EQUAL OPPORTUNITY CLIMATE STRENGTH: ANTECEDENTS AND INFLUENCE ON WORK UNIT EFFECTIVENESS

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A Dissertation

Presented to

The Faculty of the Department

of Psychology

University of Houston

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In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

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By

Jordan E. Kirkland

December, 2018

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ABSTRACT

Researchers noted that the 1990s hosted a "sexual harassment explosion" (Wiener & Hurt, 2000, p. 75) that brought "gender politics center stage" (Hirsh, 2009, p. 268). About twenty years later, these comments are, unfortunately, perhaps truer than in their original context. And sexual harassment is just one example among many types of discrimination and harassment. As the spotlight brightens on organizations responding to these public and emotional topics, research suggests the most effective strategy is to address not only individual incidents, but also the underlying climate that bred them. Researchers evaluate climate on two main dimensions – quality (i.e., climate *level*) and consistency (i.e., climate *strength*). Prior studies have made the distinction between the level and strength of a few types of climate (e.g., justice climate, safety climate), but this study extends it to equal opportunity (EO) climate, which specifically focuses on perceptions of discrimination and harassment. Results offered limited support concerning the usefulness of studying EO climate strength: although EO climate level positively predicted team effectiveness, climate strength did not influence this relationship. In other words, teams with better EO climates were also more effective, regardless of whether the team's climate was weak or strong. Findings also suggest that team characteristics (i.e., diversity, size, member deployment) helped determine the level and strength of some measures of EO climate. Although climate level clearly remains the more important dimension of organizational climate, this study does make a few potentially meaningful distinctions between EO climate level and strength, and it provides insights for organizations wishing to promote climates that value and prioritize equal opportunities.

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Chapter I: Introduction

Spurred by news headlines of harassment, toxic work environments, and the reputational downfall of several high-profile public figures, sexual harassment and diversity issues topped 2018's list of expected workplace trends, according to the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology (2018). Related projections – "companies take diversity more seriously," "unprecedented recognition of sexual harassment in the workplace," "a more strategic take on diversity and inclusion" – had an unmistakable presence in similar articles published by *Forbes* magazine (Schawbel, 2017), the Society for Human Resource Management (Nagele-Piazza & Smith, 2018), and *Entrepreneur* magazine (Huhman, 2018), respectively. Research increasingly suggests that perceived discrimination and harassment reduce job satisfaction (Bergman & Drasgow, 2003; Fitzgerald, Drasgow, Hulin, Gelfand, & Magley, 1997), organizational commitment (Triana, García, & Colella, 2010), employee retention (Sims, Drasgow, & Fitzgerald, 2005), and performance (Pryor, 1995). These experiences spill into employees' personal lives as well, often threatening their mental and physical well-being (Bergman & Drasgow, 2003; Goldman, Gutek, Stein, & Lewis, 2006; Pavalko, Mossakowski, & Hamilton, 2003; Willness, Steel, & Lee, 2007). For organizations, discrimination can incur significant financial and reputational costs (James & Wooten, 2006). Fortunately, whether from genuine desire or external pressures, many companies have progressed from prior norms in which "equal opportunities did not rank high in a list of management's priorities" (Kremer et al., 1996, p. 187). Nevertheless, discrimination and harassment persist.

Although people may be inclined to view discrimination or harassment as isolated incidents attributable to an individual perpetrator – and, certainly, individual characteristics play an important role – the more useful approach to preventing these incidents lies in an organization's climate (e.g., Fitzgerald et al., 1997; Kremer et al., 1996; Larsen, Nye, Ormerod, Ziebro, & Siebert, 2013; O'Leary-Kelly, Bowes-Sperry, Bates, & Lean, 2009). *Organizational climate* refers to shared employee perceptions concerning what is rewarded, supported, and expected in the organization (Schneider, Ehrhart, & Macey, 2013; Schneider, González-Romá, Ostroff, & West, 2017). A climate develops in many ways, starting with properties of an organization's structure, including how employees communicate and make decisions (Schneider & Reichers, 1983). As an organization faces both successes and struggles, climate starts to take a unique shape based on how management chooses to respond to those situations (Lindell & Brandt, 2000). Climates ultimately reflect the people in them, as individuals gravitate toward companies that seem to share their traits and values (Schneider, 1987). To organizational psychology, climate is a "classic topic" that helps define the field's identity (González-Romá & Hernández, 2014, p. 1042). By nature, humans seek to make sense of their climate as a means of adapting to the environment and establishing a sense of order (Schneider, 1975). Climate is thus an important intervening mechanism that explains how employees' organizational experiences translate into their subsequent attitudes and behaviors (Schneider & Hall, 1972).

One type of climate specifically addresses discrimination and harassment. *Equal opportunity* (*EO*) *climate* refers to employee perceptions of the extent to which discrimination and harassment are likely to occur in a work unit (Dansby & Landis, 1991;

Walsh, Matthews, Tuller, Parks, & McDonald, 2010). Discrimination and harassment are related constructs that reflect attacks on someone's identity in the form of unequal treatment or an unwelcoming, hostile environment, respectively (e.g., Gutman, Koppes, & Vodanovich, 2011; O'Leary-Kelly et al., 2009; Schneider, Hitlan, & Radhakrishnan, 2000). In a positive EO climate, employees feel that the organization's treatment reflects their individual merit rather than their demographic characteristics (e.g., race, sex, religion). Candidly, many organizations promote EO climate to prevent lawsuits associated with discrimination and harassment. However, beyond its function of legal compliance, EO climate also meaningfully influences individual and team outcomes. Employees with positive perceptions of a company's EO practices demonstrate greater job satisfaction (McIntyre, Bartle, Landis, & Dansby, 2002; Walsh et al., 2010), organizational commitment (McIntyre et al., 2002), and well-being (Walsh et al., 2010). Workgroups also thrive in positive EO climates because they allow members to work more cohesively (Walsh et al., 2010) and feel that the group is more effective (McIntyre et al., 2002). Alternatively, a negative EO climate can harm an organization and its members. Employees who feel discriminated withdraw from their work, becoming less engaged and more likely to want to quit (Volpone & Avery, 2013). Further, employees need not have personal experience with mistreatment to feel its effects. Even if group members do not receive direct abuse or harassment, their productivity often suffers because they must work in a climate characterized by inequality or hostility (Ogunfowora, 2013; Raver & Gelfand, 2005; Willness et al., 2007).

Although the quality of climates – including EO climate – is important, climates operate best when they are consistent. Even though the definition of climate suggests that

coworkers develop converging perceptions about their work environment, those perceptions still vary to some extent. This variability is not necessarily indicative of inaccurate perceptions or measurement error, but rather, it provides meaningful information about employees' agreement, or consensus, concerning organizational practices, policies, and procedures (Bliese & Halverson, 1998; Dickson, Resick, & Hanges, 2006; Lindell & Brandt, 2000; Schneider, Salvaggio, & Subirats, 2002). Researchers thus define *climate strength* as within-unit variability in employee perceptions of a climate (Schneider et al., 2002). Strong climates are unambiguous, and employees have similar perceptions concerning important aspects of an organization (e.g., customer service, safety, fairness, ethics). In weak climates, however, employees may misinterpret an organization's priorities because norms, practices, and policies are ambiguous or inconsistently enforced.

The purpose of this study is to explore whether the concept of climate strength can apply to EO climate. In addressing this question, my two primary goals are to test (1) whether and how EO climate strength influences an important group outcome (i.e., work unit effectiveness) and (2) which, if any, workgroup factors influence EO climate level and strength (see Figure 1 for conceptual model). Given its relatively recent introduction into a long history of climate research, climate strength has produced mixed results thus far. Climate strength does not relate directly to many organizational outcomes, but it can enhance or diminish the effects of climate. As such, researchers most commonly measure climate strength as a moderator that increases the relationships between a climate and its relevant outcomes (e.g., commitment, performance). For example, teams are more effective (i.e., increased performance, reduced absenteeism) when members feel that they

work in a fair environment (i.e., *positive* justice climate; Colquitt, Noe, & Jackson, 2002). The benefits of justice climate become even more pronounced when virtually everyone in the group feels the same way (i.e., *strong* justice climate; Colquitt et al., 2002). I expect that this trend also applies to EO climate. A positive EO climate should become even more valuable – specifically, in enhancing a work unit's effectiveness – when group members agree in their positive views of the climate. Or, stated differently, a negative EO climate may cause even more problems as more and more group members start to agree about how poor the climate is. In addition to examining this moderating relationship, I will also test antecedents of EO climate level and strength. Specifically, I predict that certain team characteristics (i.e., diversity, size, deployment) may put some work units in a position to more easily manage and promote EO climate.

In introducing climate strength to the EO climate literature, I draw primarily from theories of organizational climate, justice, and team processes. Most fundamentally, researchers developed the concept of climate strength from Mischel's (1968; 1973) concept of situational strength. Strong situations send clear signals that dictate exactly how people should interpret, react, and behave (e.g., approaching a traffic light, proceeding through airport security, attending a wedding). In contrast, people interpret and respond to weak situations differently because they lack clear cues for how to behave (e.g., power outages, technology failures, unfamiliar social situations). Climate strength applies this idea of situational strength to organizational contexts. I also draw generally from organizational climate theory (e.g., Moran & Volkwein, 1992; Schneider & Reichers, 1983) to help explain how EO climate develops and affects a team's effectiveness. Additionally, because EO climate naturally evokes issues of organizational

fairness, I also rely on theories of justice – namely, fairness heuristic theory (e.g., Lind, 2001) – to hypothesize the specific role of EO climate strength. Finally, in testing potential antecedents of EO climate, I consider theories of team processes to predict why some types of work units may be at greater risk for developing a negative or weak EO climate.

This study has the potential to make a couple of key contributions to research and practice. Most notably, it will be the first study to apply the concept of climate strength to EO climate research. Given that climate strength is one of the biggest accomplishments of climate research in recent years (Schneider et al., 2013), researchers have called for continued research on how it influences organizational climate (e.g., González-Romá et al., 2009), including extending it to EO climate (Walsh et al., 2010). Significant results would suggest that organizations can benefit from enhancing not only the quality of their climate for equal opportunity, but also the consistency of its implementation. Second, as climate level and climate strength become linked to more and more work outcomes, identifying antecedents becomes increasingly helpful in determining exactly *how* organizations might improve and strengthen their climates (e.g., Colquitt et al., 2002). Despite some theorizing about the antecedents of EO climate (Dansby & Landis, 1991), most empirical research focuses on its outcomes. This study thus offers some needed attention to EO climate's antecedents. Testing antecedents might also help clarify whether EO climate strength is truly distinct from EO climate level. For example, if a group's size influences climate strength but not climate level, this finding would lend support for the continued study of level and strength as distinct dimensions of climate. In all, these results may be especially valuable to organizations with diverse employee

populations or organizations seeking to take a strong stance in support of equal opportunities for employees.

Equal Opportunity Climate

Equal opportunity (EO) climate reflects employees' perceptions of the extent to which discrimination and harassment are likely to occur in their work unit (Dansby & Landis, 1991; Walsh et al., 2010). Stated differently, EO climate captures whether treatment toward work unit members reflects individual merit, as opposed to demographic group membership (e.g., race, gender, age, religion; Landis, Dansby, & Faley, 1993). This definition does not reflect whether employees have experienced or witnessed mistreatment personally (i.e., it is not focused on a specific target), but rather, whether they perceive that mistreatment may be present (Dansby & Landis, 1991). In positive EO climates, employees believe discrimination and harassment are unlikely to occur, whereas negative EO climates suggest that these incidents are probable or even pervasive. Other related measures of climate – including sexual harassment climate (Bergman & Drasgow, 2003; Offermann & Malamut, 2002), climate for racial bias (Ziegert & Hanges, 2005) and interpersonal climate for women (Miner-Rubino & Cortina, 2007) – use a narrower scope to address specific types of discrimination and/or harassment. In contrast, measures of EO climate – especially the most recent versions (e.g., Walsh et al., 2010) – include multiple factors that reflect a range of hostile or discriminatory workplace behaviors (e.g., racist behaviors, religious discrimination, age discrimination).

Although people may naturally associate EO climate with the prevention of unfavorable work outcomes (e.g., discrimination), researchers have also linked EO

climate to meaningful, positive work outcomes. Employees with positive views of their EO climate demonstrate more positive job attitudes, including increased organizational commitment (Estrada, Stetz, & Harbke, 2007; McIntyre et al., 2002), job satisfaction (Estrada et al., 2007; McIntyre et al., 2002; Walsh et al., 2010), and perceived workgroup efficacy (Estrada et al., 2007; McIntyre et al., 2002). EO climate also enhances well-being by reducing job-related strain (Walsh et al., 2010). These findings are consistent with Judge and Colquitt's (2004) view of "injustice as a stressor." Researchers conceptualize perceived discrimination and harassment as job demands because they impose psychological or even physical strain on victims (e.g., Fitzgerald et al., 1997; Schneider et al., 2000; Volpone & Avery, 2013). One reason that these experiences can be harmful is because of their personal nature – namely, they attack attributes of a person's core identity that he/she often cannot change (e.g., race, age, sexual orientation; Boswell & Olson-Buchanan, 2004; Volpone & Avery, 2013).

Much of the existing research has focused on *individual* perceptions of equal opportunity. This approach is important, as perceived discrimination and harassment need not be widespread to warrant an organization's attention. More recently, however, researchers have started to examine how EO climate manifests in teams as well (e.g., Walsh et al., 2010). At the work unit level – consistent with prior research, I use terms like "work unit," "team," and "workgroup" synonymously – EO climate captures the extent to which individual perceptions of discrimination and harassment emerge as shared perceptions among coworkers. Initial research suggests that unit EO climate enhances the satisfaction and well-being of unit members by fostering more group cohesion (Walsh et al., 2010). This trend toward widening the scope of EO climate

highlights an important theme of climate research in general. Namely, climate relies on "cross-level alignment" (Zohar & Luria, 2005, p. 617), as policies and procedures established at the organization level cannot succeed without successful implementation by supervisors at lower levels (Offermann & Malamut, 2002; Zohar, 2000). In the context of EO climate, McIntyre et al. (2002) found that employees' attitudes toward EO fairness at the organization level influenced their attitudes toward EO fairness in their workgroup. This aspect of climate theory and research demonstrates the importance of creating consistent climate perceptions, starting at top levels of the organization.

Compared with outcomes, research on antecedents of EO climate is sparse. Unsurprisingly, experiencing sexual harassment contributes to more negative EO climate perceptions, both for officers and enlisted women in the U.S. military (Newell, Rosenfeld, & Culbertson, 1995). Other studies consistently suggest that racial minorities and women tend to hold more negative views of their climate for discrimination and harassment, compared with their white, male colleagues (Dansby & Landis, 1991; Landis et al., 1993; O'Leary-Kelly et al., 2009; Rosenfeld, Newell, & Le, 1998; Truhon, 2008). These findings are not surprising – just as females and minorities have historically suffered more discrimination in general, they also tend to perceive more discrimination in the workplace (Avery, McKay, & Wilson, 2008). However, item response theory analyses suggest that these response trends do not reflect definitional or qualitative discrepancies – racial minorities still hold less favorable perceptions of EO climate even though their definitions of discrimination and harassment do not differ significantly from white employees' definitions (Truhon, 2008). Bergman, Palmieri, Drasgow, and Ormerod (2007) reached a similar conclusion concerning perceptions of racial/ethnic

discrimination and harassment across five different racial/ethnic groups (i.e., White, Black, Asian, Hispanic, Native American).

Finally, research on EO climate – especially at the work unit level – has raised questions about its distinctness from other constructs. First, although similar, EO climate and diversity climate have a fundamental theoretical difference. Whereas equal opportunity practices are legally mandated for many organizations, diversity climate reflects perceptions that a company values diversity and embraces it as a source of competitive advantage (e.g., Mor Barak, Cherin, & Berkman, 1998). As a result, EO climate primarily serves a function of legal compliance, whereas diversity climate is more deeply rooted in organizational strategy (Walsh et al., 2010). Additionally, climate perceptions in general are distinct from job attitudes (e.g., job satisfaction). Theoretically, climate reflects descriptive, cognitive perceptions of the work environment, whereas job satisfaction focuses more heavily on affective evaluations of the work (Jones & James, 1979; Schneider, 1975). Although they often correlate with each other, climate and satisfaction have represented separate factors in confirmatory factor analyses (e.g., McIntyre et al., 2002), and researchers have stressed their conceptual differences (Jones & James, 1979; Schneider, 1975).

Theories of Organizational Climate

In order to understand the role of EO climate, it is important to explore its theoretical foundations in the broader organizational climate literature. Just as people use *climate* to describe their economic, political, or cultural conditions, climate is also meaningful in organizational contexts. Work environments influence how employees think, feel, and behave. In essence, organizational climate reflects employee perceptions

of "the way we do things around here." Researchers formally define *organizational climate* as shared employee perceptions concerning what is rewarded, supported, and expected in the organization (Schneider et al., 2013; 2017). These shared perceptions develop as employees interact regularly, observe their work environment, and interpret organizational policies, practices, and procedures (Schneider et al., 2017). For employees, climates provide situational cues that help them identify which behaviors are expected and rewarded. For organizations, climates manifest largely in policies, procedures, and practices that guide employees toward certain goals.

Organizational climates can reflect any variable that may be of interest to a company (e.g., climate for equal opportunity, climate for justice). Although people may be inclined to describe a singular climate within an organization, climate is in fact multidimensional (Schneider & Reichers, 1983). Although organizations can have multiple climates (Schneider, 1975), many consolidate their efforts toward a climate that reinforces their chief priorities. Some organizations (e.g., hospitals, construction companies) emphasize safety climate because their employees work in contexts that incur great risk for themselves, patients, or clients. For example, in an automobile service shop, policies may require multiple technicians to check separately that steering wheel bolts are tightened before returning a car to a customer, as steering wheel malfunctions can be highly dangerous. Although using such a rigorous system of safety checks may be tedious, incorporating these types of practices into employees' daily routines can help them become more knowledgeable about safety and more motivated to practice safe behaviors (e.g., Christian, Bradley, Wallace, & Burke, 2009). Similarly, technology

companies may focus on innovation climate because their survival depends on their adaptability and the constant generation of creative ideas.

Before discussing climate theory and measurement in more detail, it is important to clarify the relationship between climate and culture. Whereas researchers define *climate* as shared perceptions of policies, practices, and procedures; *culture* refers to shared basic assumptions, values, and beliefs that are taught to newcomers and communicated by myths and stories about the organization's history (Schneider et al., 2013). Traditionally, climate attends to specific, tangible aspects of people's work experiences, whereas culture represents the intangible, idiosyncratic essence of what an organization is. As such, culture is the "deeper" concept, with climate serving as a "surface manifestation of culture" (Schein, 1990, p. 109). Although climate researchers have been hesitant to embrace the "softness" of culture, many practitioners prefer the term "culture" and rarely distinguish between the two concepts (Schneider et al., 2013). Climate and culture have developed largely separately despite being "features of the same elephant," both reflecting the "higher-order social-psychological fabric of the organization" (Schneider et al., 2017, p. 471). In recent years, researchers have made greater efforts to integrate the two concepts (e.g., Schneider et al., 2013). In general, climate has received more attention and popularity among researchers (Schneider et al., 2017), likely because its narrower scope makes it more tangible (i.e., more directly measurable) and more malleable (i.e., a more effective starting point for interventions designed to produce change; Moran & Volkwein, 1992; Schein, 1990).

Measuring Climate

The construct of climate started to gain steam in the 1960s and 1970s as an alternative to organizational psychology's reliance on individual differences (Schein, 1965; Schneider et al., 2017) and on theories of individual motivation for explaining "just about everything that happens to people at work" (Schneider & Reichers, 1983, p. 20). Researchers increasingly recognized that the organization is a connected social system rather than the sum of individual behaviors (Schein, 1965; Schneider et al., 2017). Within this social system, employees serve as information processors, cataloguing and interpreting information about organizational characteristics, interactions, and events (Schneider & Hall, 1972). Although climate perceptions develop fundamentally from individual employees – Schneider and Hall (1972) argued that "climate exists in the perceptions by individuals" (p. 447) – researchers quickly started asking important methodological questions about levels of analysis in climate research. Indeed, climate research requires careful consideration of definitional, psychometric, and methodological issues (e.g., Schneider et al., 2017), and EO climate is no exception (e.g., Walsh et al., 2010).

Climate is primarily a measure of *perceptions*, or internal representations of external objects (James & Jones, 1974). These perceptions can characterize a number of different entities in an organization. Depending on the focus of the research question, researchers may investigate climate perceptions at the individual, team, or organizational level. As organizational climate rose in popularity, its various definitions and measurement techniques became "highly diverse and even contradictory" (James & Jones, 1974; p. 1096). James and Jones (1974) addressed this concern by developing a

shared terminology for climate researchers. This relatively standardized language has allowed researchers to communicate precisely concerning which level of analysis they are using to conceptualize climate. One of the chief contributions made by James and Jones (1974) was to distinguish between climate as an individual attribute (i.e., *psychological climate*) and climate as an organizational attribute (i.e., *organizational climate*). Ultimately, definition should drive measurement in climate research (James & Jones, 1974; Schneider, 1975). That is, researchers should first identify their theoretical and conceptual definition of climate, and this definition should guide their methodology.

Despite this organized terminology, climate research still uses many different terms which are important to clarify. The word "climate" by itself may describe climate at the individual, workgroup, or organization level, depending on the focus of the research. When defining climate as an individual's perception of the work environment, researchers most commonly use the term *psychological climate* (James & Jones, 1974; Jones & James, 1979), but they may also use terms like "individual climate." Higher levels of analysis (e.g., work unit, department, branch, organization) introduce even more descriptors. For example, researchers may distinguish between the level and strength of a group's climate. Briefly, climate level and climate strength are both group attributes that simply describe different aspects of a unit's climate (i.e., average rating vs. dispersion of ratings, respectively). Because of its centrality in this research, I will discuss this distinction in more detail later in this paper. Ultimately, the topic of climate naturally stimulates research questions that span different organizational levels (e.g., Chan, 1998), so readers should attend to researchers' explanations for how they choose to define, measure, and label climate variables within a given study.

Schneider (1975) addressed another important definitional issue; namely, the issue of climate's bandwidth. The concept of climate is too broad to define and measure globally, but rather, researchers should define and measure it as a climate *for something* (e.g., climate for service, climate for leadership; Schneider, 1975). People encounter thousands of events, policies, and procedures, but they only attach meaning to those experiences if they perceive them in "interrelated bundles" (Schneider et al., 2013, p. 361). This process of attaching meaning to experiences – which is the essence of organizational climate – looks different for each organization. Just as organizations should choose selection procedures based on specific performance criteria, the organization's goals should similarly guide the type of climate they emphasize (Schneider, 1975). Schneider's (1975) position is evidenced by the fact that different climate measures have different relationships to organizational outcomes (e.g., Lindell & Brandt, 2000). For example, safety climate should be related to outcomes that serve a maintenance function (e.g., linking individuals to specific roles), whereas technology climate should be related to outcomes that serve an adaptation function (e.g., embracing organizational change; Lindell & Brandt, 2000). Measuring organizational climate without a referent would result in a climate measure that is so broad and unfocused that it would be difficult to find statistical relationships with meaningful, specific criteria (Schneider, 1975; Schneider & Reichers, 1973). One of the first successful examples of this approach was Zohar's (1980) scale to assess *safety climate*, or employees' perceptions about the relative importance of safety behaviors at work (e.g., management's attitudes toward safety, perceived importance of safety training).

Theories of Climate Development

As researchers generally reached consensus on how to define and measure climate, research increasingly shifted toward identifying its antecedents and outcomes. Given that each employee experiences countless stimuli at work, theories of climate emergence address the fundamental question of how exactly employees come to develop homogenous perceptions of their work environment (Moran & Volkwein, 1992; Schneider & Reichers, 1983). Ultimately, climate develops as employees cognitively process events to make sense of their organizational experience (e.g., Dansby & Landis, 1991). These cognitive processes are colored both by people's personal histories and the events they experience. Historically, theories of climate development have fallen into three general categories: structural, perceptual, and interactional approaches (Moran & Volkwein, 1992; Schneider and Reichers, 1983).

First, structural approaches explain that climate develops primarily from objective aspects of the organization (e.g., organization size, centrality of decision making authority, number of hierarchical levels, technology use, routinization of work; Moran & Volkwein, 1992). In other words, climate is mostly a product of conditions and attributes of the overall organizational environment, rather than its individual members. However, a strict structural approach presents both statistical and conceptual issues. Statistically, structural elements tend to demonstrate relatively weak correlations with climate (Schneider & Reichers, 1983). Conceptually, in emphasizing an organization's structural properties, these approaches fail to consider that workgroups within an organization can have different attributes. They also do not give adequate credit to the role of individual perceptions and reactions (Moran & Volkwein, 1992).

Perceptual approaches take the opposite point of view, arguing that climates are driven by the individuals within them. Specifically, climate is a product of how people attach subjective meaning to their work environment (Moran & Volkwein, 1992). For example, Schneider's (1987) attraction-section-attrition (ASA) model explains that individuals become attracted to and self-select into jobs that complement their personalities (i.e., attraction). Meanwhile, organizations target and select employees that promise to be a good "fit" with company values (i.e., selection). Over time, employees who find that their personalities are congruent with their organization remain, whereas employees who notice a lack of fit leave the company (i.e., attrition). As a result of these three processes, organizations slowly transform into homogenous collections of similar people (e.g., an engineering firm in which most employees are highly practical and analytical, or a car dealership in which most employees are extraverted and persistent). However, perceptual approaches also have their limitations in explaining climate development (Schneider & Reichers, 1983). Just as structural approaches minimize the importance of individual perceptions, perceptual approaches can minimize the importance of the larger organizational and social environment (Moran & Volkwein, 1992).

More recent iterations of a climate emergence model – including Schneider and Reichers's (1983) symbolic interactionist approach and Moran and Volkwein's (1992) cultural approach – have tried to integrate and improve upon these initial structural and perceptual perspectives. These interactive models attempt not to rely too heavily on either structure or perception as the primary force underlying climate development. Instead, the consensus is that climate emergence lies "somewhere between these two extremes,"

reflecting an interaction between personal and environmental features (Schneider & Reichers, 1983, p. 34). Moran and Volkwein's (1992) approach also attempts to incorporate the role of organizational culture by theorizing that climate and culture reciprocally influence each other over time. With each of these gradual modifications and additions, models of climate development have become more comprehensive over time.

Antecedents of Climate

Drawing from these theories of climate development, empirical research has identified several important factors that help create and sustain climates. Of these factors, leadership is arguably the most important (Schneider et al., 2017). Climate and leadership are "implicitly entwined," as employees tend to view leaders as representations and extensions of the larger organization (Kozlowski & Doherty, 1989, p. 546). Leaders have an especially strong influence on subordinate members of their ingroup (i.e., their most trusted employees with whom they communicate most closely; Kozlowski & Doherty, 1989). Although these favored subordinates are especially likely to adopt their leader's perspective, virtually all employees look to their leaders for cues about how they should behave. As a result, workgroups tend to develop climates that reflect the goals and priorities of their leaders. For example, leaders who prioritize employee development foster a climate for learning, whereas leaders who emphasize avoiding failure foster a climate for avoiding failure (Dragoni, 2005). In the context of service climate, leadership – especially service-oriented leadership (e.g., recognizing high-quality service, removing obstacles for service delivery, setting clear service quality standards) – has a significant influence on service climate (Hong, Liao, Hu, & Jiang, 2013). These studies provide examples of how leaders stand well-positioned to reinforce (or alternatively, to obstruct)

organizational climate via their perceived sincerity and commitment toward the climate (e.g., Larsen et al., 2013).

In addition to the supervisor's role in implementing policies and practices, the basic nature of these policies and practices matters as well. For example, whereas companies can use HR practices to enhance service climate, Hong et al. (2013) found that this effect is especially strong for HR practices specifically oriented toward service (e.g., customer service training, selecting for service-related competencies, reward systems for outstanding service performance). This research suggests a great starting point for companies wishing to implement or reinforce their desired climate – incorporate climate into HR practices. By purposefully aligning climate with the HR system, organizations can send an even stronger and clearer message to employees about its expectations and priorities (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004).

Finally, one HR practice emphasized by climate theory is socialization, or onboarding. In the critical early stages of organizational membership, newcomers learn the requirements and expectations of their jobs, and they start to gain an idea of what organizational membership has to offer (Schneider & Reichers, 1983). They monitor and seek information from people around them (e.g., coworkers) to make sense of their environment and, ideally, replace their vulnerability and uncertainty with trust in the organization (Chan & Schmitt, 2000; Schaubroeck, Peng, & Hannah, 2013). However, not only do newcomers change their behaviors in response to a new environment, but their entry may reciprocally alter their new environment (Mischel, 1973; Schneider & Reichers, 1983). Although researchers need to make stronger empirical links between

socialization and climate (Schneider et al., 2013; 2017), climate theory consistently emphasizes the importance of socialization in the employee sensemaking process.

Outcomes of Climate

Climates establish formal and informal guidelines for behavior because they signal to employees which behaviors are expected, valued, and rewarded. As such, the outcomes most relevant in a given climate tend to correspond with the organizational goals and strategies upon which the climate was built. For example, positive safety climates contribute to better organizational safety rankings (Zohar, 1980), fewer accidents and injuries (Beus, Payne, Bergman, & Arthur, 2010; Christian et al., 2009), and increased safety participation and compliance (Clarke, 2006). Additionally, when companies provide more resources, training, and support for customer service – such practices are the foundation of service climate – they are likely to achieve better customer satisfaction (Schneider, White, & Paul, 1998) and better organizational financial performance (Hong et al., 2013; Schneider, Macey, Lee, & Young, 2009). As a final example, research on justice climate – much like research on EO climate – has focused on improvements in interpersonal relationships and how they contribute to performance. One mechanism that consistently helps explain the link between justice climate and performance is that employees in fair work environments feel that they have a high-quality relationship with their organization (e.g., increased trust, commitment, and support; Colquitt et al., 2013). Whitman, Caleo, Carpenter, Horner, and Bernerth (2012) similarly found that work units with positive perceptions of organizational justice performed better (i.e., higher productivity and customer satisfaction) and had better job attitudes (i.e., job satisfaction, organizational commitment). Although the success of

various climates may be measured by different criteria, research has made a strong case for climate's importance.

Climate Strength

Although climate continues to be a mainstay of organizational research and practice, researchers have sought to understand it in a more nuanced way. One such approach is to differentiate between a climate's level and strength, which is the focus of this study. In the following sections, I review the definition, measurement, theory, and research underlying the concept of climate strength. This background will lay the foundation for my hypotheses concerning EO climate.

In the early 2000s, researchers started to distinguish between climate *level* and *strength*. *Climate level* (which researchers have also called climate quality or, simply, climate) is the most common approach to studying climate. Climate level reflects a unit's overall or average impression of the climate. In contrast, *climate strength* reflects the degree of consensus (i.e., the within-group variability) among individual perceptions of a given climate (Schneider et al., 2002). Thus, whereas researchers measure climate level by taking a sum or average of group members' climate ratings (e.g., a 4.4 on a scale ranging from 1 to 5), climate strength is a measure of dispersion that reflects the variability in group members' responses around this average (e.g., a standard deviation of 1). Climates therefore can vary in both level (typically described on a spectrum from "negative" to "positive") and strength (typically described on a spectrum from "weak" to "strong"). In a strong climate – whether it be strongly positive or strongly negative – group members generally agree on the level of climate. In contrast, employees in weak

climates interpret the work environment differently and demonstrate inconsistency in their impressions of whether the climate is positive or negative.

Although climate level remains the more influential construct (i.e., it demonstrates stronger empirical relationships with other variables), climate strength has shown that it can add value to our understanding of climate. One reason is that climate strength can help address the "process" aspect of climate. Although organizations largely promote climates for the achievement of strategic organizational *outcomes*, research has increasingly emphasized the importance of the *processes* that drive those outcomes (Schneider et al., 2017). Focusing on daily processes creates a strong foundation from which organizations can work toward strategic outcomes (Ehrhart, Schneider, & Macey, 2014). For example, although companies may implement climates with the end goal of attaining a strategic benchmark (e.g., higher customer service ratings, faster resolution of customer issues), a good starting point is to improve small aspects of climate that employees experience regularly (e.g., customer service training, service-oriented leadership behaviors). In a way, studying climate strength may help provide one of these starting points – namely, one potential reason for poor climate outcomes may be that the climate lacks consistency (e.g., Bowen & Ostroff, 2004).

Measuring Climate Strength

Research on climate strength has accelerated as organizational psychology has seen more theory and research on dispersion constructs (González-Romá et al., 2002; 2009). Chan (1998) developed a typology of *composition models*, or models that specify relationships among constructs at different levels of analysis (e.g., individual, team, or organizational level). In fact, Chan (1998; 2011) and Kozlowski and Klein (2000) use

climate as a running example of different types of composition models because this approach (i.e., explaining how the same construct is conceptualized at different levels of analysis) is especially critical to climate research. The most familiar and popular of the five composition models is the *direct consensus model*, in which individual scores that demonstrate sufficient within-group agreement become aggregated to represent a unit-level construct. Climate level is a direct consensus construct, as researchers combine individual climate perceptions to create a corresponding measure of group climate. Climate strength, however, aligns with Chan's (1998) *dispersion model*, in which the focal construct is the degree of within-group agreement or disagreement. Ultimately, both climate level and climate strength represent characteristics of a higher-level variable (e.g., unit EO climate) that emerges from a lower-level variable (e.g., individual perceptions of EO climate). Similarly, Kozlowski and Klein's (2000) theorizing on issues of multilevel analysis describes how lower-level constructs emerge as higher-level constructs in different ways. Climate level reflects the process by which lower-level constructs converge into an analogous unit-level construct. However, individual constructs do not always emerge to the group level in a shared, uniform, and convergent way (Kozlowski & Klein, 2000). Rather than assuming all group members' perceptions perfectly converge, organizations may benefit from viewing the *variability* in their responses as a source of valuable information. Climate strength makes this contribution.

Climate is not the only literature to take interest in dispersion constructs as focal variables. Leader-member exchange (LMX) researchers have begun conceptualizing the extent to which a leader has varying relationships with his/her subordinates (i.e., LMX differentiation; Henderson, Liden, Glibkowski, & Chaudhry, 2009). Additionally, in the

areas of group diversity and relational demography, researchers have designed studies around constructs that reflect a workgroup's variability in demographic characteristics or the extent to which an individual differs demographically from other members of the workgroup (Joshi, Liao, & Roh, 2011). Although researchers study constructs of level much more commonly than constructs of dispersion, the latter are gaining popularity in organizational research (Klein, Conn, Smith, & Sorra, 2001) and are making valuable contributions to our understanding of climate (Chan, 2011).

Theoretical Foundations in Situational Strength

Climate strength evolved from Mischel's (1968; 1973) broader concept of situational strength. Mischel's (1973) approach emphasizes processes of cognition and social learning – individuals monitor and interpret the events around them and use these stimuli to guide their own behavior. Although people have tendencies to behave in certain ways based on their personalities, they also have the capacity to observe their surroundings, discriminate important situational information, and adjust their behavior accordingly. Stated more simply, human choices and behaviors reflect some combination of the *person* and the *situation*.

"But while some situations may be powerful determinants of behavior, others are likely to be exceedingly trivial" (Mischel, 1973, p. 255). Some situations transmit strong, clear signals that induce uniform perceptions of how individuals should behave. In contrast, some situations offer such weak environmental or social cues that individuals are forced to rely on their own idiosyncratic experiences to assign some meaning to the situation. These two types of situations represent opposite ends of the spectrum of Mischel's (1968; 1973) concept of situational strength. The former represents a strong

situation (i.e., a situation in which rules or norms impose specific restrictions on how individuals should behave), whereas the latter represents a weak situation (i.e., a situation in which individuals have a wider range of possible behavioral responses; Mischel, 1973; Schneider et al., 2002). As a result, when group norms are ambiguous, individuals are forced to rely more heavily on their individual personalities and any past history they may have under similar conditions (James & Jones, 1974; Mischel, 1973). As an example, parking a car can be easy in a strong situation (e.g., clearly identified parking spots, competent parking attendants, visible signs to indicate towing zones), but people have a much harder time parking in situations that lack such cues.

Climate strength applies Mischel's (1968; 1973) concept of situational strength to the workplace (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004; Schneider et al., 2002). Employees need adequate and unambiguous information to interpret social situations correctly and maneuver the organizational environment (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004). Organizations can meet this need by implementing strong climates that provide clear expectations and consistently reward desirable behaviors. One of the important functions of climate is to prioritize competing employee demands. Using the example of safety climate, safety-related policies encourage employees to prioritize certain types of behaviors (e.g., safety over speed, quality over quantity; Zohar, 2000; Zohar & Luria, 2005). In a strong situation, employees are less likely to spend their time and energy deciding whether, for example, it is more important that they work safely or get the job done quickly. However, in a weak climate, employees may receive inconsistent information and must try to determine what the organization truly cares about – safe work or quick work.

Outcomes of Climate Strength

Although researchers have linked climate to a number of organizational outcomes (e.g., satisfaction, performance, turnover), climate strength has not demonstrated the same magnitude or frequency of empirical linkages. Some of the first tests of the climate strength construct – in some cases, even before it was formally called *climate strength* – tried to determine its outcomes. In all, researchers have found few direct effects of climate strength on attitudes and behaviors. For example, although Argote (1989) linked climate strength to the effectiveness of hospital emergency units (i.e., promptness and quality of care), these effects became nonsignificant after including climate level in the regression model. Lindell and Brandt (2000) formed similar conclusions – climate strength did not predict any individual or organizational outcomes beyond the effects of climate level (which had strong relationships with both its antecedents and outcomes). These findings suggest that climate level (not climate strength) is the more meaningful, more consistent contributor to work unit effectiveness.

Although less common, some studies have revealed direct outcomes of climate strength. In these cases, researchers have most commonly rationalized these effects with stress-related arguments. Bliese and Halverson (1998) found that group agreement about leadership and peer relations (i.e., climate strength) contributed to members' psychological well-being, controlling for climate level. They reasoned that a weak climate serves as a stressor that prevents groups from reaching consensus and makes it more challenging to establish clear group norms. Sora, De Cuyper, Caballer, Peiró, and De Witte (2013) took a similar perspective in studying job insecurity climate. Whereas most climates are positive and desirable (e.g., equal opportunity, justice, innovation), job

insecurity climate is unique because it is a stressful, undesirable climate (i.e., the extent to which employees share perceptions about job insecurity; Sora et al., 2013). In this case, a strong climate contributed to poorer job attitudes (i.e., job satisfaction, organizational commitment, organizational trust) because it meant that employees shared a concern for losing their jobs. Additionally, Bashshur, Hernández, and González-Romá (2011) took an interesting approach to studying outcomes of climate strength, examining the agreement in perceived climate between supervisors and their subordinates. They found that team outcomes were best when managers and their subordinates held high perceptions of organizational support and agreed about those perceptions. In contrast, team performance and affect were at a low when the supervisor perceived that the team received a much greater level of support than did the team itself.

Given sparse direct effects, some researchers have focused instead on a slightly different hypothesis – namely, even when climate strength does not directly change other variables, perhaps it affects the *variability* of other variables. For example, the strength of a team's justice climate can influence the strength of their burnout (Moliner, Martínez-Tur, Peiró, Ramos, & Cropanzano, 2005). If group members have very similar views of whether an organization is fair or unfair, they should also report a relatively consistent degree of burnout. Schneider et al.'s (2002) results also lend support for this effect. When employees have varying perceptions of service climate, customers have different experiences each time they interact with company employees. As a result, weak climates produced more variability in customer ratings of satisfaction (Schneider et al., 2002).

As indicated by these studies, direct outcomes of climate strength are up for debate. For some researchers (e.g., Van Vianen, De Pater, Bechtoldt, & Evers, 2011),

little theoretical or empirical reason exists that climate strength should directly affect attitudes or behaviors. Among researchers arguing for a direct effect of climate strength, the most common rationale comes from stress theories (i.e., a weak climate acts as a stressor because ambiguity incites more conflict and frustration; e.g., Lindell & Brandt, 2000; Schulte, Ostroff, Shmulyian, & Kinicki, 2009). However, evidence increasingly suggests that such direct effects are exceptions rather than the norm. As a result, most researchers have shifted their attention away from outcomes of climate strength and toward the role of climate strength as a moderator.

Moderating Effects of Climate Strength

When studying climate strength, researchers typically take the hypothesis that a strong climate moderates the relationship between climate level and its relevant attitudinal and behavioral outcomes. Specifically, because a strong climate represents a strong situation in which employees have clear expectations for their behavior, strong climates strengthen the influence of climate level on these outcomes. Thus, studies testing the moderating influence of climate strength – many of which I describe in the following paragraphs – share a theoretical foundation in Mischel's (1968; 1973) concept of climate strength. In addition, many of these researchers also rely on other theories relevant to the specific type of climate being examined (e.g., drawing from justice theories to explain justice climate strength).

Schneider et al. (2002) were some of the first researchers to test climate strength as a moderator, finding that climate strength strengthened the relationship between managerial practices (i.e., a facet of service climate) and customer satisfaction in a sample of bank employees and customers. When managers prioritized customer service

policies and practices, customers reported better experiences (i.e., competency, security, customer relationships, overall service quality). Further, the presence of a strong climate enhanced these effects by providing customers with more consistent service experiences each time they interacted with the company. Although this moderating effect was significant for one facet of service climate (i.e., managerial practices), it was not significant for the other three facets tested (i.e., global service climate, customer orientation, customer feedback). In this study, climate strength did not directly affect customer service ratings, but it did alter the influence of service climate on customer service ratings – the positive effects of a good manager (i.e., high service-oriented leadership) were essentially cancelled out in bank branches with weak climates.

One area of research that has contributed heavily to our knowledge of climate strength is justice climate. Although justice climate strength may not directly affect team outcomes (i.e., performance, absenteeism), it has moderated the relationship between justice climate level and those outcomes (Colquitt et al., 2002; Whitman et al., 2012). Specifically, the favorable behaviors that develop in a positive justice climate (i.e., higher team performance, lower team absenteeism) became even more pronounced in teams with strong justice climates (Colquitt et al., 2002; Whitman et al., 2012). Or, stated differently, a weak climate could significantly diminish the positive effects of justice climate. This interaction of justice climate level and strength appears to influence not only performance outcomes, but also well-being. In a sample of hotel employees, Moliner et al. (2005) found that, on average, units with positive interactional justice climates also reported less exhaustion. However, strong justice climates (in which

members were in agreement about organizational fairness) reduced employee exhaustion to an even greater extent.

This line of research is not limited to justice climate. Researchers have found that climate strength enhances the positive effects of innovation climate (González-Romá, Fortes-Ferreira, & Peiró, 2009) and psychological safety climate (Koopmann, Lanaj, Wang, Zhou, & Shi, 2016) on team performance. In other words, although teams generally performed well in positive climates (i.e., high levels of innovation or interpersonal trust), they performed even better as more and more members agreed about the team's valuation of innovation or trust. As another example, job insecurity climate had negative effects on employee attitudes (i.e., job satisfaction, commitment, job involvement, organizational trust), and these effects worsened as more and more employees agreed about the climate's poor quality (Sora et al., 2013).

Some studies have found more limited support for climate strength as a moderator. For Afsharian, Zadow, Dollard, Dormann, and Ziaian (2017), climate strength did not significantly moderate most of their hypothesized relationships. One exception was for engagement – in stronger team climates, psychosocial safety climate contributed to an even greater increase in employee engagement. Similarly, González-Romá, Peiró, and Tordera (2002) found that climate strength significantly enhanced the effects of innovation climate on employee attitudes (i.e., satisfaction and commitment), but other types of climates (i.e., climates for support and goals orientation) demonstrated less promising results. Finally, Van Vianen et al. (2011) considered how three types of climate (i.e., climates for innovation, cooperation, and reward) would influence employee commitment. In most of their analyses, climate level was consistently more important

than climate strength. If individuals or groups had positive climate perceptions, they were generally more committed, regardless of whether the climate was strong or weak. One exception was group climates high in both level and strength. Having a strong and positive group climate was influential enough to overpower individual impressions of climate in predicting commitment.

To summarize, these studies have yielded mixed but promising results. Whereas they concentrate on different climates (e.g., justice, innovation) and measure effects using different outcome variables (e.g., performance, burnout, customer satisfaction), they share a theoretical foundation in Mischel's (1968; 1973) concept of situational strength. Though some studies offer minimal evidence for the usefulness of climate strength (e.g., Lindell & Brandt, 2000), most offer at least partial support for their hypotheses. In many cases, even when interactions did not significantly predict all criteria, they often acted in the hypothesized direction. In all, this approach to studying climate strength – as a moderator that strengthens the effects of climate level – has produced some interesting findings and remains the most promising avenue for exploring the theoretical and practical implications of climate strength.

Antecedents of Climate Strength

Although the outcomes associated with climate strength often depend upon the type of climate being studied (e.g., service climate predicts customer service outcomes), its antecedents may be a bit more universal. Across different climate areas, researchers have theorized and tested similar factors that should contribute to the strength or weakness of climate. For example, regardless of climate's focus, many researchers have speculated that certain aspects of a group's composition or environment – including

inconsistent leadership, ambiguous policies, and limited social interaction among employees – can reduce the consistency with which employees experience and interpret their climates (e.g., Whitman et al., 2012).

Some of the most commonly tested antecedents of climate strength capture some aspect of a unit's structure – including its social structure. Using social network analyses, Zohar and Tenne-Gazit (2008) found that aspects of employee interactions (e.g., density and centrality of the social network) are important determinants of whether coworkers develop similar climate perceptions. In this study, groups had stronger safety climates when they had denser networks (i.e., more social proximity and group member interaction) and more decentralized communication (i.e., dispersed among many members versus controlled by a handful of members). Climates were also stronger in groups that hinged on a few key employees who promoted personal friendships, as these key individuals provided group members an example against which they could compared their own views and behaviors (Zohar & Tenne-Gazit, 2008). In general, when people work together closely, they have more opportunities to discuss their experiences, they often start to interpret events similarly, and they are more likely to develop shared perceptions of their work environment. In short, a group's climate often strengthens as members interact more frequently and work more interdependently (González-Romá et al., 2002; Klein et al., 2001).

A few other team dynamics have also shown effects on climate strength. Climates tend to weaken as teams become larger and more diverse (Colquitt et al., 2012). However, characteristics like cohesion can strengthen a climate, as cohesive groups have strong collective identification that promotes shared support for the group's goals

(Naumann & Bennett, 2000). Team tenure may have a more complex influence, having shown a curvilinear relationship with the level and strength of psychological safety climate (i.e., shared perceptions that the team is safe for interpersonal risk-taking; Koopmann et al., 2016). Teams had smooth interpersonal dynamics when they were newly formed (because they feel optimistic and satisfied with their new identities as group members) or mature (because they have gained experience that helps members understand each other; Koopmann et al., 2016). However, in between these two extremes, moderately tenured teams saw rises in conflict as members realized individual weaknesses and dissimilarities. Thus, compared with moderately tenured teams, members of newly formed and longer tenured teams not only felt safer taking interpersonal risks, but also experienced greater agreement in their perceptions of psychological safety.

Some researchers have focused upward on structure at the organizational level. Burns and Stalker's (1961) mechanistic-organic model distinguishes between *mechanistic* organizations (i.e., characterized by specialized and well-defined job responsibilities, clear policies, and emphasis on chain of command) and *organic* organizations (i.e., characterized by overlapping job responsibilities, shared goals, and the dispersion of decision-making authority). Despite some variation, mechanistic organizations tend to have stronger climates, compared with organic organizations (Dickson et al., 2006). However, arguably more important than the type of climate is the clarity and consistency of the climate. The strongest climates were those that distinctly identified as either mechanistic or organic, as opposed to some indistinct mixture of both types (Dickson et al., 2006). Strong climates thus are not necessarily mechanistic but can emphasize

organic qualities (e.g., informality, ambiguity, individual initiative), as long as those qualities remain unambiguously part of the organization's identity.

Although structural and social dynamics are relevant, supervisors may have the most critical impact on climate because of their proximity to employees (Schneider et al., 2002). Naumann and Bennett (2000) call supervisors "climate engineers" because of their influence in how employees make meaning from organizational events (p. 883). Ultimately, leadership is relevant at multiple levels. Although upper management designs and directs climate-related policies, they cannot carry out their strategies without lower-level supervisors to implement policies day-to-day (Zohar, 2000; Zohar & Luria, 2005). In many cases, informal rewards and incentives given by supervisors (e.g., recognition, attention) are more proximal and motivating to employees than more distal and delayed goals, outcomes, and rewards promoted by the organization (Zohar & Luria, 2005). One approach organizations can take to strengthen climate is to make procedures more formalized, which reduces any individual supervisor's discretion to interpret or enforce policies differently (Zohar & Luria, 2005). Organizations can also strengthen climate by promoting specific leadership competencies. For example, transformational leaders use an inspiring vision to help employees recognize how their contributions influence the overall climate. Transformational leaders thus can strengthen climate directly through their positive leadership behaviors, but also indirectly by promoting more interaction and networking among group members (Zohar & Tenne-Gazit, 2008). Supervisors can also strengthen climate when they use more informing behaviors (i.e., providing clear guidance, informing employees of practices, strategies, and goals; González-Romá et al., 2002) and remain more visible to employees (e.g., employees have opportunities to

observe their supervisor working on behalf of the organization; Naumann & Bennett, 2000). However, managers can also influence climate in harmful ways. When a supervisor is more abusive to some employees compared with others (i.e., high abusive supervision variability), a weak climate develops in which employees naturally have quite different perceptions of fairness (Ogunfowora, 2013). In turn, weaker climates ended up worsening employee perceptions of satisfaction, commitment, leader ethicality, and organizational ethicality (Ogunfowora, 2013).

In all, findings on the antecedents of climate strength are interesting but a bit limited – not unlike research on climate strength more broadly. Researchers have a great deal of room to explore climate strength, particularly in testing its antecedents. One way that this study seeks to contribute is to extend the topic of climate strength to EO climate, as researchers have suggested but not tested formally (Walsh et al., 2010). However, rather than approach EO climate solely from the perspective of climate theory and research, I can cover the topic more comprehensively by also considering theory and research on organizational fairness. In the following sections, I review theories of justice – and focus especially on fairness heuristic theory – as a complement to climate theories in developing hypotheses on EO climate strength.

Theories of Organizational Justice

Since Adams's (1965) seminal work on equity and inequity, researchers have engaged in decades of theory and research on organizational justice. Over these years, researchers have gradually distinguished a few dimensions of justice that are relevant to employees (Colquitt, 2001). People often gauge organizational justice by considering the fairness of work outcomes, as well as the fairness of the procedures used to determine

those outcomes (i.e., distributive and procedural justice, respectively; Leventhal, 1980; Thibaut & Walker, 1975). In addition, people judge fairness by their receipt of general interpersonal respect and clear, honest communication (i.e., interpersonal and informational justice, respectively; Bies & Moag, 1986). Regardless of the way justice is conceptualized, one of its most pronounced qualities is its interpersonal nature. Being valued by a group or organization represents the most important part of what people mean by *fairness* (Lind, 2001; Van den Bos, Lind, & Wilke, 2001). Indeed, a major reason that justice contributes to outcomes like performance is because it forms the foundation for effective work relationships (e.g., trust, commitment, support; Colquitt et al., 2013).

It is because of this strong relational component that theories of justice naturally lend themselves well to topics of diversity and discrimination (e.g., Roberson & Stevens, 2006). Discrimination and harassment represent asymmetric and negative treatment toward certain individuals or groups. The primary function of equal opportunity policies is to ensure that employees receive assignments, rewards, and treatment in a fair manner (i.e., according to individual merit rather than membership in some demographic group). People use various standards, or rules of justice, to guide their interpretation of what is fair and unfair. For example, many people abide by the rule of contributions, also called the rule of equity (Leventhal, 1980). This rule suggests a belief that individuals should receive outcomes that equal their relative inputs, or contributions. Unfortunately, equity does not always prevail. Traits like sex or ethnicity remain highly correlated with notions of social status, such that people often see minorities and females as having lower status or making fewer contributions at work or in society (Leslie, 2014; Leventhal, 1980).

One theoretical approach to organizational justice – fairness heuristic theory (Lind, 2001; Lind, Kulik, Ambrose, & Park, 1993) – explains how social interactions and social information drive impressions of fairness. This focus makes it an especially helpful theory for understanding how team processes, like EO climate, influence team outcomes.

Using Fairness Heuristic Theory to Explain Team Processes

The social comparison process inherent in justice theories relies on the extent of information available to individuals. For example, an employee should have an easier time assessing the fairness of her salary if she also knows how much her coworkers are earning. *Fairness heuristic theory* (Lind, 2001; Lind et al., 1993) focuses on the importance of information in the fairness process. The theory explains that people use judgments of fairness to determine how to approach social and organizational situations. Fundamentally, all relationships rest upon a basic social dilemma: namely, people want to live and work as members of social groups, but by doing so, they incur the risk that the group will exploit or exclude them in return (Lind, 2001; Van Den Bos, 2001). Although investing in a group often builds beneficial relationships and gives added meaning to an individual's personal identity, it can also open the door for others to exploit someone's efforts and take more than they give. Even more concerning than investing material resources is investing one's identity. When individuals hinge their identity on the group's identity, they run the risk that, in return, the group will leave their contributions unrecognized or perhaps reject, diminish, or exclude them. Because social interactions are rooted in this dilemma, people frequently seek fairness-related information to help resolve it (Van den Bos et al., 2001). As such, fairness heuristic theory rests on two processes: first, fairness judgments serve as proxies for interpersonal trust and guide how

individuals behave in social situations; and second, people use a variety of cognitive shortcuts, or heuristics, so that they have fairness judgments available when they need to resolve a social dilemma (Lind, 2001).

This social dilemma is "fundamental" because people constantly face decisions about whether to invest their time, energy, resources, and identities (Lind, 2001). These decisions range from small (e.g., *if I attend my coworker's birthday party, will I make more friends at work?*) to large (e.g., *if I take on a challenging new project, will it help advance my career?*). Because this never-ending dilemma can quickly diminish a person's cognitive capacities, fairness heuristic theory explains that people use perceptions of fair treatment as a heuristic device (Lind, 2001). In other words, people use overall impressions of fairness to help guide and regulate their involvement in relationships so that their efforts match the treatment received in return. People initially search for information most relevant to their situation, but if unavailable, they will use any other accessible information as a substitute (Harris, Lievens, & Van Hoye, 2004; Van den Bos, 2001). Any relevant dimension of justice (e.g., distributive, procedural) can contribute to a person's overall, or generalized, impression of fairness (Lind, 2001). For example, consider a group of employees who recently received performance reviews. If these employees do not know the results of their coworkers' performance reviews (i.e., distributive justice-related information), they may instead look to the fairness of the review process (i.e., procedural justice-related information) in determining whether their result seems fair (Van den Bos, 2001; Van den Bos et al., 2001).

The fairness heuristic process operates on the idea that receiving fair treatment changes the way people respond to social situations – Lind (2001) calls these responses

the “individual mode” and the “group mode” (p. 67). The individual mode, in which people make decisions based on their immediate self-interest, is more natural and familiar, and it is common to other psychological theories (e.g., expectancy theory). However, fairness is a “pivotal cognition” that can cause a person to switch from one mode to the other (Lind, 2001, p. 67). Thus, fair treatment is a force strong enough to cause people to shift from acting in self-interest toward acting based on what would be good for the group. Affection and identification are two other examples of mechanisms that share this influence.

Because of the heuristic nature of justice judgments, individuals do not constantly need to revise or update them (Lind, 2001). Rather, people spend their time in one of two phases, a judgmental phase and a use phase. People undergo a relatively brief “judgmental phase” – typically at the beginning of a relationship or at times of uncertainty or change – during which they gather and process any available information to create or revise their impression of justice. After forming this general judgment, people enter a “use phase” during which the justice judgment becomes an anchor that influences other work-related attitudes and behaviors (e.g., self-esteem, trust, cooperative behaviors) without necessarily requiring much processing or revision. Occasionally, as people spend time in the use phase, they revisit their fairness judgments, as certain stimuli (e.g., an event that falls far outside standard fairness expectations, a clear signal of change in the relationship) encourage a shift back to the judgmental phase. These phase-shifting events (e.g., company restructuring, promotion, performance appraisal) present new justice-related information and force individuals to revalidate or modify their original impressions.

As the following sections describe in more detail, the processes of fairness heuristic theory (e.g., social information seeking, the use of heuristic fairness judgments) help explain how employees use fairness-related information to interpret and respond to their work unit's EO climate. Although my hypotheses rest primarily on the concept of situational strength, I also draw from fairness heuristic theory because it uses a fairness-focused approach that situational strength lacks. This perspective is important because the specific type of climate I am studying (i.e., EO climate) has a strong basis in fairness issues.

The Moderating Effect of EO Climate Strength on Perceived Unit Effectiveness

Discrimination and harassment can derail a unit's ability to perform effectively. Groups with high rates of discrimination or harassment may be susceptible to poorer performance, less cohesion, and more problems with conflict (Goldman et al., 2006; Raver & Gelfand, 2005). Such group-level implications arguably have become even more important in recent years, as organizations are increasingly structured to rely on team-based work (e.g., Grant, Fried, Parker, & Frese, 2010; Mathieu, Hollenbeck, van Knippenberg, & Ilgen, 2017). In the following sections, I rely on a pair of theoretical frameworks – fairness heuristic theory (Lind, 2001) and Mischel's (1968; 1973) concept of situational strength – to hypothesize (1) why EO climate should contribute to employees perceiving their unit as more effective and (2) how EO climate strength enhances this effect.

EO Climate Level as a Predictor of Perceived Unit Effectiveness

The relationship between EO climate and performance is not new – researchers have linked EO climate to employee perceptions of workgroup efficacy (McIntyre et al.,

2002) and effectiveness (Estrada et al., 2007). At the team level, a couple of studies also suggest that EO climate level has positive effects on perceived unit performance (Boehm et al., 2014) and unit cohesion (Walsh et al., 2010). From the negative perspective, a poor EO climate may foster negative attitudes that create problems for both individuals and teams.

Fairness heuristic theory (Lind, 2001) is useful for understanding *why* EO climate exerts unit-level effects (see also Walsh et al., 2010). The theory explains that people rely on their impressions of fairness to determine how they should respond to social situations at work. Although people naturally act in their immediate self-interest (i.e., the *individual mode*), certain events encourage a shift toward acting based on the best interests of the group (i.e., the *group mode*; Lind, 2001). Fairness – which Lind (2001) calls a "pivotal cognition" (p. 67) – is one mechanism strong enough to cause people to switch from one mode to another. In other words, fair treatment fosters interpersonal trust and encourages individuals to adopt a group-focused view when responding to social situations. Alternatively, a perceived lack of fairness can quickly heighten a person's instinct to prioritize self-interest above anything else. These arguments are also consistent with signaling theory (Connelly, Certo, Ireland, & Reutzel, 2011; Spence, 1973; 2002), a theory which similarly emphasizes people's tendency to seek contextual information to inform their decision-making, especially when they are highly attentive to a potential signal. Given that people are protective of our identities (Roberson & Stevens, 2006) and sensitive to potential breaches of trust (Lind, 2001), even feelings or suspicions of discrimination may be sufficient to register as signals that a workgroup has relational issues that are interfering with its ability to perform effectively.

A positive EO climate is characterized by fairness – employees are more likely to believe that they are valued for their effort and abilities, not viewed only for their demographic characteristics (McIntyre et al., 2002). In terms of fairness heuristic theory, this pattern of fairness signifies interpersonal trust. Because employees in positive EO climates trust that their coworkers have their best interests in mind, they should be more likely to fulfill their roles as team members. This mechanism of interpersonal trust should link EO climate and effectiveness on two levels. First, trust serves an instrumental purpose, as employees should work harder on behalf of a group whose members are willing to respect and advance their interests. Second, trust also serves a relational purpose, as employees should become more attached to – and ultimately exert greater effort on behalf of – a collective that values them. These positive outcomes of interpersonal trust should produce more effective work teams (e.g., Colquitt et al., 2002; Lind & Tyler, 1988). In contrast, when discrimination and harassment are likely (i.e., a negative EO climate), group effectiveness should suffer because everyone is more concerned about preserving his/her own interests. These effects should not be limited to individual perceptions, but rather, they should also generalize to the unit. Just as the effects of discrimination and harassment extend to the entire workgroup (e.g., Ogunfowora, 2013; Raver & Gelfand, 2005; Willness et al., 2007), the fairness process that links EO climate and effectiveness should similarly emerge at the unit level.

Based on evidence from EO climate research and principles of fairness heuristic theory, units with positive EO climates are characterized by more fairness and interpersonal trust. These social forces should encourage members to shift their focus

toward prioritizing the group's objectives, thereby producing greater collective confidence in the unit's effectiveness.

Hypothesis 1. Unit EO climate level is positively related to perceived unit effectiveness.

The Role of EO Climate Strength in Predicting Unit Effectiveness

Research increasingly suggests the value of studying both the level and strength of climate (e.g., Schneider et al., 2013). Organizations are more likely to maximize climate's outcomes (e.g., performance, satisfaction, commitment) when they promote climates that are not only positive, but *consistently* positive. To extend this line of research, one of the primary objectives of this study is to introduce and test the concept of EO climate strength. Despite the emergence of climate strength in other areas (e.g., safety, justice, customer service), it has yet to break into research on EO climate. I expect EO climate strength – like most other conceptualizations of climate strength – to assume a moderating role that makes the effects of climate even more prominent.

The theoretical foundation for climate strength comes from Mischel's (1968; 1973) broader concept of situational strength. Strong and weak climates are analogous to Mischel's (1973) notion of strong and weak situations (e.g., Bowen & Ostroff, 2004; Schneider et al., 2002). Using this framework, strong climates provide explicit norms for how individuals should respond. As a result, employees perceive situational cues similarly and respond in a relatively uniform way. Weak climates, however, are characterized by ambiguous or inconsistent information. Rather than defer to clearly prescribed social or organizational norms, employees in weak climates must rely on their own mindsets (e.g., personality tendencies, any personal history being in a similar

situation) to interpret and ascribe meaning to their surroundings (James & Jones, 1974; Mischel, 1973). As a result, weak climates generate a wider variety of employee behavioral responses. Ultimately, employees benefit from climate strength because it provides the adequate and clear information needed to interpret situations correctly and succeed in an organization (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004).

Usually, climate strength is neither inherently good nor bad – in other words, it tends not to influence important work outcomes directly. Rather, climate strength typically acts as a moderator, such that a strong climate enhances the relationships between a climate and its outcomes of interest. This interaction between climate level and strength operates on a couple of levels (Schneider et al., 2013). First, conceptually, a strong climate means that employees have consistent experiences. When coworkers perceive an environment similarly, they are likely to respond and behave more like a collective unit. The benefits of a positive climate become more widespread, as do the problems resulting from a negative climate. Second, statistically, a strong climate indicates low variability within units. When individual responses cluster more tightly around a mean, the mean becomes more precise and reliable. As a result, when a climate is strong, it tends to produce more predictable relationships with its relevant outcome(s).

Applied to the current study, a strong EO climate means that coworkers share similar perceptions of the prevalence of discrimination and harassment in their work unit. Whether EO climate is positive or negative – a valued priority or simply a joke – employees in strong climates have no doubt about the norms that dictate how the unit works. As climate strengthens, unit members' experiences become more standardized – they draw from the same stimuli (e.g., formal policies, informal social norms, work

events and experiences) to form impressions of climate. When coworkers agree with each other, they reinforce and validate each other's views. Shared views of EO climate therefore should give rise to stronger, more certain perceptions of other group attributes (e.g., unit effectiveness). However, in weak EO climates – whether this situational weakness is driven by poor leadership, ambiguous policies, or some other source – some employees view the unit's stance on equal opportunity more positively (or negatively) than others. In the absence of clear social norms, employees must draw from their own personalities and experiences to form climate perceptions. This divergence in how group members perceive and interpret the work environment should similarly produce inconsistent impressions of unit effectiveness.

Fairness heuristic theory (Lind, 2001) offers another helpful perspective for understanding how climate strength can change group dynamics. One of the main principles of the theory is that people use various heuristics to help interpret the fairness of their social interactions. As is the nature of a heuristic device, once they have formed initial impressions of justice, people then rely on these judgments across various social interactions without needing to revise them (Lind, 2001). However, people occasionally revisit their heuristic judgments at times of uncertainty or change. Such "phase-shifting events" present new, fairness-related information, thereby encouraging people to reconsider and perhaps modify their original heuristic judgments (Lind, 2001). Weak climates should breed more phase-shifting events, as employees communicate with coworkers whose climate perceptions are more positive or negative than their own (Colquitt et al., 2002). Upon interacting with someone who has different impressions of the prevalence of discrimination and harassment, people should be more likely to

reevaluate their own judgments, attitudes, and behaviors. In contrast, coworkers in strong EO climates share similar climate perceptions and should need to revisit their fairness judgments less frequently. Ultimately, the increased phase-shifting that characterizes weak climates should contribute to weaker, more fluctuating perceptions of unit effectiveness. In contrast, the consensus of a strong climate should have a reinforcing effect, strengthening the relationship between EO climate and perceived unit effectiveness.

Interpersonal forces have a profound influence on work units – climate strength is one demonstration of this influence. Because of the influence of situational strength (Mischel, 1973) and the human reliance on fairness heuristics (Lind, 2001), a strong EO climate should act as a strong situation in which coworkers have similar experiences and thereby reinforce each other's opinions of work unit processes. Climate strength therefore should strengthen the effects of EO climate on perceived unit effectiveness.

Hypothesis 2. Unit EO climate strength moderates the positive relationship between unit EO climate level and perceived unit effectiveness such that the relationship is stronger in strong (versus weak) EO climates.

Identifying Antecedents of EO Climate Level and EO Climate Strength

As climate strength establishes its importance in climate research, researchers need a better understanding of how it develops (Whitman et al., 2012). As such, the next objective of this research is to explore factors that may contribute to EO climate level and EO climate strength. By identifying and testing these antecedents, researchers can recommend evidence-based strategies for how companies might implement and strengthen EO climate. Testing these antecedents is also a first step in identifying the

distinctiveness of EO climate level and strength. For example, if antecedents demonstrate different effects on EO climate level and strength, these findings may lend support for continuing to distinguish between these two features of climate in future research.

Specifically, I address the structural and relational characteristics of work units that might influence EO climate and EO climate strength. Research on EO climate has favored its outcomes over its antecedents. Climate strength, even in its most commonly studied role (i.e., as a moderator influencing the effect of climate on relevant criterion variables), still has produced inconsistent results. One reason for this inconsistency may be that researchers have not sufficiently accounted for differences in the types of work units studied (González-Romá et al., 2002). Further, given evidence that perceptions of discrimination may also vary across different jobs (e.g., public vs. private sector, technical vs. service-oriented jobs), researchers have suggested continued research to clarify structural and contextual characteristics that may influence the prevalence of discrimination (Pavalko et al., 2003). Taking these concerns and ideas for research, I focus on work unit dynamics that may influence EO climate and EO climate strength. In the following sections, I use theories of organizational demography, team processes, and social interaction to outline why certain workgroup characteristics (i.e., diversity, size, and deployment) may affect a unit's ability to develop a positive, strong EO climate.

Unit Diversity as a Predictor of EO Climate Level and EO Climate Strength

Demographic diversity reflects differences in surface-level traits like race, sex, or age. However, our perceptions of these surface-level traits often bring up deeper issues related to values, stereotypes, and identities (e.g., Harrison, Price, Gavin, & Florey, 2002). Diversity – especially within workgroups – has maintained popularity among

researchers because today's organizations are increasingly diverse and require a great deal of teamwork and interpersonal skills from their employees (Mathieu et al., 2017; van Knippenberg & Schippers, 2007). Although diversity can affect a number of team processes (e.g., creativity, integration, conflict, information sharing; Joshi et al., 2011), it should be especially relevant to the development of EO climate – a variable that specifically measures perceptions of demographically driven behaviors (i.e., discrimination and harassment). In hypothesizing the link between diversity and EO climate, workplace demography research provides a helpful framework for studying how demographic similarities or differences affect individuals or groups (Joshi et al, 2011).

Across organizational research in general, diversity has contrasting story lines. Diversity may simultaneously have advantages (e.g., broader set of skills and perspectives; more customers and revenue) and disadvantages (e.g., more intense interpersonal conflict; Herring, 2009). Other studies suggest that the effects of diversity depend upon certain workgroup factors and conditions (e.g., interdependence, size, work complexity, workgroup tenure; Schippers, Den Hartog, Koopman, & Wienk, 2003; Wegge, Roth, Neubach, Schmidt, & Kanfer, 2008). At the team level, diversity similarly has shown mixed or nonsignificant effects on team outcomes (Joshi et al., 2011). One suggested response is for researchers to focus on the "process" mechanisms that may explain the link between diversity and team outcomes (e.g., performance), as opposed to trying to link diversity directly to outcomes (van Knippenberg & Schippers, 2007). I propose that climate (specifically, EO climate) may serve this function and could offer some clarity to this research. In addition, given an increasing recognition that diversity

may not have uniformly good or bad effects, I propose that, whereas team diversity may promote higher EO climate level, it may weaken EO climate strength.

Unit diversity and EO climate level. The people around us affect our perception of diversity and discrimination (Avery et al., 2008). One of the most common approaches to studying these topics is organizational demography (e.g., Kanter, 1977; Tsui & O'Reilly, 1989), a line of theory and research that explains how employees' demographic similarities or differences provide insight into their attitudes and behaviors at work. Workplace demography has roots in a couple of important social processes – namely, that people heavily base their self-worth on their belongingness to social groups (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; 1986), and that people gravitate toward interacting and working with others who are most similar to them (Byrne, 1971).

Although these social processes arise from demographic differences, people do not perceive them simply as differences. Rather, demographics remain entangled with socially constructed ideas of "status." Researchers have long documented that people associate characteristics like ethnicity or gender with certain degrees of status – for example, people see some ethnicities as more prestigious or respected than others (Leslie, 2014; Roberson & Stevens, 2006). Because of these status differentials, demographics are highly relevant characteristics in how employees make sense of their work identities (Roberson & Stevens, 2006), and they perpetuate the social dynamics underlying diversity (e.g., reliance on social identities, social categorization, attraction toward similar others). Perceptions of status can further reduce the likelihood that people will form quality relationships (e.g., becoming friends, discussing important topics) with people from other demographic groups (Leslie, 2014).

Because diversity invokes perceptions of status, its importance – in this context, its importance for EO climate – may lie in the concept of *representation*. Put simply, diverse workgroups should have more positive EO climates because minorities are better represented. Dansby and Landis (1998) lend support for what they call the "representation effect" – when minority women were better represented (i.e., made up a larger proportion) among officers, they reported improved perceptions of EO climate. Seeing a high (or low) proportion of minorities or females represented in a company sends a signal to employees that their demographic traits are (or are not) meaningful to the organization (Avery & McKay, 2006). Therefore, workgroups that are more diverse may encourage and empower employees to take an active role in improving EO climate. Representation also serves as a lens through which employees – especially minorities – respond to work events (Lindsey, Avery, Dawson, & King, 2017; Roberson & Stevens, 2006). In response to an ambiguous work event, employees who feel well represented are more likely to give the organization the benefit of the doubt, whereas employees who feel poorly represented are quicker to interpret the situation negatively (e.g., they are more likely to perceive interpersonal mistreatment; Lindsey et al., 2017). Reactions become especially relevant in diversity-related incidents (e.g., diversity-related policies, stories of discrimination or harassment, discussion of hiring preferences) because negative reactions to these situations are especially likely to increase concerns for fairness (Roberson & Stevens, 2006). Although Lindsey et al. (2017) studied ethnic representation among managers – which should be especially important given the influence that managers possess – coworker representation may have a similar positive effect.

However, reasonable arguments exist for the opposite effect (i.e., that diversity has a negative effect on EO climate level). First, like team size, diversity may worsen climate by introducing communication issues and conflict into a workgroup. Colquitt et al. (2002) tested this prediction but found no relationship between diversity and climate level (in this case, justice climate level). Second, as the number of minorities increases, majority members may feel more threatened and more likely to discriminate against them (Dansby & Landis, 1998). Finally, from a mathematical perspective, given that females and minorities consistently hold more negative perceptions of EO climate in general (Dansby & Landis, 1991; Landis et al., 1993; Rosenfeld, Newell, & Le, 1998; Truhon, 2008), adding more females or minorities to a work unit might reduce the average perception of EO climate. Although these explanations are plausible, the existing theoretical and empirical evidence seems to favor the hypothesis that diversity is more likely to increase (rather than decrease) EO climate level. Support for the "representation effect" appears to reach even beyond the workplace – for example, when avatars in virtual environments are more representative (i.e., greater virtual diversity), Black participants are more willing to reveal their offline racial identities (Lee, 2014).

As team diversity increases, team members should view the workgroup from a slightly different perspective. These perceptions, rooted in both social identity and signaling processes, should form the basis of a team's EO climate. Specifically, diversity should increase a team's EO climate not only by raising employee awareness of social identities, but also by communicating the organization's appreciation for minority representation.

Hypothesis 3. Unit diversity is positively related to unit EO climate level.

Diversity may not only affect EO climate level, but it may also carry through to influence unit effectiveness as well. Given my predictions of positive relationships between unit diversity and EO climate level (Hypothesis 3) and between EO climate level and work unit effectiveness (Hypothesis 1), I further propose an indirect effect in which diversity contributes significantly to unit effectiveness by way of enhanced EO climate. This hypothesis is consistent with teams models (e.g., input-process-output, input-mediator-output-input; see Ilgen, Hollenbeck, Johnson, & Jundt, 2005), in which aspects of a team's composition (e.g., diversity, personality, structure), primarily influence team outcomes (e.g., performance) not directly, but through intermediary processes that alter how the team works. Climate variables often serve as "process" variables that explain how team characteristics, or "inputs," translate to team outcomes (e.g., Naumann & Bennett, 2000). In the current study, as diversity contributes to greater awareness and acceptance of different demographic identities (i.e., higher EO climate level), employees should, in turn, view their workgroup as more effective because members respect and utilize the skills and backgrounds that diverse members bring to the table. Additionally, in line with my previous moderation hypothesis that a stronger climate strengthens the direct relationship between EO climate level and unit effectiveness (Hypothesis 2), the proposed indirect effect should also become stronger when EO climate is stronger.

Hypothesis 4. The conditional indirect effect of unit diversity on perceived unit effectiveness via EO climate level is stronger when EO climate strength is high (versus low).

Unit diversity and EO climate strength. Although greater diversity may generally improve a workgroup's EO climate, members of diverse groups may still have

quite varying interpretations of that climate (i.e., low climate strength). Workplace demography researchers explain that people who share demographic similarities (e.g., age, sex, race) are more likely to have similar backgrounds, life experiences, and values (Harrison et al., 2002). In the context of climate, diversity increases the psychological distance among members (Colquitt et al., 2002). Homogenous workgroups should have stronger climates because members interpret and process information from the same perspective (e.g., similar values, experiences, and personal history). For example, a workgroup of six White men (compared with a more diverse workgroup) should develop relatively consistent climate perceptions because they probably have similar values and life experiences. Additionally, employees more easily internalize coworkers' experiences – even if not experienced personally – if they happened to someone similar (Naumann & Bennett, 2000). Thus, as a group becomes more homogenous, members may draw from similar work experiences, emotions, and reactions, thereby forming more convergent climate perceptions. In contrast, diverse individuals draw from different mindsets and backgrounds to frame their work experiences, and as a result, members are likely to interpret climate a bit differently (i.e., weaker climate; Klein et al., 2001).

In addition to creating psychological distance among members, diversity may also affect the quality or frequency of social interactions in a workgroup. When groups (e.g., work units) or dyads (e.g., supervisor-subordinate) are more demographically homogenous, they tend to be more attracted to each other, communicate more frequently, and develop greater cohesion (Goldman et al., 2006; Tsui & O'Reilly, 1989). In contrast, highly dissimilar coworkers often face more difficulties with communication, ambiguity, or conflict (Tsui & O-Reilly, 1989). These findings echo across other areas of

organizational theory and research, which have long supported the idea that increased interaction among group members fosters similarity – or, in other words, reduces variability – in members' perceptions and attitudes (Klein et al., 2001; Krackhardt & Kilduff, 1990; Rentsch, 1990). Because diverse groups often must overcome social forces that make communication and interaction more difficult, members are likely to remain more isolated and thereby maintain more divergent, idiosyncratic views about climate.

Only a handful of studies have tested diversity as a contributor to climate strength. Colquitt et al. (2002) found partial support for this effect, as age-diverse teams had weaker justice climates. Interestingly, age diversity significantly weakened climate strength, but gender and ethnic diversity had no effect. A couple of other studies (Klein et al., 2001; Naumann & Bennett, 2000) have predicted – but failed to find support for – a link between diversity and climate strength (specifically, these studies have measured climates for innovation, organizational resources, and procedural justice). Nevertheless, in both cases, the authors commented that this relationship deserves further testing because it is (a) a relatively new hypothesis that researchers have only tested in a few studies, and (b) a central argument of relational demography theory. Further, in the current study, diversity is not simply a work unit characteristic; it is also fundamentally linked with the type of climate being measured (i.e., EO climate). Unit diversity may be especially relevant in the context of EO climate, as both variables specifically prompt employees to consider their demographic identities.

Researchers from climate and organizational demography, among other areas, have long emphasized that the people around us at work (including their demographic characteristics) affect how we interpret our work environment. Being surrounded by

similar others tends to reinforce a person's beliefs and instincts. In contrast, because diverse people have different experiences, attitudes, and values, they are likely to perceive and interpret organizational events a bit differently – including perceptions of EO climate.

Hypothesis 5. Unit diversity is negatively related to EO climate strength.

Unit Size as a Predictor of EO Climate Level and EO Climate Strength

Teams researchers have long studied team size (i.e., the number of members in a work unit under a common supervisor) as a substantive variable influencing team processes and outcomes. Because of this tradition, I draw from team process theories to help rationalize why larger workgroups may face more challenges with the level and strength of their EO climates.

Unit size and EO climate level. In teams theory and research, one of the most consistent themes is that groups exhibit *process losses* – that is, despite the sum of each member's resources and skills, the unit tends to fall short of its performance potential (Kerr & Tindale, 2004; Mathieu et al., 2017; Steiner, 1972). One contributor to process loss is group size. Although large teams have benefits (e.g., broader knowledge base, more opportunities for task specialization, quicker completion of tasks), too many members can make a group dysfunctional (Curral, Forrester, Dawson, & West, 2001; Mathieu et al., 2017; Staats, Milkman, & Fox, 2012; Wheelan, 2009). Specifically, larger groups face three types of challenges – coordination (i.e., communication linkages become more difficult to maintain), motivation (i.e., members lose motivation to participate), and conflict (i.e., interpersonal issues arise more easily; Curral et al., 2001;

Staats et al., 2012). In considering how group size affects EO climate level, issues of conflict and motivation become most relevant.

First, larger groups may be vulnerable to more discrimination and harassment because of increased conflict. Initial findings suggest that larger groups have higher levels of sexual harassment (Raver & Gelfand, 2005) and more negative EO climates (Boehm et al., 2014), most likely because they generally face more issues with interpersonal conflict. As a work unit increases in size, people are quicker to identify and categorize each other into social groups with similar demographic qualities (e.g., Hispanics, males, Muslims, older workers; Boehm et al., 2014; Wegge et al., 2008). Based on these group differences, people naturally align their interests, favoring members of their ingroup over members of outgroups (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Large groups split more easily into factions in which members choose to work most closely with members of their ingroup. In contrast, smaller groups often require members to work with each other – regardless of similarities or differences – because they provide a more limited pool of available coworkers. As a result, the success of smaller groups often relies more heavily on members' ability to embrace cooperation with other coworkers, a process which should foster more positive interpersonal interactions (Boehm et al., 2014). Because of these heightened demographic identities and the tendency to form subgroups, large groups should encounter more difficulties in interpersonal relations, including the likelihood of discrimination and harassment (i.e., EO climate level).

In addition to issues of conflict, large groups also confront issues of motivation – individual contributions become less identifiable, and members lose motivation to participate because they can simply coast on their coworkers' efforts (Kerr & Tindale,

2004; Latané, Williams, & Harkins, 1979). Being in a group diminishes an individual's feeling of personal responsibility for a given situation – a phenomenon researchers call *diffusion of responsibility* (Darley & Latané, 1968). As a result, larger groups tend to have more negative impressions of fairness (i.e., lower justice climate level; Colquitt et al., 2002). In the context of EO climate, an important organizational goal is to promote equal opportunities by reducing discrimination and harassment. For large groups, diffusion of responsibility may influence EO goals in multiple ways. Employees are likely to feel less personal responsibility to help advance an organization's EO goals. Perpetrators may have an easier time dodging the consequences of harassment or discrimination because their actions are less identifiable. Employees with EO concerns may not formally report those concerns under the assumption that they have already been addressed – *if this is a real issue, surely someone else has brought it up by now*. Finally, because of the perception that large teams must spread resources more thinly, members may feel less confident in the availability of individualized support or assistance in response to EO issues (Mueller, 2012). These examples offer a few reasons that smaller teams may be in a better position to provide employee support, resolve problems with discrimination or harassment, and maintain a positive EO climate. Even if individuals report discrimination or harassment – for example, in organizational surveys – positive change may simply take longer to manifest in larger groups.

Ultimately, group size is not a concept limited to teams research. Climate theory similarly explains that structural characteristics, including size, influence how climate develops (Schneider & Reichers, 1983). However, both teams and climate researchers recognize the potentially limited role that group size may play – other factors (e.g., team

member personalities, leadership behaviors) are almost always more influential than size in determining team outcomes. Although both teams (Kerr & Tindale, 2004; Stewart, 2006) and climate (Pugh, 1966; Schneider & Reichers, 1983) researchers advise against studying team size as the sole or primary contributor to team processes, it remains worth exploring as a potentially important aspect of a team's composition.

Although not the only relevant factor, the size of a work unit can change its dynamics. Theories of team performance suggest that larger teams are more susceptible to process losses. From the perspective of EO climate, larger work units may breed more interpersonal conflict and provide less accountability for adhering to equal opportunity policies and practices. As more group members work under a single supervisor, the likelihood of discrimination and harassment may increase.

Hypothesis 6. Unit size is negatively related to unit EO climate level.

Whereas size may not be the strongest predictor of a work unit's effectiveness, EO climate may be a mechanism that explains why smaller groups may perceive themselves as more effective. Given my predicted relationships between unit size and EO climate level (Hypothesis 6) and between EO climate level and work unit effectiveness (Hypothesis 1), I further propose an indirect effect in which unit size predicts unit effectiveness via EO climate. As described previously, teams theories emphasize "processes" as important mechanisms that translate team inputs to team outcomes (e.g., Ilgen et al., 2005). In this case, EO climate is that proposed mechanism – if larger units face more problems with EO climate (e.g., less accountability, more discrimination and harassment, more interpersonal conflict), employees should subsequently view their unit as less effective overall because EO climate problems likely distract members from being

able to work together to carry out tasks effectively. Further, consistent with the expected interaction between EO climate level and EO climate strength (Hypothesis 2), the proposed indirect effect should also become stronger when EO climate is stronger.

Hypothesis 7. The conditional indirect effect of unit size on perceived unit effectiveness via EO climate level is stronger when EO climate strength is high (versus low).

Unit size and EO climate strength. A work unit's size may influence not only the level, but also the strength, of its EO climate. Recall that large groups tend to encounter three primary challenges – coordination, motivation, and conflict (e.g., Staats et al., 2012). Whereas breakdowns in EO climate level likely result from issues of conflict and motivation, breakdowns in EO climate strength are more likely the result of coordination issues.

Teams rely on the ability to exchange information effectively. Specifically, the group must ensure that all members have access to important, task-relevant information (e.g., Brown & Miller, 2000). Unfortunately, many groups are "less-than-optimal users of information" because they fail to spread information widely among members (Kerr & Tindale, 2004, p. 633). As groups become larger, they have greater difficulty achieving effective interaction, participation, and exchange among members (e.g., West & Anderson, 1996). These interactions, whether effective or not, ultimately form the basis of a group's climate – an individual's perceptions only gain meaning as they become shared with the people around him/her (Schneider et al., 2017; Schneider & Reichers, 1983).

Theoretically, smaller teams should have stronger climates because members have more opportunities to interact socially and develop shared perceptions (Bliese & Halverson, 1998; Colquitt et al., 2012; González-Romá et al., 2002; Whitman et al., 2012). As described earlier in the context of workgroup diversity, members who interact more with each other are likely to form increasingly similar perceptions about the work environment (Klein et al., 2001; Krackhardt & Kilduff, 1990; Rentsch, 1990). Many areas of organizational research recognize this important role played by social interaction. For example, social information processing theory (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978) explains that individuals seek cues from the people around them in constructing attitudes and opinions about their work environment. The people nearest us at work (e.g., coworkers, friends, supervisors) influence how we construct our reality – both directly by their verbal statements (e.g., a coworker openly complaining about the job), and indirectly by drawing our attention to certain aspects of work (e.g., a coworker mentioning the poor quality of the company's products causes an individual to question the meaningfulness of his/her work; Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978; Thomas & Griffin, 1989). In short, because members of smaller groups can interact with each other more closely, frequently, and uniformly, their beliefs and perceptions about their work experience become increasingly similar (e.g., Klein et al., 2001; Rentsch, 1990).

Although social interaction and group size are distinct concepts, the teams literature has long considered group size an important determinant of the level of social interaction (e.g., Hare, 1952). However, despite the theoretical argument that group size implies a certain degree of social interaction (which, in this case, influences climate strength), empirical results are mixed. Some evidence supports the hypothesis that larger

groups have weaker climates (e.g., Colquitt et al., 2002). However, other studies suggest no relationship between team size and climate strength (e.g., Bliese & Halverson, 1998; González-Romá et al., 2002; Zohar & Tenne-Gazit, 2008). Although researchers have found that larger groups do have more limited interactions (e.g., reduced social interaction, reduced communication density), they do not necessarily have weaker climates (González-Romá et al., 2002; Zohar & Tenne-Gazit, 2008).

Despite these inconsistent findings, the relationship between team size and climate strength warrants further attention for a couple of reasons. First, prior researchers have sampled from organizations with relatively large teams – average group sizes range from 20 members (Colquitt et al., 2002) to 48 members (Bliese & Halverson, 1998). Additional research can test whether these findings generalize to smaller work teams (González-Romá et al., 2002). Second, our understanding of climate strength – especially its antecedents – is still relatively new. These initial findings represent only a few types of climate, and researchers should still consider group size in the context of other dimensions of climate before ruling out its potential influence (González-Romá et al., 2002; Whitman et al., 2012). Among existing studies, the dimension of climate strength that significantly relates to unit size is justice climate strength (Colquitt et al., 2002). In the context of the current study, this finding is promising because EO climate is conceptually similar to justice climate (i.e., both climates address fair treatment at work). Perhaps the interpersonal challenges faced by large groups (e.g., unequal participation, interpersonal conflict) draw attention to fairness-related issues, including EO climate.

Increasing the size of a workgroup may weaken EO climate. Working with many people naturally introduces barriers to interaction and coordination – information simply

does not spread as easily or as uniformly as it might in a smaller group. Members likely have access to different types or amounts of information related to the group's EO climate (e.g., observed occurrences of discrimination or harassment, potential consequences or rewards associated with discrimination or harassment, group social norms concerning EO practices). As a result, members of large groups should develop more varied perceptions of the discrimination and harassment present in the workgroup.

Hypothesis 8. Unit size is negatively related to EO climate strength.

Deployment as a Predictor of EO Climate Level and EO Climate Strength

In addition to diversity and size, the nature of a group's work assignments may also affect EO climate. For example, in military units, some members may be deployed (i.e., on assignment in a destination away from home) while others work from a home base. Conceptualized here as the proportion of unit members currently deployed, a unit's deployment may reduce EO climate level and strength by introducing stressors and adding physical distance between members. In addition to climate theory, theories focusing on team processes and social interaction help explain deployment's effect on climate.

Deployment and EO climate level. Military members may deploy within or outside the continental United States, and their assignments may involve combat or non-combat work. Deployments, especially those involving combat, are high-stress and potentially life-threatening (LeardMann et al., 2013; Levy, Conoscenti, Tillery, Dickstein, & Litz, 2011). In the face of such immediate stressors, deployed personnel may become less concerned about preventing behaviors like harassment or assault, and perpetrators often become less accountable for their actions (LeardMann et al., 2013).

Indeed, in creating survey measures of deployment stressors, researchers have included both general and sexual harassment as components of these measures (e.g., Nillni et al., 2014; Vogt et al., 2013). Further, for women in combat, sexual stressors may escalate because combat work not only involves more dangerous circumstances, but it also tends to be more traditionally male-dominated (LeardMann et al., 2013). In one study of U.S. service members, although deployment itself was not related to sexual harassment or assault, women who were deployed *and* experienced combat reported more sexual harassment and assault than nondeployed women (LeardMann et al., 2013). Although this existing research has produced valuable findings on individual outcomes of deployment (e.g., post-traumatic stress symptoms), one goal of the current study is to understand how deployment affects a team's climate.

Stressors force teams to change the way they work. For example, Karau and Kelly's (1992) attentional focus model explains that one stressor, time pressure, forces teams to focus narrowly on the most vital, central tasks over more peripheral tasks (Kelly & Karau, 1999). Faced with this need to prioritize, teams may treat complex and simple tasks differently – they may involve and consult all group members concerning a complex task, whereas they may delegate simple tasks to a handful of members (Brown & Miller, 2000). As stressors increase, teams increasingly rely on such heuristic strategies as a means of simplifying their information processing and channeling their attention toward the most pressing or important responsibilities (Karau & Kelly, 1992; Kerr & Tindale, 2004). As a side effect, teams under pressure often maximize rather than optimize – that is, stressors can push teams to produce results at greater quantity, albeit sometimes at lower quality (Karau & Kelly, 1992).

A group's priorities thus shift based on the intensity or nature of its workload. In the absence of stressors, group members can spend more time involving themselves with personal, relational, or other non-task-related issues. However, stressful conditions push these issues aside in favor of work directly related to task completion (Karau & Kelly, 1992). The behaviors that constitute EO climate (i.e., harassment, discrimination) may represent some of these peripheral, interpersonal goals that members neglect in their prioritization of more task-focused work (LeardMann et al., 2013). Additionally, not unlike large teams, teams with deployed members may face accountability issues, as physical separation or added stressors may enable more diffusion of responsibility when it comes to preventing discrimination and harassment (LeardMann et al., 2013).

A few researchers have briefly addressed how climate may vary across different sectors of military work. First, Bliese and Halverson (1998) controlled for the type of U.S. Army company (i.e., airborne, armor, artillery, light infantry, or mechanized infantry). Their findings suggested significant differences across companies – for example, light infantry companies reported lower psychological well-being than armor companies. Later, Estrada et al. (2007) compared EO climate in active and reserve personnel. They anticipated differences between these two groups because reserve personnel have less frequent interactions with other unit members. Instead, they found that the relationship between EO climate and its outcomes (i.e., job satisfaction, commitment, and unit effectiveness) did not vary between active and reserve personnel. Finally, Dierdorff, Surface, Meade, Thompson, and Martin (2006) found that military and civilian personnel largely viewed climate similarly (i.e., the two groups demonstrated measurement invariance), but they differed in their views of personnel management (e.g.,

fair distribution of rewards and recognition). In all, these studies lend some support for studying how attributes of military work (e.g., deployment) may be relevant in understanding team climates.

Although deployment is unique to military work, these findings may still generalize to work teams more broadly. For example, teams with deployed members may possess similar characteristics as other types of workgroups (e.g., teams with members who work remotely, teams with members on expatriate assignments, teams under high amounts of work pressure). Studying a variable like deployment may help clarify the extent to which climate challenges vary for different work teams.

As members become deployed, a work team may face added challenges trying to comply with EO guidelines. Groups whose members do not have to cope with deployment stressors should have more time and resources to focus on functions like minimizing discrimination and harassment. In contrast, as some or all members become deployed, the unit's attention may shift toward tasks directly related to performance, potentially at the expense of other goals like maintaining a positive EO climate.

Hypothesis 9. Unit deployment (i.e., proportion of unit members deployed) is negatively related to unit EO climate level.

Deployment may affect not only a unit's EO climate level, but also its overall effectiveness. Given my predicted relationships between unit deployment and EO climate level (Hypothesis 9) and between EO climate level and work unit effectiveness (Hypothesis 1), I also propose an indirect effect in which EO climate explains the relationship between deployment and perceived effectiveness. Using the same theoretical rationale as for previous mediation hypotheses (e.g., team process theory, Ilgen et al.,

2005), I argue that EO climate serves as a mechanism that explains why member deployment may contribute to reduced team effectiveness. As more unit members become deployed, added stressors may reduce EO climate by forcing members to shift their time and resources toward task performance, perhaps at the expense of EO climate. This argument makes this mediation hypothesis an interesting one, as deployment may potentially reduce EO climate while simultaneously increasing task performance. However, despite team members' concerted focus on task performance, low EO climate may still eventually catch up to a team. Working in an environment with low EO climate may not be sustainable, eventually producing conflict that may taint a group's overall perceived effectiveness. In line with the hypothesized simple interaction between EO climate level and EO climate strength (Hypothesis 2), I also propose that the overall indirect effect of unit deployment on effectiveness should become stronger when EO climate is stronger.

Hypothesis 10. The conditional indirect effect of unit deployment on perceived unit effectiveness via EO climate level is stronger when EO climate strength is high (versus low).

Deployment and EO climate strength. Teams with deployed members may face challenges sustaining not only a positive EO climate, but also consistent perceptions of that climate. Much like the issues seen in large or diverse teams, units with deployed members may have a harder time coordinating effectively. As deployments separate unit members in physical distance, social interactions may become less frequent or less effective. As an example, consider a work unit in which five members become deployed while five members remain nondeployed. Subclimates may develop in which the

deployed and nondeployed members start to develop unique subgroup identities with their own variations of social norms – including norms concerning discrimination and harassment. Ultimately, regardless of whether distinct subgroups exist, any physical, social, or emotional barriers within a unit may contribute to weaker ties among members and ultimately a weaker team climate.

Climate theory, among other organizational theories (e.g., Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978), emphasizes the importance of social interactions – specifically, theories view social interaction as serving a calibrating function. When coworkers work together closely (which may be more likely for a unit with no deployed members), they have more opportunities to discuss their work experiences. As a result, they draw from the same knowledge and experiences to form their impressions of the work environment. In short, coworkers with frequent social interactions are likely to develop more uniform views and beliefs about their climate (Klein et al., 2001; Krackhardt & Kilduff, 1990; Moran & Volkwein, 1992; Rentsch, 1990; Schneider & Reichers, 1983). In contrast, when interactions become less frequent (which may be more likely for a unit with deployed members), fewer opportunities exist for coworkers' beliefs or evaluations to color one's own perception of the work environment. With fewer social interactions, members are more likely to diverge in their views of EO climate because they are using different experiences and information to formulate these views.

Although climate researchers have not studied deployment directly, initial evidence suggests that variables related to social interaction are predictors of climate strength. Researchers have used different measures as proxies for social interaction, including the frequency with which members discuss work unit goals (González-Romá et

al., 2002), the frequency with which members interact with each other as friends (Klein et al., 2001), and the interdependence of work (Klein et al., 2001). Like diversity or group size, deployment is not a direct measure of social interaction, but it seems to raise issues related to social interaction, including feelings of isolation (Orme & Kehoe, 2014) or a lack of social support (Vogt, Samper, King, King, & Martin, 2008). These issues may become especially relevant for members deployed as individuals rather than as part of a cohesive unit (Vogt et al., 2008). As such, deployment is another variable with potentially interesting implications for climate strength.

Deployments may weaken EO climate strength by fragmenting the social connections within a work unit. As some members become deployed and operate across different locations, the group's communication may naturally become less frequent or less potent. Deployed and nondeployed members are also likely to have different work experiences and face different challenges. They may work in environments in which personnel have different priorities, standards, or attitudes regarding harassment or discrimination. Given these varying work experiences and more limited social interactions, units with deployed members should demonstrate more variability in perceptions of EO climate.

Hypothesis 11. Unit deployment is negatively related to EO climate strength.

Chapter II: Method

Survey

The survey responses analyzed in the current study were collected in 2012 as part of a larger data collection effort in a sample of United States military personnel. Specifically, the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute (DEOMI) collected

the data as part of the DEOMI Organizational Climate Survey (DEOCS), a survey project designed to reduce discrimination and harassment in the military (Landis et al., 1993), as well as understand the extent to which EO climate can enhance organizational effectiveness (Walsh et al., 2010). Rooted in the study of organizational climate, the DEOCS measures "atmosphere of discrimination" (Landis et al., 1993, p. 212) as a means of upholding employees' legal rights to work in an environment that is neither hostile nor offensive to individuals because of their group membership (e.g., under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, amended in 1991). In addition to EO climate, the DEOCS assesses other variables, including attitudes and perceptions that contribute to a productive work environment (e.g., organizational commitment, job satisfaction, leadership, well-being).

Participants

This dataset included responses from 1,288 United States military personnel – representing 294 work units – who completed the DEOCS in 2012. Other researchers had already removed some observations from the dataset because they demonstrated patterns of careless responding (i.e., repeatedly selecting the same answer in a block of consecutive items). I excluded data from 26 additional employees who did not provide a response to the race/ethnicity question. When analyzing workgroup data, it is important to consider whether some units may be too small or too large to include in statistical analyses. For example, if a work unit has survey responses from only a few members, calculating a group average from such a small set of ratings may be an unreliable representation of the group's perception (Glomb & Liao, 2003). Accordingly, and consistent with prior research (e.g., Glomb & Liao, 2003; Klein et al., 2001; Walsh et al.,

2010), I excluded responses from employees in units with fewer than three reporting members. On the other hand, although large units may be too unwieldy to allow for effective interaction and participation among members (West & Anderson, 1996), I hypothesized and had a substantive interest in these processes and concerns associated with unit size. As such, I did not exclude any work units on the basis of being too large.

The final sample used for analyses included 139 work units representing 1,060 employees. Much like the broader military population (United States Department of Defense, 2016), this sample had limited diversity, consisting mostly of men (84%) and Whites (72%). Employees also identified as Hispanic (14%), Black (14%), Asian (5%), American Indian (4%), and Native Hawaiian (2%). This sample was also relatively young – most were 30 years or younger (69%), and the vast majority were 40 years or younger (92%). 290 persons (27%) were deployed at the time of data collection, and work units ranged from having no members deployed (proportion = 0.00) to having all members deployed (proportion = 1.00). Work unit sizes ranged from 3 to 36 members (M = 7.63, SD = 5.65). Respondents mostly served in the Army (55%) and Navy (34%) but also represented the Marines (9%), Coast Guard (2%), and Air Force (0.2%). Finally, respondents were mostly enlisted members (89%) but also included officers (11%).

Measures

Respondents completed the survey online during work shifts. They responded to all survey measures at one time point. See Appendix A for full versions of study measures.

Equal opportunity (EO) climate level (Cronbach's α = .94 for the full scale, ranges from .81 to .90 for individual factors)**.** DEOMI developed this 24-item scale for

the DEOCS (e.g., Dansby & Landis, 1991; Estrada et al., 2007). The items measure perceptions of the likelihood that events of discrimination or harassment could have occurred in the last 30 work days. As a focal construct in the DEOCS, the EO climate scale has undergone extensive validation in United States military samples (e.g., Dansby & Landis, 1991; 1998). The scale includes seven factors (i.e., differential command behaviors, positive EO behaviors, racist behaviors, sexual harassment and discrimination, age discrimination, religious discrimination, and disability discrimination). Although original versions of the scale included up to 50 items, validation studies offer support for the validity, reliability, and factor structure of the shortened EO climate scale (e.g., Estrada et al., 2007).

Participants responded to all items on a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = "There is a *very high chance* that the action occurred," 5 = "There is *almost no chance* that the action occurred"). Example items are "A supervisor did not select a qualified subordinate for promotion because of their race/ethnicity" (differential command behaviors) and "Someone made sexually suggestive remarks about another person" (sexual harassment and discrimination). Where necessary, I recoded items such that high (low) values represent a positive (negative) EO climate. For example, if an employee thinks there is a high likelihood that older workers are passed over for promotions, this response would correspond to a low, or poor, or negative, EO climate.

Because organizations and supervisors assume different responsibilities in the climate process (e.g., organizations create policies, but supervisors implement them), items that assess climate constructs should not confound these responsibilities (Zohar, 2000). Instead, researchers should match the item content to the level at which they are

conceptualizing climate (Schneider, 1975; Zohar, 2000). For example, items designed to measure group climate perceptions should ask about group-level processes. As such, survey items prompted participants to respond based on experiences "at your duty location." Using scale items written to match the intended measurement and interpretation of the data also helps reduce problems with aggregating individual-level variables to group-level variables (Schneider & Reichers, 1983). I aggregated individual responses to create a unit-level measure of EO climate.

Equal opportunity (EO) climate strength. EO climate strength represents the variability of group members' responses to the EO climate scale. Researchers most commonly use measures of deviation (e.g., standard deviation), interrater agreement (e.g., r_{wg}), or coefficient of variation. Although each dispersion index has its own limitations, some indexes perform better in certain modeling situations. Roberson, Sturman, and Simons (2007) empirically compared these dispersion indexes and provided recommendations for researchers. When modeling an interaction effect between climate level and strength, standard deviation can be one of the most useful measures because it has a higher likelihood of detecting interaction effects, compared with other indexes (Roberson et al., 2007). Another benefit of standard deviation is the ease with which people can calculate and interpret it. Given these recommendations, I calculated each unit's EO climate strength using its standard deviation on the EO climate scale. Following the example of prior studies (e.g., Colquitt et al., 2002; González-Romá & Hernandez, 2014; Koopmann et al., 2016), I multiplied climate strength by -1. This sign reversal makes the findings easier to interpret by designating that smaller values indicate a weaker climate and larger values indicate a stronger climate.

Perceived unit effectiveness ($\alpha = .87$)**.** I used the 4-item scale selected from the U.S. Air Force Organizational Assessment Package (Short, 1985) for inclusion in the DEOCS (e.g., Dansby & Landis, 1991; Estrada, 2007). These items focused on the work unit level, assessing employee perceptions of group effectiveness. Participants responded to items on a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = "*Totally agree* with the statement," 5 = "*Totally disagree* with the statement"). Responses were reverse coded such that high values correspond to high levels of perceived effectiveness. Example items include "The quality of output of my work group is very high" and "My work group's performance in comparison to similar work groups is very high." I aggregated individual responses to create a unit-level measure of effectiveness.

Unit diversity. As part of the DEOCS, employees responded to demographic questions to indicate their sex, race, and age. To capture diversity at the group level, I combined these individual responses to form indexes of diversity for each work unit. Diversity researchers have found that specific dimensions of diversity tend to relate more strongly to other variables – and provide more information – than overall or combined measures of diversity. For example, Avery et al. (2008) found that women perceived more sex-based discrimination (but not race-based discrimination), whereas Blacks and Hispanics perceived more race discrimination (but not sex-based discrimination). Additionally, Wegge et al. (2008) found that different types of diversity (i.e., age diversity, sex diversity) affected team health and performance in different ways. Because each type of diversity is unique, researchers do not recommend combining them into an overall diversity index (Harrison & Klein, 2007). Accordingly, I tested three different types of diversity (i.e., sex, race, and age) as separate factors.

Additionally, group members develop climate perceptions based not necessarily on the raw number of their peers in a group, but on the proportion of peers in the context of the entire work unit (e.g., Dansby & Landis, 1998). For example, three women in a work unit of five people would suggest high diversity, but three women in a work unit of 20 people would suggest low diversity. For this reason, I operationalized diversity using a proportion of minorities as a function of group size, not simply the raw number of minorities within a work unit.

The DEOCS assessed sex, race, and age as categorical variables. Specifically, respondents selected the categories that best describe their sex (male, female), race(s) (Hispanic/Latino, American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, White), and age range (18-21, 22-30, 31-40, 41-50, 51 and over). Given these response formats, I used Blau's (1977) index because it is the predominant approach to measuring group-level diversity of categorical variables (Joshi et al., 2011; Naumann & Bennett, 2000). Blau's (1977) formula ($1 - \Sigma P_i^2$) measures the proportion of "*P*" individuals in each of "*i*" categories. According to the formula, the most diverse team would include members from all demographic groups in equal proportions. Higher values on the index represent greater diversity, or more equal representation of demographic groups. However, because values increase with group size, the index underestimates diversity values for smaller groups (Biemann & Kearney, 2010; Harrison & Klein, 2007). Following these recommendations, I used a version of Blau's index that corrects for bias associated with group size, $\text{Blau}_N = 1 - \Sigma \frac{N_i(N_i-1)}{N(N-1)}$. See Appendix B for diversity formulas and calculations.

The other adjustment I made dealt with the racial diversity measure. Because participants could identify with more than one racial group (e.g., White and Hispanic), some work units had more races represented than their total number of workgroup members. This discrepancy produced incorrect diversity values for some groups. To correct for this issue, I adjusted the coding of the race categories so that no individual exceeded 1 in his/her total "amount" of race. As an example, for a person only identifying as Black, I coded him/her as 1 in the Black category and 0 in all other race categories. However, a person identifying as both Asian and White would originally have a count of 1 in both categories (and therefore have a combined race value equivalent to two people). I recoded these responses so that such a person would contribute 0.5 to the White category and 0.5 to the Asian category.

Unit size. Consistent with prior climate research (e.g., González-Romá et al., 2002), the survey instructions defined a work unit as a group of employees who hierarchically depend on the same supervisor. Thus, unit size reflected the number of employees reporting to a common supervisor.

Unit deployment. The DEOCS included a single item to measure whether and how recently employees are deployed, as well as the type of deployment. Personnel may be deployed *CONUS* (i.e., within the continental U.S.) or *OCONUS* (i.e., outside the continental U.S.). In response to the item ("Are you currently deployed?"), participants selected one of six responses: 1 = "No, but it has been more than 6 months since my last deployment, or I have never been deployed," 2 = "No, but I returned from combat zone deployment within the past 6 months," 3 = "No, but I returned from non-combat zone

deployment within the past 6 months," 4 = "Yes (CONUS)," 5 = "Yes (OCONUS, in a combat zone)," 6 = "Yes (OCONUS, in a non-combat zone)."

I operationalized deployment as the proportion of group members deployed. First, I condensed the original six response options into two categories (i.e., currently deployed or not currently deployed). Then, for each workgroup, I generated a proportion of unit members currently deployed as a function of the group's size. For example, consider a work unit with 7 members deployed out of 12 total unit members. This group's deployment value would be .58, meaning that about 58% of the unit is deployed. For this variable, work units ranged from 0.00 (no unit members deployed) to 1.00 (all unit members deployed).

Control variables. Members of historically disadvantaged demographic groups (e.g., racial minorities, women) consistently report more negative perceptions of EO climate (Dansby & Landis, 1991; Landis et al., 1993; O'Leary-Kelly et al., 2009; Rosenfeld et al., 1998; Truhon, 2008) and are more likely to perceive discrimination and harassment (Avery et al., 2008; Bergman et al., 2007). Given these trends in prior research and in the current dataset, I controlled for the proportion of women and the proportion of racial minorities in each unit. However, I only included these control variables for analyses not addressing diversity. For hypotheses in which diversity already served as a focal variable (i.e., the hypotheses testing antecedents of climate level or strength), I did not add the demographic control variables. I also controlled for discrimination in all hypotheses. People who have personal experience with discrimination or harassment also hold more negative views of EO climate (Newell et al., 1995). I controlled for these experiences by calculating each work unit's average number

of reported experiences of discrimination and harassment. Participants self-reported their sex, race, and whether they have personally experienced discrimination (i.e., based on race, sex, age, disability, or religion) or sexual harassment in the past 12 months at work.

Chapter III: Results

Tables 1, 2, and 3 provide means, standard deviations, intercorrelations, and internal consistency estimates of study variables at both individual and unit levels. For the EO climate scale, each climate dimension's mean and standard deviation (i.e., climate level and climate strength, respectively) correlate significantly with each other ($p < .001$). Because all of these correlations are significant and positive, I do not provide them formally in a table.

Confirmatory Factor Analyses

Prior to testing my hypotheses, I conducted a series of item-level confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) using M*Plus* 6 (Muthén & Muthén, 1998) to verify that the subjectively-rated variables in this study (EO climate and unit effectiveness) represent distinct constructs. Table 4 provides the results of these analyses. Researchers have approached the structure of the EO climate scale differently. Whereas some researchers specify the factors (e.g., racist behaviors, age discrimination) as indicators of one overall EO climate variable (e.g., Walsh et al., 2010), others have treated each factor as a separate latent variable (e.g., Estrada et al., 2007). Therefore, I constructed different models to determine which factor structure would best fit these data. I began by testing an eight-factor model consisting of seven latent variables for EO climate (one for each dimension) and one for work unit effectiveness. Next, I tested a model with two factors – EO climate (with the seven factors as indicators of this overall construct) and unit

effectiveness. Finally, I tested a single-factor model in which all items loaded onto a common factor. Chi-square difference tests revealed that (1) the eight-factor model demonstrated significantly better fit for the data than the two-factor model, and (2) the two-factor model demonstrated significantly better fit than the single-factor model. These findings indicated that I should treat the seven EO climate dimensions as separate in my analyses.

Despite the strong fit of the hypothesized model relative to the alternate models (as assessed by the chi-square difference tests), the chi-square statistics for goodness of fit were significant for all models. Because a significant chi-square statistic is often an indicator of poor model fit, I further assessed and compared the models by examining various fit indices, including root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), standardized root mean square residual (SRMR), comparative fit index (CFI), and Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI). Compared with the two- and one-factor models, the eight-factor model demonstrated the most satisfactory values across each of these indices. Values fell within recommended ranges for RMSEA (.07, 90% CI = [.064, .070]) and SRMR (.05), and they neared the ideal threshold (.95) for the CFI (.93) and TLI (.92; Browne & Cudeck, 1993; Hu & Bentler, 1995). Given that each fit index met or neared its recommended range, I concluded that the hypothesized model was a decent fit for the data, and I proceeded to treat the EO climate dimensions separately in my subsequent hypothesis testing.

Finally, because both subjective measures were provided by the focal employee (i.e., a common source), I tested an additional model to determine the influence of common method bias. This model estimated how much of the variance in participant

responses may be explained by the true underlying constructs (e.g., EO climate, unit effectiveness) versus the method used to measure those constructs (e.g., survey response bias). Following procedures outlined by Podsakoff, Mackenzie, Lee, and Podsakoff (2003) and Williams, Cote, and Buckley (1989), I loaded all items onto both their respective latent factors, as well as a method factor. The fit indices for this model (RMSEA = .05, 90% CI = [.046, .053]; SRMR = .03; CFI = .96; TLI = .95) were better than the hypothesized eight-factor model, and the chi-square difference test indicated that the fit was significantly better. On average, method variance explained about 25% of the variance in the items, a proportion comparable to the median method variance reported by Williams et al. (1989). Although some aspects of the study design reduce the concern of method variance (e.g., using more objective measures like deployment, unit size, and diversity), the proportion of method variance is higher than desirable, and readers should be aware that these findings may overstate the true relationships among these constructs (Podsakoff et al., 2003).

Consideration of Levels of Analysis

Given the nested structure of this study's data (i.e., employees nested within work units), I originally considered a multilevel approach to testing my hypotheses. The concept of climate is inherently multilevel, standing at the intersection of group-level events and individual perceptions of those events (e.g., Zohar, 2000). Not only have multilevel methodologies enhanced the study of organizational climate, but climate itself has had a "formative impact" on the development of multilevel theory and research (Kozlowski & Klein, 2000, p. 4). However, in this study, I tested my hypotheses using ordinary least squares (OLS) regression for both conceptual and statistical reasons. First,

and most importantly, I am primarily interested in team processes. In some work contexts (e.g., the military), approaching all theory and analysis at the group level is common (Zohar & Tenne-Gazit, 2008), as the work unit may be the most important or relevant entity for analyzing data and designing interventions. All subjective scales within this study (i.e., EO climate, unit effectiveness) specifically prompt participants to respond to items using a group referent (e.g., age discrimination occurring at the duty location, perceived efficiency of the work unit). Therefore, given that choices about the level of *theory* should precede and guide choices about the level of *analysis*, not vice versa (Klein, Dansereau, & Hall, 1994), I operationalized every variable at the team level of analysis and tested the proposed relationships using multiple regression analyses. Prior climate studies have used a similar analytical approach when testing relationships among purely aggregate or group-level variables (Colquitt et al., 2002; Ogunfowora, 2013).

Second, statistically, these data demonstrated little evidence of within-group agreement. The intraclass correlation coefficients, or ICC(1)s, of the variables ranged from .04 to .11. These values were especially low, indicating that, at best, only about ten percent of the variance in ratings could be attributed to membership in a given work unit. In other words, employees' perceptions were largely independent, and belonging to a given work unit did little to influence individual ratings. Additionally, when variables have ICC(1) values below .05 (as was the case for one of the climate dimensions in the current study), model convergence for multilevel structural equation modeling may become problematic (e.g., Preacher, Zyphur, & Zhang, 2010). When ICC(1)s are low, a common next step is to review the ICC(2) values, which represent the reliability of group means. These values were also quite low, with none exceeding .50. Both the ICC(1) and

ICC(2) estimates thus fell well below ideal values (e.g., Glick, 1985; Jones & James, 1979; Schneider et al., 1998). Although low ICC values are not entirely uncommon for military data (Bliese, 2000), the low values in this sample suggest that my decision to ignore cross-level analyses incurs limited statistical risk.

One reason to carefully consider the level of statistical analysis is to minimize the "aggregation problem," or the question of whether the aggregation of individual climate perceptions truly represents the group-level perception (Schneider & Reichers, 1983, p. 22). In the current study, aggregation is acceptable without risk of aggregation bias because I measure all variables at the macro level (Snijders & Bosker, 2012). Aggregation bias is a much more significant concern for cross-level models in which researchers simultaneously analyze data across different levels of analysis. However, following recommendations from Snijders and Bosker (2012), I caution readers on two main points: first, adding more employee ratings increases the reliability of the group-level variable, which means that larger groups could pull greater weight in the findings. Second, readers should be careful to interpret the findings only in terms of work units. Because I aggregated all study variables to the group level, findings reflect work units and do not necessarily parallel the experiences of individual employees.

Hypothesis Testing

I tested my hypotheses using SPSS 24 (see Table 5 for summary of hypotheses). For each hypothesis, in order to yield more interpretable results, I centered the independent variables at their respective mean values (Aiken, West, & Reno, 1991; Dalal & Zickar, 2012). I centered climate level at the individual level (i.e., I did not need to re-center after aggregating to the group level), but I centered the other independent variables

at the group level because they exist only as group-level constructs. Additionally, the results of the factor analyses suggest that the EO climate scale best fits the data when treated as seven separate dimensions. Given this structure, I tested each hypothesis using eight different models. For each analysis, I started by using the complete scale of EO climate items with all seven factors combined. Then, I tested the same hypotheses using each dimension of EO climate separately.

Hypothesis 1 predicted that EO climate level would be positively related to the outcome variable, unit effectiveness (see results in Table 6). Both the complete EO climate scale (B = .72, SE = .11, p < .01), as well as each dimension of EO climate (Bs range from .20 to .55, SEs range from .07 to .10, p < .01 for all seven dimensions) significantly predicted unit effectiveness, supporting Hypothesis 1. All main effects were positive, so employees perceiving more positive EO climates also rated their units as more effective.

Next, I added climate strength to the regression models. Because climate level and climate strength are mathematically related, I entered climate strength into each regression model after (and separately from) climate level, a procedure which controls for the correlation between climate level and strength (Bliese & Halverson, 1998; Schneider et al., 2002). Because most researchers expect that climate strength operates as a moderator (as opposed to a direct predictor) of outcomes, I did not hypothesize its direct effects. And, consistent with these arguments, climate strength was unrelated to effectiveness in most cases. However, two of the seven dimensions of climate strength had a significant main effect on the outcome, over and above the effect of climate level: differential command behaviors (B = -.37, SE = .15, p < .05) and positive EO behaviors

(*B* = -.50, *SE* = .11, *p* < .01). Strangely, in both cases, units with stronger climates were also rated as less effective. Although most researchers do not expect direct effects of climate strength, when they do, they typically predict that stronger climates have positive effects.

Hypothesis 2 predicted that EO climate level and EO climate strength would interact to predict unit effectiveness (see results in Table 6). Results do not support Hypothesis 2 using either the complete EO climate scale (*B* = -.53, *SE* = .36, *p* = .14) or separate regression models for the EO climate dimensions (*B*s range from -.09 to .27, *SE*s range from .13 to .22, *p* values range from .22 to .88). Because none of the interactions were significant, I did not proceed to plot the interactions or perform significance tests of the simple slopes of the regression models (Aiken et al., 1991; Cohen, Cohen, West, & Aiken, 2003).

The next sets of hypotheses shifted to testing antecedents of EO climate level and strength. Hypotheses 3, 6, and 9 assessed the extent to which unit diversity (H3), unit size (H6), and unit deployment (H9) predict EO climate level (see results in Tables 7-14). Size was the only antecedent to significantly predict EO climate level when using the complete scale of all 24 EO climate items (*B* = -.01, *SE* = .004, *p* = .050). In other words, larger units rated EO climate more negatively. When I tested these relationships separately with each climate dimension, results were mostly nonsignificant, with a few exceptions. More race-diverse units had poorer climates for differential command behaviors (*B* = -.28, *SE* = .10, *p* < .01), more age-diverse units had poorer climates for positive EO behaviors (*B* = -.41, *SE* = .18, *p* < .05), and more sex-diverse units had better climates for positive EO behaviors (*B* = .47, *SE* = .15, *p* < .01). Also, larger units had

significantly poorer climates for sexual harassment and discrimination (B = -.01, SE = .01, p < .05) and for religious discrimination (B = -.01, SE = .01, p < .05). Deployment was not significantly related to EO climate level or any of its dimensions. Overall, these hypotheses received limited support.

Hypotheses 5, 8, and 11 assessed the extent to which unit diversity (H5), unit size (H8), and unit deployment (H11) predict EO climate strength (see results in Tables 7-14). None of the antecedents significantly predicted EO climate strength when using the complete scale of all 24 EO climate items. When I tested these relationships separately with each climate dimension, results were largely similar (i.e., nonsignificant), with a few exceptions. More age-diverse units had weaker climates for positive EO behaviors (B = -.28, SE = .13, p < .05), and more sex-diverse units had stronger climates for racist behaviors (B = .30, SE = .14, p < .05). Unit size did not significantly relate to the strength of EO climate or any of its dimensions. Units with more members deployed had weaker climates for differential command behaviors (B = -.20, SE = .09, p < .05). Overall, these hypotheses received limited support.

Finally, hypotheses 4, 7, and 10 combined many of the prior predictions into a more comprehensive model (i.e., a model of moderated mediation; Hayes, 2012; 2018). Specifically, I predicted that (a) EO climate level would be the explanatory mechanism that links the antecedents to unit effectiveness and (b) EO climate strength would strengthen this indirect effect (see results in Table 15). I tested for the conditional indirect effects of unit diversity (H4), unit size (H7), and unit deployment (H10) using Hayes's (2012; 2018) PROCESS macro (Model 14) for SPSS (see Figure 2 for a diagram of Model 14), version 2. Testing conditional process models offered a few benefits. First,

this approach allowed me to test more of the variable relationships simultaneously rather than separately. The PROCESS approach is also more helpful than other approaches to mediation (e.g., Baron & Kenny, 1986) because it (a) quantifies indirect effects, (b) generates confidence intervals for effects by using bootstrapping analysis, and (c) allows the researcher to test both mediation and moderation in the same model. I generated 95% confidence intervals for the hypothesized effects using 10,000 bootstrap samples. For ease of interpretation, and as recommended by Hayes (2012; 2018), I mean-centered the climate level and climate strength variables in each model. Given the presence of five antecedents (three types of diversity, unit size, and deployment) and eight mediators (the complete EO climate measure plus its seven separate dimensions), these hypotheses required 40 model combinations (5 antecedents × 8 mediators). The conditional indirect effects were not significant for any of the model combinations, as all confidence intervals contained zero. Hypotheses 4, 7, and 10 thus did not receive support. Given limited support for earlier hypotheses assessing specific paths of the conceptual model, these nonsignificant results for the more comprehensive model are not surprising. However, the results do lend support for team process models, which often argue that team inputs (e.g., diversity, size) do not directly predict outcomes, but they instead operate through mediating variables like climate. With the exception of race diversity, none of the antecedents had a direct relationship with effectiveness.

Chapter IV: Discussion

A recent trend in organizational climate research has been an attempt to differentiate between the *level* and *strength* of a given climate. Theoretically, it makes sense – a good climate should become even better when employees show high agreement

or belief in that climate (e.g., Mischel, 1968; 1973). In contrast, a poor climate should probably worsen as more and more employees agree about something that their work environment lacks. Although several studies support this twofold approach to climate, my goal was to test it in the context of equal opportunity climate. Specifically, I wanted to understand (1) whether and how EO climate strength meaningfully contributes to a team outcome (i.e., unit effectiveness) and (2) whether certain team factors (i.e., diversity, size, deployment) drive the development of EO climate level and/or strength. Drawing from theories of climate (Mischel, 1968; Moran & Volkwein, 1992; Schneider & Reichers, 1983), fairness (Lind, 2001), and team processes (Ilgen et al., 2005; Joshi et al., 2011; Kerr & Tindale, 2004), I rooted my arguments deeply in organizational theories pointing toward the unique value of climate strength. The idea of climate strength operates on the importance of social context – that people's beliefs and behaviors are swayed by the beliefs and behaviors of the people around them. As a result, I expected climate strength to be especially relevant to EO climate, a type of climate which specifically evokes perceptions about how people are treated, relative to their coworkers. Altogether, my hypotheses received limited support. In the following paragraphs, however, I point out a few ways in which these findings still inform our understanding of climate strength and how they may help organizations advance their equal opportunity strategies.

Interpreting the Hypotheses

My first set of hypotheses tested the relationship between EO climate level and unit effectiveness. Consistent with prior research linking EO climate to various measures of perceived team performance (Boehm et al., 2014; Estrada et al., 2007; McIntyre et al., 2002; Walsh et al., 2010), EO climate was a significant predictor of unit effectiveness

(Hypothesis 1). This result strengthens the findings of prior studies because the relationship with effectiveness was significant using both the overall EO climate scale, as well as each of the seven climate dimensions individually. These findings reinforce arguments based in fairness heuristic theory (Lind, 2001) that teams with positive EO climates also perform better because they foster interpersonal trust, esteem, and loyalty (Colquitt et al., 2002). Employees are likely to work harder and identify more strongly with a workgroup that demands interpersonal respect. In short, fairness is a perception so important (Lind, 2001) that it has quite a direct influence on a team's effectiveness.

Despite the strong connection between EO climate level and unit effectiveness, climate strength did not influence this relationship as predicted (Hypothesis 2). Theory suggests that, even if EO climate is already positive, it can produce better effects when it is *consistently* positive (e.g., Bowen & Ostroff, 2004; Schneider et al., 2002; 2013) because employees who share consistent experiences tend to validate and reinforce each other's beliefs. The findings in this study do not offer such evidence – EO climate level was a strong predictor of unit effectiveness regardless of whether a team's climate was weak or strong. Although unexpected, this finding is not entirely surprising given climate strength's track record. Some researchers have speculated that climate strength may add no incremental value beyond what climate level tells us (Lindell & Brandt, 2000), and several studies offer only partial support for their climate strength hypotheses (e.g., Afsharian et al., 2017; González-Romá et al., 2002). For example, Schneider et al. (2002) tested the same interaction (climate level × climate strength) using four subscales of service climate but found that only one of those four interactions "behaved as hypothesized" (p. 228).

Perhaps a more unexpected result was that this interaction does not tell the complete story about climate strength. Rather, two of the climate strength dimensions predicted unit effectiveness directly. When team members demonstrated more agreement concerning differential command behaviors (e.g., people of one race being passed over for promotions) or positive EO behaviors (e.g., people of different races seen socializing), they also rated their units as less effective. These direct effects of EO climate strength are meaningful because they were significant over and above the effects of EO climate level. Although interesting, these findings are difficult to explain. Neither climate dimension had a negative raw correlation with effectiveness (r = .41 for differential command strength and r = .02 for positive EO behaviors strength), but both effects emerged as negative when included in a multiple regression equation with other predictors. In other words, when holding climate level constant, climate strength's effect became negative. These two findings contradict existing theory and research because (a) most researchers do not predict that climate strength has direct effects on outcomes, and (b) those who do make this prediction tend to expect that stronger climates are better, not worse (i.e., because people prefer to work in teams with less situational ambiguity; Bliese & Halverson, 1998; Lindell & Brandt, 2000; Schulte et al., 2009). As a result, it is unclear why, in comparing two groups with the same average climate rating, the group with more consistent ratings would be less effective. This result warrants additional consideration, both theoretically and empirically.

In addition to understanding how EO climate contributes to an important team outcome (i.e., effectiveness), I also wanted to test the extent to which EO climate

develops differently across work teams. My expected antecedents (size, deployment, diversity) had limited effects on EO climate, with a few exceptions:

As units became larger, members reported significantly more negative views of EO climate generally, as well as more negative perceptions of sexual harassment and discrimination and religious discrimination. These findings lend support for the teams (e.g., Kerr & Tindale, 2004; Staats et al., 2012) and diversity (e.g., Boehm et al., 2014; Raver & Gelfand, 2005) literatures by suggesting that larger teams face both broad issues with motivation and conflict *and* a greater likelihood of harassment and discrimination specifically. However, although group size contributed to poorer EO climate level, it had no effect on EO climate strength. Evidently, even if larger groups have fewer chances for social interaction, this does not necessarily mean they will have weaker climates (González-Romá et al., 2002; Zohar & Tenne-Gazit, 2008). It appears that the extent of team members' consensus in their attitudes, beliefs, and opinions is a result of factors other than simply the size of the group. Although larger teams may have more negative EO climates, they do not appear to demonstrate any less consensus in how they perceive that climate.

Results for the deployment variable were more limited. Deployment did not relate to any dimension of EO climate level. Therefore, even if deployment introduces stressors into a work unit (LeardMann et al., 2013; Levy et al., 2011), these stressors do not seem to interfere with a unit's ability to maintain a positive EO climate. Given that teams under high amounts of pressure must prioritize and focus narrowly on their performance goals (Karau & Kelly, 1992), one explanation is that this narrow focus on task-related goals leaves little opportunity for people to engage in discrimination or harassment.

Alternatively, perhaps the high stakes of deployment foster greater shared respect among team members, and deployed personnel may be forced to place increased trust in their coworkers. Although deployment did not affect EO climate level, it did weaken the strength of one of the climate dimensions. Specifically, units with a greater proportion of deployed members had significantly weaker climates for differential command behaviors. This finding aligns with climate theory (e.g., Klein et al., 2001; Moran & Volkwein, 1992; Schneider & Reichers, 1983), which argues that team members who work closely together have more opportunities to calibrate their climate perceptions. Deployment may be a variable that increases the distance – physically and/or psychologically – among team members, thereby creating more divergent perceptions of EO climate.

Of the antecedents, diversity had the most nuanced effects on EO climate. I predicted that diversity would improve EO climate because of a "representation effect" (i.e., better representation improves the experiences of minority members; Dansby & Landis, 1998; Lindsey et al., 2017). One finding supported this prediction – as expected, units with more sex diversity had better climates for positive EO behaviors. However, two other findings suggest the opposite effect. Units with more race diversity had poorer climates for differential command behaviors, and units with more age diversity had poorer climates for positive EO behaviors. Researchers have put forth several ideas for why diversity might have negative effects. One possibility is that diversity worsens climate by introducing conflict and communication issues into workgroups (Colquitt et al., 2002). Another is that diversity threatens majority members and encourages more discrimination against minorities (Dansby & Landis, 1998). Or, considering evidence that women and minorities view EO climate more negatively (Dansby & Landis, 1991;

Landis et al., 1993; Rosenfeld, Newell, & Le, 1998; Truhon, 2008), an analogous effect may exist at the group level such that teams with more minorities view EO climate more negatively. Finally, to offer the most optimistic view, perhaps the presence of minorities makes a team more sensitive to EO climate. Working with diverse colleagues may slowly shift majority members away from rosy views of fairness and equal opportunity and toward a more realistic understanding of how much room exists to improve EO climates.

Diversity also had two significant effects on climate strength, and the direction of these findings again contradict each other. Units with more sex diversity had *stronger* climates for racist behaviors, whereas units with more age diversity had *weaker* climates for positive EO behaviors. I predicted the latter effect would be true – namely, that diverse groups would develop more varying perceptions (i.e., weaker climates) because diverse group members naturally draw from different backgrounds, values, and life experiences when forming attitudes at work (Harrison et al., 2002; Klein et al., 2001). Strangely, the unexpected finding is inconsistent with the notion that the type of diversity should be most relevant to outcomes of the same focus (e.g., sex diversity links most strongly with gender-related outcomes; Avery et al., 2008; Wegge et al., 2008). As a result, it is difficult to explain why groups with more *sex* diversity had more agreement about the extent of *racist* behaviors in the workgroup. Although existing evidence still favors a match between the focus of the diversity and the focus of the outcome, researchers have posed the idea that diversity of any type may heighten people's sensitivity toward discrimination in general (Avery et al., 2008). In other words, perhaps experience with one type of diversity is, at least to some extent, "transferable" to perceiving discrimination based on another type of diversity.

Overall, I caution readers not to overinterpret some of the results from this study. Although I have highlighted and interpreted several interesting results, each significant finding was outnumbered by nonsignificant findings. For example, whereas two dimensions of climate strength were significant predictors of effectiveness, the other five dimensions of climate strength were unrelated to effectiveness. The same is true for the relationships between each of the antecedents and EO climate level and strength. The findings reviewed in this Discussion are certainly interesting and deserve attention, but readers should also keep in mind the full range of findings for these hypotheses.

Limitations and Recommendations for Study Design

Readers should consider these results in light of this study's sample. Few studies exist that directly compare military and non-military employees. Although military employees are like the broader working population in many ways, nontrivial differences may also exist. For example, demographically, the military is relatively homogenous (U.S. Department of Defense, 2016). This study was no exception, with limited representation from older workers, women, and racial minorities. In the future, researchers would benefit from testing these hypotheses in organizations that are more representative of the labor force, especially given that EO climate is a measure rooted in demographic identities. Additionally, sample size can be important in supplying the power needed to detect statistical effects, especially for interactions (Cohen et al., 2003). Although this study included survey responses from over 1,000 individual employees, analyzing the data at the work unit level makes the working sample size much more modest (N = 139 work units). Researchers face many barriers when they study above the individual level (e.g., locating organizations with large numbers of teams, collecting

enough data from each team to make the responses usable), but continued research at the unit level may determine whether more significant findings would emerge in larger samples. Given that organizations have become especially reliant on team-based work (Grant et al., 2010; Mathieu et al., 2017) and often design interventions for teams (Bliese, 2000), key stakeholders are likely to have a keen interest in how climate, discrimination, and effectiveness operate at a team level.

Additionally, the teams in this sample had unusually low agreement in their survey responses. In one sense, low agreement is beneficial because studying climate strength requires at least some variability in ratings. However, because these agreement indices were especially low, researchers should replicate these analyses in samples in which individual responses are more reliable representations of group means. Additionally, although the group sizes (mean = 7.63 members, range = three to 36 members) are on par with similar research studies, this sample used a broader definition of what constitutes a "work unit," compared with most organizations. Specifically, leaders at duty locations designated which employees belonged to a given work unit. As a result, definitions of work units could have ranged from small teams to entire ships of personnel. This limitation is significant because inconsistent definitions for work units reduce the ability to directly compare findings across units. On a related note, it is also worth reconsidering the clarity of the prompts preceding the survey items. The EO climate items prompt respondents to consider their "duty location," whereas the effectiveness items prompt respondents to consider their "work group (i.e., all persons who report to the same supervisor that you do)." Although the EO climate scale has accumulated validity evidence over the course of many years (e.g., Dansby & Landis,

1991; 1998; Estrada et al., 2007), future researchers might still consider whether people respond differently based on the provided reference group (e.g., "duty location" versus "work group"). Such minor distinctions may be meaningful in measuring climate because responsibilities vary at different levels of the organization (e.g., organizations create policies, but supervisors implement them; Zohar, 2000). Researchers and companies should carefully phrase their survey prompts using company-specific language (e.g., teams, workgroups, businesses, departments, units) so that respondents rate items using a clear reference group.

Beyond sample characteristics, one of the foremost concerns is the potential influence of common method variance. On one hand, I have measured several variables using objective information (e.g., demographics, deployment, unit size), which helps reduce the bias of method variance (Podsakoff et al., 2003; Podsakoff & Organ, 1986). However, confirmatory factor analyses indicated that method variance may have been a legitimate issue. The part of this study most affected was the link between EO climate level and effectiveness, as both measures were rated subjectively *and* collected at the same time point. In the future, one way to limit method variance is to conduct more longitudinal research. Longitudinal designs would also allow researchers to test for causality (e.g., whether EO climate drives teams to be more effective, or whether effective teams develop better climates) and mediation (e.g., whether variables like climate explain the link between team inputs and outcomes). Alongside these benefits, longitudinal data has it has challenges, too. Researchers have speculated that teams with poor climate attributes (low climate level or low climate strength) may not actually be viable for very long before they become forced to improve or simply disband (e.g.,

Koopmann et al., 2016; Lindell & Brandt, 2000). If possible, researchers should carefully consider the time scheduled between data collections.

Another important aspect of study design is measurement, and researchers should try to move beyond perceptions. In this study, general perceptions were valuable as a measure of EO climate. This approach offered more information than if I had limited employees to reporting only personal experiences with discrimination or harassment. Where this research can improve, however, is in measuring the outcome variable. Researchers should incorporate outcomes that better measure true team performance, as opposed to subjective perceptions of team performance, efficacy, or cohesion. Given that each type of performance measure (e.g., self-ratings, supervisor ratings, objective organizational data) may tell a slightly different story, researchers might consider collecting outcome data from multiple sources.

Directions for Future Research

Although not included as part of a formal hypothesis, a theme that emerged was the powerful effect of discrimination (i.e., each unit's average number of reported personal experiences with discrimination and harassment). Although research indicates that prior experience with sexual harassment damages perceptions of EO climate (Newell et al., 1995) and team productivity (O'Leary-Kelly et al., 2009; Willness et al., 2007), discrimination's effect on the other variables was more pervasive than expected. The discrimination variable consistently demonstrated some of the strongest relationships not only with EO climate level and effectiveness, but also with climate strength. This last finding is new – discrimination not only worsened the quality of EO climate but also group agreement about EO climate. However, this finding is consistent with evidence

linking perceived discrimination to burnout and withdrawal (Boswell & Olson-Buchanan, 2004; Volpone & Avery, 2013). In groups with higher rates of discrimination and harassment, members are likely to become more psychologically distant, contributing to more varying perceptions of the team's climate. Overall, given its substantial influence, I recommend that EO climate researchers incorporate some measure of discrimination in their studies, whether as a focal variable or as a control variable.

If discrimination had a surprisingly influential presence in these results, climate strength certainly had the opposite effect. Even so, these results afford us a few helpful observations about climate strength. First, the antecedents suggest some degree of differentiation between climate level and climate strength. For example, whereas unit size predicted climate level, it had no effect on climate strength. Findings like these indicate some value in treating climate level and strength differently because they may have somewhat different drivers. Second, these findings bolster the importance of EO climate level as a predictor of team effectiveness. In general, climate level overpowered climate strength as a predictor – the nonsignificant interactions suggest that a positive EO climate makes for an effective team regardless of the strength of the team's climate. Although nonsignificant interactions are always disappointing to researchers, the practical implications are still positive. For organizations, it is good that EO climate level is such a strong predictor of effectiveness that its effects hold even in work units with the weakest climates.

Significant findings for diversity were the most complex but also the most abundant. Each of the three types of diversity related significantly to some dimension of EO climate. However, whereas race and age diversity had reducing effects (i.e., they

worsened climate level and/or weakened climate strength), sex diversity had enhancing effects (i.e., it improved climate level and strengthened climate strength). Perhaps – and this is only speculation – sex diversity had slightly more positive effects because women are more tolerant of inequality than other minority groups. Although organizational demography researchers have advocated for treating each type of diversity as unique (rather than collapsing them into an overall index), the field has yet to determine why certain types of diversity may have more positive or negative effects than others.

On a similar note, researchers should continue to treat the EO climate construct as seven distinct factors instead of combining the items into one overall measure. In this sample, consistent with Estrada et al.'s (2007) findings, the positive behaviors subscale demonstrated more frequent linkages with the other study variables. In contrast, the age discrimination and disability discrimination subscales had extremely limited relationships with other variables. This limited influence may relate to the sample – on average, respondents were especially young (92% were 40 years or younger), and it is possible that relatively few people in the sample had disabilities. As a result, many employees may have lacked awareness of these types of discrimination or been unable to relate to the perspectives of older or disabled employees. Although it is not clear why positive behaviors seemed to play a slightly larger role in these results, it does raise an interesting research question of whether there exists a difference in negatively- versus positively-oriented items. The positive EO behaviors subscale is most like the items found in diversity climate scales (e.g., McKay et al., 2007; Mor Barak et al., 1998), which frame events more positively (e.g., "managers here make layoff decisions fairly," "equal access to training"). This similarity brings up a broader need to clarify the exact relationship

between diversity climate and EO climate. Although Boehm at al. (2014) found that diversity climate significantly predicted EO climate, more studies should examine this relationship – especially longitudinally – to provide empirical evidence for the theoretical assertion that these two scales are distinctly different.

This study leaves several doors open for research on EO climate strength. For example, leadership variables may be the most promising antecedents of EO climate strength because of leadership's well-established influence on employee attitudes and behaviors (e.g., Bowen & Ostroff, 2004; Kozlowski & Doherty, 1989; Schneider et al., 2002). In fact, when Schneider et al. (2002) tested the interaction between climate level and climate strength with four dimensions of service climate, managerial practices was the only dimension to emerge as significant. In predicting climate development, good leadership may simply outweigh more objective group characteristics like composition, size, or diversity. Additionally, like other climate strength researchers, I have emphasized the importance of social interaction in developing climate (e.g., Klein et al., 2001; Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978; Schneider & Reichers, 1983). However, instead of claiming that group characteristics (e.g., size, diversity, deployment) theoretically produce a certain degree of social interaction, researchers may need to start using items that map more directly onto what we truly mean by *interaction*. In other words, perhaps structural or demographic antecedents are not always great proxies for measuring social interaction (see also Spector & Brannick, 2011). Although harder to measure, other variables may be more direct measurements of the intended constructs (e.g., similarity in values, task interdependence, frequency or quality of interactions, team identification, communication exchange). For example, as a follow-up to this study, it would be interesting to test

whether conflict is the mechanism that links team size to effectiveness, or whether interpersonal trust explains the link between diversity and effectiveness.

Practical Implications

Although significant findings are limited, this study still offers a few takeaways that can help inform organizational decisions. For companies wishing to collect data on EO climate, they will gain the most information by using more comprehensive measures of EO climate and diversity. In this study, the results would not have revealed as many nuances, had I simply combined all EO climate items together or lumped all three types of diversity into an overall index. Almost all significant links between the antecedents and the climate variables only emerged once I separated EO climate into its seven dimensions. Despite these benefits, the fact remains that companies often face more pressure than researchers to limit the length of their employee surveys. If measuring the complete set of EO climate items is not feasible, companies might consider which factors are most relevant to their employees. Even if organizations reduce the number of items or subscales included in a survey, analysts should still evaluate the data using both the complete EO climate scale and any individual factors represented.

Although these findings produced only a handful of significant paths, they also have an upside – namely, that organizations can improve EO climate and team outcomes even if they start small. If sex diversity only contributes to improvements in one or two climate dimensions, companies can still use this knowledge to understand how climate develops differently across different types of teams or departments. Leaders may choose to focus on one or two dimensions of EO climate with the greatest room for improvement, and as these findings show, those individual climate dimensions can make

a difference in team outcomes. Additionally, for many companies, promoting climate strength (e.g., consistent, clear expectations of the work environment) probably offers high practical value, even if the statistical relationship is not quite significant. Ultimately, even small improvements are worthwhile when the outcome (e.g., reducing discrimination and harassment) is incredibly important to stakeholders.

Another benefit of collecting data on climate strength is that it requires minimal survey space. A lot of organizations recognize the value of measuring climate level, so climate items are likely not a hard sell for inclusion in a survey. For companies already measuring climate level, they need no extra survey space to measure climate strength as well – it requires only the climate items already being measured. Certainly, given mixed findings across climate strength research, organizations may question the added value of climate strength or wonder why their efforts should not focus entirely on climate level. Although the longevity of climate strength research is not entirely clear, companies sacrifice little by continuing to study climate strength until researchers develop clearer conclusions.

Another important takeaway for organizations is the huge influence of the discrimination variable. This knowledge is not necessarily new – research demonstrates that groups with high rates of discrimination and harassment have poorer performance, less cohesion, and more conflict (Goldman et al., 2006; Raver & Gelfand, 2005). However, the consistency and magnitude of discrimination's effects in this study reinforce its importance. Given that personal experience with discrimination or harassment seemed to influence nearly all other variables in this study, it is especially important for organizations to ensure that people feel safe reporting these experiences on

surveys. In addition to encouraging employees to trust and participate in formal reporting processes, companies can also tailor their survey communications to reassure employees that they can feel comfortable responding honestly on surveys.

Beyond survey design and analysis, companies can take a number of steps to promote a positive EO climate. In terms of broad strategy, companies should conceptualize EO climate not simply as the absence of discrimination, but also as the presence of positive equal opportunity events and behaviors. Although most of the EO climate scale focused on negative events (e.g., religious discrimination, sexual harassment), the positive behaviors subscale showed some of the strongest relationships with other variables. Although it is not entirely clear why the positive subscale showed such a strong effect, it demonstrates that companies should measure the success of their EO initiatives by both reducing negative events *and* encouraging more positive behaviors.

Workgroup characteristics (e.g., diversity, size, deployment) offer a starting point for improving EO climate. As a broad area of research, diversity is perhaps one of the best examples for which researchers' best answer still seems to be "it depends." In this study, sex diversity had positive effects on EO climate, whereas age and race diversity had negative effects. Readers should not misinterpret such findings to suggest that they need to restructure or segregate work teams to be more or less diverse. Rather, organizations need to recognize that diversity provides clear benefits but also presents some challenges. The goal, therefore, should be to maximize diversity's benefits while minimizing its negative outcomes (King & Gilrane, 2015). This goal starts with equipping leaders to manage diverse groups. Fundamentally, it helps for supervisors to

understand why demographics are socially charged. Belonging to certain social groups helps us define our identities and create our personal value (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; 1986). In many cases, people's natural preferences for our own social groups hinder us from recognizing other people's value and making the best collective decisions. Supervisors also need to recognize their front-line importance (e.g., Kozlowski & Doherty, 1989) as role models and champions of equal opportunity practices. Managers should become aware of common biases and stereotypes, question their assumptions when making decisions, and actively pay attention to situations in which contributions from certain demographic groups are downplayed or overlooked (King & Gilrane, 2015).

Beyond individual leaders, every decision the organization makes sends a signal about its commitment to equal opportunity practices (e.g., Avery & McKay, 2006). In samples like this one, even working in a relatively diverse group may not negate the fact that the overall population is highly homogenous. Each organization or industry is not the same when it comes to diversity – some have built fantastic reputations for diversity, whereas others are trying to rebuild after high-profile lawsuits. These factors should play a role in how an organization uses diversity information to improve people's impressions of the company (Avery & McKay, 2006). Companies wishing to improve employee EO perceptions need to reconsider how their HR practices – from hiring to diversity training to performance reviews – reinforce their *sincere* commitment to EO practices. To provide a couple of examples (for further reading, see white paper by King & Gilrane, 2015), organizations can make their diversity training more inclusive and effective by emphasizing multiple minority groups rather than targeting only one type of minority group (e.g., race/ethnicity). Organizations can also improve performance reviews – and

perceptions of performance reviews – by training supervisors to become aware of potential biases (e.g., the tendency to rate women as less effective than men) and to correct them.

Like diverse teams, large teams may also have to work harder to create and maintain a positive EO climate. The challenges faced by large teams are most likely to be motivational and/or interpersonal in nature (Curral et al., 2001; Staats et al., 2012). If a team's issues seem to be motivational, leaders should try to instill in each employee more personal responsibility and accountability for upholding the organization's EO climate. This can curb the tendency for group members to reduce their effort as teams become larger. On the other hand, if a team's issues are interpersonal in nature, leaders should focus on addressing conflict. This may involve breaking down the barriers that inhibit people of different demographic groups from respecting each other's contributions and overcoming their differences.

Finally, although I also studied how EO climate varies based on military deployment, it may be too early to make solid recommendations for practice. This study was one of the first to examine deployment in the context of team climate. One significant finding suggests that deployment can weaken climate strength – in this case, it produced less consistent perceptions of differential command behaviors. This finding should encourage military researchers and collaborators to continue studying how deployment affects team climate. Beyond the military, other organizations might consider the climates of their most challenged work teams. Teams with expatriates, virtual teams, or teams under high amounts of work pressure may also face unique issues with EO climate that are worth exploring and understanding.

Conclusion

According to this study, teams with positive EO climates – that is, teams with a low probability of discrimination and harassment – also felt that they performed more effectively. This finding held true using every possible measure of EO climate, from racist behaviors to age discrimination. However, this finding did not change based on a team's consensus regarding its EO climate. Teams with positive EO climates were more effective regardless of how much variability existed across members' individual climate ratings. Although climate strength played much smaller role than I hypothesized, these results do indicate that a positive EO climate is beneficial even for teams with the weakest climates. These results also offer some evidence that certain teams may face challenges developing positive or strong EO climates. Supervisors should consider the size and diversity of their work teams with an understanding that these qualities may affect member perceptions of discrimination and harassment.

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Table 1

Individual-Level Descriptive Statistics and Correlations of Study Variables

Variable	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1. EO Climate Level (Combined)	4.21	.67	(.94)												
2. Differential Command Behaviors	4.49	.77	.82**	(.88)											
3. Positive EO Behaviors	4.10	.92	.40**	.28**	(.88)										
4. Racist Behaviors	3.71	1.13	.76**	.52**	.05	(.90)									
5. Sexual Discrimination & Harassment	4.05	.96	.85**	.62**	.09**	.78**	(.86)								
6. Religious Discrimination	4.45	.77	.83**	.68**	.18**	.60**	.70**	(.81)							
7. Age Discrimination	4.28	.94	.79**	.59**	.17**	.50**	.61**	.66**	(.89)						
8. Disability Discrimination	4.37	.88	.78**	.61**	.17**	.49**	.59**	.65**	.70**	(.87)					
9. Effectiveness	4.09	.87	.46**	.40**	.27**	.31**	.37**	.31**	.34**	.36**	(.87)				
10. Sex	.16	.37	-.04	.004	.06*	-.03	-.11**	-.01	-.05	-.05	-.07*	--			
11. Race	5.15	1.55	.11**	.15**	.11**	.08*	.02	.06	.05	.08**	.11**	-.04	--		
12. Age	2.20	.86	.05	.01	.02	.09**	.05	.01	-.02	.07*	.08**	-.11**	.03	--	
13. Deployment	.27	.45	-.07*	-.11**	-.03	-.07*	-.06	-.03	-.04	-.01	-.03	-.01	-.06	-.06	--
14. Discrimination	.43	.96	-.52**	-.44**	-.09**	-.45**	-.51**	-.40**	-.44**	-.41**	-.28**	.13**	-.07*	-.06	.08*

Note. N = 1,060. Reliability estimates (Cronbach's alpha) are provided in parentheses in the diagonal. EO = equal opportunity. EO Climate Level (Combined) represents the full EO climate scale with all seven factors included. Sex coded such that 1 = female and 0 = male. Deployment coded such that 1 = currently deployed and 0 = not currently deployed. Race and age assessed as categorical variables (i.e., 1-6 and 1-5, respectively). Although using a multi-categorical measure of race makes the variable easy to view in a correlation matrix, it does not provide all information (i.e., it does not reflect that some individuals belong to more than one race).

* $p < .05$, two-tailed.

** $p < .01$, two-tailed.

Table 2

Unit-Level Descriptive Statistics and Correlations of Study Variables (Including Climate Level Variables)

	Variable	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1.	EO Climate Level (Combined)	4.24	.32	--													
2.	Differential Command Behaviors	4.53	.36	.83**	--												
3.	Positive EO Behaviors	4.12	.46	.42**	.31**	--											
4.	Racist Behaviors	3.76	.53	.77**	.56**	.09	--										
5.	Sexual Discrimination & Harassment	4.10	.46	.86**	.66**	.07	.78**	--									
6.	Religious Discrimination	4.49	.34	.82**	.69**	.21*	.58**	.73**	--								
7.	Age Discrimination	4.31	.42	.79**	.58**	.17	.51**	.67**	.66**	--							
8.	Disability Discrimination	4.38	.46	.82**	.64**	.22**	.53**	.66**	.63**	.73**	--						
9.	Effectiveness	4.07	.45	.63**	.56**	.43**	.40**	.45**	.43**	.44**	.57**	--					
10.	Sex Diversity	.28	.26	-.05	-.12	.18*	-.01	-.13	.02	-.04	-.18*	-.15	--				
11.	Race Diversity	.49	.27	-.15	-.27**	-.11	-.12	.01	-.07	-.08	-.17*	-.26**	.03	--			
12.	Age Diversity	.62	.21	-.03	-.05	-.17*	.11	.09	-.03	-.09	-.05	-.05	.11	.03	--		
13.	Size	7.63	5.65	-.14	-.12	-.05	-.15	-.14	-.16	-.10	-.04	.05	-.10	.01	.01	--	
14.	Deployment	.23	.36	-.19*	-.27**	-.05	-.22*	-.17	-.07	-.12	-.07	-.15	.06	.17	.01	.18*	--
15.	Discrimination	.43	.47	-.55**	-.44**	-.17*	-.42**	-.49**	-.37**	-.47**	-.57**	-.47**	.26**	.10	.02	-.02	.29**

Note. $N = 139$. EO = equal opportunity. EO Climate Level (Combined) represents the full EO climate scale with all seven factors included. Diversity variables coded using the $Blau_N$ index. Deployment and discrimination coded as unit averages.

* $p < .05$, two-tailed.

** $p < .01$, two-tailed.

Table 3

Unit-Level Descriptive Statistics and Correlations of Study Variables (Including Climate Strength Variables)

Variable	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. EO Climate Combined (Strength)	-.57	.27	--								
2. Differential Command Behaviors (Strength)	-.59	.40	.78**	--							
3. Positive EO Behaviors (Strength)	-.81	.33	.20*	.17*	--						
4. Racist Behaviors (Strength)	-1.00	.41	.61**	.40**	.06	--					
5. Sexual Harassment & Discrimination (Strength)	-.84	.40	.80**	.57**	.07	.70**	--				
6. Religious Discrimination (Strength)	-.63	.37	.72**	.63**	.09	.36**	.57**	--			
7. Age Discrimination (Strength)	-.80	.43	.70**	.48**	.08	.35**	.56**	.50**	--		
8. Disability Discrimination (Strength)	-.72	.45	.67**	.54**	.01	.30**	.48**	.45**	.68**	--	
9. Effectiveness	4.07	.45	.39**	.41**	.02	.23**	.32**	.36**	.34**	.46**	--
10. Sex Diversity	.28	.26	.01	-.06	.08	.12	-.02	.07	.03	-.15	-.15
11. Race Diversity	.49	.27	-.09	-.22*	.06	-.08	.01	-.11	-.05	-.17	-.26**
12. Age Diversity	.62	.21	-.13	-.05	-.17	-.14	-.06	-.04	-.11	-.15	-.05
13. Size	7.63	5.65	-.11	-.15	-.14	-.14	-.12	-.17*	-.10	-.07	.05
14. Deployment	.23	.36	-.14	-.32**	-.17*	-.10	-.17*	-.13	-.13	-.13	-.15
15. Discrimination	.43	.47	-.42**	-.40**	-.10	-.21*	-.39**	-.33**	-.41**	-.52**	-.47**

Note. N = 139. EO = equal opportunity. EO Climate Level (Combined) represents the full EO climate scale with all seven factors included. Each climate strength variable reverse-coded (i.e., multiplied by -1) so that higher values represent a stronger climate. Diversity variables coded using the $Blau_N$ index. Deployment and discrimination coded as unit averages. See Table 2 for correlations among variables 10-15.

* $p < .05$, two-tailed.

** $p < .01$, two-tailed.

Table 4

Confirmatory Factor Analyses of Nested Models

Model	*df*	χ^2	χ^2_{diff}	RMSEA	SRMR	CFI	TLI
Eight-factor model	322	1841.17**		0.07	0.05	0.93	0.92
Two-factor model	349	7647.75**	5806.58**	0.14	0.11	0.66	0.63
One-factor model	350	9363.26**	1715.51**	0.16	0.12	0.58	0.55
CMV model †	294	1055.96**	785.21**	0.05	0.03	0.96	0.95

Note. N = 1,060. *df* = degrees of freedom, RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation, SRMR = standardized root mean square residual, CFI = comparative fit index, TLI = Tucker-Lewis Index, CMV = common method variance. Eight-factor model includes seven EO climate factors and effectiveness. Two-factor model includes EO climate (all dimensions combined) and effectiveness. One-factor model combines all variables into a common latent factor.

† CMV model includes the eight-factor structure and a general "method" factor (and is thus compared against the eight-factor model).

** $p < .001$.

Table 5

Summary of Study Hypotheses

Hypothesis	Prediction	Support?
1	Unit EO climate level is positively related to perceived unit effectiveness. *Effects were significant using both the full EO climate measure and its separate dimensions.	Yes
2	Unit EO climate strength moderates the positive relationship between unit EO climate level and perceived unit effectiveness such that the relationship is stronger in strong (versus weak) climates.	No
3, 6, 9	Unit diversity is positively related to unit EO climate level. *Units that were more sex-diverse had better climates for positive EO behaviors. *Units that were more race-diverse had poorer climates for differential command behaviors. *Units that were more age-diverse had poorer climates for positive EO behaviors.	Limited
	Unit size is negatively related to unit EO climate level. *Larger units rated EO climate overall (i.e., the full EO climate measure) more poorly. *Larger units rated climate for sexual harassment and discrimination more poorly. *Larger units rated climate for religious discrimination more poorly.	Partial
	Unit deployment is negatively related to unit EO climate level.	No
5, 8, 11	Unit diversity is negatively related to unit EO climate strength. *Units that were more sex-diverse had stronger climates for racist behaviors. *Units that were more age-diverse had weaker climates for positive EO behaviors.	Limited
	Unit size is negatively related to unit EO climate strength.	No
	Unit deployment is negatively related to unit EO climate strength. *Units with more members deployed had weaker climates for differential command behaviors.	Limited
4, 7, 10	The conditional indirect effect of unit diversity on perceived unit effectiveness via EO climate is stronger when EO climate strength is high (versus low).	No
	The conditional indirect effect of unit size on perceived unit effectiveness via EO climate is stronger when EO climate strength is high (versus low).	
	The conditional indirect effect of unit deployment on perceived unit effectiveness via EO climate is stronger when EO climate strength is high (versus low).	

Note. EO = equal opportunity.

* Summarizes significant findings.

Table 6

Hierarchical Regression Results and Moderation Analysis for Unit Effectiveness

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	B (*SE*)	*β*	*B* (*SE*)	*β*	*B* (*SE*)	*β*	*B* (*SE*)	*β*
Women	-.01 (.21)	-.00	-.04 (.18)	-.02	.00 (.19)	.00	.05 (.19)	.02
Racial Minorities	-.25 (.15)	-.13	-.13 (.13)	-.07	-.14 (.13)	-.07	-.12 (.13)	-.06
Discrimination	-.43 (.08)	-.45**	-.16 (.08)	-.17*	-.17 (.08)	-.18*	-.19 (.08)	-.20*
EO Climate Level **(Complete)**			.72 (.11)	.52**	.83 (.14)	.60**	.87 (.14)	.63**
EO Climate Strength **(Complete)**					-.20 (.16)	-.12	-.21 (.15)	-.13
Level × Strength **(Complete)**							-.53 (.36)	-.11
R^2		.24**		.42**		.43**		.44**
Adjusted R^2		.22**		.40**		.41**		.41**
ΔR^2				.19**		.01		.01

Note. *N* = 139 work units. EO = equal opportunity; *SE* = standard error. EO Climate (Complete) represents the full EO climate scale with all seven factors included. "Women" and "Racial Minorities" indicate the proportion of women and the proportion of racial minorities in a work unit, respectively.

* $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

Table 6 (Continued)

Hierarchical Regression Results and Moderation Analysis for Unit Effectiveness

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	B (*SE*)	*β*	*B* (*SE*)	*β*	*B* (*SE*)	*β*	*B* (*SE*)	*β*
Women	-.01 (.21)	-.00	-.01 (.19)	-.01	.05 (.19)	.02	.05 (.19)	.02
Racial Minorities	-.25 (.15)	-.13	.00 (.14)	.00	.02 (.14)	.01	.02 (.14)	.01
Discrimination	-.43 (.08)	-.45**	-.26 (.08)	-.27**	-.28 (.08)	-.29**	-.28 (.08)	-.29**
EO Climate Level **(Diff. Command)**			.55 (.10)	.44**	.91 (.18)	.73**	.90 (.18)	.72**
EO Climate Strength **(Diff. Command)**					-.37 (.15)	-.33*	-.37 (.15)	-.33*
Level × Strength **(Diff. Command)**							-.05 (.20)	-.02
R^2		.24**		.37**		.40**		.40**
Adjusted R^2		.22**		.35**		.38**		.37**
ΔR^2				.14**		.03*		.00

Note. *N* = 139 work units. EO = equal opportunity; *SE* = standard error. EO Climate (Diff. Command) represents the "Differential Command Behaviors" factor of the EO climate scale. "Women" and "Racial Minorities" indicate the proportion of women and the proportion of racial minorities in a work unit, respectively.

* $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

Table 6 (Continued)

Hierarchical Regression Results and Moderation Analysis for Unit Effectiveness

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	B (*SE*)	*β*	*B* (*SE*)	*β*	*B* (*SE*)	*β*	*B* (*SE*)	*β*
Women	-.01 (.21)	-.00	-.24 (.20)	-.09	-.29 (.18)	-.11	-.27 (.18)	-.11
Racial Minorities	-.25 (.15)	-.13	-.20 (.14)	-.10	-.12 (.13)	-.06	-.12 (.13)	-.06
Discrimination	-.43 (.08)	-.45**	-.34 (.07)	-.36**	-.34 (.07)	-.36**	-.34 (.07)	-.36**
EO Climate Level **(Positive)**			.37 (.07)	.38**	.59 (.08)	.61**	.57 (.09)	.59**
EO Climate Strength **(Positive)**					-.50 (.11)	-.38**	-.51 (.11)	-.38**
Level × Strength **(Positive)**							.16 (.16)	.07
R^2		.24**		.37**		.45**		.46**
Adjusted R^2		.22**		.35**		.43**		.43**
ΔR^2				.13**		.09**		.00

Note. *N* = 139 work units. EO = equal opportunity; *SE* = standard error. EO Climate (Positive) represents the "Positive EO Behaviors" factor of the EO climate scale. "Women" and "Racial Minorities" indicate the proportion of women and the proportion of racial minorities in a work unit, respectively.

* $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

Table 6 (Continued)

Hierarchical Regression Results and Moderation Analysis for Unit Effectiveness

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	B (*SE*)	*β*	*B* (*SE*)	*β*	*B* (*SE*)	*β*	*B* (*SE*)	*β*
Women	-.01 (.21)	-.00	-.02 (.20)	-.01	-.04 (.21)	-.01	-.03 (21)	-.01
Racial Minorities	-.25 (.15)	-.13	-.21 (.14)	-.11	-.21 (.15)	-.11	-.21 (.15)	-.11
Discrimination	-.43 (.08)	-.45**	-.34 (.08)	-.35**	-.33 (.08)	-.35**	-.34 (.08)	-.35**
EO Climate Level **(Racist)**			.20 (.07)	.24**	.18 (.08)	.21*	.17 (.09)	.21*
EO Climate Strength **(Racist)**					.05 (.10)	.04	.04 (.10)	.04
Level × Strength **(Racist)**							.04 (.16)	.02
R^2		.24**		.28**		.28**		.28**
Adjusted R^2		.22**		.26**		.26**		.25**
ΔR^2				.05**		.00		.00

Note. N = 139 work units. EO = equal opportunity; *SE* = standard error. EO Climate (Racist) represents the "Racist Behaviors" factor of the EO climate scale. "Women" and "Racial Minorities" indicate the proportion of women and the proportion of racial minorities in a work unit, respectively.

* $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

Table 6 (Continued)

Hierarchical Regression Results and Moderation Analysis for Unit Effectiveness

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	B (*SE*)	*β*	*B* (*SE*)	*β*	*B* (*SE*)	*β*	*B* (*SE*)	*β*
Women	-.01 (.21)	-.00	.10 (.20)	.04	.11 (.21)	.04	.13 (.21)	.05
Racial Minorities	-.25 (.15)	-.13	-.28 (.14)	-.14	-.28 (.14)	-.14	-.28 (.14)	-.15*
Discrimination	-.43 (.08)	-.45**	-.30 (.08)	-.31**	-.30 (.08)	-.32**	-.31 (.09)	-.32**
EO Climate Level **(Sex)**			.30 (.08)	.31**	.32 (.11)	.33**	.33 (.11)	.34**
EO Climate Strength **(Sex)**					-.03 (.11)	-.03	-.03 (.11)	-.03
Level × Strength **(Sex)**							-.09 (.19)	-.04
R^2		.24**		.31**		.31**		.31**
Adjusted R^2		.22**		.29**		.28**		.28**
ΔR^2				.07**		.00		.00

Note. N = 139 work units. EO = equal opportunity; *SE* = standard error. EO Climate (Sex) represents the "Sex Discrimination and Harassment" factor of the EO climate scale. "Women" and "Racial Minorities" indicate the proportion of women and the proportion of racial minorities in a work unit, respectively.

* $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

Table 6 (Continued)

Hierarchical Regression Results and Moderation Analysis for Unit Effectiveness

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	B (*SE*)	*β*	*B* (*SE*)	*β*	*B* (*SE*)	*β*	*B* (*SE*)	*β*
Women	-.01 (.21)	-.00	-.01 (.20)	-.00	.01 (.20)	.00	-.06 (.21)	-.02
Racial Minorities	-.25 (.15)	-.13	-.22 (.14)	-.12	-.24 (.14)	-.12	-.25 (.14)	-.13
Discrimination	-.43 (.08)	-.45**	-.33 (.08)	-.35**	-.33 (.08)	-.35**	-.32 (.08)	-.33**
EO Climate Level **(Religion)**			.39 (.10)	.29**	.45 (.18)	.34*	.45 (.18)	.34*
EO Climate Strength **(Religion)**					-.08 (.16)	-.06	-.06 (.16)	-.05
Level × Strength **(Religion)**							.27 (.22)	.09
R^2		.24**		.31**		.31**		.32**
Adjusted R^2		.22**		.29**		.28**		.29**
ΔR^2				.07**		.00		.01

Note. N = 139 work units. EO = equal opportunity; *SE* = standard error. EO Climate (Religion) represents the "Religious Discrimination" factor of the EO climate scale. "Women" and "Racial Minorities" indicate the proportion of women and the proportion of racial minorities in a work unit, respectively.

* $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

Table 6 (Continued)

Hierarchical Regression Results and Moderation Analysis for Unit Effectiveness

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	B (*SE*)	*β*	*B* (*SE*)	*β*	*B* (*SE*)	*β*	*B* (*SE*)	*β*
Women	-.01 (.21)	-.00	-.02 (.20)	-.01	.01 (.21)	.00	.00 (.21)	.00
Racial Minorities	-.25 (.15)	-.13	-.24 (.14)	-.12	-.24 (.14)	-.12	-.24 (.14)	-.12
Discrimination	-.43 (.08)	-.45**	-.30 (.08)	-.32**	-.31 (.08)	-.32**	-.31 (.08)	-.32**
EO Climate Level **(Age)**			.30 (.09)	.28**	.35 (.13)	.33*	.35 (.13)	.33**
EO Climate Strength **(Age)**					-.07 (.13)	-.07	-.07 (.13)	-.07
Level × Strength **(Age)**							.03 (.17)	.01
R^2		.24**		.30**		.30**		.30**
Adjusted R^2		.22**		.28**		.27**		.27**
ΔR^2				.06**		.00		.00

Note. N = 139 work units. EO = equal opportunity; *SE* = standard error. EO Climate (Age) represents the "Age Discrimination" factor of the EO climate scale. "Women" and "Racial Minorities" indicate the proportion of women and the proportion of racial minorities in a work unit, respectively.

* $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

Table 6 (Continued)

Hierarchical Regression Results and Moderation Analysis for Unit Effectiveness

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	B (*SE*)	*β*	*B* (*SE*)	*β*	*B* (*SE*)	*β*	*B* (*SE*)	*β*
Women	-.01 (.21)	-.00	.03 (.19)	.01	.05 (.19)	.02	.05 (.19)	.02
Racial Minorities	-.25 (.15)	-.13	-.14 (.14)	-.07	-.14 (.14)	-.07	-.14 (.14)	-.07
Discrimination	-.43 (.08)	-.45**	-.20 (.08)	-.21*	-.21 (.08)	-.22*	-.21 (.08)	-.22*
EO Climate Level **(Disability)**			.43 (.08)	.44**	.50 (.13)	.52**	.50 (.13)	.52**
EO Climate Strength **(Disability)**					-.10 (.13)	-.10	-.10 (.13)	-.10
Level × Strength **(Disability)**							.02 (.13)	.01
R^2		.24**		.36**		.37**		.37**
Adjusted R^2		.22**		.34**		.34**		.34**
ΔR^2				.13**		.00		.00

Note. N = 139 work units. EO = equal opportunity; *SE* = standard error. EO Climate (Disability) represents the "Disability Discrimination" factor of the EO climate scale. "Women" and "Racial Minorities" indicate the proportion of women and the proportion of racial minorities in a work unit, respectively.

* $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

Table 7

Hierarchical Regression Results for Effects of Antecedents on Level and Strength of EO Climate ***(Complete Measure)***

	Model 1		Model 2	
	B (*SE*)	*β*	*B* (*SE*)	*β*
Dependent Variable: Climate Level				
Discrimination	-.38 (.05)	-.55**	-.39 (.05)	-.57**
Sex Diversity			.11 (.09)	.09
Race Diversity			-.12 (.09)	-.10
Age Diversity			-.04 (.11)	-.03
Unit Size			-.01 (.00)	-.14†
Unit Deployment			.01 (.07)	.01
R^2		.30**		.34**
Adjusted R^2		.30**		.31**
ΔR^2				.04
Dependent Variable: Climate Strength				
Discrimination	-.24 (.05)	-.42**	-.26 (.05)	-.45**
Sex Diversity			.14 (.09)	.13
Race Diversity			-.05 (.08)	-.05
Age Diversity			-.17 (.10)	-.13
Unit Size			-.01 (.00)	-.11
Unit Deployment			.01 (.06)	.01
R^2		.18**		.22**
Adjusted R^2		.17**		.19**
ΔR^2				.05

Note. N = 139 work units. EO = equal opportunity; *SE* = standard error. "Complete Measure" indicates the use of the full EO climate scale with all seven dimensions included.

* $p < .05$.

† $p = .050$.

** $p < .01$.

Table 8

Hierarchical Regression Results for Effects of Antecedents on Level and Strength of EO Climate ***(Differential Command Behaviors)***

	Model 1		Model 2	
	B (*SE*)	*β*	*B* (*SE*)	*β*
Dependent Variable: Climate Level				
Discrimination	-.34 (.06)	-.44**	-.30 (.06)	-.39**
Sex Diversity			-.02 (.11)	-.02
Race Diversity			-.28 (.10)	-.21**
Age Diversity			-.05 (.13)	-.03
Unit Size			-.01 (.01)	-.11
Unit Deployment			-.10 (.08)	-.11
R^2		.20**		.28**
Adjusted R^2		.19**		.24**
ΔR^2				.08*
Dependent Variable: Climate Strength				
Discrimination	-.35 (.07)	-.40**	-.30 (.07)	-.35**
Sex Diversity			.06 (.12)	.04
Race Diversity			-.22 (.12)	-.15
Age Diversity			-.08 (.14)	-.04
Unit Size			-.01 (.01)	-.12
Unit Deployment			-.20 (.09)	-.18*
R^2		.16**		.25**
Adjusted R^2		.16**		.21**
ΔR^2				.08*

Note. N = 139 work units. EO = equal opportunity; *SE* = standard error.

* $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

Table 9

Hierarchical Regression Results for Effects of Antecedents on Level and Strength of EO Climate ***(Positive EO Behaviors)***

	Model 1		Model 2	
	B (*SE*)	*β*	*B* (*SE*)	*β*
Dependent Variable: Climate Level				
Discrimination	-.17 (.08)	-.17*	-.23 (.09)	-.23**
Sex Diversity			.47 (.15)	.26**
Race Diversity			-.15 (.14)	-.09
Age Diversity			-.41 (.18)	-.19*
Unit Size			-.00 (.01)	-.03
Unit Deployment			.03 (.11)	.02
R^2		.03*		.13**
Adjusted R^2		.02*		.09**
ΔR^2				.10*
Dependent Variable: Climate Strength				
Discrimination	-.07 (.06)	-.10	-.07 (.06)	-.10
Sex Diversity			.15 (.11)	.12
Race Diversity			.12 (.11)	.09
Age Diversity			-.28 (.13)	-.18*
Unit Size			-.01 (.01)	-.10
Unit Deployment			-.13 (.08)	-.14
R^2		.01		.09*
Adjusted R^2		.00		.05*
ΔR^2				.08*

Note. N = 139 work units. EO = equal opportunity; *SE* = standard error.

* $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

Table 10

Hierarchical Regression Results for Effects of Antecedents on Level and Strength of EO Climate ***(Racist Behaviors)***

	Model 1		Model 2	
	B (*SE*)	*β*	*B* (*SE*)	*β*
Dependent Variable: Climate Level				
Discrimination	-.48 (.09)	-.42**	-.48 (.09)	-.42**
Sex Diversity			.17 (.17)	.08
Race Diversity			-.15 (.16)	-.07
Age Diversity			.28 (.19)	.11
Unit Size			-.01 (.01)	-.13
Unit Deployment			-.10 (.12)	-.07
R^2		.18**		.23**
Adjusted R^2		.17**		.19**
ΔR^2				.05
Dependent Variable: Climate Strength				
Discrimination	-.18 (.07)	-.21*	-.22 (.08)	-.25**
Sex Diversity			.30 (.14)	.19*
Race Diversity			-.09 (.13)	-.06
Age Diversity			-.29 (.16)	-.15
Unit Size			-.01 (.01)	-.12
Unit Deployment			-.00 (.10)	-.00
R^2		.04*		.12*
Adjusted R^2		.04*		.08*
ΔR^2				.08

Note. N = 139 work units. EO = equal opportunity; *SE* = standard error.

* $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

Table 11

Hierarchical Regression Results for Effects of Antecedents on Level and Strength of EO Climate ***(Sexual Harassment and Discrimination)***

	Model 1		Model 2	
	B (*SE*)	*β*	*B* (*SE*)	*β*
Dependent Variable: Climate Level				
Discrimination	-.48 (.07)	-.49**	-.48 (.08)	-.49**
Sex Diversity			-.05 (.14)	-.03
Race Diversity			.10 (.13)	.06
Age Diversity			.23 (.16)	.11
Unit Size			-.01 (.01)	-.15*
Unit Deployment			-.01 (.10)	-.01
R^2		.24**		.27**
Adjusted R^2		.23**		.24**
ΔR^2				.04
Dependent Variable: Climate Strength				
Discrimination	-.33 (.07)	-.39**	-.34 (.07)	-.40**
Sex Diversity			.12 (.13)	.08
Race Diversity			.09 (.12)	.06
Age Diversity			-.10 (.15)	-.06
Unit Size			-.01 (.01)	-.11
Unit Deployment			-.05 (.09)	-.05
R^2		.15**		.18**
Adjusted R^2		.14**		.14**
ΔR^2				.03

Note. N = 139 work units. EO = equal opportunity; *SE* = standard error.

* $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

Table 12

Hierarchical Regression Results for Effects of Antecedents on Level and Strength of EO Climate ***(Religious Discrimination)***

	Model 1		Model 2	
	B (*SE*)	*β*	*B* (*SE*)	*β*
Dependent Variable: Climate Level				
Discrimination	-.26 (.06)	-.37**	-.30 (.06)	-.41**
Sex Diversity			.15 (.11)	.11
Race Diversity			-.05 (.10)	-.04
Age Diversity			-.05 (.13)	-.03
Unit Size			-.01 (.01)	-.17*
Unit Deployment			.07 (.08)	.08
R^2		.13**		.18**
Adjusted R^2		.13**		.14**
ΔR^2				.05
Dependent Variable: Climate Strength				
Discrimination	-.27 (.06)	-.33**	-.30 (.07)	-.37**
Sex Diversity			.22 (.12)	.15
Race Diversity			-.11 (.11)	-.08
Age Diversity			-.09 (.14)	-.05
Unit Size			-.01 (.01)	-.16
Unit Deployment			.01 (.09)	.01
R^2		.11**		.17**
Adjusted R^2		.11**		.13**
ΔR^2				.06

Note. N = 139 work units. EO = equal opportunity; *SE* = standard error.

* $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

Table 13

*Hierarchical Regression Results for Effects of Antecedents on Level and Strength of EO Climate **(Age Discrimination)***

	Model 1		Model 2	
	B (*SE*)	*β*	*B* (*SE*)	*β*
Dependent Variable: Climate Level				
Discrimination	-.42 (.07)	-.47**	-.45 (.07)	-.50**
Sex Diversity			.14 (.13)	.09
Race Diversity			-.05 (.12)	-.03
Age Diversity			-.18 (.15)	-.09
Unit Size			-.01 (.01)	-.10
Unit Deployment			.05 (.10)	.04
R^2		.22**		.25**
Adjusted R^2		.21**		.21**
ΔR^2				.03
Dependent Variable: Climate Strength				
Discrimination	-.38 (.07)	-.41**	-.42 (.08)	-.45**
Sex Diversity			.25 (.14)	.15
Race Diversity			-.02 (.13)	-.01
Age Diversity			-.23 (.16)	-.12
Unit Size			-.01 (.01)	-.09
Unit Deployment			.02 (.10)	.02
R^2		.17**		.21**
Adjusted R^2		.16**		.17**
ΔR^2				.04

Note. N = 139 work units. EO = equal opportunity; *SE* = standard error.

* $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

Table 14

Hierarchical Regression Results for Effects of Antecedents on Level and Strength of EO Climate ***(Disability Discrimination)***

	Model 1		Model 2	
	B (*SE*)	*β*	*B* (*SE*)	*β*
Dependent Variable: Climate Level				
Discrimination	-.56 (.07)	-.57**	-.58 (.07)	-.58**
Sex Diversity			-.07 (.13)	-.04
Race Diversity			-.23 (.12)	-.13
Age Diversity			-.07 (.15)	-.03
Unit Size			-.01 (.01)	-.08
Unit Deployment			.17 (.10)	.13
R^2		.32**		.36**
Adjusted R^2		.32**		.33**
ΔR^2				.03
Dependent Variable: Climate Strength				
Discrimination	-.50 (.07)	-.52**	-.50 (.07)	-.52**
Sex Diversity			-.02 (.13)	-.01
Race Diversity			-.20 (.12)	-.12
Age Diversity			-.28 (.15)	-.13
Unit Size			-.01 (.01)	-.09
Unit Deployment			.07 (.10)	.06
R^2		.27**		.31**
Adjusted R^2		.27**		.28**
ΔR^2				.04

Note. N = 139 work units. EO = equal opportunity; *SE* = standard error.

* $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

Table 15

Estimates and Bootstrapped 95% Confidence Intervals for the Conditional Indirect Effects of Antecedents on Unit Effectiveness via EO Climate at ± 1 Standard Deviation of EO Climate Strength

Level of Climate Strength	Unit Effectiveness		
	Estimate (*SE*)	Lower CI	Upper CI
Independent Variable: Sex Diversity			
– 1 *SD* Climate Strength	.13 (.10)	-.04	.36
+ 1 *SD* Climate Strength	.09 (.08)	-.04	.26
Index of Moderated Mediation	**-.06 (.08)**	**-.35**	**.03**
Independent Variable: Race Diversity			
– 1 *SD* Climate Strength	-.11 (.10)	-.35	.05
+ 1 *SD* Climate Strength	-.08 (.07)	-.25	.05
Index of Moderated Mediation	**.05 (.09)**	**-.03**	**.37**
Independent Variable: Age Diversity			
– 1 *SD* Climate Strength	-.03 (.13)	-.30	.21
+ 1 *SD* Climate Strength	-.02 (.09)	-.19	.16
Index of Moderated Mediation	**.02 (.09)**	**-.10**	**.29**
Independent Variable: Unit Size			
– 1 *SD* Climate Strength	-.01 (.01)	-.02	-.00
+ 1 *SD* Climate Strength	-.01 (.00)	-.02	-.00
Index of Moderated Mediation	**.00 (.00)**	**-.00**	**.02**
Independent Variable: Unit Deployment			
– 1 *SD* Climate Strength	-.03 (.06)	-.18	.08
+ 1 *SD* Climate Strength	-.02 (.05)	-.13	.06
Index of Moderated Mediation	**.02 (.04)**	**-.03**	**.18**

Note. *N* = 139 work units. EO = equal opportunity; CI = confidence interval; *SD* = standard deviation; *SE* = standard error. For each independent variable, I ran seven additional models using the seven EO climate dimensions (e.g., age discrimination level and age discrimination strength). All models included discrimination as a control variable. Because the results using separate dimensions are comparable to the results using the complete measure of EO climate, I only include the latter here to save space.

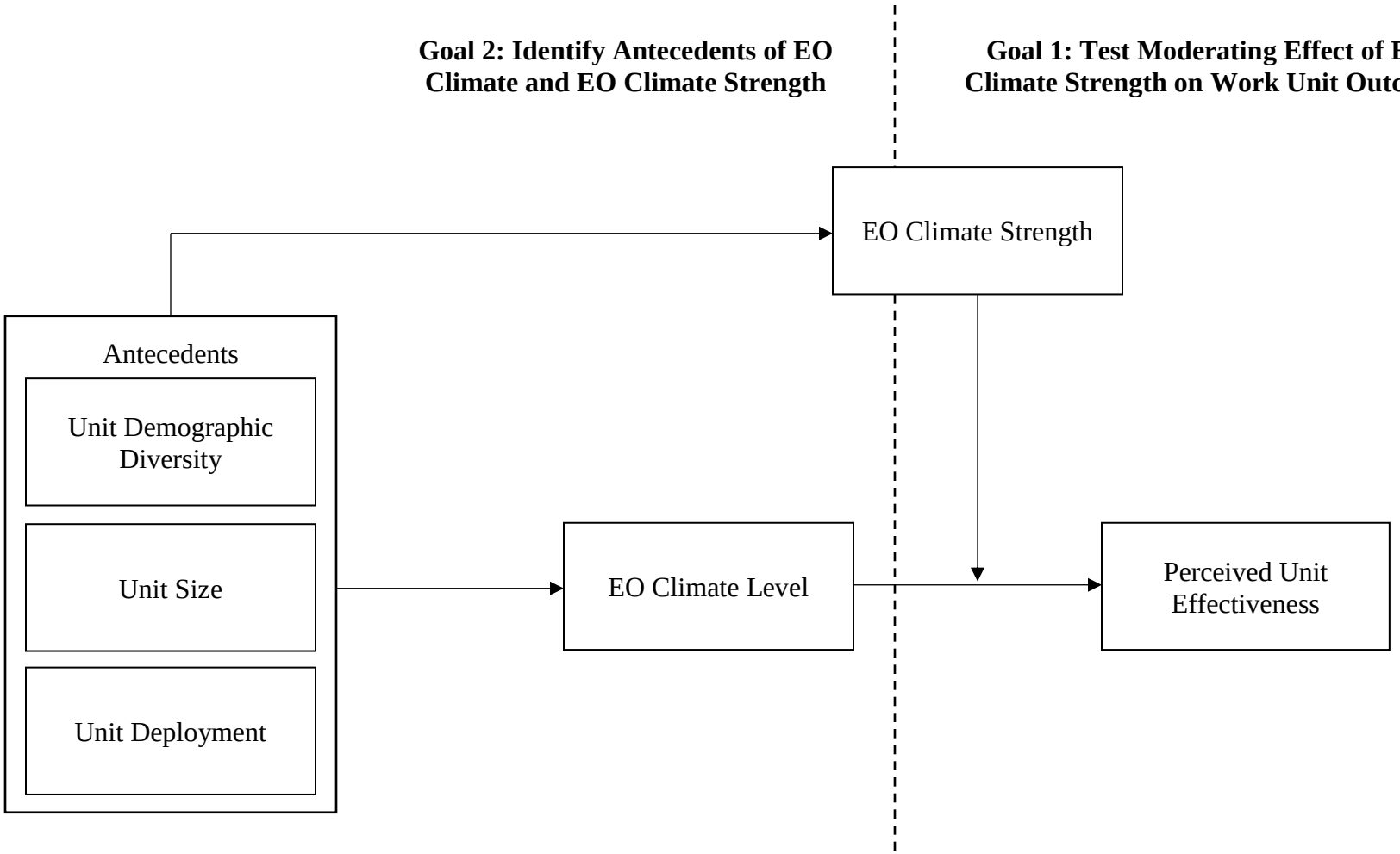

Figure 1. Conceptual model.

Note. EO = equal opportunity.

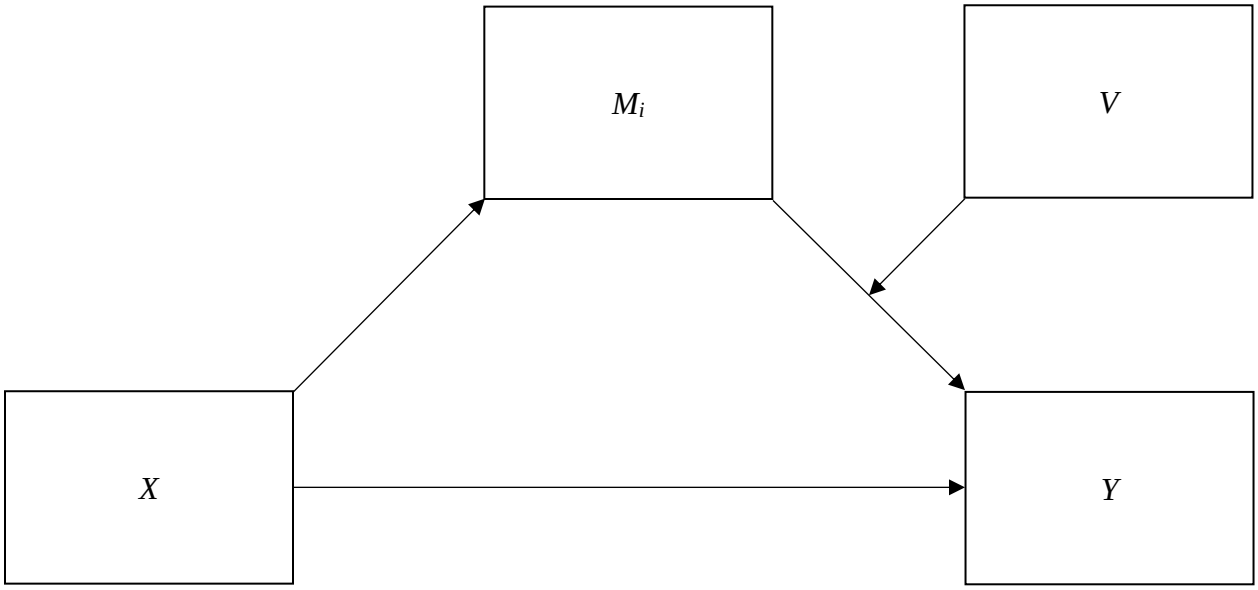

Figure 2. Conceptual diagram of Model 14 from Hayes's (2012) PROCESS macro for SPSS, version 2.

Note. X = independent variable (unit diversity, unit size, unit deployment), M_i = mediator (EO climate level), Y = dependent variable (unit effectiveness); V = moderator (EO climate strength). EO = equal opportunity.

Appendix A

Measures

Equal Opportunity Climate

Items developed by the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute (DEOMI) for the DEOCS (i.e., DEOMI Organizational Climate Survey; e.g., Dansby & Landis, 1991; Estrada et al., 2007).

YOU NEED NOT HAVE PERSONALLY SEEN OR EXPERIENCED THE ACTIONS BELOW.

Use the following scale to rate the *LIKELIHOOD* that the actions listed below COULD have happened, even if you have not personally observed or experienced it.

During your last 30 workdays at your duty location:

1	2	3	4	5
There is a *very high chance* that the action occurred.	There is a *reasonably high chance* that the action occurred.	There is a *moderate chance* that the action occurred.	There is a *small chance* that the action occurred.	There is *almost no chance* that the action occurred.

I. Differential Command Behaviors toward Minorities

1. A supervisor did not select for promotion a qualified subordinate of a different race or ethnicity.
2. While speaking to a group, the person in charge of the organization took more time to answer questions from one race or ethnic group than from another group.

3. Members of a particular race or ethnicity were assigned less desirable office space than members of a different race/ethnicity.
4. The person in charge of the organization changed the duty assignments when it was discovered that two people of the same race or ethnicity were assigned to the same sensitive area on the same shift.

II. Positive EO Behaviors

5. Supervisors of different racial or ethnic backgrounds were seen having lunch together.
6. Personnel of different racial or ethnic backgrounds were seen having lunch together.
7. Members from different racial or ethnic groups were seen socializing together.
8. Members joined friends of a different racial or ethnic group at the same table in the cafeteria or designated eating area.

III. Racist Behaviors

9. Offensive racial or ethnic names were frequently heard.
10. Racial or ethnic jokes were frequently heard.
11. A person of one race or ethnicity told several jokes about a different race or ethnicity.

IV. Sexual Harassment and Discrimination

12. When a person complained of sexual harassment, the supervisor said, "You're being too sensitive."
13. A supervisor referred to subordinates of one gender by their first names in public while using titles for subordinates of the other gender.

14. Jokes about a particular gender were frequently heard.
15. A person made sexually suggestive remarks about the opposite gender.

V. Age Discrimination

16. A younger person was selected for a prestigious assignment over an older person who was equally, if not slightly better qualified.
17. An older individual did not get the same career opportunities as did a younger individual.
18. A young supervisor did not recommend promotion for a qualified older worker.

VI. Religious Discrimination

19. A well-qualified person was denied a job because the supervisor did not like the religious beliefs of the person.
20. A supervisor favored a worker who had the same religious beliefs as the supervisor.
21. A demeaning comment was made about a certain religious group.

VII. Disability Discrimination

22. A worker with a disability was not given the same opportunities as other workers.
23. A career opportunity speech to a worker with a disability focused on the lack of opportunity elsewhere; to others, it emphasized promotion.
24. A supervisor did not appoint a qualified worker with a disability to a new position, but instead appointed another, less qualified worker.

Perceived Unit Effectiveness

Items selected from the United States Air Force Organizational Assessment Package (Short, 1985) for the DEOCS (DEOMI Organizational Climate Survey; e.g., Dansby & Landis, 1991; Estrada et al., 2007).

Respond to the following items regarding the *effectiveness of your work group* (all persons who report to the same supervisor that you do), and top leaders, using the scale below:

1	2	3	4	5
Totally agree with the statement	*Moderately agree* with the statement	*Neither agree nor disagree* with the statement	*Moderately disagree* with the statement	*Totally disagree* with the statement

1. The amount of output of my work group is very high.
2. The quality of output of my work group is very high.
3. When high priority work arises, such as short deadlines, crash programs, and schedule changes, the people in my work group do an outstanding job in handling these situations.
4. My work group's performance in comparison to similar work groups is very high.

Demographic and Control Variables

The information provided below WILL NOT be used to identify you. It is used by a computer to identify groups of people (e.g., Male, Female, Officer, Enlisted, Civilian, etc.). If fewer than five responses are given for a particular group, those responses are not reported for that group.

YOUR ACCURACY IS IMPORTANT IN GETTING AN HONEST ASSESSMENT OF YOUR ORGANIZATION.

I am:

1	2
Male	Female

Are you Spanish/Hispanic/Latino?

1	2
No	Yes

What is your race? *Mark one or more races to indicate what you consider yourself to be.*

1	2	3	4	5	6
American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian (e.g., Asian Indian, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese)	Black or African American	Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander (e.g., Samoan, Guamanian, or Chamorro)	White	N/A

My age is

1	2	3	4	5
18-21	22-30	31-40	41-50	51 or over

Are you currently deployed?

1	2	3	4	5	6
No, it has been more than 6 months since my last deployment, or I have never deployed	No, but I returned from combat zone deployment within the past 6 months	No, but I returned from non-combat zone deployment within the past 6 months	Yes (CONUS)	Yes (OCONUS, in a combat zone)	Yes (OCONUS, in a non-combat zone)

Within the past 12 months, I have personally experienced an incident of discrimination within my current organization. (Mark all that apply.)

1	2	3	4	5	6
YES, racial/national origin/color	YES, gender (sex)	YES, age	YES, disability	YES, religion	No

Within the past 12 months, I have personally experienced an incident of sexual harassment within my current organization.

1	2
YES	NO

Appendix B

Formulas for Unit Diversity Variables

Blau's Index

Blau (1977)

$$\text{Blau} = 1 - \Sigma P_i^2$$

P = proportion of individuals in the *i*th category

$$\text{Blau}_{\text{Sex}} = 1 - \Sigma\ \text{Male\_P}_i{}^2 + \text{Female\_P}_i{}^2$$

$$\text{Blau}_{\text{Race}} = 1 - \Sigma\ \text{Hisp\_P}_i{}^2 + \text{Am\_Ind\_P}_i{}^2 + \ \text{Asian\_P}_i{}^2 + \text{Black\_P}_i{}^2 + \ \text{Nat\_Hw\_P}_i{}^2 + \ \text{White\_P}_i{}^2$$

$$\text{Blau}_{\text{Age}} = 1 - \Sigma\ \text{P\_18\_21}_i{}^2 + \text{P\_22\_30}_i{}^2 + \ \text{P\_31\_40}_i{}^2 + \text{P\_41\_50}_i{}^2 + \ \text{P\_51\_Up}_i{}^2$$

Blau's Index with Correction for Group Size Bias

Biemann and Kearney (2010), Harrison and Klein (2007)

$$\text{Blau}_N = 1 - \Sigma \frac{N_i(N_i - 1)}{N(N - 1)}$$

N_i = number or sum (i.e., absolute frequency) of individuals in the *i*th category

N = unit size

$$\text{Blau}_N\text{Sex} = 1 - \Sigma \frac{\text{Male\_S}_i(\text{Male\_S}_i - 1)}{\text{Unit\_Size}\ (\text{Unit\_Size} - 1)} + \frac{\text{Female\_S}_i(\text{Female\_S}_i - 1)}{\text{Unit\_Size}\ (\text{Unit\_Size} - 1)}$$

$$\text{Blau}_N\text{Race} = 1 - \Sigma \frac{\text{Hisp\_S}_i(\text{Hisp\_S}_i - 1)}{\text{Unit\_Size}(\text{Unit\_Size} - 1)} + \frac{\text{Am\_Ind\_S}_i(\text{Am\_Ind\_S}_i - 1)}{\text{Unit\_Size}\ (\text{Unit\_Size} - 1)}$$

$$+ \frac{\text{Asian\_S}_i(\text{Asian\_S}_i - 1)}{\text{Unit\_Size}\ (\text{Unit\_Size} - 1)} + \frac{\text{Black\_S}_i(\text{Black\_S}_i - 1)}{\text{Unit\_Size}\ (\text{Unit\_Size} - 1)}$$

$$+ \frac{\text{Nat\_Hw\_S}_i(\text{Nat\_Hw\_S}_i - 1)}{\text{Unit\_Size}\ (\text{Unit\_Size} - 1)} + \frac{\text{White\_S}_i(\text{White\_S}_i - 1)}{\text{Unit\_Size}\ (\text{Unit\_Size} - 1)}$$

$$\text{Blau}_N\text{Age} = 1 - \Sigma \frac{\text{S\_18\_21}_i(\text{S\_18\_21}_i - 1)}{\text{Unit\_Size}\ (\text{Unit\_Size} - 1)} + \frac{\text{S\_22\_30}_i(\text{S\_22\_30}_i - 1)}{\text{Unit\_Size}\ (\text{Unit\_Size} - 1)}$$

$$+ \frac{\text{S\_31\_40}_i(\text{S\_31\_40}_i - 1)}{\text{Unit\_Size}\ (\text{Unit\_Size} - 1)} + \frac{\text{S\_41\_50}_i(\text{S\_41\_50}_i - 1)}{\text{Unit\_Size}\ (\text{Unit\_Size} - 1)}$$

$$+ \frac{\text{S\_51\_Up}_i(\text{S\_51\_Up}_i - 1)}{\text{Unit\_Size}\ (\text{Unit\_Size} - 1)}$$