

Resistance to organisational change: the role of defence mechanisms

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Abstract *Observes that the published literature on resistance to organisational change has focused more on organisational issues rather than individual psychological factors. The present study investigated the role of both adaptive and maladaptive defence mechanisms in individual resistance. Surveys were conducted in nine organisations undergoing major change and responses were obtained from 615 employees. The results indicate that five maladaptive defence mechanisms are positively correlated with behavioural intention to resist change, namely, projection, acting out, isolation of affect, dissociation and denial. The adaptive defence mechanism of humour was found to be negatively correlated with resistance intention. Identifies two intervention strategies which can be used by management to address the effects of defence mechanisms on resistance during periods of change in organisations.*

Introduction

Individuals go through a reaction process when they are personally confronted with major organisational change (Jacobs, 1995; Kyle, 1993). According to Scott and Jaffe (1988) this process consists of four phases: initial denial, resistance, gradual exploration, and eventual commitment. Unconscious processes arise as individuals respond to the threats of change (Halton, 1994; O'Connor, 1993). Individuals unconsciously use well-developed and habitual defence mechanisms to protect themselves from change and from the feelings of anxiety change causes (Oldham and Kleiner, 1990; de Board, 1978). These defences can sometimes obstruct and hinder an individual from adapting to change (Halton, 1994).

Resistance is a natural part of the change process and is to be expected (Coghlan, 1993; Steinburg, 1992; Zaltman and Duncan, 1977). Resistance occurs because change involves going from the known to the unknown (Coghlan, 1993; Steinburg, 1992; Myers and Robbins, 1991; Nadler, 1981). Typically, individuals seek a comfortable level of arousal and stimulation and try to maintain that state (Nadler, 1981; Zaltman and Duncan, 1977). Individuals differ in terms of their ability and willingness to adapt to organisational change (Darling, 1993). This is because individuals experience change in different ways (Carnall, 1986). Some people tend to move through the change process rather quickly, while others may become stuck or experience multiple transitions (Scott and Jaffe, 1988).

The failure of many large-scale corporate change programs can be traced directly to employee resistance (Maurer, 1997; Spiker and Lesser, 1995; Regar *et al.*, 1994; Martin, 1975). A longitudinal study conducted by Waldersee and Griffiths (1997) of 500 large Australian organisations during 1993 and 1996 revealed that employee resistance was the most frequently cited implementation problem encountered by management when introducing change. Over half the organisations surveyed experienced employee resistance. These findings raise questions about how effectively the resistance phase is managed when implementing change. Managing employee resistance is a major challenge for the initiators of change, and according to O'Connor (1993) outweighs any other aspect of the change process.

It could be argued that the vast majority of organisational change is managed from a technical viewpoint without recognising or understanding how the human element influences the success or failure of the change (Arendt *et al.*, 1995; New and Singer, 1983). It is often easier for management to focus attention on, and to become preoccupied with, the technical side of change, dealing with quantifiable and predictable issues such as developing strategies and action plans, calculating profitability and rationalising resources (Huston, 1992; Steier, 1989; Tessler, 1989). Management has a tendency to neglect and ignore the equally important human dimension when implementing change (Levine, 1997; Steier, 1989). By adopting a technical approach, individual resistance tends to be avoided. In essence, resistance becomes something to be resisted (Nord and Jermier, 1994) rather than managed.

While it may be argued that change is mostly managed from a technical perspective without due consideration to human factors, there are times when the human side is accounted for in a token and instrumental way. For example, while management invests a significant amount of money into creating the planned change, little is invested in communicating, training and follow-up needed to successfully implement the change (Schneider and Goldwasser, 1998). Staff may also find their requested input into procedures for implementing change are subsequently ignored by management, leaving staff disillusioned (Weinbach, 1984). Hultman (1995) believes that most employees expect to have their views considered and to be treated with respect. However, some change initiators instead resort to questionable techniques to overcome resistance, such as manipulation and coercion (Hultman, 1995; Carr, 1994; New and Singer, 1983). These practices result in mistrust and resentment, making change more difficult to implement (New and Singer, 1983).

Leading an organisation through change involves constructively balancing human needs with those of the organisation (Spiker and Lesser, 1995; Ackerman, 1986). Because organisations consist ultimately of people, organisational change essentially involves personal change (Band, 1995; Steinburg, 1992; Dunphy and Dick, 1989). Change requires the participation of people who must first change themselves for organisational change to succeed (Evans, 1994).

When individuals demonstrate symptoms of resistance it is important to distinguish between the symptoms of resistance and the causes behind it. This article reports on a study that aimed to identify, measure and evaluate some of the unconscious motivations associated with an individual's level of resistance to organisational change.

Hypothesis development

The two constructs namely, unconscious processes and resistance are operationalised to derive variables for measurement. Hypotheses are developed to test the relationship between the operationalised variables.

Operationalising unconscious processes

Psychoanalytic theory provides the conceptual framework for understanding unconscious processes (Obholzer and Zagier Roberts, 1994) which are simply described as thoughts and desires that are below the level of conscious awareness (Matlin, 1995). For this research, unconscious processes were operationalised as defence mechanisms that arise involuntarily in response to the perceptions of psychic danger and are adopted by the individual to alleviate anxiety (Andrews *et al.*, 1993).

Anxiety is central in all psychoanalytic theory and when experienced in an intense and acute form, is the most unpleasant feeling that a human being can experience (de Board, 1978). Whether the cause is real or imaginary, anxiety still produces the same physiological responses for an individual. Not only does anxiety arise from perceived external dangers, but may also be experienced internally within the individual for no obvious reason. This internal resistance is often caused by the surfacing of past experiences, fears, or worries the individual has experienced. It exists when habitual thoughts, feelings or behaviours in the subconscious conflict with new thoughts, feelings and intentions to act, in the conscious mind (de Board, 1983, 1978). These unconscious forces can have more power over an individual's behaviour than consciousness does (Wade and Tavris, 1996; van der Erve, 1990). While automated patterns in the subconscious are not living creative thoughts of the moment, they have, however, developed over time through repetition and reinforcement and are stored in memory (Altorfer, 1992). As a result, individuals develop a number of internal defence mechanisms to protect themselves from the unpleasant feelings of anxiety (de Board, 1978). It is not unusual for an individual to develop habitual use for a particular defence (Andrews *et al.*, 1993).

Unconscious forces have a tendency to direct and divert energy elsewhere and away from the task of change (Oldham and Kleiner, 1990). These are considered to be the main cause of inefficiency, both in people and organisations, and are also claimed to influence resistance to organisational change (de Board, 1983). The more an individual resorts to maladaptive defence mechanisms, the less mental energy the individual has to direct towards what may be really happening in terms of the organisational change (de Board, 1983). Most of the literature on the unconscious aspects of organisational theory and

organisational life has come from the fields of psychodynamics and psychoanalysis (Olson, 1990). This is because resistance experienced by those initiating organisational change is similar to resistance experienced by a psychotherapist when working with a client (Lipton, 1996; Gabriel, 1992).

The study reported in this article investigated the relationship between defence mechanisms (both adaptive and maladaptive) and their association with resistance to change. Two adaptive defences are investigated, namely, humour and anticipation. In addition, five maladaptive defences are examined, namely denial, dissociation, isolation of affect, projection and acting out. Each of these defences is described briefly in Table I.

Operationalising resistance

Behavioural intention to resist is derived from the construct resistance. Behaviour has been defined as “physical actions that can be seen or heard” and “also includes mental processes, which cannot be seen or heard” (Matlin, 1995, p. 2). Behavioural intention to resist is derived to measure an individual’s intentions to engage in either supportive or resistant behaviour towards organisational change.

Developing hypotheses

Defence mechanisms are generally used unconsciously by an individual in response to psychic danger (Andrews *et al.*, 1993; Oldham and Kleiner, 1990)

Defence mechanism	Description
Humour (adaptive)	An individual deals with internal/external stressors by emphasising amusing and ironic aspects.
Anticipation (adaptive)	An individual deals with internal/external stressors by experiencing or anticipating consequences and emotional reactions in advance and considering realistic alternative responses or solutions.
Denial (maladaptive)	An individual deals with internal/external stressors by refusing to acknowledge some painful aspects of external reality or subjective experience that is apparent to others.
Dissociation (maladaptive)	An individual deals with internal/external stressors with a breakdown in the usually integrated functions of consciousness, memory, perception of self or the environment.
Isolation of affect (maladaptive)	An individual deals with internal/external stressors by separating ideas from the feelings originally associated with them. The individual loses touch with the feelings associated with a given idea while remaining aware of the cognitive elements.
Projection (maladaptive)	An individual deals with internal/external stressors by falsely attributing to another their own unacceptable feelings, impulses, or thoughts.
Acting out (maladaptive)	An individual deals with internal/external stressors by actions rather than reflections or feelings and includes transference which is the recreation in present relationships of experiences from earlier childhood relationships.

Source: Adapted from American Psychiatric Association (1994, pp. 755-7)

Table I.
Description of defence mechanisms

and are claimed to influence an individual's resistance to organisational change (de Board, 1983). It is proposed that individuals with higher maladaptive defence mechanisms will have higher levels of resistance to organisational change. Conversely, it is expected that individuals with high adaptive defence mechanisms will have higher levels of support for organisational change. The following two hypotheses are developed for testing.

- H1. The higher the level of maladaptive defence mechanisms, the higher the level of behavioural resistance to change.
- H2. The higher the level of adaptive defence mechanisms, the lower the level of behavioural resistance to change.

The analysis will also identify and report which particular defence mechanisms have the strongest relationship with resistance as manifested in behavioural intentions.

Design and method

The research used hypothesis testing to examine the strength of the relationship between adaptive and maladaptive defence mechanisms and behavioural intention to resist. It was conducted as a correlational field study in a non-contrived setting with minimal researcher involvement and no manipulation of organisational activities. Purposive and judgemental sampling was implemented because the data being sought could only be sourced from individuals exposed to the resistance phase of major organisational change. The data-collection method chosen for this research was a self-administered questionnaire. Questionnaires were distributed to participants at their place of employment, for completion at their own convenience. The two primary reasons for choosing a self-administrated questionnaire were efficiency in data collection for measuring specific variables of interest, and anonymity for respondents who were disclosing personal information about themselves and their reactions to change.

Defence mechanisms

A number of methods have been developed to measure defence mechanisms which include: "The life style index", "Defense style questionnaire", "The defense mechanisms inventory", "The defense mechanism profile", "The Rorschach", "Defense mechanisms rating scales" and "The inventory of defense-related behaviors" (Conte and Plutchik, 1995).

A reduced version of "The defense style questionnaire 40" (DSQ-40) (Andrews *et al.*, 1993) was selected over other assessment methods for three reasons. First, the scale is self-administered and consists of short statements, as opposed to the use of vignettes or clinical observation. Second, responses are recorded on an interval scale which provides greater options for statistical analysis as opposed to a nominal scale. Finally, the primary aim of the DSQ-40 is to measure and differentiate between impaired and unimpaired defences and

it is regarded as most accurate when discriminating between adaptive and maladaptive defence styles (Bond, 1995).

An important issue that arises when measuring unconscious processes is how does an individual self-assess their own defence mechanisms. Bond (1995) states that only clinical examination can identify unconscious processes as they happen. The DSQ-40 was designed specifically to elicit the respondent's style for dealing with psychic danger based on the assumption that individuals can accurately comment on their behaviour from a distance (Bond, 1995). It is argued by Andrews *et al.* (1993) that individuals often become aware of unconscious processes when examining, in hindsight, why they have acted in a certain way. Also, the habitual use of particular defences will result in them becoming a part of an individual's belief and attitude system. In addition, other people may point out to the individual the defence mechanisms that they use (Bond, 1995).

Self-assessment of unconscious processes does have its limitations. These include an individual's motivation at the moment of responding, their level of openness, and their individual level of self-awareness (Bond, 1995). Furthermore, when self-reporting, some individuals may have a tendency to supply socially desirable responses rather than disclose information about themselves (Matlin, 1995). In addition to respondent issues, there is also a measurement limitation. The statements or items in the scale are indirect measures of defences that attempt to tap into and record the conscious derivatives of unconscious intrapsychic processes (Bond, 1995). Despite this measurement limitation, the DSQ-40 is useful in discriminating between adaptive and maladaptive defence styles (Bond, 1995).

Questionnaire items for the two adaptive and five maladaptive defence mechanisms listed in Table I were selected for measurement from the DSQ-40. The two published items for each defence were selected for this research, with measurement recorded on a seven-point interval scale. Measures of defence mechanisms were assessed for reliability and validity. Published test-retest correlations ranged from 0.48 to 0.77. The results of a validity study showed significant positive correlations between maladaptive defences on the DSQ-40 and immature defences on the "Defense Mechanisms Rating Scale". There were also significant negative correlations between maladaptive defences on the DSQ-40 and mature defences on the "Defense Mechanisms Rating Scale" (Bond, 1995). Thus, the present instrument was considered a suitable measurement tool.

Behavioural intention to resist

A 20-item seven-point interval scale was developed by the researcher to measure an individual's behavioural intention towards organisational change. The scale was designed to measure both support and resistance behaviour and was constructed from key words derived in the quadrant of active-passive and overt-covert dimensions illustrated in Figure 1.

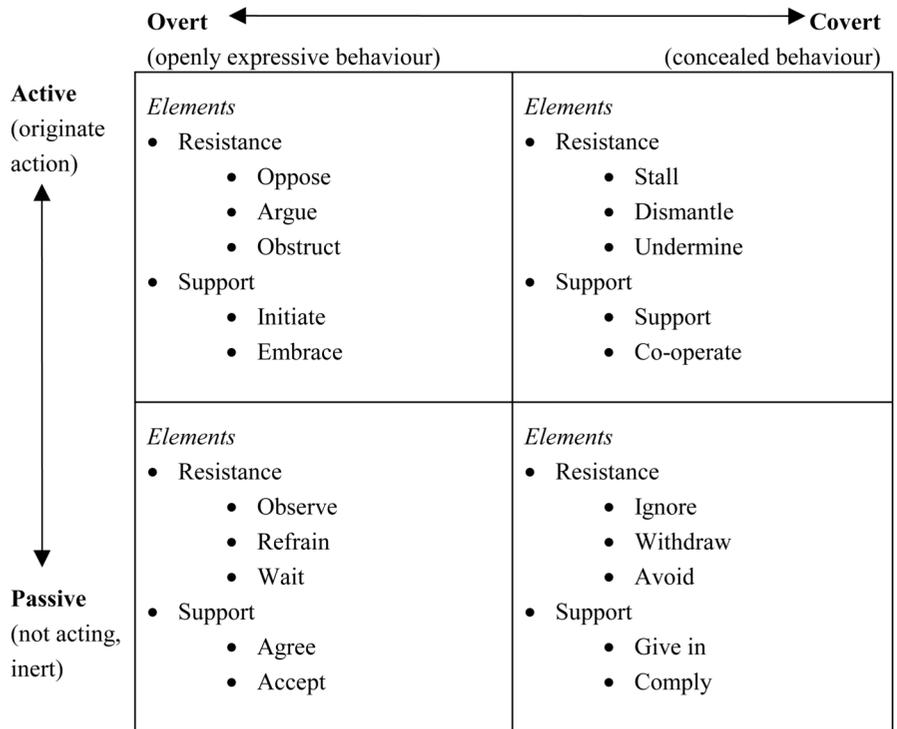


Figure 1.
Framework for
measuring behavioural
intentions

Items developed from Figure 1 were listed in random order, with 12 items requiring recoding to control for response direction effects. The scale was developed to measure the level of behavioural intentions towards change, with “1” reporting the least resistance and “7” reporting the most resistance on the interval scale. Because this was a newly-constructed scale specifically designed for the research, there was no prior evidence of its reliability and validity, but these were assessed using the present data. Also, the scale was satisfactorily trailed during the pre-test of the questionnaire.

Limitations of the methodology

A number of limitations are acknowledged with this research. First, because the study adopts purposive sampling (non-probability) and not random sampling (probability), the findings from this study cannot be generalised to other organisations. Second, the data collection method used was very structured. This approach did not allow the opportunity to identify, measure and test other significant variables that may be associated with resistance to change. Third, self-reporting on a questionnaire is subjective rather than objective. Finally, respondents may have underestimated their level of resistance, producing respondent bias. Despite these limitations, which are common in most social research, the design and methodology was considered adequate.

Implementation

Nine organisations participated in the research. These included federal government corporations and agencies, state government departments and agencies, local government and large private sector organisations, predominantly in Brisbane (state capital of Queensland, Australia). All organisations that participated in the study were implementing major change involving either restructures and realignments of departments/divisions, major reorganisation of systems and procedures or the introduction of new process technologies. A total of 615 useable questionnaires were returned, at a response rate of 39 per cent. Approximately 90 per cent of respondents believed the change in their organisation had affected them at least moderately. To be more specific, 32.2 per cent of respondents believed the change had a large effect on them, with a further 37.3 per cent reporting they were affected a great deal. Most respondents were experiencing significant organisational change when surveyed, constituting a suitable sample for investigation.

Results

The data were analysed for factorial validity, reliability and measures of association to test each hypothesis.

Factorial validity and reliability

The defence mechanisms scale was assessed for factorial validity by using factor analysis to analyse and confirm underlying interrelationships among the defence variables. The results of the factor analysis are presented in Table II.

The factor analysis loaded five of the seven defences being investigated. One “denial” item loaded on Factor 4 with “dissociation” indicating these defence items have a similar underlying dimension. The adaptive defence “anticipation” was below the coefficient cut-off rate of 0.3 and not reported. A factor analysis was also conducted on the behavioural intentions scale. Two factors were identified. These were labelled “overt support for change” and “covert resistance to change”.

With the underlying structures of both scales validated, the reliability of each scale was assessed for inter-item consistency by calculating Cronbach’s alpha. Reliability was calculated only on those items that loaded on the factor analysis (see Table II). Maladaptive defence mechanisms reported an alpha of 0.64 while the adaptive defence mechanism “humour” had an alpha of 0.61. The newly constructed behavioural intentions scale reported a Cronbach’s alpha of 0.90. Summated scales were created for the maladaptive, adaptive and behavioural intentions variables. The normality, linearity and homoscedasticity of each summated scale were assessed and data transformation was considered unnecessary, thus preserving the data in a natural form.

Hypothesis testing

In order to test the two hypotheses, bivariate analysis using measures of association (correlation coefficients) was implemented, to determine the

Items	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5
Acting out (I often act impulsively when something is bothering me)	0.692				
Acting out (I get openly aggressive when I feel hurt)	0.529				
Humour (I am able to laugh at myself pretty easily)		0.697			
Humour (I'm usually able to see the funny side of an otherwise painful predicament)		0.648			
Anticipation (when I have to face a difficult situation I try to imagine what it will be like and plan ways to cope with it)					
Anticipation (if I can predict that I'm going to be sad ahead of time, I can cope better)					
Isolation (I'm often told that I don't show my feelings).			0.803		
Isolation (often I find that I don't feel anything when the situation would seem to warrant strong emotions)			0.436		
Denial (People say I tend to ignore unpleasant facts as if they didn't exist)					
Denial (I fear nothing)				- 0.975	
Dissociation (I've special talents that allow me to go through life with no problems)				- 0.511	
Dissociation (I ignore danger as if I were Superman)				- 0.405	
Projection (I am sure I get a raw deal from life)					0.760
Projection (people tend to mistreat me)					0.609

Note: : Only loadings >0.3 are reported

Table II.
Defence mechanisms
factor analysis

existence and strength of relationship between defence mechanisms and behavioural intention to resist. The results of the correlations along with the descriptive statistics and reliability are reported in Table III.

H1. The higher the level of maladaptive defence mechanisms, the higher the level of behavioural resistance to change. The correlation between maladaptive defences and behavioural intention to resist in Table III was found to be 0.27 which is statistically significant ($p \leq 0.001$). To support this calculation a scatterplot was drawn to graphically illustrate the relationship between these two variables. The line of best fit showed the higher the level of maladaptive defences, the higher the level of behavioural resistance resulting in the hypothesis being confirmed.

H2. The higher the level of adaptive defence mechanisms, the lower the level of behavioural resistance to change. The correlation between the adaptive defence “humour” and behavioural intention to resist was found to be -0.12 ($p \leq 0.01$). The line of best fit in the scatterplot showed a gradual slope illustrating the higher the level of adaptive defences, the lower the level of resistance towards change. Although the adaptive defence “humour” and behavioural intention to resist are correlated the low gradient of the slope indicated a comparatively weaker relationship compared to *H1*. Nevertheless, *H2* was also confirmed.

In addition to testing the two hypotheses, this paper also set out to report which particular maladaptive defence mechanisms have the strongest association with resistance to organisational change. A correlation matrix of maladaptive defence mechanisms is presented in Table IV.

The correlation matrix shows that “projection” has a strongest association with behavioural intention to resist when compared to the other defences, reporting a correlation of 0.32 ($p \leq 0.001$). Both “acting out” and “isolation of affect” report the same correlation of 0.14 ($p \leq 0.001$). “Dissociation” and “denial” reported correlations with behavioural intention of 0.12 ($p \leq 0.01$) and 0.09 ($p \leq 0.05$), respectively. The high correlation between “dissociation” and “denial” of 0.58 ($p \leq 0.001$) was expected, with both defences loading on Factor 4 in the factor analysis (see Table II).

Discussion

This research was specifically carried out during the implementation of major organisational change. Individuals were surveyed during the resistance phase of the change process, in order to measure the association between an

	M	SD	α	1	2
1. Behavioural intention to resist	2.57	1.08	0.90		
2. Maladaptive defences	2.93	0.74	0.64	0.27***	
3. Adaptive defences	5.51	0.98	0.61	-0.12**	-0.03

Note: * $p \leq 0.05$ ** $p \leq 0.01$ *** $p \leq 0.001$ $n = 615$

Table III.
Descriptive statistics, reliabilities and correlations

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Intentions					
2. Projection	0.32***				
3. Acting out	0.14***	0.22***			
4. Isolation	0.14***	0.20***	0.09**		
5. Dissociation	0.12**	0.08*	0.23***	0.26***	
6. Denial	0.09*	0.07	0.15***	0.19***	0.58***

Note: * $p \leq 0.05$ ** $p \leq 0.01$ *** $p \leq 0.001$ $n = 615$

Table IV.
Maladaptive defences correlations

individual's unconscious motivations operationalised as defence mechanisms and their behavioural intentions towards the change. Each scale was assessed and regarded as having satisfactory factorial validity and reliability.

The results of this research show that individuals who are unconsciously inclined to use maladaptive defences are more likely to resist organisational change. Also as hypothesised, individuals with a tendency to unconsciously adopt adaptive defences were less likely to resist organisational change. The research shows maladaptive defences generally had a stronger association with behavioural intention to resist than did the adaptive defences being investigated. The positive correlation between the maladaptive defences and behavioural intention to resist could be described as "modest" whereas the negative correlation between the adaptive defence "humour" and behavioural intention to resist could be described as "low".

The findings of this research show individuals who have a tendency to use humour to cope with feelings of anxiety were less likely to resist organisational change. According to Bond (1995), humour is strongly associated with good coping and reflects an individual's capacity to accept a conflictual situation while taking the edge off its painful aspects. When an individual laughs at a problem they are putting it in a new perspective, sometimes by seeing the silly or absurd aspects, thus gaining control over it (Dixon (1980) in Wade and Tavis (1996)). By seeing the amusing or ironic aspects of change, the individual is displaying constructive coping skills to the anxiety associated with the change. Thus, respondents who were able to constructively cope with feelings of anxiety would have been less likely to resist change and this accounts for the negative correlation between adaptive defences and behavioural intentions to resist.

The analysis revealed that "projection" had by far the strongest association with behavioural intention to resist change compared to the other maladaptive defences being investigated. Individuals who reported higher than the median for projection were generally more resistant to change in their organisation. Conversely, individuals reporting lower than the median for projection were generally more supportive of change.

Projection as a defence mechanism is described as unconsciously and falsely attributing one's own unacceptable feelings, impulses and thoughts to another person (Wade and Tavis, 1996; Matlin, 1995; Plutchik, 1995; American Psychiatric Association, 1994; de Board, 1978). In other words, people see in others the motives about which they themselves are anxious, fear and possess (Wrightsmann and Sanford, 1975). A projecting person has a tendency to put blame and responsibility on others instead of accepting their own impulses (Bond, 1995). Essentially, the psyche tricks itself into believing that the cause of the anxiety is located in somebody else (de Board, 1983).

An individual's effectiveness lies in their ability to distinguish and know the boundary between the self and the outside world. Projection tends to blur this boundary and distort reality by making what is within the self appear to the individual to be outside. What was originally an internal threat is now

perceived by the individual to be external. To the individual, the source of the anxiety is apparently externalised and becomes something objective to be resisted (de Board, 1978).

Anxiety levels are likely to increase during major organisational change and the findings of this research show that individuals were more likely to resort to projection as a defence. These individuals were more inclined to externalise their internal thoughts and feelings, perceiving the change as the cause of their anxiety and responding with resistance. Until the individual understands the internal source of the anxiety, it will continue to manifest itself as an external threat (de Board, 1978). Whitfield (1993) describes it as a process of bringing unconscious material of our inner life into our conscious awareness and owning it.

It also needs to be noted that defences may be more acute depending on the level of anxiety in one's personal life. For example, an individual experiencing high levels of anxiety and stress as a result of a relationship separation/divorce, bereavement, or any other psychological trauma, may be more inclined to, for example, unconsciously project unfinished grieving to other aspects of their life, including changes occurring in the work environment. When implementing change, management needs to be aware of the ways that personal issues can impact on an employee's thoughts, feelings and behaviour.

Kotter and Schlesinger (1979) argue it is important to diagnose human resistance when implementing change and in order to diagnose the true cause it is necessary to understand the individual. Olson (1990) suggests that to effect organisational change, it is sometimes necessary to go beyond the outward aspects of an individual's behaviour and address the unconscious motivations so as to achieve a change of attitude.

When implementing significant change, management needs to be aware of how defence mechanisms are associated with an individual's behavioural intentions. Once the benefits of working with the human dimension are understood and accepted, management will be more inclined to develop, promote and implement appropriate intervention strategies. Two types of intervention strategies are proposed to assist management to work with individual resistance. These are information-based interventions and counselling interventions. Information-based interventions provide the individual with information to create awareness and understanding of unconscious processes and how these influence an individual's motivations and behaviours in a changing environment. Information-based interventions ideally need to be supported by counselling interventions. Counselling interventions focus on activities designed to assist individuals, both singularly and collectively as a group, to analyse, interpret and understand how their own defence mechanisms influence their perceptions and motivations towards change.

In conclusion, the outcomes of this research have provided further support for adopting a balanced approach to implementing change. Rather than focussing attention and energy only on technical aspects, it is equally

important for management to work with the human factors associated with resistance to aid the change process. These human factors include unconscious processes such as defence mechanisms. Intervention strategies are needed to assist an individual to identify and interpret their own perceptions of change, thus creating greater personal awareness and understanding of self. This personal growth and development is likely to alter an individual's perceptions of organisational change, thereby reducing the level of resistance.

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