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Empowering to Reduce Intentions to Resist Future Change: Organization-Based Self-esteem as a Boundary Condition

Pedro Neves [1], Daniela Pires [2] and Sandra Costa [3]
[1]Nova School of Business and Economics, Campus de Carcavelos, Rua da Holanda, n.1, Carcavelos, 2775-405, Portugal, [2]BNP Paribas, Rua Alexandre Herculano n.50, Lisboa, 1250-011, Portugal, and [3]University of Liverpool Management School, Chatham Street, Liverpool, L69 7ZH, UK
Corresponding author email: pneves@novasbe.pt

Research examining resistance to change usually focuses on what happens during (or immediately prior to) implementation. However, researchers also acknowledge that organizational life, including change events, do not occur in a vacuum and that individuals form intentions to resist future change based on their prior experiences. Building on uncertainty reduction theory, we examined the role of empowering leadership in the reduction of intentions to resist future change. Using a time-lagged design, we found that empowering leadership reduces behavioural intentions to resist future change via structural empowerment. The indirect effect on cognitive and affective intentions was significant only for high organization-based self-esteem (OBSE) individuals. We also found a positive effect on cognitive intentions via psychological empowerment, again only for high OBSE individuals. These findings suggest that, to anticipate and prevent potential resistance to change, organizations should take a long-term approach to change management, namely by stimulating empowering leadership during times of stability.

Introduction

The most common approach to change is to treat it as a one-off phenomenon, where each change process is assessed and managed as a single event (for a review, see Rafferty, Jimmieson and Armenakis, 2013). Kotter's (1995) model of change management starts precisely by discussing how change efforts often fail due to the lack of a sense of urgency (Error #1). It assumes the preparation for change starts once the need for change is identified and it makes clear that the success of the firm depends on the motivation of its workforce. This approach is incomplete since the meaning of one's actions is not limited to the moment when it takes place, but rather 'those future experiences which are my intended action and (…) those past experiences which are my completed action' (Schutz, 1967, p. 39). Thus, we argue it is imperative to identify strategies that help reduce intentions to resist future change, rather than solely attempting to reduce resistance to change once it has been enacted.

Resistance to change has been identified as one of the key sources of change failure (Szabla, 2007), but there has been criticism given that the most common approaches assume change agents do not contribute substantially to such process and reject the possibility that employees' reactions to change might be built on legitimate reasons (Ford and Ford, 2010). This has been the dominant approach, possibly to protect change agents from engaging in a discussion about 'their own ignorance, incompetence, or mismanagement' and easily, albeit perhaps unconsciously, assigning blame '"over there, in them" (the change recipients)' (Ford, Ford

The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author, Pedro Neves.

and D'Amelio, 2008, p. 362). There is, however, substantial evidence on the role of change agents (Vos and Rupert, 2018), and particularly leaders (e.g. Furst and Cable, 2008; Oreg and Berson, 2011; van Dam, Oreg and Schyns, 2008), in the development of resistance. This suggests that more research concerning the actions of change agents, such as middle managers, who actually manage the change in the shop floor (Neves, Almeida and Velez, 2018), is needed to fully understand employees' subjective experience (Oreg, 2006).

Uncertainty reduction and intentions to resist future change

One of the paradoxes that best characterizes current organizations is the need to stress organizational continuity, while simultaneously pursuing change (Waldman and Bowen, 2016). This is particularly troublesome given that change is commonly seen as an 'either–or' equation, where managers either pay attention to short-term value creation or they focus on the development of long-term capabilities (Beer and Nohria, 2000). The need to swiftly demonstrate that the change was beneficial – reflected in the overweight given to quick wins – often results in heightened levels of employee resistance to change.

Resistance to change can be defined as a negative set of responses to change across three dimensions (Piderit, 2000). Cognitive resistance reflects the individual's beliefs about the change, while affective resistance focuses on their feelings, moods and emotions in relation to the change process, and behavioural resistance concerns actions towards change (Oreg, 2006). The distinction between these dimensions is fundamental given the potential for within-person ambivalence (Piderit, 2000) and their variability in terms of antecedents (e.g. Garcia-Cabrera and Hernandez, 2014; Oreg, 2006) and outcomes (e.g. Rafferty and Jimmieson, 2017).

Resistance depends, at least in part, on managerial actions (Ford and Ford, 2010). The (quite often failed) history of change in similar contexts reflects the weight of such actions (Amis and Aissaoui, 2013). When managers ignore past practices, values and traditions of the organization while preparing for future changes, they are promoting a biased and simplified view of employee reactions (i.e. 'they just don't get it'). Such an agent-centric view (Ford, Ford and D'Amelio, 2008) impedes an open and honest communication about perceived fears and difficulties and complicates the enactment of appropriate strategies to deal with the actual sources of resistance, including the proactive management of resistance as a valuable resource (Ford and Ford, 2010).

Uncertainty reduction theory (URT) (Berger and Calabrese, 1975) proposes that individuals strive to reduce uncertainty and increase predictability about the behaviour of others. Building on past interactions, individuals engage in a proactive process where they 'develop predictions about the other before the other acts' (p. 101). Managers can provide opportunities for organizational members to actively participate in (and pave the way for) change, helping them self-discover the underlying message through experiential learning (Armenakis, Harris and Mossholder, 1993). One key step for creating readiness for change is empowering others to act on the vision, not only by changing structures but also by encouraging non-traditional ideas and actions (Kotter, 1995). By examining the relationship between empowering leadership and intentions to resist future change, our study contributes to the literature in several ways.

First, we build on a recent trend that suggests that organizations need to start preparing for future changes in times of stability, rather than only when change is warranted (Neves, Almeida and Velez, 2018). This is an important leap in the change management paradigm as we move away from a view of change as a discrete event and integrate the uncertainty reduction elements of explanation and prediction (Berger and Calabrese, 1975) to demonstrate that the regular activities of the organization, in this case the empowering actions of its agents, shape how individuals prepare for future, unforeseen change events. Thus, we move away from the one-off phenomenon perspective and integrate past experiences and future intentions.

Second, we aim to demonstrate that resistance stems, at least partly, from managerial actions. In doing so, we follow the view that the dominant, agent-centric, approach to change provides a biased and unilateral account of resistance (Ford, Ford and D'Amelio, 2008), and propose that we have to take into account how managers proactively prepare individuals for change (Ford and Ford, 2010), even when one is not foreseeable in

the near future. In preparation for dire times, organizations must rely on regular practices and the day-to-day behaviours of their agents as a vehicle of their positive intentions, demonstrating how the broader organizational context influences one's readiness for change.

Third, we couple URT with the person–situation debate to contribute to the literature on empowering leadership and empowerment. Although it is generally accepted that there is a need to integrate person and context, particularly how individuals construe and make sense of the situation (Mischel, 2004), the literature on empowerment still favours a universal, beneficial, approach (Maynard, Gilson and Mathieu, 2012). Nonetheless, a handful of studies have shown that, under certain conditions, not all individuals react positively to empowerment (e.g. Auh, Menguc and Jung, 2014; Butts *et al*., 2009; Zhang and Bartol, 2010). These findings are aligned with evidence that shows that, to develop more comprehensive models on uncertainty reduction, individual differences need to be integrated (Bradac, 2001; Greco and Roger, 2001). We expect individuals with a high self-perceived value of themselves as organizational members, that is organization-based self-esteem (OBSE) (Pierce *et al*., 1989) to respond positively to empowerment as they are less uncertain about the appropriateness of their own thoughts, feelings and behaviours (Pierce and Gardner, 2004), while those low on OBSE should not necessarily benefit from empowerment efforts. By showing that empowerment should not be used as a 'one size fits all' type of strategy, we answer the call for more research on its boundary conditions (Maynard, Gilson and Mathieu, 2012).

Leadership, empowerment and intentions to resist future change

To develop a flexible organizational design, necessary to adapt quickly in competitive environments (Arnold *et al*., 2000), leaders need to involve employees in decision-making processes and provide them with more autonomy. This is often achieved through the empowerment of employees (Spreitzer, 1995), for which the behaviours displayed by leaders play a central role (Druskat and Wheeler, 2003), particularly empowering leadership. Empowering leadership refers to delegating authority, sharing information, asking for input and coaching and promoting autonomous decision-making (Sharma and Kirkman, 2015). These behaviours include several dimensions (Ahearne, Mathieu and Rapp, 2005; Amundsen and Martinsen, 2014; Arnold *et al*., 2000), with an emphasis on participative decision-making (e.g. encouraging the expression of ideas, soliciting opinions) and autonomy/delegation/coaching (e.g. making suggestions on how to improve, believing in one's ability, giving power).

It falls under the behavioural approach to leadership, such as other constructs like participative, transformational or ethical leadership, but is conceptually distinct (Cheong *et al*., 2019). Only empowering leadership focuses specifically on what leaders do to provide autonomy and decision latitude to followers, which we argue contributes to their active sensemaking of the process of change, an essential element to understand employees' experience of change (Rafferty and Jimmeson, 2017). This goes beyond merely asking for participation (participative), highlighting the importance of the collective 'us' (transformational) or stressing an ethical perspective. In this context, the role of empowering leaders is to 'lead others to lead themselves' (Manz and Sims, 1987, p. 119).

Research so far has demonstrated the relevance of empowering leadership, not only for performance (Fong and Snape, 2015; Huang *et al*., 2010; Lorinkova, Pearsall and Sims, 2013; Raub and Robert, 2010; Stewart, 2006) but a vast array of employee behaviours, including learning (Jonsson *et al*., 2015), knowledge sharing (Chuang, Jackson and Jiang, 2016; Srivastava, Bartol and Locke, 2006), voice (Gao, Janssen and Shi, 2011), proactivity (Martin, Liao and Campbell, 2013), work engagement (Tuckey, Bakker and Dollard, 2012), creativity (Harris *et al*., 2014; Yon, Bloom and Crant, 2014), innovative behaviours (Chen *et al*., 2011) and organizational (Huang *et al*., 2010; Li, Chiaburu and Kirkman, 2017; Raub and Robert, 2010) and service-oriented citizenship behaviours (Auh, Menguc and Jung, 2014). Additionally, meta-analytic evidence suggests that empowering leadership adds explanatory power to several employee attitudes and behaviours such as organizational citizenship behaviour, creativity, trust in leader and knowledge sharing over and beyond transformational leadership or leader–member exchange (Lee, Willis and Tian, 2018).

The transference of power and responsibility from leaders to their subordinates enables and

develops them, making them more adaptive and open to change (Ahearne, Mathieu and Rapp, 2005). The unpredictability and complexity of organizational change calls for individuals to enact new patterns (Ford, Ford and D'Amelio, 2008), and reducing uncertainty becomes a priority. As change processes do not occur in a vacuum (van Dam, Oreg and Schyns, 2008), individuals look at the current situation, namely how their managers behave, to develop an understanding about the organization's intentions.

Neves, Almeida and Velez (2018) found evidence supporting this claim. They found that both commitment-based HR practices and ethical leadership were necessary in order for employees to reduce their intentions to resist future change, as they emphasize the long-term investment of the organization and its reflex in the daily actions of its agents. These findings are aligned with the idea that individuals resist change not necessarily because of their fear of the future, but rather due to their own prior subjective experiences (Oreg, 2006), which highlights their need to reduce uncertainty as an anticipatory, proactive coping strategy.

Building on URT (Berger and Calabrese, 1975) and on the compelling argument that more often than not employees have legitimate reasons to resist change (Oreg, 2006), we argue that decisions about whether or not one should resist future efforts to change are built around their regular work experiences. Empowering leadership demonstrates the importance placed in the development of subordinates and the belief that employees have the necessary capabilities to deal with potential challenges.

Thus, empowering leadership should reduce employees' intentions to resist future change, reflected in three domains (Piderit, 2000): cognitive (negative beliefs about future changes), affective (feelings, moods and emotions about future changes) and behavioural (reactions to future changes). While these reactions are often aligned, mismatches or ambivalence between them are an important part of resistance of change (Piderit, 2000). It is possible that an individual sees benefits in a particular change (cognitive), but does not necessarily feel positively about it (affective) and eventually even decides not to act (behaviour). We need to examine each dimension separately, as a unifaceted view of the phenomenon is fated to provide an incomplete account of the phenomenon (Piderit, 2000). We argue that the reduction of uncertainty that stems from working with an empowering leader influences: (a) the rational assessment of future changes, particularly negative thoughts (cognitive); (b) the emotions associated with the possibility of change, with an emphasis on negative emotions (affective); and (c) the willingness or intention to act in response to that potential change, particularly actions against that effort (behavioural). Therefore, we propose that:

H1: Empowering leadership is negatively related to (a) cognitive, (b) affective and (c) behavioural intentions to resist future change.

URT also provides cues in terms of the expected pathways. It proposes that positive relational patterns serve two functions: motivational, where shared meaning is ascribed to potentially stressful and threatening environments; and instrumental, where the quantity and quality of the resources provided are assessed (Albrecht and Adelman, 1984; Berger and Calabrese, 1975).

The link between empowering leadership and motivational states, particularly psychological empowerment, has been examined extensively (e.g. Amundsen and Martinsen, 2014; Chen *et al*., 2011; Fong and Snape, 2015; Huang *et al*., 2010; Li, Chiaburu and Kirkman, 2017; Wallace *et al*., 2011; Zhang and Bartol, 2010). Psychological empowerment is commonly defined as intrinsic task motivation manifested in four cognitions: meaningfulness, the value associated with a given task goal or purpose; competence, the mastery with which someone performs a task; impact, the purpose of the task and whether a person can make a difference; and choice, whether an individual controls the initiation and regulation of his/her actions (Thomas and Velthouse, 1990).

Psychological empowerment is one of the main mechanisms via which empowering leadership influences employee work behaviours, including performance (Auh, Menguc and Jung, 2014; Fong and Snape, 2015; Huang *et al*., 2010; Raub and Robert, 2010), innovation (Chen *et al*., 2011), taking charge (Li, Chiaburu and Kirkman, 2017) and creativity (Zhang and Bartol, 2010). Through this motivational process, empowering leadership indirectly contributes to employees' willingness to contribute to their organizations (Chen and Kanfer, 2006). In light of URT, working for an empowering leader should help reduce negative thoughts about, emotional reactions to and intentions to act against any potential change effort because it

improves intrinsic task motivation. Oreg (2006) found that intrinsic motivation only predicted affective and cognitive resistance to change; therefore, we expect the psychological empowerment mechanism to be stronger for cognitive and affective intentions to resist future change. Accordingly:

H2: The negative relationship between empowering leadership and (a) cognitive, (b) affective and (c) behavioural intentions to resist future change is mediated by psychological empowerment.

Another way to reduce uncertainty about the intentions of the organization is to shift control from leaders to their subordinates (Arnold *et al.*, 2000) by demonstrating that its structure, practices and policies focus on 'cascading power, decision-making authority and responsibility down to lower levels of the organization' (Sun *et al.*, 2012, p. 55). Although motivation is at the core of empowerment (Conger and Kanungo, 1988), we argue that the provision of resources side of empowerment is the main uncertainty reduction mechanism concerning organizational change. Change often involves resource scarcity (i.e. lack of time, knowledge, experience), making the access to those commodities a priority. This involves ensuring employees have the necessary access to information, support and resources to be effective at work, while providing opportunities to grow and learn, that is to develop their structural empowerment (Laschinger *et al.*, 2004). By doing so, it reduces asymmetries in information power distribution (Berger and Calabrese, 1975) and thereby fulfils an important role in predicting leader behaviour and reducing uncertainty about their intentions.

The role of structural empowerment as a linking mechanism between leadership behaviours and employee outcomes has remained understudied. Evidence so far shows that leaders are indeed instrumental for its development, with consequences for employee health and behaviour (Read and Laschinger, 2015; Sun *et al.*, 2012). Empowering leadership should also contribute to employees' willingness to support future change efforts by providing them with added control over their environment (Arnold *et al.*, 2000) and improving their perceptions of the current working conditions (Laschinger *et al.*, 2004). Empowering leaders provide resource assistance and reduce information power asymmetries, as reflected in structural empowerment, and thereby diminish employees' negative thoughts about, emotional reactions to and intentions to act against the potential change effort. Given the evidence showing that the amount and quality of information predicts cognitive and behavioural – but not affective – resistance (Oreg, 2006), we expect structural empowerment to be more important for cognitive and behavioural intentions to resist future change. Thus:

H3: The negative relationship between empowering leadership and (a) cognitive, (b) affective and (c) behavioural intentions to resist future change is mediated by structural empowerment.

The role of organization-based self-esteem

While empowerment seems to be generally beneficial, there is also evidence showing that it might not always be an effective strategy. For example, without a learning climate, psychological empowerment does not drive service-oriented citizenship behaviours (Auh, Menguc and Jung, 2014); if enacted in a context of low leader encouragement of creativity, it stops promoting creative process engagement (Zhang and Bartol, 2010); and if put forth in a low organizational support setting, it does not contribute to improved performance (Butts *et al.*, 2009). Interestingly, and while all these authors posited augmenting effects of different contextual variables, they all consistently found them to be a necessary condition for empowerment to drive individual behaviour.

In order to increase the precision of URT, particularly in unusual or multifaceted situations – such as organizational change, we need not only to consider potential moderators in general (Bradac, 2001), but individual differences in particular (Greco and Roger, 2001), as what threatens some might be seen as a challenge by others. OBSE (Pierce *et al.*, 1989) in particular has been associated with how individuals experience uncertainty (Hui and Lee, 2000; Pierce and Gardner, 2004) because they are expected to behave in a manner that is consistent with their positive self-view (Pierce *et al.*, 1989). OBSE refers to 'the degree to which organizational members believe that they can satisfy their needs by participating in roles within the context of an organization' (Pierce *et al.*, 1989, p. 625). It reflects the answer to the question 'How capable, significant and worthy am I as an organizational member?', and could be resumed to

a rather simple statement: 'I count around here' (Pierce and Gardner, 2004, p. 593).

Albeit related, as they both involve elements related to competence and impact, OBSE and psychological empowerment are conceptually distinct. Empowerment involves assessments of self-efficacy – that is the ability to function and perform (Conger and Kanungo, 1988), while OBSE reflects feelings of organizational worth (Pierce *et al*., 1989). Although they both reflect success in achievement domains, the former relies mostly on successfully coping with a wide range of situations while the latter refers to the evaluative component of the self (Johnson, Rosen and Levy, 2008) in the organizational context.

An important tenet of OBSE research is related to behavioural plasticity. Individuals with lower OBSE tend to be more attentive and reactive to negative external stimuli (Brockner, 1988). As such, OBSE should function as a moderator between work environment conditions and employee attitudes and behaviours (Pierce and Gardner, 2004). For example, OBSE moderates the impact of participation in a change process on employee resistant feelings, such that those with higher OBSE reacted more positively to participation (Garcia-Cabrera and Hernandez, 2014).

The predictions of behavioural plasticity help us understand how OBSE influences the uncertainty reduction process. Low self-esteem individuals, when confronted with situations of high uncertainty, are more reactive and easily influenced by negative cues (Hui and Lee, 2000). Reducing uncertainty is therefore a difficult endeavour for these individuals, even when there is resource assistance and the work is meaningful. In contrast, high self-esteem individuals are less permeable to negative cues, and should be more responsive to empowerment efforts and feel more confident about the organization's future intentions. As previously argued, given the centrality of resource scarcity in one's attempts to cope with organizational change, we expect the interaction effects to be stronger for structural empowerment, as it signals the ability to gain important resources. Hence, we predict:

H4: The negative relationship between psychological empowerment and (a) cognitive, (b) affective and (c) behavioural intentions to resist future change is moderated by OBSE, such that this relationship is stronger for high OBSE.

H5: The negative relationship between structural empowerment and (a) cognitive, (b) affective and (c) behavioural intentions to resist future change is moderated by OBSE, such that this relationship is stronger for high OBSE.

Based on these arguments and evidence suggesting that not all employees react positively to empowerment (Humborstad and Kuvaas, 2013), we also predict that OBSE should moderate the process via which empowering leadership influences intentions to resist future change. When faced with the corresponding feelings of psychological and structural empowerment that stem from an empowering leader, employees with high OBSE should more easily reduce uncertainty about the intentions of their organization and respond with lower intentions to resist future change (cognitively, affectively and behaviourally). We do not predict an interaction effect between empowering leadership and OBSE because research has consistently framed the former to be a contextual resource that precedes the latter (Kim and Beehr, 2018; Kwan, Chen and Chiu, 2020; Zhang *et al*., 2018).

H6: The negative relationship between empowering leadership and (a) cognitive, (b) affective and (c) behavioural intentions to resist future change via psychological empowerment is moderated by OBSE, such that this relationship is stronger for high OBSE.

H7: The negative relationship between empowering leadership and (a) cognitive, (b) affective and (c) behavioural intentions to resist future change via structural empowerment is moderated by OBSE, such that this relationship is stronger for high OBSE.

Figure 1 depicts our theoretical model.

Method

Sample and procedure

We used a snowballing sampling method. We relied on our personal networks to invite people to participate while asking them to share the invitation in their own network. At Time 1 we collected data from 334 employed individuals. Of these, we excluded 21 because they missed a catch question inserted in the survey. To match Time 1 and Time 2 data, we created a code that also allowed

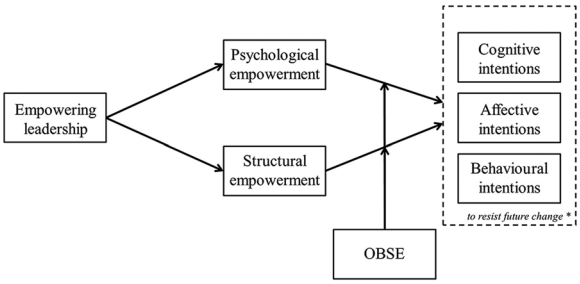

Figure 1. Theoretical model
*Notes: *Measured at Time 2 (six weeks later). OBSE = organization-based self-esteem.*

participants to remain anonymous. Six weeks later (Time 2) we contacted the same individuals to fill out the survey on intentions to resist future change. As Menard (2002) argues, no universal time lag can be recommended as it varies as a function of multiple factors. As such, we defined our time lag based on (a) the call for the use of shorter time lags in the study of work-related attitudes and perceptions (Dormann and Griffin, 2015), (b) common practice in organizational research (e.g. Bateman and Organ, 1983; Mathews and Toubeva, 2015) and (c) pragmatic reasons for collecting data from individuals working in multiple organizations (Tekleab *et al*., 2019). In practice, this time lag allowed us to reduce mortality rates and common method bias, while minimizing the likelihood of any major organizational initiative or critical event taking place between measurement points. We received 174 matching surveys at Time 2 (52.1% of the original sample).

Given that the history of change determines employees' sensemaking (Rafferty and Jimmeson, 2017) and how they react to a future change (Bouckenooghe, 2012), we tested our model only with individuals with a history of change in their current employing organization. To identify those that had already been through a change process, we asked (at the end of the Time 2 survey) whether their organization implemented some significant change in the previous two years. In doing so, we ensure individuals focus on 'recent or ongoing' changes, as emphasized in the retrospective method originally used by Herscovitch and Meyer (2002), while using the timeframe adopted by Neves, Almeida and Velez (2018). Moreover, quite often organizations engage in 'excessive change', as Carucci (2019) pointed out, having almost a 'program of the month aura' (Armenakis and Bedeian, 1999), making it difficult for individuals to exactly pinpoint the start and/or end of change. Our final sample was comprised of 130 individuals (74% of the Time 1–Time 2 matching sample), all of which had gone through major change processes in the past two years and were still employed in that organization. Individuals highlighted that these processes involved several features, namely restructuring (35.8%), changes in systems and processes (25%), new software acquisition (16.2%), departmental changes (12.2%), introduction of new policies (9.5%) and staff reduction (1.3%).

Average organizational tenure was 11.39 years (SD = 9.85) and with their supervisor, 4.88 years (SD = 4.80). Slightly over half were female (52.3%) and were on average 38.35 years old (SD = 10.03). Their education was as follows: 30.0% completed graduate studies; 22.3% had an undergraduate degree; 40.8% completed high school; and 6.9% did not complete high school. The sample had slightly more individuals working in the public sector (56.2%). Their employing organizations operated in several sectors, including public administration (41.6%), social service and health (12.4%), consultancy (8.8%), education (8.8%), information technology (7.1%), finance and insurance (5.3%), hospitality (4.4%), arts and sports (4.4%), among others less represented (e.g. industry, retail).

Measures

Empowering leadership (Time 1). We used the 12-item scale developed by Ahearne, Mathieu and Rapp (2005) with four subdimensions: meaningfulness of work (e.g. 'my manager helps me understand the importance of my work to the overall effectiveness of the company'), fostering participation in decision-making (e.g. 'my manager often consults me on strategic decisions'), expressing confidence in high performance (e.g. 'my manager expresses confidence in my ability to perform at a high level') and providing autonomy (e.g. 'my manager allows me to do my job my way'). The scale should be treated as unidimensional (Ahearne, Mathieu and Rapp, 2005). Cronbach's alpha was 0.89.

Psychological empowerment (Time 1). We used the 12-item scale developed by Spreitzer (1995) with four subdimensions: meaning (e.g. 'the work I do is meaningful to me'), competence (e.g. 'I am confident about my ability to do my job'), self-determination (e.g. 'I can decide on my own how to

go about doing my work') and impact (e.g. 'my impact on what happens in my department is large'). Factor analysis supported the unidimensionality of the construct (Spreitzer, 1995). Cronbach's alpha was 0.88.

Structural empowerment (Time 1). We applied the CWEQ-II (Conditions of Work Effectiveness Questionnaire-II) (Laschinger *et al*., 2001). It includes 12 items within four dimensions which, like the previous measures, load on a global construct: opportunity (e.g. 'in my present job I consider my job challenging'), information (e.g. 'I consider that I have information regarding the current state of the company'), support (e.g. 'regarding my work, I consider that I receive specific information about things you do well') and resources (e.g. 'in my job, I consider that I have sufficient time to meet with the job's requirements'). Cronbach's alpha was 0.75.

Organization-based self-esteem (Time 1). OBSE was measured with the 10-item scale developed by Pierce *et al*. (1989). A sample item is 'I can make a difference in this organization'. Cronbach's alpha was 0.89.

Intentions to resist future change (Time 2). We adapted the cognitive, affective and behavioural resistance to change scales developed by Oreg (2006), comprising five items each. We changed the wording of the items in order to focus on a potential future change event (Neves, Almeida and Velez, 2018): cognitive (e.g. 'I would believe that the change would make my job harder'), affective (e.g. 'I would be afraid of the change') and behavioural intentions to resist future change (e.g. 'I would protest against change'). This procedure also included an introduction where participants were asked to imagine that their organization started a change process and detail how they think they would react. Cronbach's alpha for cognitive and affective intentions to resist future change was 0.68 and 0.69, respectively. We had to remove one item from the behavioural intentions to resist future change. Cronbach's alpha for the four-item behavioural intentions to resist future change measure was 0.70.

Control variables. We controlled for openness to experience since individuals who are high on this trait tend to be tolerant and perceptive, open to new ideas and suggestions, demonstrate effective coping mechanisms (McCrae and Costa, 1986; Straud, McNughton-Cassill and Fuhrman, 2015) and show more positive attitudes towards organizational change (Vakola, Tsaousis and Nikolaou, 2004). We used the 10 items developed by John, Donahue and Kentle (1991). Cronbach's alpha was 0.79. In order to determine which demographic variables should be included in our analysis, we followed the recommendations put forth by Becker *et al*. (2016), in which they suggest leaving out impotent control variables (i.e. those that are not related to any of the outcome variables). As such, tenure with the supervisor, age and education were kept in our analysis, while we did not include organizational tenure or gender.

Both surveys used five-point Likert scales for all measures, ranging from 1 = 'Strongly Disagree' to 5 = 'Strongly Agree'.

Results

Descriptive statistics, reliabilities and zero-order correlations are presented in Table 1. Given that empowering leadership, OBSE and both psychological and structural empowerment were measured simultaneously, we performed a series of confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) with AMOS 25 to examine the distinctiveness of the constructs. Because the number of indicators in the CFA was quite high in comparison with the sample size, we applied the partial disaggregation technique suggested by Bagozzi and Edwards (1998). Given that each of the three empowerment constructs consists of four subdimensions, we aggregated the items in light of those subdimensions (Hall, Snell and Foust, 1999) and so each construct was represented in the CFA by four indicators (one per dimension). For OBSE we followed Little *et al*.'s (2002) recommendation and created three indicators that combined high and low loading items. The four-factor measurement model presented the best fit ($\chi^2(82) = 153.67$; CFI = 0.93; RMSEA = 0.08; SRMR = 0.06) when compared to the three-factor model ($\chi^2(85) = 170.86$; CFI = 0.91; RMSEA = 0.09; SRMR = 0.06; $\Delta\chi^2(3) = 17.19$, $p < 0.05$), where psychological empowerment and OBSE were combined into a single factor; the two-factor model ($\chi^2(87) = 220.74$; CFI = 0.86; RMSEA = 0.11; SRMR = 0.07; $\Delta\chi^2(5) = 67.07$, $p < 0.05$), where empowering leadership was also integrated; and the one-factor model ($\chi^2(88) = 224.10$; CFI = 0.86; RMSEA = 0.11; SRMR = 0.07; $\Delta\chi^2(6) = 70.43$, $p < 0.05$). These findings support the distinctiveness of the constructs measured at Time 1.

Table 1. Correlations, means, standard deviations and reliabilities

	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Empowering leadership	3.65	0.67	(0.89)									
2. Psychological empowerment	4.11	0.59	0.66**	(0.88)								
3. Structural empowerment	3.51	0.57	0.69**	0.49**	(0.75)							
4. OBSE	4.05	0.62	0.70**	0.72**	0.59**	(0.89)						
5. Cognitive intentions to resist	2.26	0.60	−0.06	0.00	−0.23**	−0.04	(0.68)					
6. Affective intentions to resist	2.28	0.66	−0.10	−0.17*	−0.18*	−0.16	0.68**	(0.69)				
7. Behavioural intentions to resist	2.19	0.71	−0.09	−0.11	−0.24**	−0.12	0.66**	0.66**	(0.70)			
8. Openness to experience	3.71	0.57	0.36**	0.39**	0.29**	0.43**	−0.16	−0.16	−0.10	(0.79)		
9. Tenure with the supervisor	4.88	4.80	−0.11	−0.02	−0.09	0.07	0.12	0.16	0.18*	−0.07		
10. Age	38.35	10.03	0.04	0.15	−0.05	0.17	0.18*	0.03	0.03	0.06	0.35**	
11. Education	3.80	1.05	0.07	−0.08	0.18*	−0.05	−0.11	0.04	−0.16	0.16	−0.33**	−0.34**

Notes: OBSE = organization-based self-esteem. Education was coded as follows: 1 = 4th grade; 2 = 9th grade; 3 = completed high school; 4 = undergraduate; 5 = postgraduate studies.

Test of hypotheses

To test our hypotheses (except for H1, which was tested with a linear regression) we conducted bootstrapping analysis with 1,000 bootstrap samples using the PROCESS macro developed by Preacher, Rucker and Hayes (2007). We used Model 4 to test H2 and H3 and Model 14 to test H4 and H5 (Hayes, 2013). We chose Model 14, that disregards the interaction between the predictor and the moderator, because empowering leadership has consistently been conceptualized as a contextual antecedent of OBSE (Kim and Beehr, 2018; Kwan, Chen and Chiu, 2020; Zhang *et al.*, 2018). Empowering leadership was not directly related to cognitive (B = −0.00; 95% CI[−0.17, 0.16]), affective (B = −0.03; 95% CI[−0.21, 0.16]) or behavioural (B = −0.04; 95% CI[−0.24, 0.15]) intentions to resist future change. Thus, H1 was not supported.

To test H2 and H3 (Model 4), we first examined the relationship between empowering leadership and psychological (B = 0.52; 95% CI[0.40, 0.64]) and structural empowerment (B = 0.56; 95% CI[0.45, 0.67]). We then examined the relationship between empowerment and intentions to resist future change. Psychological empowerment was not a significant predictor of cognitive (B = 0.12; 95% CI[−0.13, 0.36]), affective (B = −0.16; 95% CI[−0.43, 0.11]) or behavioural intentions to resist future change (B = −0.09; 95% CI[−0.38, 0.19]). Structural empowerment was negatively related to cognitive (B = −0.33; 95% CI[−0.59, −0.07]) and behavioural (B = −0.37; 95% CI[−0.69, −0.06]), but not affective intentions to resist future change (B = −0.19; 95% CI[−0.48, 0.10]). The indirect effect of empowering leadership on cognitive (B = −0.18; 95% CI[−0.33, −0.03]) and behavioural (B = −0.21; 95% CI[−0.38, −0.04]) intentions to resist future change via heightened structural empowerment was significant, supporting H3a and H3c but not H2a–c or H3b.

We then tested our full moderated mediation models. Bootstrapping results are presented in Tables 2, 3 and 4. First, we examined the interaction effects. OBSE was a significant moderator of the relationship between psychological empowerment and cognitive intentions to resist future change (B = 0.52; 95% CI[0.16, 0.88]). Simple slope analysis showed that when OBSE was high, psychological empowerment was positively related to cognitive intentions (t = 2.63, p < 0.05); when it was low, the relationship was not significant (t = −0.93,

*Table 2. Bootstrapping results for cognitive intentions to resist future change (*Model 14*)*

	Psychological empowerment				Structural empowerment				Cognitive intentions			
	B	t	LLCI	ULCI	B	t	LLCI	ULCI	B	t	LLCI	ULCI
Controls												
Openness to experience	0.20	2.71**	0.05	0.34	0.09	1.26	−0.05	0.22	−0.22	−2.12*	0.42	−0.01
Tenure with the supervisor	−0.00	−0.66	−0.00	0.00	0.00	1.47	−0.00	0.00	0.00	0.53	−0.00	0.00
Age	0.01	1.22	−0.00	0.01	−0.00	−1.07	−0.01	0.00	0.01	1.08	−0.01	0.02
Education	−0.08	−2.04*	−0.17	−0.00	0.07	1.70	−0.01	0.14	0.01	0.25	−0.10	0.13
Main effects												
Empowering leadership	0.52	8.47**	0.40	0.64	0.56	9.79**	0.45	0.67	0.11	0.90	−0.14	0.36
Psychological empowerment									0.18	1.33	−0.09	0.44
Structural empowerment									−0.31	−2.31*	−0.57	−0.04
OBSE									−0.04	−0.29	−0.32	0.24
Interaction effects												
PE × OBSE									0.52	2.88**	0.16	0.88
SE × OBSE									−0.44	−2.83**	−0.75	−0.13
Index of moderated mediation												
PE × OBSE									0.27		0.08	0.52
SE × OBSE									−0.25		−0.48	−0.07

Notes: N = 130. LLCI = lower limit confidence interval. ULCI = upper limit confidence interval.
*$p < 0.05$.
**$p < 0.01$.

Table 3. Bootstrapping results for affective intentions to resist future change (Model 14)

	Psychological empowerment				Structural empowerment				Affective intentions			
	B	t	LLCI	ULCI	B	t	LLCI	ULCI	B	t	LLCI	ULCI
Controls												
Openness to experience	0.20	2.71**	0.05	0.35	0.09	1.26	−0.05	0.22	−0.16	−1.42	0.39	0.07
Tenure with the supervisor	−0.00	−0.48	−0.00	0.00	0.00	1.48	−0.00	0.00	0.00	1.66	−0.00	0.00
Age	0.01	1.21	−0.00	0.01	−0.00	−1.08	−0.01	0.00	0.00	0.23	−0.01	0.01
Education	−0.07	−1.79	−0.15	0.01	0.06	1.71	−0.01	0.14	0.08	1.35	−0.04	0.21
Main effects												
Empowering leadership	0.52	8.46**	0.40	0.64	0.56	9.83**	0.45	0.67	0.22	1.51	−0.07	0.50
Psychological empowerment									−0.08	−0.52	−0.38	0.22
Structural empowerment									−0.19	−1.24	−0.48	0.11
OBSE									−0.18	−1.11	−0.49	0.14
Interaction effects												
PE × OBSE									0.33	1.59	−0.08	0.73
SE × OBSE									−0.41	−2.33*	−0.76	−0.06
Index of moderated mediation												
PE × OBSE									0.17		−0.03	0.40
SE × OBSE									0.23		−0.44	−0.03

Notes. N = 130. LLCI = lower limit confidence interval. ULCI = upper limit confidence interval.
*$p < 0.05$.
**$p < 0.01$.

Table 4. Bootstrapping results for behavioural intentions to resist future change (Model 14)

	Psychological empowerment				Structural empowerment				Behavioural intentions			
	B	t	LLCI	ULCI	B	t	LLCI	ULCI	B	t	LLCI	ULCI
Controls												
Openness to experience	0.20	2.71**	0.05	0.35	0.09	1.26	−0.05	0.22	−0.02	−0.13	−0.26	0.23
Tenure with the supervisor	−0.00	−0.48	−0.00	0.00	0.00	1.48	−0.00	0.00	0.00	1.72	−0.00	0.00
Age	0.01	1.21	−0.00	0.01	−0.00	−1.08	−0.01	0.00	−0.00	−0.78	−0.02	0.01
Education	−0.07	−1.79	−0.15	0.01	0.06	1.71	−0.01	0.14	−0.07	−0.97	−0.20	0.07
Main effects												
Empowering leadership	0.52	8.46**	0.40	0.64	0.56	9.83**	0.45	0.67	0.27	1.73	−0.04	0.57
Psychological empowerment									−0.03	−0.16	−0.35	0.30
Structural empowerment									−0.37	−2.30*	−0.69	−0.05
OBSE									−0.17	−0.97	−0.51	0.17
Interaction effects												
PE × OBSE									0.21	0.94	−0.23	0.65
SE × OBSE									−0.30	−1.59	−0.68	0.07
Index of moderated mediation												
PE × OBSE									0.11		−0.10	0.33
SE × OBSE									−0.17		−0.42	0.03

Notes. N = 130. LLCI = lower limit confidence interval. ULCI = upper limit confidence interval.
*$p < 0.05$.
**$p < 0.01$.

$p > 0.05$). The difference between slopes was significant ($t = 2.87$, $p < 0.05$). OBSE also moderated the relationship between structural empowerment and both cognitive ($B = -0.44$; 95% CI[−0.75, −0.13]) and affective intentions to resist future change ($B = -0.41$; 95% CI[−0.76, −0.06]). When OBSE was high, structural empowerment was negatively related to cognitive ($t = -3.81$, $p < 0.05$) and affective ($t = -2.58$, $p < 0.05$) intentions; when it was low, these relationships were not significant ($t = -0.18$, $p > 0.05$ and $t = 0.35$, $p > 0.05$, respectively). Again, the difference between slopes was significant ($t = -2.83$, $p > 0.05$ and $t = -2.32$, $p > 0.05$, respectively). These results support H4a, H5a and H5b. The effects are depicted in Figure 2.

Finally, we examined the conditional indirect effects for the three previously described interactions. When OBSE was high, empowering leadership significantly increased cognitive intentions to resist future change via psychological empowerment ($B = 0.26$; 95% CI[0.07, 0.52]); when it was low, the indirect effect was not significant ($B = -0.08$; 95% CI[−0.25, 0.06]). Although the index of moderated mediation was significant ($B = 0.27$; 95% CI[0.08, 0.52]), the pattern is opposite to what we predicted, and thus we did not confirm H6a. Simultaneously, when OBSE was high, empowering leadership significantly decreased cognitive intentions to resist future change via structural empowerment ($B = -0.32$; 95% CI[−0.53, −0.13]); when it was low, the indirect effect was not significant ($B = -0.02$; 95% CI[−0.19, 0.23]). The index of moderated mediation was significant ($B = -0.25$; 95% CI[−0.48, −0.07]), supporting H7a. Lastly, when OBSE was high, empowering leadership significantly decreased affective intentions to resist future change via structural empowerment ($B = -0.25$; 95% CI[−0.49, −0.02]); when it was low, the indirect effect was not significant ($B = 0.04$; 95% CI[−0.17, 0.26]). The index of moderated mediation was significant ($B = -0.23$; 95% CI[−0.44, −0.03]), supporting H7b.

Our analytical models explained a fair amount of variance of cognitive, affective and behavioural intentions to resist future change (18%, 13% and 12%, respectively).

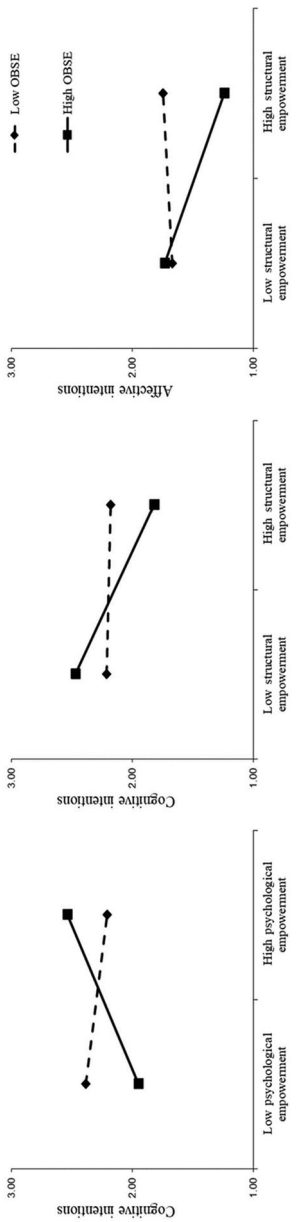

Figure 2. Plots for the interaction effects

Discussion

Taken together, our results show that empowering leadership reduces behavioural intentions to resist

future change (measured six weeks later) via an increase in structural empowerment. It also reduces cognitive and affective intentions to resist future change via an increase in structural empowerment, but only for high OBSE employees. However, it also contributes to an increase in cognitive intentions to resist future change via an increase in psychological empowerment, but only for high OBSE employees. Our study contributes to the change management and empowerment literatures and to our knowledge of the process that sustains the potential for resistance to change in several ways.

First, we contribute to the nascent body of knowledge that argues that organizations need to prepare for change in times of stability (Neves, Almeida and Velez, 2018). In line with the tenets of URT (Berger and Calabrese, 1975), we show that, when preparing for change, individuals make predictions based on the prior behaviour of organizational agents. It also shows that resistance (or specifically, intentions to resist) has a functional value (Ford and Ford, 2010). While research on intentions to resist future change is still scarce (Neves, Almeida and Velez, 2018), it consistently shows that individuals plan to resist change efforts based on an uncertainty reduction process – where they interpret the information available in order to make predictions about the future and for which the leaders' actions contribute significantly.

Second, in line with the viewpoint that critiques the agent-centric approach to change and argues for the legitimacy of employees' reactions (Ford and Ford, 2010; Ford, Ford and D'Amelio, 2008), we provide evidence that the empowering efforts of leaders contribute, over and beyond employees' own openness to experience, to the reduction of employees' intentions to resist future change, across three dimensions: thoughts, affects and behaviours. Empowering leaders provide access to opportunity, information, resources and support (Laschinger *et al*., 2004), and this increase in structural empowerment provides employees with an added control over the environment (Arnold *et al*., 2000). This makes them instrumental in reducing uncertainty about future actions and intentions of the organization. Our study supports the assertion that multiple factors, ranging from managerial actions to individual characteristics, contribute to the complexity of the subjective experience of change (Oreg, 2006).

Specific actions like delegating authority, sharing information, coaching and stimulating autonomy, that is empowering leadership (Sharma and Kirkman, 2015), enable and develop employees, reflecting a long-term commitment of the organization. This long-term perspective helps employees navigate the ambiguous and uncertainty-charged seas of change. When these behaviours are consistently demonstrated by direct supervisors, they help reduce the gap between the present and the future (Amis and Aissaoui, 2013). Moreover, and as predicted, structural empowerment came forth as the main mechanism, when compared to psychological empowerment, linking empowering leadership and intentions to resist future change.

Third, in line with the person–situation framework (Mischel, 2004), we show that empowering leadership (and the empowerment that comes with it) matters for the anticipation of change efforts, but it does not always work. The reduction of cognitive and affective intentions to resist future change via structural empowerment was significant only for high OBSE individuals. As predicted, individuals that felt that they count and matter as organizational members (Pierce and Gardner, 2004) were responsive to structural empowerment, while those that felt that their role was insignificant were not influenced. Given their intrinsic ability to deal with uncertainty, high OBSE individuals are less reactive to negative cues (Hui and Lee, 2000), and therefore respond positively to uncertainty reduction efforts, making them more willing to support potential change efforts. These results are in line with the findings of Heuvel, Demerouti and Bakker (2014) in the context of a major reorganization, showing that OBSE is also linked to an increased adaptability to change.

Finally, although unintendedly, we also contribute to the ongoing discussion on the potential burden of empowering leadership (Cheong *et al*., 2016). While it is generally seen as a positive strategy that contributes to empowerment and ultimately enacts positive behaviours (Maynard, Gilson and Mathieu, 2012), we show that empowering leadership might backlash, at least to a certain extent. Empowering leadership, via psychological empowerment, increased cognitive intentions to resist future change for those with high OBSE (but not low OBSE). Organizational membership is the centrepiece for the self-image of high OBSE individuals, reflected in a heightened sense of purpose, competence, impact and choice (Thomas and Velthouse, 1990). It is possible that, as a side effect, high OBSE individuals might

also start thinking about the need to defend and preserve the status quo in the face of uncertainty, and feel responsible for protecting the practices that helped the organization become what they are so proud of. Similar evidence was found by Hui and Lee (2000) and was justified around potential threats to an individual's sense of self-worth and identity. They found that low OBSE individuals were more responsive to uncertainty, with heightened absenteeism and lower commitment; however, high OBSE individuals also reacted with lower intrinsic motivation. Although against our predictions, this effect is not necessarily surprising (Cheong *et al*., 2016), as prior studies have shown that not all employees expect or react positively to empowerment (e.g. Humborstad and Kuvaas, 2013).

Practical implications

Our study also carries several implications for managers. By (2005) argued that the main task of contemporary leaders is to manage change. Knowing that change is inevitable, we build on his statement and argue that an important complement to this task is to help employees proactively cope (Aspinwall and Taylor, 1997) and prepare for change. Proactive coping refers to efforts put forth before a potentially stressful event to either prevent it or change its form before it occurs (Aspinwall and Taylor, 1997). Because people prefer to 'see it coming' rather than be caught in a stressful situation (Neubauer, Smyth and Sliwinski, 2018), coupled with the fact that organizational change is now the norm rather than the exception, the importance of developing anticipatory coping skills is key (Feldman and Hayes, 2005). Anticipatory coping efforts help develop resources to deal with the stress of an upcoming event (Neubauer, Smyth and Sliwinski, 2018). This can be done by training middle managers to demonstrate a long-term commitment to their teams, especially through structural empowerment efforts during periods of stability, as our study shows. Such an approach should help employees go through the five stages of proactive coping (i.e. resource accumulation, recognition of potential stressors, initial appraisal, preliminary coping efforts and use of feedback) (Aspinwall and Taylor, 1997), enabling them to deal with the uncertainty that characterizes contemporary organizations.

When preparing for or implementing a major change, the organization's past will come to either help or haunt the devised strategy. Organizations may also implement HR practices that demonstrate a similar involvement with the workforce, such as emphasizing the internal labour market in selection processes, the role of team and organizational performance for compensation and the long-term perspective of training opportunities (Tsui *et al*., 1997). It will be difficult for an organization to demonstrate its commitment to its members during difficult and uncertain times (such as major change processes) if it fails to nurture talent in times of stability (Neves, Almeida and Velez, 2018).

Since empowerment may not work for everybody, managers should establish the necessary conditions for it to be effective, namely develop their employees' OBSE by demonstrating support and consideration or reducing job stressors and role ambiguity and conflict (Bowling *et al*., 2010). Managers should also be concerned with how they communicate the change message itself, as it should demonstrate that the envisioned future state is better than the current state and that the team has the necessary skills to successfully overcome the discrepancy (Armenakis, Harris and Mossholder, 1993). The key focus should be on highlighting purpose and urgency without forgetting that resistance should be interpreted as feedback (Ford and Ford, 2010).

Limitations and future research

Our study is not without limitations. First, and although we collected data at two separate time points, all our data comes from a single source, which raises concerns about common method variance (CMV). CMV might have particularly inflated the relationships between the variables measured at Time 1. However, there are three reasons that minimize our concerns: (a) CFA supported the distinctiveness of the constructs; (b) CMV does not generate artificial interaction effects – at most it deflates them, making them more difficult to identify (Lai, Li and Leung, 2013); and (c) we tested the impact of including an unmeasured latent method factor in the measurement model in order to assess the weight of CMV (Podsakoff, MacKenzie and Podsakoff, 2012). As expected, the model with the CMV factor presented a better fit to the data ($\chi^2(53)$

= 98.79; CFI = 0.97; RMSEA = 0.06; SRMR = 0.05; $\Delta\chi^2(29) = 54.88$, $p < 0.05$). However, the variance explained by the CMV factor was 1.95%, demonstrating its small weight compared to the 25% threshold (Williams, Cote and Buckley, 1989).

Although the time-lagged design is one of the main methodological strengths of our study, it also carried some unintended limitations, such as the significant reduction in our sample size. Moreover, this was enhanced by the fact that we focused solely on individuals with a history of participation in change efforts in the current organization, as it contributes to the individual sensemaking process (Bouckenooghe, 2012; Rafferty and Jimmeson, 2017). While this might carry additional concerns about statistical power, these concerns are minimized by the fact that interaction effects are difficult to find, especially when statistical power is low (Aguinis, 1995).

Another limitation concerns the fact that our study incorporates multiple types and forms of change, both related to individuals' past experience as well as their future intentions. While this highlights the common elements in the experience of change, and thus allows us to provide general recommendations for change management, it does not consider potential specificities of different types of change strategies. One might argue that someone who survived downsizing might react differently (or more aggravatedly) than someone who underwent a total quality management programme. Moreover, the weights and pathways might differ depending on the type of change, signalling the potential ambivalence between facets of resistance (Piderit, 2000). Providing resources might reduce behavioural resistance to the acquisition of new software, but not the emotions associated with it, while psychological empowerment might be particularly important for affective resistance in changes that appeal directly to the ascribed meaning of work (e.g. restructuration). We believe these change-specific elements deserve further exploration.

Another issue that requires further understanding is how these intentions transfer to actual resistance behaviours once a change is proposed. The combination of retrospective methods and presentation of future change scenarios also implies that the time lag between the end of the last process and the beginning of the yet-to-come change varies substantially. Given that the examination of intentions to resist future change is still nascent (Neves, Almeida and Velez, 2018), future research should also dedicate additional attention to the temporal stability of intentions to resist future change. Temporal stability refers to 'the extent to which an attitude remains unchanged over time regardless of whether it is challenged' (Sheeran, Orbell and Trafimow, 1999, p. 725). Prior research has shown that the relationship between intention and behaviour varies substantially depending on the temporal stability of those intentions (Conner and Godin, 2007; Sheeran, Orbell and Trafimow, 1999). While we argue that these intentions are broadly formed as an attempt to manage uncertainty in the workplace, it is worth examining how these intentions fluctuate across time and which are the main contributing factors, namely the role played by empowerment (and the consistency of the empowering actions) in such processes. Finally, it would be interesting to study parallel challenges that might also stem from intentions to resist future change efforts. Do these intentions express themselves in other behaviours, even in the absence of change, such as protecting oneself from risks, covering up problems or lashing out?

Conclusion

Our study contributes to the understanding of the antecedents of intentions to resist future change. Our findings show that empowering leadership is an important safeguard for the rise of these cognitive, affective and behavioural intentions via an increase in structural empowerment and mostly for high OBSE individuals. However, it might also have unwarranted effects via psychological empowerment. The purpose of our study was precisely to call attention to the need for organizations to develop a long-term, humanistic approach towards their workforce, where change is prepared by stimulating empowering leadership and enhancing OBSE during times of stability.

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Pedro Neves is an Associate Professor at Nova School of Business and Economics. His research has been published in journals such as *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology* and *The Leadership Quarterly*. His research interests focus on leadership and interpersonal relationships in the workplace, change management and entrepreneurship.

Daniela Pires currently works as Project Manager at BNP Paribas. She graduated in Economics in 2014 and completed her Master's in Management with a major in Human Resources Management in 2016, both at Nova School of Business and Economics. Prior to the experience in BNP, she was a trainee in Caixa Geral de Depósitos. Her Master's thesis focused on empowerment and its impact on reactions to change.

Sandra Costa is a Lecturer in Organizational Behaviour and Human Resource Management at the University of Liverpool Management School. She received her PhD from Nova School of Business and Economics. Her research interests focus on psychological contract breach, job insecurity, ethical leadership, coworker undermining, recovery, revenge and forgiveness in the workplace.