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Article

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South African Journal of Business Management

Provided in Cooperation with:

University of Stellenbosch Business School (USB), Bellville, South Africa

Suggested Citation: Msweli-Mbanga, P.; Potwana, N. (2006) : Modelling participation, resistance to change, and organisational citizenship behaviour: A South African case, South African Journal of Business Management, ISSN 2078-5976, African Online Scientific Information Systems (AOSIS), Cape Town, Vol. 37, Iss. 1, pp. 21-29,
<https://doi.org/10.4102/sajbm.v37i1.595>

This Version is available at:

<https://hdl.handle.net/10419/218351>

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Modelling participation, resistance to change, and organisational citizenship behaviour: A South African case

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Received November 2005

The purpose of this paper is two-fold. First, to establish the extent to which employees from State Owned Enterprises are provided with information and opportunities to participate in change efforts in their organisations. Secondly, to verify the relationship between access to participation, willingness to participate, resistance to change and organisational citizenship behaviour, by testing a model that links these four constructs together. While the results of this study support the hypothesis that access to participation is positively linked to willingness to participate, we found that personnel from the State Owned Enterprises are not provided adequate access to participate in change efforts. The hypothesis that willingness to participate in change efforts in organisations has a higher propensity to reduce resistance to change was also supported. The implications of these findings are discussed and avenues for further research offered.

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Introduction

South African organisations have undergone unprecedented changes during the past decade as a result of legislative interventions that set to abolish the apartheid laws and democratise institutions and organisations. The South African government's vision to democratise institutions has been embraced by policy makers, strategic thinkers, project planners and a variety of other participants involved in other functions and activities in South African institutions. As pointed out by a number of scholars (Dachler & Wilpert, 1978; Esterhuyse, 2003; Pasmore & Fagans, 1992) the system of democracy cannot be confined at the political level. For democracy to survive, it must occur and function in all social and economic organisations including the workplace, where individuals participate in the day-to-day activities of their organisations.

In this paper we particularly focus on State Owned Enterprises. In the past decade, State Owned Organisations such as Telkom, Eskom, and Transnet faced the challenge of replacing autocratic, inflexible, static and coercive bureaucracies with agile, evolving, democratic and participative management systems. State Owned Enterprises in particular are implementing transformation and rationalisation processes that are required to facilitate the government's social delivery and economic growth objectives. In addition to the mandate they carry to comply with transformation legislation, State Owned Enterprises are expected to be in the forefront of all transformation strategies and initiatives. Theirs is not only to implement state laws, but to serve as prime example that these changes are possible and the laws practicable.

As with all change, the almost conditioned response to change is to resist it. Weick (2001) points out that no matter how carefully and slowly an idea of change is introduced, the immediate reaction is to resist it. Esterhuyse (2003:5) refers to the phenomenon as an '*in-built conservatism and preservation syndrome*'. This syndrome also affects the distribution of knowledge, whereby people view the knowledge they possess as a source of power. In this paper we argue that employee participation is the best way of getting their buy-in as they face changes in their organisations. The objective of this study is to develop a model of resistance to change that integrates participation with organisational citizenship behaviour. With the backing of literature, we restrict our enquiry to four constructs: (1) access to participation, (2) willingness to participate, (3) resistance to change and (4) organisational citizenship behaviour. We seek to understand the extent to which willingness to participate influences resistance to change. What of access to participation? Do employees in State Owned organisations have equal access to participation in the change efforts of their organisation? Does access to participation determine the willingness to participate? In addressing these questions we seek to test the simultaneous effect of these multivariate relationships.

Conceptual framework

Participation

One of the earlier works that links participation to change is that of Lewin (1948), who put forward a contention that participation is useful in changing conduct during a process

of change in organisations. Lewin (1948) argued that a person's conduct, perception and sentiment can change to the degree to which the individual becomes actively involved in the problem. Lewin's theory essentially emphasises that it is through participation under suitable conditions, that an individual can willingly change his conduct.

Nine years later, Argyris (1957), came up with another viewpoint with regards to participation theory. Argyris's (1957) view on participation is that it is a means of integrating the individual and organisational needs. According to Argyris's (1957) theory, the needs of normal adults are to develop from passive infants into active adults by mastering a range of effective behaviours that aid in viewing complex problems and see them as challenges. As individuals mature, Argyris argues that the conflict between the individuals and the traditional organisations is likely to grow, resulting in the evocation of defence mechanisms of withdrawal, apathy and disinterest. To avoid these consequences, Argyris suggests changing the structure of the organisation and increasing opportunities for meaningful participation.

McGregor (1960) expresses a similar view to Argyris (1957) although his emphasis is on viewing participation as a mechanism for the attainment of higher order needs, such as; self-expression, respect, independence and equality, thereby increasing morale and satisfaction. Likewise, Etzioni (1968), states that participation means uninhibited, authentic, and educated expression of an unbounded membership. Etzioni puts forward an appealing argument as he explains that to participate is to be active and to be in charge, whereas, to be passive is to be under control. Etzioni (1968) further argues that participation is not only an indicator of commitment, but is also a process of ensuring that all are equally dependent on each other.

In the period between 1970 and 1990 participation theorists focused on the level of participation by organisational members. For example, London (1975) argues that one level of participation is that of brainstorming, which is restrictive as participants will not be required to use their ideas to arrive at a decision. London (1975) contends that, for participation to realise its full potential in enhancing motivation, participants should be engaged at the level of choice. London (1975), points out that it is the choices that individuals make that they can own and defend.

Abdel-Halim (1983) approaches participation from the decision-making perspective. In his study he shows that when tasks are non-repetitive, participative decision making would have a positive effect on job satisfaction regardless of the subordinates' predisposition toward independence or autonomy. Leana (1986) expresses a view that participation is a special type of delegation by which management share authority with employees. Earley and Lind (1987) view this delegation process as means by which employees are given a voice to express themselves through a four-stage process: (1) definition of the problem and designing of procedures; (2) discussion of relevant issues and searching for relevant information; (3) selection of a solution among variable alternatives; (4) reconciliation of dissenting parties to the

decision. Earley and Lind (1987) maintain that if, for example, the employee's participation ends at stage one, they are only exercising a choice, which will be enacted by someone else. As such, the employee will have a loose form of control over the ultimate decision. Earley and Lind (1987) point out that voice provides an opportunity to exercise an additional finer control over future events, by allowing one to convey the reasons behind the choice.

The preceding discussion suggests that different scholars have treated the participation construct differently. This is evident again in the way participation has been viewed in the past decade. For example, Chisholm and Vansima (1993) equate participation with organisational practices, programmes or techniques, while other researchers (e.g. Aktouf, 1992; Alvesson & Wilmott, 1992) view participation as a broader social issue with a variety of underlying implications, such as manipulation, oppression, and control. Pasmore and Fagans (1992) put forward an assertion that organisational receptivity, individual ego development, and knowledge availability influence the effectiveness of participation. The authors argue that, often organisational members lack participative competence and are not adequately prepared to participate in organisations. As a result, questions have been raised about the feasibility of employees to participate in a full range of decisions that affect them. This is why organisational researchers according to Wagner (2000) have speculated that participatory processes must be considered by managers who seek to encourage the exchange of information and knowledge. A participative system of management, according to Manville and Ober (2003) affords the people the opportunity to realise their full power and the ability to thrive in the knowledge economy. Empirical evidence provided by Neumann (1989) has shown that approximately two thirds of a work force chose not to participate in organisational change efforts when provided the opportunity.

In their work, Glew, O'Leary-Kelly and Griffin (1995) argue that simply involving people in decision making will not necessarily produce benefits to either those involved or the organisation as a whole, because of the complexity of the participation process. A different view is proposed by Hall (1980) in his contention that participation is the mechanism of ownership of organisation work in a way that offers ego satisfaction. Similar to this line of thought, Pasmore and Fagans (1992) view participation in organisations as providing opportunities for people in the modern world to find meaning in their lives. Pasmore and Fagans (1992) contend that effective participation helps individuals to write life stories worth living and societies to fulfil the dreams of their citizens. To have that true meaning, the participative structure must also emerge naturally from the people's own aspirations and initiatives (Manville & Ober, 2003). Smith, Organ and Near (1983), suggest that personnel should be retained in organisations by affording them opportunities for innovative and spontaneous activity that go beyond role prescriptions.

In examining scholarly conceptions of participation, we find as many viewpoints and definitions of participation as there are scholars studying the construct. For the purpose of this

study we found Pasmore and Fagans' (1992) study most helpful. First the authors recommend the concept of organisational citizenship as a more inclusive framework for research and practice concerning organisation development activities. Secondly, they distinguish four types of participation: (1) participation in making goals, (2) participation in making decisions, (3) participation in solving problems (3) participation in making changes in the organisation. Similar to Pasmore and Fagans' study it is participation in making changes in the organisation that this paper is concerned with.

Dachler and Wilpert (1978) in their study view participation as a central concept of organising. This view of participation, as Dachler and Wilpert (1978) argue, requires the following questions to be addressed: Who makes what kind of decision in organisations? What kind of access do employees have to information that helps in making decisions? Are employees' opinions taken into account in the decision process or is the decision completely in the hands of senior management? Dachler and Wilpert (1978) define participation as a continuum reflecting the different access that employees have to the actual making of a decision, or the amount of influence they can exert toward a given decision outcome. Following this line of argument, we argue that participation is not possible without access to information that helps in making decisions. Pasmore and Fagans (1992) go on to say that participation is difficult if one lacks relevant information or knowledge pertaining decisions to be made. In their study, they assert that knowledge pertinent to the decision under consideration affects a person's ability and inclination to participate in a given situation. Tjosvold (1987) further states that several persons can increase the information and ideas being considered. They can correct each other's thinking, and pool their resources to develop high quality solutions effectively. In addition, this can heighten the acceptance and the implementation of decisions. Participation also enhances tacit knowledge because tacitness is a property of collectively held knowledge. It is co-produced through situation and activity, and therefore, context dependant (Breu & Hemingway, 2002).

On the basis of the foregoing discussion we offer a definition of access to participation as the extent to which organisations provide information and opportunities to enhance employees' participative competence. It stands to reason that employees are more likely to consider participation in the change efforts in their organisations if they view their organisations as providing access to participation. Access to participation should primarily influence willingness to participate. We thus postulate that:

Hypothesis 1: Willingness to participate in the change efforts in organisations is positively associated with access to participation.

Resistance to Change

Diamond (1986) views resistance to change from the cognitive perspective. The author sees resistance to change as a process that fosters learning among organisation participants. This process is achieved by means of

interventionist efforts of promoting learning, while dealing with psychological defences against change that serve to obstruct learning. Diamond (1986) believes that the unconscious defensive techniques, such as compulsive, repetitive, security-oriented, error reducing and self-sealing human behaviour are modes for adaptation. These adaptive tendencies protect the status quo and therefore block learning. In his 1990 work, Diamond argues that, intervention aimed at change in the status quo, challenges organisationally embedded defensive structures. Such interventions as pointed out by Diamond (1993) are more likely to meet with resistance to change and learning.

Bartunek and Moch (1987) also viewed resistance to change from the cognitive perspective. The authors move from the premise that the world as it is experienced, does not consist of events that are meaningful themselves. Rather, organising frameworks or schemata, guide cognitions, interpretations or ways of understanding events. The notion of interpretation of change through schemata has received support in literature (for further reference see Lau, 1990; Lau & Woodman, 1995). From the organisational point of view, schemata generate shared meanings for various subgroups within it. In their change and organisational development theory, Bartunek and Moch (1987) point out that, when change is planned, an assessment of the three orders of change must first be done, so that intervention can be directed accordingly. These three orders of change are: (1) tacit reinforcement of present understandings; (2) conscious modification of present schemata in a particular direction; (3) the training of organisational members to be aware of their present schemata and thereby more able to change these schemata as they see fit. Second order change, has been acknowledged in recent literature as more radical. For example, Esterhuyse (2003) puts forward a contention that the second order type of change is not necessarily focused at operational level of an organisation, its primary objective is rather to transform the structure, culture, defining values and overall form of an organisation.

Lau's (1990) schematic perspective gives a different meaning to a change schema. The author identified three dimensions of a schema: (1) causality dimension which provides the knowledge framework explaining why change occurs; (2) valence dimension, which is a feature of a schema that allows a person to evaluate the significance of a specific event, process, person or relationship; (3) inference dimensions, which enables a person to predict the future or make inferences by specifying the likelihood of the occurrence of events of behaviours. Lau (1990) argues that these change schema dimensions are influenced by personal dispositional factors.

The notion of linking change to personal dispositional factors was further developed by Lau and Woodman (1995) in terms of the manner in which the construct is embedded in a three variable nomological network comprising (1) locus of control, (2) dogmatism and (3) organisational commitment. Locus of control refers to people's beliefs concerning the source of control over events affecting them. Stated in different words, people who believe that they have control over change events are not likely to resist change, whereas, those who feel they have no control over the

source of change may reject it. There is sufficient evidence in literature (Connor, 1992; Oreg, 2003; Sagie & Kolovsky, 2000) showing that loss of control is the primary cause of resistance to change, and such resistance can be overcome by allowing employees to participate in decision making. Dogmatism on the other hand defines the extent to which a person's belief system is open or closed. In other words, a highly dogmatic individual is rigid and close-minded and will have a change schema that reflects rigid beliefs about the value and consequences of change. Oreg (2003) refers to this state as cognitive rigidity.

The third dispositional factor, as conceptualised by Lau and Woodman (1995) is organisational commitment. The authors note that, a person committed to an organisation accepts its values, is willing to exert effort on its behalf and wishes to remain in the organisation. As such, a highly committed person might more readily identify with and accept organisational change. Indeed, their study supported the notion that organisational commitment has significant direct effects on the impact and control dimensions of change. Contrary to the previous studies of Lau and Woodman (1995), Wanberg and Banas (2000) found that dispositional traits, specifically, personal resilience, which comprises self-esteem and control, was not predictive of a more positive view of change. The personal resilience construct was, however, associated with increased likelihood of accommodating a required change and not necessarily related to agreement with whether that change is beneficial to the organisation or not.

Scholarly work reviewed above shows that there is a strong link between participation and change in organisations. One approach of viewing change has been that of looking at it as an outcome of participation. A popular approach in reducing resistance to change is to involve and engage organisational members in change processes. Although the latter approach makes good sense, Neumann (1989) as we mentioned earlier, found that even though opportunities to participate were provided, two thirds of the work force in their study chose not to participate. Glew *et al.* (1995) contend that willingness to participate does not only depend on opportunities to participate, but is also a function of factors ranging from type of changes required from employees, how much these changes are welcome, and the workload implications of participation. Primarily, the participative behaviour cannot be invoked without the willingness of the participants. Furthermore, employees are likely to respond favourably to employee participation programmes that would not have a tremendous effect on their existing workload. One would then expect to find those employees who are willing to participate in change processes to be less resistant to change. On that basis we offer the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2: Willingness to participate in change efforts in organisations is likely to reduce resistance to change.

Pasmore and Fagans (1992) provide a critical evaluation of participation in conjunction with Organisational Development activities. While their study is nonempirical in nature, it provides an extensive overview of moderating variables that influence effectiveness of participation

together with outcomes associated with different kinds of participative acts. Of particular relevance to our study, Pasmore and Fagans (1992) recommend the concept of organisational citizenship behaviour as a framework for examining participation in organisations. Organisational citizenship behaviours are innovative and spontaneous activities that go beyond the call of duty within an organisation, but make a contribution to organisational effectiveness (MacKenzie, Podsakoff & Ahearne, 1998). These innovative and spontaneous activities have also been referred to as extra-role behaviours (Glew *et al.*, 1995; MacKenzie *et al.*, 1998; Morrison & Phelps, 1999; Msweli-Mbanga & Lin, 2003; Van Dyne & Lepine, 1998). Glew *et al.*'s (1995) conceptualisation of participation is based on the contention that, it is a conscious and intended effort by individuals at a higher level in an organisation to provide visible extra-role or role expanding opportunities for individuals or groups at a lower level in the organisation to have a greater voice in one or more areas of organisational performance. This argument rests on the premise that management need to provide lower level employees with opportunities to develop extra-role behaviours. While Glew *et al.*'s (1995) definition implicitly assumes that extra-role behaviours are a mechanism for facilitating participation. Pasmore and Fagans (1992) have a different view. The authors view the development of citizenship behaviour as being a driver of participation. Indeed, willingness to participate is more likely to be displayed by those individuals who exhibit high levels of organisational citizenship behaviour. We thus submit that:

Hypothesis 3: Organisational citizenship behaviour is positively associated with willingness to participate in change efforts in an organisation.

Given that organisational citizenship behaviour is the function of individual initiative, helping behaviour, organisational allegiance and loyalty (Msweli-Mbanga & Lin, 2003), it is reasonable to expect those who display high levels of organisational citizenship behaviour to be more positive towards change. In support of this view, Pasmore and Fagan (1992) emphasise the use of participation in conjunction with organisational citizenship behaviour in order to facilitate change. The rationale being that organisational citizenship is broader than helpfulness and conscientiousness. The concept encompasses the ability to exercise skills and the courage needed to be an active participant in organisational change, under less than ideal change. It is on that basis that we link organisational citizenship behaviour with access to participation as well as resistance to change (Hypotheses 4 and 5). Additionally, given the fact that organisational citizenship behaviours enhance team spirit and cohesiveness in an organisation, as documented by a number of scholars (Kidwell, Mossholder & Bennet, 1997; MacKenzie, Podsakoff & Paine, 1999), it is reasonable to expect the individuals who display high levels of OCB (organisational citizenship behaviour) to be more positive to change. As such we postulate that access to participation is positively linked to organisational citizenship behaviour, as illustrated in Figure 1.

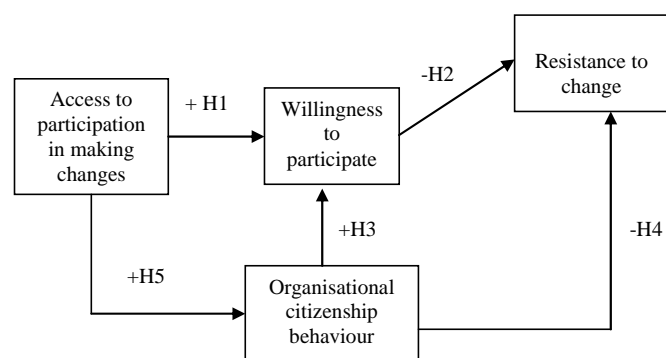


Figure 1: Hypothesised model - Extra-role performance, participation and change model

Methods

Sample and data acquisition

Using a survey instrument, data were collected from three State Owned Enterprises - Petronet, Eskom and Spoornet - based in Johannesburg and Durban. Questionnaires were first pre-tested on a sample of ten people. A direct cognitive structural analysis of the variables specifically designed for the study ('access to participation', 'willingness to participate', and 'resistance to change') was conducted. The ten respondents were asked to determine whether the items used for each variable were relevant and if so, how important each item is to the variable in question. This exercise was carried out to achieve content validity of the research instrument.

Before questionnaires were sent out, we first approached the Human Resource Managers of the three State Owned Enterprises to explain our intentions to gather data from employees involved in administrative functions in their organisations. For consistency in the composition of our sample, we asked the Human Resource Managers to use their databases to generate a random sample of 500 employees from Human Resource, Operations, Finance, and IT functions of their organisations. A total of 1500 questionnaires were sent to each of the informants in the three organisations (500 questionnaires per organisation). After two weeks, a reminder note was sent to all potential informants. We received a total of 363 responses yielding a response rate of 24%. Hierarchical level of respondents varied from entry level clerical staff to senior management. Forty nine percent (49%) of respondents are male and 51% female. The median age of respondents is 31-40 years. Most of the respondents (44%) have more than seven years of tenure and 75% have post matric qualifications. Thirteen percent (13%) have postgraduate qualifications.

Measures

Glew *et al.* (1995) have acknowledged not only a lack of consensus in the measurement of participation, but also the fact that many studies of participation are not empirical, as

such, they do not include a measure of participation. One plausible reason for lack of consensus in measuring participation is its multifaceted nature. In our study for example we are looking at participation in the change processes of State Owned Organisations in South Africa. More precisely we are looking at willingness to participate as an intervening variable between access to participation and resistance to change. We define access to participation as the extent to which organisations provide information and opportunities to enhance employees' participative competence. A five-point Likert scale ranging from '1' strongly disagree to '5' strongly agree was used to measure five items developed for this study: (1) employees are informed in advance about change decisions to be made; (2) employees are given an opportunity to express their opinion about change decisions to be made; (3) employee opinions are taken into account in the decision making process; (4) decisions are completely in the hands of organisation members with no distinction between managers and subordinates; (5) employees are adequately prepared to make informed decisions regarding change processes in their organisation.

Willingness to participate is the extent to which employees respond favourably to employee participation programmes irrespective of effort, time, and workload implications. Similar to 'access to participation measure', we measured willingness to participate on a five point Likert scale ranging from '1' strongly disagree to '5' strongly agree. We used the following six items to measure the variable: (1) I am unwilling to participate in change decisions because the decisions do not affect my day-to-day job; (2) participation in change decisions is time consuming, you have to attend a number of meetings and I don't have the time; (3) I am willing to participate because I want to have an input in how my organisation is run; (4) I am willing to participate although participation increases my workload; (5) I am unwilling to participate because participation in change programmes disrupt my relationships with my colleagues. Items 1, 2, and 5 were reverse coded to avoid cancelling out.

Resistance to change was captured using the following items measured in a five-point Likert scale: (1) Although changes taking place in my organisation are important, I feel more comfortable with what I am used to than the unknown; (2) A few privileges will be lost as a result of change in my organisation; (3) I feel the change is to serve the interest of a few rather than the best interest of the organisation and its employees; (4) I don't see the need for change, things have been working pretty well without the changes; (5) With the change more people are likely to lose their positions, and that feels uncomfortable. The items in each of the three variables - 'access to participation', 'willingness to participate', and 'resistance to change' were standardised and combined to form single measures. Using standardised data eliminates the effects due to scale differences, thus allowing for comparison of the relative effect of sets of independent variables on dependent variables under study. The structural model was written as a completely endogenous model, and only beta coefficients were estimated. As pointed out by Joreskog and Sorbom (1996), this approach in model estimation has been found to be efficient and does not require exogenous constructs to be

nominated. Completely endogenous models have been estimated in a number of studies (refer to Bagozzi, 1980; Mackenzie *et al.*, 1998; Msweli-Mbanga, 2001).

We used Msweli-Mbanga and Lin's (2003) 15-item scale to measure OCB. In their study Msweli-Mbanga and Lin demonstrate that the scale possesses adequate psychometric properties.

Results

Table 1 presents means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations among the variables, as well as Cronbach's alpha for the scales used in the study. The Cronbach's alphas are within the benchmark of .7 as suggested by Nunnally and Bernstein (1994). The results show that access to participation is low (mean = 2.0), and willingness to participate is somewhat high (mean = 3.9).

Table 1: Means, Standard Deviations, Cronbach's alphas and Correlations

Constructs	Means	s.d.	α	1	2	3	4
1. Access	2,0	,82	,81	1,00			
2. Willingness	3,9	,52	,70	-,30	1,00		
3. Resistance to change	-2,5	,99	,88	-,38	,45	1,00	
4. OCB	3,8	,38	,79	,36	,18	-,32	1,00

We used structural equation methodology to test the hypothesised model illustrated in figure 1. We used Amos 3.61's maximum likelihood method of estimation and correlations as in-put to estimate path coefficients for each hypothesised relationship (Arbuckle, 1997). According to Arbuckle (1997), the correlation matrix is preferred instead of a covariance matrix if the objective is to explore the pattern of interrelationships. Prior to estimating model parameters, identification problems were checked, and it was found that the model was underidentified. As pointed out by Maruyama (1998), an identification problem can be solved by defining more constraints on the model to eliminate some of the estimated coefficients. Hair, Anderson, Tatham and Black (1998) suggest solving an identification problem by fixing the measurement error

variances of constructs. The measurement error terms for each construct were thus fixed to a unity to remedy the identification model. Table 2 contains the standardised parameter estimates for the hypothesised model and the overall goodness-of-fit indices.

The results show that with the exception of Hypothesis 3 which was not supported, the hypotheses received considerable amount of support. Results also show that the directions of the relationships were as predicted. The low, and statistically nonsignificant chi-square, indicates that the proposed model fits data well. While the goodness-of-fit index is quite high (.98) for the proposed model, the TLI value indicate low model parsimony.

Table 2: Standardised Estimates, Standard Error, Critical Ratios, and Goodness-of-Fit Indices

Hypotheses	Estimates	Standard Error	Critical Ratio
H1: access/willingness	,31	,06	3,58
H2: willingness/resistance to change	-,35	,04	-3,87
H3: willingness/organisational citizenship behaviour	-,07	,07	-,84
H4: citizenship behaviour/resistance to change	,26	,20	3,16
H5: Access/citizenship behaviour	,42	,15	5,14
Proposed Model		Revised Model	
Chi-square (degrees of freedom)	5,59 (1)	6,3 (2)	
P-value	0,01	,04	
GFI	,98	,98	
AGFI	,78	,90	
TLI	,02	,54	

On the basis of Bentler's (1980) recommendation to remove paths with standard errors larger than their regression estimates, the willingness/organisational citizenship behaviour path was removed with the aim of improving model parsimony. As a result, the TLI value of the revised model improved to a more traditionally accepted level. The adjusted goodness of fit index improved from .78 (hypothesised model) to .90 (revised model).

Overall, these findings indicate that (1) access to participation is positively associated with willingness to participate; (2) willingness to participate is an intervening variable between access to participation and resistance to change; (3) access to participation is positively associated to organisational citizenship behaviour; and finally, (4) organisational citizenship behaviour is negatively related to resistance to change. Furthermore, these results show that OCB is the stronger predictor of resistance to change (-.42), compared to willingness to participate (-.26).

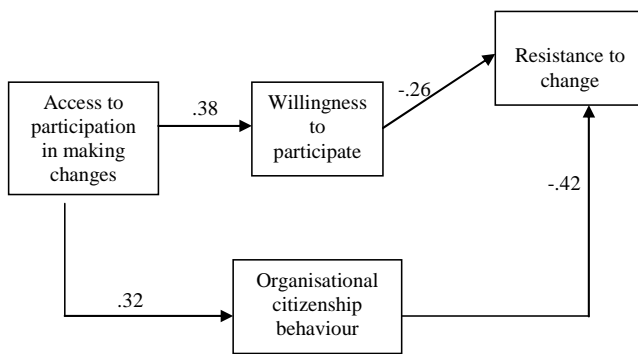


Figure 2: Revised model - Extra-role performance, participation and resistance to change

Discussion and conclusion

The goals of this paper were first to establish the extent to which employees from State Owned Enterprises are provided with information and opportunities to participate in change efforts. Secondly, to verify the relationship between access to participation, willingness to participation, resistance to change and organisational citizenship behaviour, by testing a model that links these four constructs together.

While the results of this study support the hypothesis that access to participation is positively associated with willingness to participate, we found that personnel from the State Owned Enterprises are not provided adequate access to participate in change efforts. The low mean value (2.0) of the access to participation variable indicates that all together, personnel from these organisations are not provided with opportunities and knowledge to deal with change efforts. The implication of this finding is that, with limited access to participation, State Owned Organisations are less likely to achieve cooperation based on mutual trust and shared feelings. As such change is more likely to be resisted. This finding is in line with the strong link between participation and change in organisations that is well established in literature (Dachler & Wilpert, 1978; Glew *et al.*, 1975; Manville & Ober, 2003).

This study also showed that citizenship behaviour is an important outcome of access to participation and a fairly strong predictor of resistance to change. This is an important finding for three reasons: First the findings provide a framework for managing resistance to change from the participation perspective. Secondly, the findings imply that for the development of organisational citizenship behaviour, organisations need to provide adequate access to participation. Organisational citizenship is a behaviour that is more likely to be displayed if access to participation is provided. In previous studies, OCB has been linked to task performance, organisational loyalty, job satisfaction and overall organisational effectiveness (MacKenzie *et al.*, 1998; Coleman & Borman, 2000).

The implication of the study to management is the need to create a participative system that reduces resistance to change. For example, the work load of employees participating in organisational change activities could be integrated to their workload so as to increase willingness to participate. The participative system should also encourage constant sharing of fresh viewpoints and knowledge. With such a system in place organisational personnel is more likely to exhibit higher levels of organisational citizenship behaviour, which in turn will lead to reduced resistance to change. Essentially, the study highlights the importance of providing access to participation as one method of improving organisational citizenship behaviour. Management could possibly aim at providing options of participation and improve organisational allegiance and loyalty as a method of reducing resistance to change.

It needs to be highlighted that the hypothesis that there is a positive relationship between organisational citizenship behaviour and willingness to participate has not been supported by this study (Hypothesis 3). There are a number of reasons that can be attributed to the hypothesis not being supported. For example, it is possible that an individual could score high on organisational citizenship behaviour, yet, unwilling to participate if participation is viewed as increasing workload. It is also possible that unwillingness to participate could stem from viewing change as a disruptive alteration that poses a threat to acquired skills and knowledge. Arguably, it is easier to display helping behaviour, individual initiative, sportsmanship behaviour and other organisational citizenship aspects, than to let go of familiar and habitual practices necessary to embrace change. In addition to the above, literature has shown that dispositional factors such as personal resilience and dogmatism are likely to impact how people view change in their organisations (Connor, 1992; Oreg, 2003; Sagie & Kolovsky, 2000). It is then possible that willingness to participate on change efforts in an organisation will be contingent on these dispositional factors irrespective of the levels of organisational citizenship behaviours.

The notion of including organisational citizenship behaviour in examining participation was suggested, among others, by Pasmore and Fagans (1992), although their study was nonempirical in nature. It would be valuable for future research to test this model in different contexts to increase model validity. It is likely that when the relationship between willingness to participate and organisational citizenship behaviour is examined during the transformation period and during the period after transformation, the results might be different.

This study provides a starting point for understanding how participation as a process is linked to resistance to change via two intervening variables organisational citizenship behaviour and willingness to participate. Future research could consider additional variables that impact on resistance to change. Future research is also needed to test the model on a cross sectional sample using a larger sample size to increase the statistical power of the findings. Additionally, although the scales to measure access to participation, willingness to participate and resistance to change have been found to have relatively high internal consistency, it would

be valuable to improve the validity of the scales by replicating the study.

The study may also have limited generalisability due to the small sample size and low response rate. Perhaps, a better way to ensure higher response rate is to use other data collection alternatives such as intercept interview. Intercept interviews give the interviewers an opportunity to establish a friendly relationship with respondents to improve respondent receptiveness. Future studies using alternative data collection methods are warranted to improve response rate.

Acknowledgements

The authors thank the anonymous reviewers for their insightful comments on this paper.

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