



Factors influencing employees' resistance to change in the mining sector in Zimbabwe

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Abstract

Change has become important and unavoidable in today's business environment. Today's dynamic business environment requires organizations to change their systems and structures for survival continuously and to remain competitive. However, many change initiatives face big challenges and have a low success rate. The focus of the study was to identify the factors and reasons for employee resistance to change at Bindura Nickel Corporation (BNC). The research is a descriptive case study, and a sample of 20 respondents from Bindura Nickel Corporation was used. Non-probability sampling technique was applied using purposeful sampling. A qualitative research approach was employed, and face-to-face interviews and semi-structured interviews were employed to collect the data. The study findings showed many numbers of factors attributed to for employee resistance to change. The study results indicated that employee resistance emanated mainly from fear of job loss/security, lack of communication, lack of rewards, concerns about lack of skills and capabilities and fear of moving from their current position to a new position and new systems. It is recommended that management should communicate the change to the employees and get their perspective before implementing the change.

Keywords: Employee resistance; Change; Change management; Mining Sector

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1. Introduction

In today's ever changing business world companies from all of sizes must be aware of the different factors that might affect the way they are managed and ultimately operate. Every organisation needs to change in order to successfully adjust to new circumstances in the market and improve its efficiency as well as the ability to stay competitive. Companies allocate large financial resources to conducting organisational changes since they recognise their importance for future growth and development. Chiguvu and Guruwo (2017) point out that the topic of change can mean different things to different people in different situations. They contend that this makes it difficult to generalize the idea of change. In simple words change is making things different from the way they are. This implies that change essentially requires transitioning from current state of things to a new state that one desires to be in. Change can be planned or unplanned. Hartel et al. (2006), posit that organizational change is any alteration whether planned or unplanned that causes a shift in the status quo and that affect the structure and resources of an organization. However, in the business world we are living in today change has become more of a planned thing to improve organization's effectiveness. There are a lot of forces driving change internally and externally and these influences the mining sector to change their systems and ways of doing things. Some of these forces include technological changes, political factors, change in demographic patterns, social responsibilities, the change in economy and globalization (Grama and Todericiu, 2016; Chavan and Bhattacharya, 2022). Organizational change is therefore a planned change of the organizational systems, structures, people, and technology to improve the operations effectiveness of the organization (Cawsey et al., 2012).

The dynamic business environment of today requires organizations to be continuously changing their systems and structures for survival and to remain competitive (Triaa, et al., 2016). However, many change initiatives face big challenges and have a low success rate (Kalyani and Sahoo, 2011; Peus et al., 2009). Since 2000, Zimbabwe's recent economic decline has resulted in significant changes in the commercial world, and the mining industry is no exception. Change has become a fundamental factor because of fierce business competition, new technologies, new techniques to business development and mostly globalization. Organizations are quickly realizing that in a world where national and geographic boundaries are dissolving due to globalization, they must position themselves as regional and global actors (Varnavsky, 2019). In this view, change is now inevitable and hence crucial for managers to take the initiatives and act promptly in the context of worldwide changes. Cummings and Worley (2019) indicate that the change is a constant in organizational life due to the speed of global, economic, and technical growth. The current environment requires organizations to adapt or else fail (Robbins, Judge, Odendaal and Roodt, 2009). However, change is not always smooth and welcomed by everyone. Resistance comes with the pressures of change. Most well-planned restructuring efforts seem to die a natural death when faced with stern resistance (El-Taliawi, 2018 and Bradutanu, 2015).

According to (Cohen and McWilliams, 2021) resistance is any attitude or behavior that reflects a person's unwillingness to make or support a desired change. This view concurs with Farrell, (2021) who define resistance as behavior which is intended to protect an individual from the effects of real or imagined change. Therefore, when employees resist a change, it means that they are unwilling to make some adjustments required to enhance productivity in the organization. Organizational change, according to (Heracleous and Bartunek, 2021), is the function of effort over a period to learn new methods of managing an organization. Cohen and McWilliams (2021) views change as moving from the known to the unknown. In short, change is an

alteration of the present state. The organizational change process consists of the 3 steps that are Unfreeze; Move, and Freeze (Lewin, 1951). According to Lewin (1951) unfreezing entails examining the status quo and increasing the driving forces to change. The move phase encompasses making change permanent. Thus, the effects of employee resistance to change encompasses, strikes, decrease in production, low morale, decrease in labour turnover, to mention but a few.

In Zimbabwe restructuring attempts of the mining sector seem to be met by strong resistance as evidenced at Zimplats, Hwange Colliery Mine and Ashanti Gold Mine, just to mention a few (MMCZ report, 2018). These mining organizations embarked on a restructuring exercise, but employees resisted the change. However, things have changed. The mining sector has become violent and the players in this sector have realized that for them to survive they cannot wait for the one size fits all kind of running things they need to restructure, reposition and reorganize systems to win in the global village (Muchaendepi et al., 2019). Bradley (2010), states that avoiding change is not a viable option. The Challenge is to develop an effective and timely method of determining the optimum set of proactive changes and to manage them so that stakeholder resistance is overcome and defined performance goals are achieved like mitigating climate change and promoting sustainable mining environment. There is need for the mining sector to continue making internal changes because the external environment continues to change every day. Without the change, players in the mining sector will not survive. The study evaluates the factors for employee resistance to change, the management response and its effect on productivity in the mining sector and using Bindura Nickel Corporation as a case study. The study is of significance because knowing the main factors for employees' resistance for change, can represent opportunities to grow and signal employees that Bindura Nickel Corporation is staying up to date. Bel et al., (2018) found that individuals actively supported the change process, when they had positive attitudes towards its objectives. In addition, other scholars (Hughes 2018; Sveningsson and Sörgärde, 2019) have argued that employees' resistance to change can also have positive intentions: For example, when employees see flaws in the change strategy or suspect negative implications of the organization, resistance can be useful and lead to better outcomes. This is important to Bindura Nickel Corporation management because it guide them to formulate strategies of managing change and to foster strong relationship with the employees. This minimises conflicts and increase productivity and work efficiency at Bindura Nickel Corporation.

2. Literature review

2.1. The concept of Change

In today's world, change is all prevalent in entities. It occurs continuously, and often at a fast speed. According to Weiner (2020) change is the only constant in today's life of individuals and organizations. Institutions embark on change processes with various aims; either to catch up with rivals, turn around a crisis situation, complete a merger, enhance performance, for diversification or cost cutting it has been argued that firms that do not engage in change process at some time or other risk extinction or perform below expected standards. According to Buschow and Suhr, (2022), today's business environment produces change in the workplace more suddenly and frequently than ever before. Mergers, acquisitions, new technology, restructuring, and downsizing are all factors that contribute to a growing climate of uncertainty.

According to Anyieni (2016) change is unavoidable and as such employees who resist change can cripple an organization. Many researchers have argued that half to two thirds of corporate change fail or collapse (Buschow and Suhr, 2022; Weiner, 2020; Anyieni, 2016; Waseela, 2005). These are frightening figures considering the turbulent business environment and climate that individuals are operating in. There are many reasons which cause the failure of change in organizations. Change is any alteration occurring in the work environment that affects the ways in which employees must act (Buschow and Suhr, 2022). Diana and Aslami, (2022) argues that change is an ever-present feature of organizational life both at operational and strategic level. Change can be planned, unplanned, transformational, or incremental and organizational just to mention but a few.

2.2. Change management

Change management has been defined as the process of continually renewing an organization's direction, structure, and capabilities to serve the ever-changing needs of external and internal customers (Moran & Brightman 2000, Anyieni, 2016). Change Management is a structured approach to transitioning individuals, teams and organizations from a current state to a desired future state (Cawsey et al., 2012). Change Management refers to any approach to transitioning individuals, teams, and organizations using methods intended to re-direct the use of resources, business process, budget allocations, or other modes of operation that significantly reshape a company or organization (Buschow and Suhr, 2022). Change management is the process, tools, and techniques to manage the people-side of change to achieve the required business outcome. Change management incorporates the organizational tools that can be utilized to help individuals make successful personal transitions resulting in the adoption and realization of change (Benton, 1998; Diana and Aslami, 2022; Buschow and Suhr, 2022).

Change management has also been defined as the process of continually renewing an organization's direction, structure, and capabilities to serve the ever-changing needs of external and internal customers (Moran and Brightman, 2001). According to Munawar, (2021) change is an ever-present feature of organizational life, both at an operational and strategic level. Therefore, there should be no doubt regarding the importance to any organization of its ability to identify where it needs to be in the future, and how to manage the changes required getting there. Consequently, organizational change cannot be separated from organizational strategy, or vice versa (Lauer, 2021; Munawar, 2021; Burnes, 2004; Rieley and Clarkson, 2001). Due to the importance of organizational change, its management is becoming a highly required managerial skill (Munawar, 2021). Buschow and Suhr (2022) go as far as suggesting 'against a backdrop of increasing globalization, deregulation, the rapid pace of technological innovation, a growing knowledge workforce, and shifting social and demographic trends, few would dispute that the primary task for management today is the leadership of organizational change. Since the need for change often is unpredictable, it tends to be reactive, discontinuous, ad hoc, and often triggered by a situation of organizational crisis (Lauer, 2021; Munawar, 2021). Although the successful management of change is accepted as a necessity to survive and succeed in today's highly competitive and continuously evolving environment (Buschow and Suhr, 2022; Weiner, 2020; Anyieni, 2016; Waseela, 2005) report a failure rate of around 70 per cent of all change programs initiated. It may be suggested that this poor success rate indicates a fundamental lack of a valid framework of how to implement and manage organizational change as what is currently available to academics and practitioners is a wide range of contradictory and confusing theories and approaches (Burnes et al., 2018).

Buschow and Suhr (2022) argue that mostly personal and superficial analyses have been published in the area of change management, and according to Doyle (2002) there is even evidence to suggest that with only a few exceptions existing practice and theory are mostly supported by unchallenged assumptions about the nature of contemporary organizational change management. Edmonstone (1995) supports this observation when stating 'many of the change processes over the last 25 years have been subject to fundamental flaws, preventing the successful management of change'. Even though it is difficult to identify any consensus regarding a framework for organizational change management, there seems to be an agreement on two important issues. Firstly, it is agreed that the pace of change has never been greater than in the current business environment (Balogun and Hailey, 2004; Burnes, 2004; Carnall, 2003; Kotter, 1996; Luecke, 2003; Moran and Brightman, 2001; Okumus and Hemmington, 1998; Paton and McCalman, 2000; Senior, 2002). Secondly, there is a consensus that change, being triggered by internal or external factors, comes in all shapes, forms, and sizes (Balogun and Hope Hailey, 2004; Burnes, 2004; Carnall, 2003; Kotter, 1996; Luecke, 2003), and therefore, affects all organizations in all industries.

2.3. Employee resistance to change

It is crucial to understand what is meant by resistance in order to comprehend the idea of employee resistance. As cited by Dent and Goldberg (1999), Zander (1950), an early researcher in the subject, defined resistance to change as behaviour which is intended to protect an individual from the effects of real or imagined change. Bradley (2000) defines resistance as any contact that serves to maintain the status quo in the face of pressure to change the status quo. This means that resistance is any force that tends to oppose or retard motion of change. Organizational change represents a shift from the known to the unknown, by changing the status quo (Dent, 1999). Unless there are compelling reasons for a change, employees generally do not support change (Cummings and Worley, 2009).

2.4. Sources and reasons to resistance to change at workplace

There are many sources and reasons for employee resistance to change at workplace. Resistance to change can be explained by several factors. Many researchers have cited several reasons to resistance to change at the workplace (Cohen and McWilliams, 2021; El-Taliawi, 2018; Grama and Todericiu, 2016; Lauer, 2021; Bradutanu, 2015; Munawar, 2021; Anyieni, 2016). Table 1 shows the sources and reasons of resistance to change at the workplace.

Dent and Goldberg (1999, cited in Anyieni, 2016) states that employee resistance to change normally arises from those whose jobs are directly affected. Causes such as surprise, inertia, misunderstanding, emotional side effects, lack of trusts, fear of failure, personality conflicts, poor training, threats to job status/ security and work group breakup, can stop the change process. Dubrin and Ireland (1993, cited in Dent and Goldberg, 1999) attributed resistance to change to four main factors, people's fear of poor outcomes, fear of failure, faults of change and threat to job security. Employees resist change for a wide variety of reasons, ranging from a straightforward intellectual disagreement over facts to deep-seated psychological prejudices (Anyieni, 2016). Below is the discussion of the common reasons why people resist change at the workplace.

Table 1. Factors of Employees' resistance to change

Factors of employee resistance to change	Anyieni, 2016	Cohen and McWilliams, 2020	El-Taliawi, 2018	Grama and Todericiu, 2016	Lauer, 2021	Munawar, 2021	Bradutanu, 2015
Bad Communication Strategy	✓		✓	✓			
Inertia	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Shock/ Fear of Unknown	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Misunderstandings	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Lack of trusts	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Fear of Failure	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
Personality conflicts	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Lack of competence	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Threats to job status/ security	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Work group breakup	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Peer pressure	✓	✓	✓				✓
Faults of change		✓	✓				✓
Uncertainty	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Lack of reward	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Poor timing	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Organizational politics	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Loss of support systems	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

Source: (Chiguvi, 2022)

2.4.1. Fear of losing job

Many researchers have argued that job loss is a major reason that employees resist change in the workplace (see table 1). In an organizational setting, any process, technological advancement, systems, or product change will include streamlining, working smarter, cost reduction, efficiency, and faster turnaround times (Adenle, 2011). All these means employees will resist the changes that result in their roles being eliminated or reduced. For example, introduction of new technology causes many employees to fear that their jobs are gone. Waseela (2005) explained that when new technology is introduced, many jobs are lost hence the reason for employees to resist change in the workplace.

2.4.2. Lack of reward

When there are no rewards in change for the organization's employees, they will resist it (Bradutanu, 2015; Munawar, 2021; Adenle, 2011). Without a reward, there is no motivation to support the change over the long run (Anyieni, 2016; Waseela, 2005). This often means that organizational reward systems must be altered to support the change that management wants to implement.

2.4.3. Fear of the unknown

Employees resist change due to fear of latent effects especially if the change is novel. Employees' responses to organizational change can range from fear and panic to enthusiastic support (Anyieni, 2016). Waseela (2005) and Bradutanu (2015) argued that during periods of change, some employees may feel the need to cling to the past because it was a more secure, predictable time. If what they did in the past worked well for them, they may resist changing their behaviour out of fear that they will not achieve as much in the future. This assertion was also echoed by Munawar (2021) who posits that the less the organization employees know about the change and its impact on them, the more fearful they become. This clearly demonstrates that employees resist change due to fear of the unknown. This is mainly common in an unstable business environment.

2.4.4. Uncertainty

Employees resist change because of uncertainty. Waseela (2005) argued that many employees are reluctant to leave the familiar behind. This means that all people are suspicious about the unfamiliar and if there is no hope, people tend to resist change in the workplace (Anyieni, 2016). This researcher has got the opinion that if companies are constantly experiencing times where the future is unknown, as the current case in Zimbabwe, there is also a good possibility that employees would not respond to change well.

2.4.5. Misunderstanding

Employees resist change when they do not understand the need for change in the workplace. This is mainly caused by poor communication and poor leadership (El-Taliawi, 2018). Watson, (2019) mentioned that, if the process of what needs to be changed, how it needs to be changed and what success would look like cannot be communicated, then resistance should be expected. Employees need to understand why there is a need for change, because if they are just thrown the notion that what they have been used to for a long time is going to be completely renovated, with that will come much backlash (Watson, 2019). Waseela, 2005) mentioned that this resistance is common at lower-level employees who were not involved or engaged during the planning stages of change. This infers that employees need to thoroughly be engaged and consulted before the implementation of change process. If the employees are not engaged, it is difficult for the employees to understand the change process (Robbins, 2001).

2.4.6. Fear of failure

Employee resistance to change is common to those people who feel that they will not be able to cope (Martin, 2005). Fear of failure is one of the reasons why employees resist change in the workplace. This factor is made worse by the prevalent culture in most organizations that failure is unacceptable. In an organizational setting,

any process, technological advancement, systems, or product change will include streamlining, working smarter, cost reduction, efficiency, faster turnaround times Cohen and McWilliams, 2021. All these means staff and managers will resist the changes that result in their roles being eliminated or reduced (Grama and Todericiu, 2016; Lauer, 2021). This assertion was supported by (El-Taliawi, 2018 and Thompson, 1990) who posited that resisting change protects people from the glare of failure.

2.4.7. Poor communication

Cohen and McWilliams, (2021) argues that the way in which any change process is communicated to employees within the organization is a critical factor in determining their reactions. If employees do not understand the need for change, then expect resistance (Grama and Todericiu, 2016; Lauer, 2021). Changes within an organization start with key decision makers. It is up to them to pass along the details to team members and ensure all questions and complaints are handled before changes go into effect. Grama and Todericiu, (2016) pointed out that, as news of a change spreads through the hierarchy, details are sometimes skewed, and members end up receiving inaccurate, second-hand information. This infers that poor communication can therefore cause resistance to change.

2.4.8. Work group breakup

Change has a potential to bring about social loss (Anyieni, 2016). The informal work group may be extremely strong. If a change causes an individual to be transferred, the power of the group is likely to be diminished (Bradutanu, 2015; Munawar, 2021). The individual who is transferred gets affected as he or she loses the association with the other members of the group. Therefore, fear of social loss makes employees to resist change in the workplace.

2.4.9. Resentment of control

When employees are told that a change is to take place, they are made to realize that they do not have any other option other than implementing the change (Lauer, 2021). This may create some resentment that employees may not have any control over their destiny. Even though the change may be for better, they are likely to resent the change (Cohen and McWilliams, 2021).

2.4.10. Self-interest

Ego often interferes with the ability to adapt to change (Cohen and McWilliams, 2021). Some want to maintain the status quo to better advance their own personal agendas; others have different motivations. In the end, employees acting in their own self-interest, instead of the organization's greater good, will resist change (Bradutanu, 2015).

2.4.11. Feeling excluded

Organizations often solicit advance input to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to voice their ideas and opinions (Lauer, 2021). If, however, employees hear of a sudden change, and they had no input, they will feel excluded from the decision making process and perhaps offended (Grama and Todericiu, 2016; Lauer, 2021).

2.4.12. Lack of trust

Trust plays a big role in running a successful organization. When organization members feel they cannot trust each other or key decision makers, it becomes difficult for them to accept organizational changes (Bradutanu, 2015). They may ascribe the changes to some negative underlying reason or even assume they will eventually lose their jobs. Weiner (2020) argued that employees will resist change if they believe that leadership does not have their interest at heart, or is not open and honest with them about the change and its impact.

3. Change management models

Change management models are concepts, theories, and methodologies that provide an in-depth approach to organizational change (Lewis 2011). They aim to provide a guide to making changes, navigating the transformation process, and ensuring that changes are accepted and put into practice. In this study, Lewin’s Change Management Model was discussed.

3.1. Kurt Lewin’s model

Kurt Lewin’s model and his ideas about organizational change are well known and quoted by managers today. Lewin was one of the first theorists to deepen the understanding of action research as well as the understanding of groups, experimental learning, and changes. Kurt Lewin (1951) as cited in Martin (2005) developed a change model known as the force field analysis model which states that any situation exists as the result of a balance between the forces acting upon it. His force field analysis and three stage theory of change is a basis for many similar three step change management models today. The three steps of Lewin’s theory are:

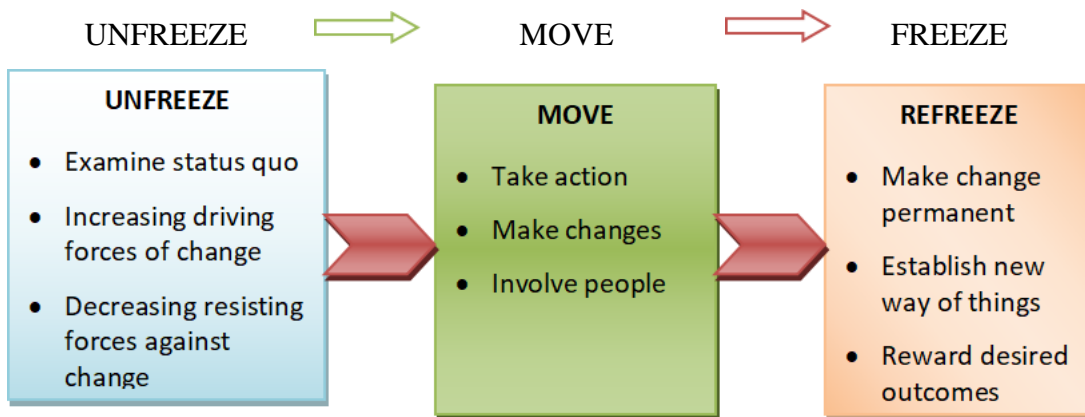


Figure 1. Lewin’s 3 step model (Source: Lewin 2003)

3.1.1. Unfreezing

In the first phase Lewin’s force field analysis explains why change happens. This analysis explains that in any change situation both driving and resisting forces exist. To trigger a change, the driving forces have to outweigh the resisting forces. An example of this case is the quest whether a company should implement a new reporting

system in their office. There are a lot of arguments for the employees to keep their old familiar system – these are the resisting forces. On the other hand, driving forces promote a new reporting system. However, as long as more reasons for keeping the old system exist than for establishing a new one, no change will happen. It requires the current situation or state to be unfrozen in preparation for change to be introduced. This is a difficult stage as resistances surfaces at this stage. If resistance is extremely high management may have to resort to both reducing resistance and increasing attractiveness of the alternative if the unfreezing is to be successful. At this stage organization try to change the failing systems whilst at the same time maintaining order within the organization. Communication is vital at this stage for employees, and everyone involved to air out their views and concerns and the management can address these issues to avoid the barriers to achieving a successful change program.

3.1.2. The move phase

The move phase is also referred to as a change in transition phase by various authors (Buschow and Suhr, 2022; Diana and Aslami, 2022; Sveningsson and Sörgärde, 2019). In this stage, people start moving towards something new or at least different, they are unforeseen. The phase is described as one of the hardest stages within the whole change process as people are unsure about the future and a lot of support is needed in order to reach the admired output. At this phase, the current situation has been unfrozen. The new operational level has been identified and it is now time to make the necessary changes. New systems, policies and structures are put in place and everyone in the organization is encouraged to take part in the change initiative. Change can be in either the driving force or the restraining forces. Research has shown that to be effective, change has to happen quickly, and organizations will do well if they get through the movement stage quickly (Robbins and Judge, 2011). At this stage there must be intensive communication and involvement so that people are moving along at the same pace and encouraging everyone and showing them that this new change will bring greater things in the long run.

3.1.3. The freezing phase

In this phase the ongoing change must face the notion of homeostasis. Homeostasis is the feature of a system to maintain stable and return to its equilibrium after disruption. Lewin (1951) argues that in the third phase of his model the new state of equilibrium must be strengthened in order to prevent the system from its original state. In the freezing phase the new methods and behaviors must become the state of the art. Driving and restraining forces are equal. Once the changes have been implemented, they are refrozen in a new state of balance. If this is not done the balance will not be fixed and it will go back to its previous state. Refreezing implies that changes made become the new norms for that particular situation (Martin, 2005). When the change agents monitor the change in systems and structures, and they are satisfied they then refreeze the new change. For this to work change has got to be reinforced.

4. Research methodology

In this research study, a qualitative research approach was employed. The qualitative research approach was used to help the researcher to understand the sources and reasons of employee resistance to change at BNC.

This approach enabled the researcher to have a deeper understanding of the effects and challenges of resistance to change at Bindura Nickel Corporation. Qualitative research methods are also helpful as they give more opportunities to the respondents to respond more elaborately and in greater detail than is typically the case with quantitative methods (Mohajan, 2018). Qualitative research uses open-ended questions and probing which gives participants the opportunity to respond in their own words, rather than forcing them to choose from fixed responses, as quantitative methods do (Mohajan, 2018). This study used a case study. Case study is an ideal design when a holistic, in-depth investigation is needed (Feagin, et al, 1991). Yin (1984) defines the case study research method as an inquest that examines a contemporary phenomenon within its actual setting.

4.1. Population and sampling technique

Thieme (2018) affirmed that a population is defined as the entire group of people, events, or things that the researcher wishes to investigate. The targeted population of this study comprised of employees and top management of Bindura Nickel Corporation. Non-probability sampling technique was used in this study. The researcher used judgmental sampling to select respondents who have knowledge and expertise in line to the study area of the research. This study was qualitative and therefore, used a small sample size to gather in depth information required for this study. Taherdoost (2017) recommended a sample size of 10 to 30 participants for qualitative research. The sample comprised of 20 respondents who were purposively selected to form the sample size of the study.

4.2. Data collection

Face-to-face interviews with the respondents were done in an effort to understand the causes, effects, and challenges of employee resistance to change in the mining industry. The thematic content analysis was used to analyze the qualitative data. Thematic content analysis was used to analyse qualitative data. Thematic analysis entails identifying the most recurrent important key words, themes or concepts, which are analysed in terms of their implications to the subject under study (Saunders et al., 2019). The data collected was presented in writing to detail findings, quoting key responses gathered. This was analysed and linked to the research topic and questions, as well as previous research. All the responses provided were verified and tabulated. Qualitative data was interpreted in a narrative form.

5. Data findings

Under this theme, the researcher sought to identify the sources and reasons of employee resistance to change at BNC. The study results in table 2 shows the sources and reasons for employee resistance to change from 15 employees and 5 managers at BNC. The majority (12 out of 15) of the respondents from the employees indicated that fear of job loss, lack of clarity and fear of unknown are the major sources and reasons of employee resistance to change at BNC. Three (3) out of the 15 further indicated that lack of reward and lack of competitive skills and capabilities are the reasons for employee resistance to change at BNC.

In the interviews all the five managers interviewed 5 out of 5 have revealed that loss of power, lack of trust, fear of extra and new responsibilities, fear of job security and lack of skills and capabilities are the major sources and reasons of employee resistance to change at BNC.

Table 2. Factors influencing employees' resistance to change at BNC

Sources & reasons for employee resistance to change	Employees	Managers	Total
	(n)	(n)	(n)
• Fear of job loss /security	12	5	17
• Lack of clarity (Poor Communication)	12	-	12
• lack of competitive skills and capabilities	3	5	8
• Fear of unknown (Uncertainty)	12	-	12
• Lack of reward	3	-	3
• Loss of power	-	5	5
• Lack of trust	-	5	5
• Fear of new and more responsibilities.	-	5	5
TOTAL	15	5	20

Source: Field Research

5.1. Fear of job loss

All the 15 employees indicated the fear of job loss as the major source and reason for employee resistance to change at BNC 5 out of 5 of the managers interviewed also cited lack of job security as major reason for employee resistance to change. This seems to be caused by economic instability in Zimbabwe and as such employees' fear change due to fear of losing their jobs. One of them went on to say:

Mining changes in this prevailing economic crisis in our country and the mining sector, has posed a major threat to job security. For this reason, employees resist any form of changes to protect their jobs.

5.2. Lack of clarity

The majority (12 out of 15) of the respondents from the employees indicated that lack of clarity is one of the reasons for employee resistance to change at BNC. The 12 respondents pointed that the change process at BNC is rushed without wide consultation. This factor caused many employees to resist change. One of them had this to say:

Yes, we had to resist the change because we did not understand the purpose of the change. For me personally things were fine as they were so to just change without a clear reason is a problem. Change usually means someone will lose their job.

5.3. Loss of power and Lack of skills and capabilities

All the five managers interviewed have mentioned loss of power and lack of skills and capabilities as major sources and reasons for employee resistance to change at BNC. This seems to be caused by the fact that the mining sector is rapidly involving due to new technologies used in the mining sector. Therefore, it seems majority of the mining workers does not have 21st century skills and they fear criticism of failure or fail to cope with new changes, hence employees' resistance to change. One of the 5 managers said:

Mining sector is involving and as such employees with new technological skills are needed to increase productivity and mining efficiency...

The other one agreed and said:

Many mining employees are resisting change because fear loss of power, since their jobs will be replaced by technology, and some does not have key competency skills required when change takes place.

6. Discussion

From the responses gathered many reasons were identified as sources for employee resistance to change at BNC. Five major sources and reasons were pinpointed by both 15 employees and 5 managers of BNC as the sources and reasons of employee resistance to change. Manager and employees concurred, that fear of job loss or security is the major reason for employee resistance to change in the mining sector. The respondents felt that whenever, change take place old jobs will be replaced by new jobs. This makes existing employees to lose their jobs. This finding is supported by (El-Taliawi, 2018; Grama and Todericiu, 2016; Lauer, 2021; Munawar, 2021; Anyieni, 2016) who postulated that when new technology is introduced, many jobs are lost hence the reason for employees to resist change in the workplace. This assertion was also supported by (Lauer, 2021; Bradutanu, 2015; Munawar, 2021; Adenle, 2011) who all corroborated that employees would resist the changes that result in their roles being eliminated or reduced.

This finding of the research is also substantiated by (Cohen and McWilliams, 2021; El-Taliawi, 2018; Grama and Todericiu, 2016; Lauer, 2021; Bradutanu, 2015), who mentioned that fear of job loss and security is the major source and reason why employees in the mining sector resist change. Muchaendepi et al., (2019) argued that mining is a mass employer and as such mining employees resist change due to fear of losing their jobs. The study findings also revealed that lack of clarity due to poor communication is another reason for employee resistance to change. This finding is supported by Bel et al. (2018) who indicated that employees resist change when they do not understand the need for change in the workplace. This is mainly caused by poor communication and poor leadership. Zimunya et al. (2015) mentioned that, if the process of what needs to be changed, how it needs to be changed and what success would look like cannot be communicated, then resistance should be expected. Employees need to understand why there is a need for change, because if there is no clarity, employees resist that change Bel et al. (2018).

The study findings also revealed that employees resist change because of lack of trust and uncertainty. This sentiment was echoed mainly by BNC managers. They mentioned that employees at BNC do not trust

management and as such they are apathy to change. This assertion was supported by the studies by both (Grama and Todericiu, 2016 and Lauer, 2021) who both argued that many employees are reluctant to leave the familiar behind. This means that all people are suspicious about the unfamiliar and if there is no hope, people tend to resist change in the workplace. This researcher has got the opinion that if companies are constantly experiencing times where the future is unknown, as the current case in Zimbabwe, there is also a good possibility that employees would not respond to change well. This assertion was also echoed by (Diana and Aslami, 2022). who posits that the less the organization employees knows about the change and its impact on them, the more fearful they become. This clearly demonstrates that employees resist change due to fear of the unknown. This is mainly common in an unstable business environment.

The study findings in table 2 also revealed that employee resist change if they are no rewards. This finding was supported by Grama and Todericiu (2016) who posited that organizational employees would resist change when they do not see anything in it for them in terms of rewards. El-Taliawi (2018) and Anyieni (2016) and Waseela (2005) also corroborated that without a reward, there is no motivation to support the change over the long run. This means that organizational reward systems must be altered to support the change that management wants to implement, if any change is to be accepted and successful.

7. Conclusion

The study results showed that there are many sources of employee resistance to change. The study findings revealed that fear of job loss, loss job status, lack of reward, fear of unknown, lack of skills and capabilities, job security, loss of job benefits are the factors for employees' resistance to change at BNC. The study results from both employees and top managers indicated that the fear of job security is the major source and reason for employee resistance to change in the organization. Fear of losing job benefits, like free company housing has proved to be one of the reasons why employees resist change at BNC. The conclusion drawn was that there are many sources and reasons for employee resistance to change at BNC. However, all the respondents have indicated fear of job loss/security as the major source and reason for employee resistance to change at BNC. This research recommends that the management must provide and acquire adequate resources in the organization. Safety is the number one priority in the mining sector. Therefore, to motivate and encourage many employees to accept change, managers must provide sufficient resources to the employees, whenever, the resources are needed. The management must provide assurance of job security to the employees. This help to reduce resistance and fear among employees. When employees feel secured of their jobs, employee resistance to change weakens. Management should also understand, accept and make an effort to work with resistance since not doing so would undermine even the most well-intended and well-conceived change efforts. Management's ability to achieve maximum benefits from change depends in part of how effectively they create and maintain a climate that minimizes resistant behavior and encourage acceptance and support. Management must also develop a change management strategy which must provide direction and purpose for all other change management activities in the future. Bindura Nickel Corporation is a big mining company and as such the management must sponsor coalition as a strategy of managing employee resistance to change. Sponsor coalition describes the leaders and managers who need to be on board and actively engaged in leading the change. The primary sponsor is the person who authorizes and champions the change. This person must be actively and visibly engaged in the change throughout the project. They also have a part in building a coalition

of sponsors across the organization. In the mining sector a longer, more strategic rollout is almost always the best option, rather than a hasty shift in direction. This is because majority of the mining employees are semi-skilled and less skilled people who generally are slow to adopt new habits, so this strategy will give staff a chance to familiarize themselves with the new way of doing things and gradually phase out old practices in a more natural way.

This study was limited to one mining organization, hence limiting the scope of the study. It is therefore, suggested that future researchers should involve many mining organizations to improve the authenticity of the research.

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