors” is establishing effective decision-making and communication protocols. In their FFA activity, the Leadership Team identified decision-making authority as the most influential restraining force that would keep the RRCP from reaching full organizational capacity. In their discussions about decision making within the context of the RRCP, there yet remains to be clarified about “whom”—among the Leadership Team—gets to make “what types” of decisions. As such, there was a team consensus that there is not a clear policy and process for how decisions are to be made and at what level such decisions should be made. As a result, some decisions are not made in a timely manner. Leadership Team members also identified “communication” as a restraining force, recognizing the need to develop a

communication structure that would provide up-to-date information about state technical assistance activities and how they are being implemented across the RRCP. They also discussed the challenge of establishing effective communication across various groups within the RRCP, such as Priority Teams, Cadres, etc.

The results of RRCP staff interviews reflected challenges related to decision-making and communication. For example, several staff expressed concerns about the decision making ability of the Leadership Team, particularly with regard to their ability to be transparent both with each other and with RRCP staff. Others indicated that technical assistance initiatives which needed to go through the approval process established by the Leadership Team do not often occur in a timely manner. Also, there remains confusion among RRCP staff about “who to go to” in the event a decision needs to be made. Staff also emphasized the importance and need for more regular and uniform communication not only with the Leadership Team, but with OSEP, the Project Officer and OSEP State Contacts. In their interviews, RRCP staff also focused on the challenge of communicating a consistent message about the RRCP and what the organization represents for SEAs and other stakeholders. Finally, staff reported the importance of establishing communication and building relationships with colleagues across the country to developing effective technical assistance solutions.

The challenges of achieving an effective level of organizational socialization within the RRCP are many and varied. However, there are initiatives currently underway to address some of the most intense challenges. For example, to improve communication, the Leadership Team has allowed RRCP staff to “fishbowl,” or listen in on team calls. Also, Priority Teams leads are invited to join the Leadership Team in their quarterly meetings. In addition, the Leadership Team has worked with a professional organizational consultant to address issues related to both communication and decision-making. In addition, consideration is being given to efforts that will help “newcomers” as they enter the RRCP. Specifically, RRCP staff identified strategies that could help new team members to build relationships and establish cohesion with peers and obtain a clear

understanding of roles and protocols within the RRCP. Staff emphasized that strategies to support new staff should include a comprehensive orientation, along with coaching and mentoring opportunities, and continuous professional development activities.

Role Conflict and Resolution

Over the past five decades, much has been written examining role conflict in the area of leadership, covering issues that range from “leader versus manager,” (Stanley, 2006) to problems of ambiguity in leadership roles (House, 1972). Long ago, in his study of role conflict and ambiguity of leaders, Seeman (1953) indicated that role conflict was:

The exposure of the individual in a given position is incompatible to behavioral expectations. Though an apparent incompatibility may be resolved, avoided, or minimized in various ways, the conflicting demands cannot be completely and realistically fulfilled. (p. 373)

Since that time, SIT researchers have confirmed the importance of recognizing issues associated with incompatible behavioral expectations, suggesting that “social identity” represents an amalgamation of identities which can impose inconsistent demands within an individual and thus conflict with those of one’s personal identity (Cheek & Briggs, 1982; Leary, Wheeler, & Jenkins, 1986). One of the identities adopted by individuals is their job role and given the range of demands and expectations under which one must function, role conflict may occur. With regard to the RRCP, it appears that role conflict is very much related to organizational socialization discussed earlier in this chapter. That is, both the Leadership Team and RRCP staff have found themselves having to learn new behaviors to accommodate the demands of the redesigned Program. In the case of the Leadership Team, they have had to engage in collaborative efforts with other center Directors to oversee a national Program. Likewise, RRCP staff recognize that their job roles have changed quite dramatically through operating in an organizational structure which is based on cross-regional collaboration activities (e.g., Priority Teams). Thus, in both cases, role conflicts are apparent.

Previously, restraining forces related to the Leadership Team were reported where conflicts associated with decision making authority and trust in team members were described. Such tension may be symptomatic of self-identity and the particular job classifications in which each Leadership Team member must function. For example, each RRC Director has a specific type of role within their center. That is, the Director is the final line of authority, manages and directs, and makes all critical decisions relative to their center. As they step into the role of Leadership Team member, however, they must share this responsibility with five other Directors, the RRCP Coordinator(s), and the OSEP Project Officer. In doing so, the “new” set of expectations is that they set aside the individual interests of their center to make decisions for the advancement of the RRCP. It is worthwhile to note, however, that the “new” set of expectations are now five years’ old. House & Rizzo (1972) would assess that what is being experienced by the Leadership Team is reflective of a “degree of incongruity or incompatibility of expectations associated with the role.” They would further suggest that such ambiguity eventually lead to a lack of clarity and predictability of members of the Leadership Team. The results of RRCP staff interviews would certainly seem to corroborate this proposition. As the role conflict among Leadership Team members continues, it seems to be increasingly interpreted among RRCP staff that members of the Leadership Team do not support the Program. One RRCP staff member stated: They [Leadership Team] didn’t respect structures set up by Program. Many of the leadership don’t believe in the Program and continually promote their own centers.” This was not an isolated statement—several other staff clearly agreed with this assessment. However, it might be worthwhile to consider that the perception of a lack of support may simply be a consequence of the role conflict continuously experienced by members of the Leadership Team.

While the issue of “leader versus manager” did not emerge in any of their discussions, it is a topic that nevertheless, should be addressed as a key factor in the RRCP’s organizational change experience. In his book, *A Force for Change: How Leadership Differs from Management*, Kotter (1990) contends that a clear distinction should be made between the two terms. He suggests that management is largely focused

on such tasks as “planning, budgeting, structuring jobs, staffing jobs, measuring performance and problem-solving, which help an organization to predictably do what it knows how to do well.” Leadership, on the other hand, is concerned with “taking an organization into the future.” Kotter (1990) suggest that leadership involves setting a vision, establishing buy-in, stimulating empowerment and, “most of all, involves producing useful change.” Kotter (1990) insists that leadership has nothing to do with “charisma” or any other type of personal attributes, irrespective of where an individual may be in the organizational hierarchy. Rather, he suggested that leadership is about behaviors that lead to innovative and constructive change. However, the results of this study indicate that the behaviors of the Leadership Team often do not exhibit the type of leadership that Kotter (1990) refers to, often stuck in the mire of even trying to manage the national Program. For the past four years, the Leadership Team has been working with an organizational consult to overcome some of these issues, but it is clear that much work remains with regard to building both the leadership and management skills of the team.

RRCP staff also identified a number of areas in which role conflict occurs. Staff expressed a concern that time spent working on Program initiatives detracted from their technical assistance delivery within SEAs. Clearly, the “Program vs. center” quandary discussed by RRCP staff in Chapter 4 continues to be a source of tension. In addition, role conflict is seen when staff working in Priority Team are unable to make “just in time” or simple decisions about their work, because all decisions need to be approved by the Leadership Team. Although Priority Team members are told they have a leadership position, a number do not believe they are getting an opportunity to exercise their leadership skills.

Intergroup Relations

Data from this study suggest there remain challenges, but also opportunities for progress with regard to improving intergroup relations within the RRCP. Hogg and Terry (2000) state that within organizations, there are “internally structured groups that are

located in complex networks of intergroup relations characterized by power, status, and prestige differentials.” The RRCP is no different. Within the Program, RRCP staff and leadership are differentiated from each other through membership in varying workgroups, levels of authority, and unique or specialized skills. As with any organization, the nature and range of associations differ and sometimes may involve competing interests and conflict, resulting in issues of control, power, and authority. While an organization may be composed of any number of groups (Aldeerfer & Smith, 1982), the two main groups of interest within the Program are the Leadership Team and RRCP staff. Results from the FFA activity conducted with both the Leadership Team and RRCP staff revealed that one restraining force between the two groups was that of decision making authority and level of decision making. The issue of trust between the two groups was also identified as a restraining force to organizational change. However, as indicated earlier in this chapter, Leadership Team members are taking proactive steps to involve staff in their monthly teleconferences as well as inviting Priority Teams leads to attend their quarterly face-to-face meetings.

While challenges of intergroup relations were noted between the Leadership Team and RRCP staff, a number of quality aspects of intergroup relations, particularly with the RRCP Priority Teams, were identified as well. In particular, RRCP staff indicated Priority Teams as mechanisms for providing high quality technical assistance as well as efforts to provide professional development to RRCP staff on specialized topics, such as fiscal issues. In order to enhance further opportunities for improving intergroup relations among RRCP staff, it was suggested that efforts focused on relationship building across centers continue to expand in the future.

Implications for Policy and Practice

Implications for Leadership and Decision-Making. Based on the finding of this study, one of the most troublesome challenges faced by the RRCP is continuing a practice of equal decision-making powers among members of the Leadership Team. Both Leadership Team members and RRCP staff alike recognized lag time for decisions to be

made on critical aspects of Program work. Even after five years after Program implementation, it often remains unclear as to “who” and “where” the final accountability rests. Thus one implication for practice is to establish policies that designate *one* individual as the final decision-making authority, serving in a role similar to that of a Chief Executive Officer (CEO). The Leadership Team, as currently constructed, could serve as an advisory board to the CEO. As such, each Director would serve as a “regional manager.” This model would provide more clarity to staff and ensure uniform decision-making and implementation. The CEO model could also alleviate some of the feelings of competition and lack of trust that were reported by a number of respondents by ensuring that one person—not tied to any one center—had final decision-making authority. Recall the old bromide “too many cooks spoil the broth.” The wisdom of that adage can be seen in the RRCP leadership structure and has been repeatedly reinforced in research about effective organizations. In an extensive review of the literature, it was very difficult to find an effective organizational “model” that resembled the current RRCP leadership structure. Certainly, no for-profit business would be able to function effectively under this type of structure and it appears that the same is the case for federally funded initiatives. While things can and do “work,” it is not without expended effort and causes one to wonder about the overall costs and benefits.

Need for Appropriate Funding Model for RRCP. In addition to the challenge of shared leadership at the top levels of the Program, the current mode of funding of the RRCP appears to compound the restraining forces found in this study. As reported earlier, each Regional Resource Center secures its own funding through a competitive grant submission process. As such, there is not a single funding stream for the RRCP. Rather, each center contributes resources (e.g., personnel, hosting contracts, etc.) from its award to support the work of the Program as a whole. This inadvertently results in a number of challenges. First, each center is housed within its own host agency with its own rules governing grants management and budgetary systems. In addition, because each center of the RRCP is funded individually, the natural tendency for competition is established, as each host agency wants to ensure continued funding by showcasing their

center as the “best.” Finally, the current funding structure is dated, placing focus on regional concerns rather than national priorities. In order to address these challenges, OSEP could consider funding one national center rather than six regional centers with a CEO type of governance model.

Clear Policies and Procedures. To support more consistent and uniform delivery of technical assistance, clear policies and procedures need to be established and implemented. Policies need to clearly outline decision making authority, leadership roles within the Program, consistent use of resource sharing to support work nationally, and clearly define the roles and responsibilities of Priority Teams and other groups within the Program. Simply put, the RRCP needs to create a structure in which it cultivates a culture of healthy organizational socialization to ensure that all Leadership Team members and RRCP staff alike, acquire the skills sets necessary to institutionalize and sustain the new archetype. A good start would be to for the Program to adopt uniform practices for orienting new staff. Although just a start, even this would help to facilitate a better understanding of the Program structure and clear expectations for all staff. It’s also something that all could learn from, irrespective of their position or how long they have been associated with an RRC. Such an initiative could help to clarify the organizational vision and alleviate individual feelings of uncertainty with “who,” “how,” and “where” to address challenging situations and issues.

Future Research Implications

The results of this study offer several suggestions for future research in the area of organizational change, particularly with regard to federally funded programs. In terms of policy research, this study has presented a wide range and variation in the implementation of policies, practices, and procedures to establish a national program. As such, it provides researchers and policymakers with an analysis of the array of the many challenges, driving, and restraining forces in retrofitting formerly autonomous regional programs under a new, overarching framework. What is needed in future research is an analysis of effective policies and practices that significantly contribute to the organizational

transformation from Transition to Refreeze. This is particularly important when relics of the past, such as decades-old funding practices and regional-centric cultures continue to endure, yet the demands for people to adopt to new behaviors within a new organizational structure occur. Why this issue is important for researchers to consider is that the RRCP is not likely to be the only federally funded program within OSEP that will be expected to undergo some type of consolidation with other centers within the TA & D Network. At last count, there are over 50 TA & D centers funded by OSEP. With rising concerns about the federal budget, one could speculate that efforts similar to that of the RRCP might be initiated over the next several years, thus conducting additional research in this area would seem to be a worthwhile endeavor.

An additional area where research efforts are needed is to examine how the organizational change of the RRCP has impacted the delivery of quality and useful technical assistance to states. For example, interesting research questions would be “Have state systems of general supervision improved?” Also, “Are states better able to implement the accountability requirements of IDEA 2004?” In particular, future research could focus on identifying aspect of the Program components that may have helped or hindered a state’s ability to improve. Likewise, such an effort would also be helpful to identify components of technical assistance which have emerged as a result of the RRCP that are considered to be of high quality. Finally, future research could focus on determining the degree to which the RRCP contributed to OSEP’s ability to provide technical assistance to states and whether the RRCP was able to reduce the burden on OSEP to provide technical assistance.

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Appendix A

RRCP Staff Force Field Analysis Invitation

Dear Colleague,

As you may know, I am working on my dissertation. I am working on a critical instance case study in which I am examining the dynamics of how the RRCs have evolved into the RRC Program, reflecting on the policy context which led to the formation of the national program, the challenges encountered, those that remain and the prospects of institutionalizing organizational change for the future. As part of my data collection activities, I would like to get input from you as part of a group of RRCP staff participating in a Force Field Analysis (FFA) procedure. The purpose of the FFA is to identify driving forces that are “helpful” factors which support the growth and development of the Program and restraining forces that are factors which hold back the growth and development of the Program.

The FFA will take about two hours of your time for the group activity part of the analysis. I will summarize the driving and restraining forces and ask that you then score the strength of each force that is identifies. This second part of the process should take approximately 30 minutes of your time and will be conducted individually. Please know that participation is voluntary. If you are willing to assist me in the collection of data, please know that the information collected will not be shared with anyone in the RRC Program, individual centers or with OSEP. I will aggregate all responses and ensure that no personally identifiable information is available. Responses will be anonymous to the extent that your comments do not provide identifiable information. There are no potential risks for participating in this survey. Please note that by completing the FFA you are implying your consent. If you have questions or need clarification please feel free to contact me. I appreciate your time and sincere feedback.

Sincerely,

Maureen Hawes

Appendix A

Survey Invitation

Dear Colleague,

As you may know, I am working on my dissertation. I am working on a critical instance case study in which I am examining the dynamics of how the RRCs have evolved into the RRC Program, reflecting on the policy context which led to the formation of the national program, the challenges encountered, those that remain and the prospects of institutionalizing organizational change for the future. As part of my data collection activities, I would like to get input from you using the Organizational Change Recipients' Belief Scale (OCRBS). Please know that participation is voluntary. This scale, developed by Armenakis et al. (2007) is a tool designed to measure the progress of organizational change from the perspective of the recipients of change; that is, those who are expected to participate and implement the change. According to Armenakis et al. (2007), the OCRBS can be used as a barometer of change, an assessment of beliefs that influence change, and a basis for developing an action plan to improve buy-in on behalf of the change recipients. Consisting four (4) demographic items and twenty four (24) belief items, the OCRBS is grounded in assessing the beliefs of individuals. The survey will take about 10 minutes of your time. If you are willing to assist me in the collection of data, please know that the information collected will not be shared with anyone in the RRC Program, individual centers or with OSEP. I will aggregate all responses and will assign random numbers to each survey so that no personally identifiable information is available. Responses will be anonymous to the extent that your comments do not provide identifiable information. There are no potential risks for participating in this survey. Please note that by completing the survey you are implying your consent. If you have questions or need clarification please feel free to contact me. I appreciate your time and sincere feedback.

Appendix A

RRCP Staff Interview Invitation

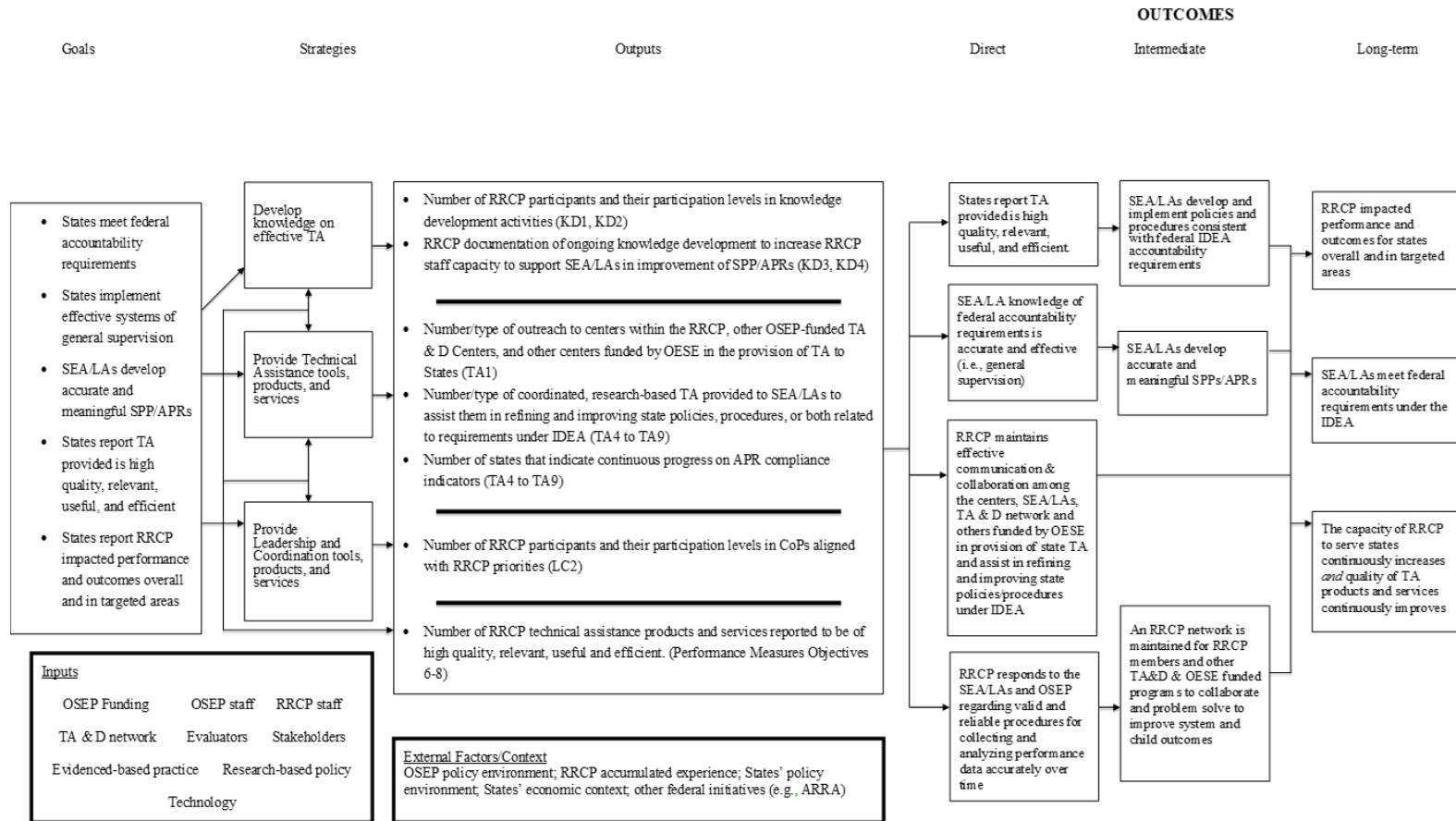
Dear Colleague,

As you may know, I am working on my dissertation. I am working on a critical instance case study in which I am examining the dynamics of how the RRCs have evolved into the RRC Program, reflecting on the policy context which led to the formation of the national program, the challenges encountered, those that remain and the prospects of institutionalizing organizational change for the future. As part of my data collection activities, I would like to get input from you by interviewing you. The interview will take approximately 60 minutes of your time. Please know that participation is voluntary. If you are willing to assist me in the collection of data, please know that the information collected will not be shared with anyone in the RRC Program, individual centers or with OSEP. I will aggregate all responses and ensure that no personally identifiable information is available. Responses will be anonymous to the extent that your comments do not provide identifiable information. There are no potential risks for participating in this interview. Please note that by completing the interview you are implying your consent. If you have questions or need clarification please feel free to contact me. I appreciate your time and sincere feedback.

Sincerely,

Maureen Hawes

Appendix B RRCP Logic Model



Appendix C

Organizational Change Recipients' Belief Scale (OCRBS)

Directions: Please provide your ratings on the following aspects of the Organizational Change Recipient Belief Scale using the 7-point scale below. The range of options extends from “7” which indicates “Strongly Agree” to a “1” which indicates “Strongly Disagree.” Please do not skip any items.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Undecided	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. This change will benefit me (V)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Most of my respected peers embrace the proposed organizational change (PS)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I believe the proposed organizational change will have a favorable effect on our operations (A)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I have the capability to implement the change that is initiated (E)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. We need to change the way we do some things in this organization (D)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. With this change in my job, I will experience more self-fulfillment (V)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. The top leaders in this organization are “walking the talk” (PS)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. The change in our operations will improve the performance of our organization (A)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. I can implement this change in my job (E)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. We need to improve the way we operate in this organization (D)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. I will earn higher pay from my job after this change (V)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. The top leaders support this change (PS)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. The change that we are implementing is correct for our situation (A)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. I am capable of successfully performing my job duties with the proposed organizational change (E)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. We need to improve our effectiveness by changing our operations (D)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. The change in my job assignments will increase my feelings of accomplishment (V)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Undecided	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
17. The majority of my respected peers are dedicated to making this change work (PS)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. When I think about this change, I realize it is appropriate for our organization (A)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. I believe we can successfully implement this change (E)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. A change is needed to improve our operations (D)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21. My fringe benefits will remain the same after this change (V)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22. My immediate manager is in favor of this change (PS)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23. This organizational change will prove to be best for our situation (A)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24. We have the capability to successfully implement this change (E)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
25. We need to improve our performance by implementing organizational change (D)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
26. My immediate manager encourages me to support the change (PS)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Demographic Survey Items

1. Please select the category that best describes your job role:
 - Center Support Staff (e.g., accountant, travel coordinator, secretary)
 - Technology/Information Research Staff
 - Technical Assistance Provider
 - Administrative (e.g., Associate Director, Coordinator, Evaluation)
 - Other, please describe:

2. Please indicate the number of years you have worked for an RRC:
 - Less than 1 year
 - 1-3
 - 3-5
 - 5-8
 - 8-10
 - More than 10 years

Appendix D
Staff Interview Protocol

Staff Interview Protocol

Case Study of the Regional Resource Center Program: A Study of Organizational Change

1. What RRCP activities or strategies support or hinder your ability to successfully perform your job during this organizational change?

2. How are the changes in operations improving or hindering the performance of the RRCs?

3. What strategies do Leadership utilize to implement the organizational change in a consistent manner?

4. What changes in policy, practices, operations or training do you feel would have the most impact on bringing the six RRCs together to increase consistency of TA practice?

5. What are the intended and unintended consequences of undergoing this organizational change initiative?

Appendix E

Codes Used for Atlas TI

No.	Code	Description/Criteria for Inclusion
1	Relationship Building	To what extent does relationship building contribute to the success of the RRCP?
(1.1)	Strategies for	Evidence and discussion of successful strategies implemented by the RRCP that support relationship building
(1.2)	At Various Levels within and outside the Organization	Discussion of how relationship building occurs at various levels within and outside the organization
(1.3)	Trust	Discussion of critical elements of relationship building
2	Communication	To what extent does communication occur across the organization?
(2.1)	Levels of	Evidence and discussion of communication across various levels of the organization
(2.2)	Uniformity of	Discussion of how communication occurs within the RRCP
(2.3)	With Various Groups	Discussion of how communication occurs with various groups including OSEP, Leadership Team, Staff, States
3	Alignment of Program and State Work	How do staff align Program and State work?
(3.1)	Manage and Prioritize	Evidence and discussion of how staff manage and prioritize their work
(3.2)	Impact on TA Delivery	Evidence and discussion of how Program and State work impact technical assistance delivery
4	RRCP Structure and It's Impact on Organizational Growth	To what extent does the RRCP structure impact organizational growth?
(4.1)	Refinement of Structure	Discussion of how the RRCP structure is refined to impact organizational growth
(4.2)	Leadership Team	Discussion of how Leadership Team structure impacts organizational growth
(4.3)	Decision Making Processes	Discussion of how decisions are made across the organization and by whom
(4.4)	Priority Teams	Discussion of the role of the Priority Teams and their impact on the organization to deliver technical assistance
5	Professional Development	What are the types of professional development teachers and administrators have received?
(5.1)	Staff Orientation	Discussion on how staff orientation is offered to new staff
(5.2)	Mechanisms for	Discussion of mechanisms for receiving professional development within the organization

Appendix F
Summary Statistics for Chronbach's Alpha

OCRBS Summary Item Statistics for Chronbach's Alpha

	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Maximum /Minimum	Variance	N of Items
Item Means	2.393	1.909	5.818	3.909	3.048	.603	26
Inter-Item Covariances	.198	-.818	1.959	2.777	-2.394	.083	26
Inter-Item Correlations	.248	-.475	.899	1.374	-1.891	.083	26

OCRBS Scale Statistics

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
62.227	153.994	12.4094	26

OCRBS Reliability Statistics

Chronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.871	.896	26

Appendix G

Summary Statistics for Analysis of Variance

ANOVA Summary Statistics

Mean	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	3.524	4	.881	1.883	.151
Within Groups	9.828	21	.468		
Total	13.352	25			

Post Hoc Scheffe Summary Statistics

Subscale*	Mean Difference	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval		
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound	
Valence (1)	2.00	1.04600	.43266	.249	-4.123	2.5043
	3.00	.85600	.43266	.440	-.6023	2.3143
	4.00	.89800	.43266	.393	-.5603	2.3563
	5.00	.51500	.41424	.816	-.8812	1.9112
Discrepancy (2)	1.00	-1.04600	.43266	.249	-2.5043	.4123
	3.00	-.19000	.43266	.995	-1.6483	1.2683
	4.00	-.14800	.43266	.998	-1.6063	1.3103
	5.00	-.53100	.41424	.799	-1.9272	.8652
Appropriateness (3)	1.00	-.85600	.43266	.440	-2.3143	.6023
	2.00	.19000	.43266	.995	-1.2683	1.6483
	4.00	.04200	.43266	1.000	-1.4163	1.5003
	5.00	-.34100	.41424	.952	-1.7372	1.0552
Efficacy (4)	1.00	-.89800	.43266	.393	-2.3563	.5603
	2.00	.14800	.43266	.998	-1.3103	1.6063
	3.00	-.04200	.43266	1.000	-1.5003	1.4163
	5.00	-.38300	.41424	.928	-1.7792	1.0132
Principal Support (5)	1.00	-.51500	.41424	.816	-1.9112	.8812
	2.00	.53100	.41424	.799	-.8652	1.9272
	3.00	.34100	.41424	.952	-1.0552	1.7372
	4.00	.38300	.41424	.928	-1.0132	1.7792

Subscale Codes: 1 = Valence, 2 = Discrepancy, 3= Appropriateness, 4 = Efficacy, 5 = Principal Support

Appendix H

OCRBS Means, Standard and Deviations for RRCP Staff and Leadership Groups

OCRBS Means and Standard Deviations for RRCP Staff and Leadership Groups

Subscale	Item Number and Description	RRCP Staff		Leadership	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Valence	1. Change will benefit me.	2.20	1.08	1.71	0.76
	6. Fulfillment for me.	2.60	0.63	2.00	0.58
	11. Will earn higher pay.	2.00	0.53	2.00	1.41
	16. Increase self-accomplishment.	2.20	1.21	1.71	0.76
	21. Same fringe benefits.	2.00	0.93	1.86	0.38
Discrepancy	5. Need the change.	2.67	1.45	2.57	0.53
	10. Need improve we operate.	3.13	1.55	2.86	1.35
	15. Need to improve effectiveness.	2.13	0.92	2.14	1.07
	20. Change to improve operations.	2.13	0.52	2.00	1.00
	25. Need to improve performance.	2.13	0.74	2.29	0.49
Appropriateness	3. Have favorable effect.	5.80	1.21	5.86	1.77
	8. Improve organization.	3.07	1.44	2.43	1.62
	13. Correct for the situation.	2.40	0.91	2.29	1.25
	18. Appropriate for organization.	1.93	0.80	1.86	0.90
	23. Change will prove best.	1.87	0.74	2.00	0.00
Efficacy	4. Implement the change.	3.00	1.56	3.57	1.40
	9. Implement change job.	2.33	0.82	2.43	1.13
	14. Successfully perform job duties.	2.00	0.65	2.14	0.90
	19. Can implement change.	2.33	0.62	2.14	1.07
	24. We have the capability.	1.97	0.74	2.07	0.19
Principal Support	2. Peers embrace change.	2.40	1.40	1.71	1.11
	7. Leaders are walking the talk.	2.07	0.70	2.29	0.95
	12. Leaders support change.	2.33	0.82	2.57	1.13
	17. Majority dedicated to change.	2.27	0.70	2.00	1.00
	22. Immediate manager in favor.	2.00	0.76	2.43	1.13
	26. Manager encourages me.	1.87	0.64	2.00	0.58

Appendix I

Number, Percent, and Percentage Total of Staff and Leadership Groups Selecting “Agree” for OCRBS Items

Number, Percent, and Percentage Total of Staff and Leadership Groups Selecting “Agree” for OCRBS Items

		Staff		Leadership		Total Percent
		N	Percent	N	Percent	
Valence	1. Change will benefit me.	13	62	7	33	95
	6. Fulfillment for me.	10	56	7	39	94
	11. Will earn higher pay.	0	0	1	5	5
	16. Increase self-accomplishment.	12	63	3	16	79
	21. Same fringe benefits.	10	59	6	35	94
Discrepancy	5. Need the change.	14	67	7	33	100
	10. Need improve we operate.	15	68	7	32	100
	15. Need to improve effectiveness.	15	68	7	32	100
	20. Change to improve operations.	15	68	7	32	100
	25. Need to improve performance.	15	75	5	25	100
Appropriateness	3. Have favorable effect.	15	75	5	25	100
	8. Improve organization.	14	70	6	30	100
	13. Correct for the situation.	13	72	5	28	100
	18. Appropriate for organization.	15	71	6	29	100
	23. Change will prove best.	14	74	5	26	100
Efficacy	4. Implement the change.	13	62	7	33	95
	9. Implement change job.	14	67	7	33	100
	14. Successfully perform job duties.	14	67	7	33	100
	19. Can implement change.	15	71	6	29	100
	24. We have the capability.	15	71	6	29	100
Principal Support	2. Peers embrace change.	14	67	7	33	100
	7. Leaders are walking the talk.	11	55	5	25	80
	12. Leaders support change.	12	60	5	25	85
	17. Majority dedicated to change.	14	74	5	26	100
	22. Immediate manager in favor.	15	71	6	29	100
	26. Manager encourages me.	15	68	7	32	100
	26. Manager encourages me.	15	68	7	32	100