

Case

Analyzing Resistance to Change in a Social Movement using Content Analysis

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Abstract

The objective of the study is to look at the trend in resistance to change during a social movement and specifically Anna Hazare's movement. The most striking feature of this nation-wide movement is that all forms of mass protests, demonstrations, and hunger strikes throughout the movement were absolutely non-violent. Anna was able to get the support of millions across the country but throughout the movement Anna had to face different forms of resistances. In this paper we are exploring the trend explaining the different forms of resistances that Anna came across during his movement. Though the results of the study are case specific, still we get an insight of the various factors that contribute to resistance to change in a democratic setup. We are trying to explain resistance to change during the movement both analytically and methodologically. This study is conducted with

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qualitative research using content analysis.

Key Words: Social Movement, Resistance to Change, Content Analysis

Introduction

In the year 2011, the world has witnessed many large scale social movements. All these movements were instrumental in bringing out the public sentiments about their respective regimes. The Libyan Uprising, The Egyptian revolution, London riots are few examples of such social movements. India, the largest democratic country in the world didn't remain untouched by this wave. The biggest social movement of our times was the nationwide anti corruption movement headed by social activist Anna Hazare. Anna fasted thrice in the year 2011 demanding stronger anti- corruption legislative bill or Lokpal bill. Millions across the country took to streets to support the cause of Anna Hazare. The most striking feature of this nationwide movement is that all forms of mass protests, demonstrations, and hunger strikes throughout the movement were absolutely non-violent.

Another noteworthy thing about the whole anti-corruption movement is Anna's leadership. Anna displayed remarkable leadership qualities during the social movement. In this paper our aim is to explore the leadership style of Anna. Anna was able to get support of millions across the country but there is other side of the coin also. Throughout the movement, Anna had to face different forms of resistances. We are exploring the trend explaining the different forms of resistances that Anna came across during his movement.

Literature focusing on resistance to change can be seen as two opposite moving streams. One stream of research look at

resistance to change as a hurdle that has to be overcome in order to implement a successful change. These studies have negative orientation towards resistance to change. The focus of these studies is to analyze the various causes of resistance to change (Lewin, 1951; Dent & Goldberg, 1999; Oreg, 2006; Bruckman, 2008; Oreg et al., 2008) and the ways to overcome it (Bruckman, 2008; Kan & Parry, 2004). Other stream of research which is minor as compared to the earlier one, focuses on positive role of resistance in the change process (Ford et al., 2008; Knowles and Linn, 2004; Schultz-Hardt et al., 2002; Waddell and Sohal, 1998). Here, resistance is seen as a resource for change (Ford et al., 2008) that can help to modify and improve the change effort.

In both these streams of research, level at which change is analyzed is a single organization and individuals within an organization (Marci et al. 2001). However, according to the open system perspective, organizations are open systems and are affected by the environmental influences (Thompson, 2007). According to contingency theory also, organizations are influenced by their environment and in order to be effective, they adapt to their environment (Donaldson, 2001). Thus, organizations can not remain unaffected by the changes occurring in their environment. What happens if these changes are in the form of a social movement? According to Turner and Killian as quoted in Nash (2000) social movements are “collectivity with some continuity to promote or resist a change”. If there is a change effort then, there will also be resistance to change. In case of social movements, literature suggests that in case of social movements individuals resist because of their vested interests and threatened status-quo (Coser, 1957; Vander

Zanden, 1959).

The social movement that is considered for this analysis is Anna Hazare's movement and the change recipient or the organization on which the effect of this change effort is studied is the UPA (United Progressive Alliance) government.

Background of Anna's Movement

Anna Hazare, a social activist initiated the movement against corruption with hunger strike at Jantar Mantar in Delhi on April 5, 2011. Initially, Anna and his supporters demands were to form a joint committee of representatives both from government and members of the civil society (term represents Anna and his key supporters) to draft a stronger anti- corruption legislative bill or Lokpal bill. The fast ended with the assurance from the government to meet all the demands of the movement. But, after several failed discussion and difference in opinion with the government on the draft bill, Anna again decided to go on an indefinite hunger strike from 16 August 2011. This time the demand was to pass his team's draft of the stronger Lokpal bill in the then going session of parliament. The government resisted and responded by arresting Anna and his supporters before the planned indefinite fast; Section 144 (which prohibits assembly of more than 5 persons) was also imposed by the government in Delhi before the planned fast. The arrest set-off mass protests across the country. A day later, government decided to free Anna but he refused to leave the jail until he was given permission to fast at Ramlila Maidan for 15 days. In next few days several talks between civil society members and government took place. Anna was supported by millions

throughout the country. After several ups and downs, finally both the houses in parliament passed the resolution meeting Anna's demands by voice vote. After that only Anna agree to end his 12 day fast on 28th august 2011.

The most striking feature of this nation-wide movement is that all forms of mass protests, demonstrations, and hunger strikes throughout the movement were absolutely non-violent. Unavailable in Gandhian era, team Anna used social network sites, SMS s etc. to spread their message.

Another noteworthy thing about the whole anti-corruption movement is Anna's leadership. Anna displayed remarkable leadership qualities during this social movement. Through this movement Annanot only revived the once forgotten Gandhian principle of non-violence but also established their present day relevance.

Leadership strategies that lead to a social change can be explained in three ways as suggested by Chin and Benne (1961) – rational-empirical (change is perceived to be logically justified by change recipients), normative-reeducative (change recipient themselves participate in developing and implementing the change) and power-coercive (power and position are used to implement change on change recipients) (Szabla, 2007). In the case of Anna Hazare's movement none of the above mentioned strategies are working, instead Anna s leadership to bring a social change can be well-explained through Advanced Change Theory (ACT). ACT looks at leader as a change agent who changes the self first and then attracts others to change themselves in order to achieve a common good (Quinn et al. 2000).

Ten principles by Quinn et al. (2000) explain the ways in which an ACT leader can bring change in self first and then others. If we try to align these principles with Anna's efforts to bring change, it can be easily indicated that Anna is an ACT practitioner.

According to Quinn et al. (2000) ACT leaders recognize the human weakness of being hypocrite. People do not behave in the way that they preach. But ACT leaders try to reduce this gap and they try to act on those values that they espouse. This helps to build their integrity among the followers. Besides, abstaining self-hypocrisy ACT leaders are open to new ideas that align with their common good objective. Instead of following the rules, ACT leaders do what they believe is right. They act in unconventional ways and have enough courage to follow their faith. ACT leaders use trust rather than force or control to connect with their followers. They inspire their followers to commit to the common good. They believe that change in self can change others.

Anna displayed all the qualities of an ACT leader through this movement. Those who supported him trusted him and had faith in him because of the way he had spent his whole life. He has no charm for the material possessions and he acted upon Gandhian principles of leading a simple life. Therefore, his integrity is unquestionable in his follower's eyes. When Anna raised his voice against corruption in the country, people believed in him and supported him and his recommendation to draft a stronger anti-corruption legislative bill or Lokpal Bill. Millions supported Anna when he declared his fast. Majority of individuals in the country perceived that Anna has articulated their thoughts and therefore they supported his movement. Thus, based on above

arguments our first proposition is-

Proposition 1- Anna's leadership to bring a social change through the movement can be well- explained through Advanced Change Theory (ACT). For millions of his followers during the movement, Anna displayed the qualities of an ACT leader.

Resistance to change during Anna's Movement-

Anna started his movement demanding stronger Janlokpai to eradicate corruption at a time when the country was struck with various scams and scandals. There was a general feeling of disgust in common man with corruption. Various politicians were involved in the scams and thus the credibility of the political class in the eye of common man was falling. In such circumstances Anna emerged as a credible leader. People looked up to him as a credible leader who can give voice to their sentiments. People saw themselves as stakeholder and looked at Anna's movement as if he has articulated their thoughts only. All the factors that led to the movement are listed in Figure 1. Anna was able to get support of millions across the country but there is other side of the coin also. Throughout his movement Anna had to face various forms of resistances. One form of the resistance is by those individuals (the elected representatives in parliament) who play fundamental role in enacting the change. This kind of resistance to social change is often attributed to 'vested interests and bourgeoisie' (Vander Zanden, 1958). Individuals in power look at social movement as a threat to their status-quo and they are uncertain about their future ex-post. So, they resist the change. Another form of resistance is from inside the Anna's team itself. We have

termed this form of resistance as internal resistance.

All these various forms of resistances are shown in Figure 1.

As explained in figure 1, when we look at Anna's movement in particular, the UPA government was initially reluctant to let Anna proceed with his movement. Anna had declared that he will be on fast unto death from 16th August well in advance.

On 14th

August government's top ministers had a meeting to come out with a strategy to deal with Anna's proposed fast. In that meeting Chidambaram and Sibal suggested to arrest Anna. Some ministers like Pranav Mukherjee and A.K. Anthony disagreed. But PM followed the advice of Chidambaram and Sibal. Police arrested Anna and Anna was sent to Tihar Jail. On directions from the government Delhi police didn't give Anna the permission to go ahead with fast at Jaya Prakash Narayan Park. In spite of all these actions from the government, on the proposed day Anna started his fast in the jail. The arrest of Anna led to an upsurge of several protests throughout the country. It made pressure on the government and orders were given to release Anna in the evening. But Anna refused to leave the jail. Here, it can be seen that initially the resistance by the government was very high. They went for extreme steps and tried to resist Anna by arresting him and denying him the permission to fast.

In the next week from 17th-22nd August the government was still resistant towards Anna's movement. In the situation of crisis government responded by being inactive. No initiatives were taken from the government side to resolve the issue. But, as the movement progressed government started to negotiate with Anna's team. Both parties tried to reach to a consensus. Except three issues both parties agreed on all issues. PM who was earlier defending his government's

action of arresting Anna tried to reach out to Anna on 25th August. The unfolding of all these events lead to propose our next hypothesis.

Hypotheses 1: During the Anna's movement, as the movement progressed, the external form of resistance decreased.

Another form of resistance is from inside the Anna's team itself. We have termed this form of resistance as internal resistance. Anna has to overcome this resistance too in order to continue his movement. From the beginning, Anna's team wanted to have their version of bill to be passed in Parliament's, then going session. They were very rigid and adamant to negotiate with respect to their demands. But, as the movement progressed, Anna's health became a concern for the team members. Anna was 74 years

old at the time of fast. Fasting for such a long period at this age was dangerous for his health. Besides, Anna's team had bitter past experience while dealing with the government. During the Anna's earlier fast that ended on 8 April 2011, government had promised to accept all the demands of the movement. But, while drafting the bill, government sidelined the Anna's Team member's recommendations to make a stronger Lokpal bill. Therefore, Anna's team felt that the government members had deceived them and they had distrust on government. But after several rounds of talks with the government and PM's assurances, Anna's team inflexibility reduced. Our next hypothesis is based on above arguments.

Hypotheses 2: During the Anna's movement, as the movement progressed the internal form of resistance decreased.

Insert Figure 1 here

Methodology

This study is conducted with qualitative research using content analysis of the articles published in various magazines. “Content analysis is a research technique used to objectively and systematically make inferences about the intentions, attitudes and values of individuals by identifying specified characteristics in textual messages”(Morris, 1994). With the help of content analysis we tried to bring out the various forms of internal and external resistances that Anna had to overcome during the movement. Then, we further analyzed the trends in the relative frequency of internal as well as external resistance statements over time.

Sample-

For this study data was collected with the help of online resources. The data generated in this format is well suited for the computerized coding of the text and hence, was preferred over the printed form of data. The articles for the study were identified with the help of Google search engine. All the articles included in the study are published after 28th August, i.e. after Anna's fast got over. The search was conducted using the various combinations of following keywords: Anna Hazare's movement, fast, Jan Lokpal, government, failure, discussion, opinions, editorials. The search generated lot of articles that had some combination of the above mentioned terms but only those articles were shortlisted for the study that discussed some aspect of this movement in addition to one or two of the following (a) Before drafting Lokpal b) Anna's fast at JantarMantar c)

Discussion and Failure of negotiations with government d) Steps taken by government to curb the movement]. Final sample included 19 articles of which 15 were from popular Indian magazines (from both weekly and fortnight publications). The readership of these magazines varies from 1.5 million to 15 million. Two articles were from popular news channels online reports and 2 are from online daily e-newspapers.

We used the computer software MAXQDA 10 for content analysis. With the help of the software we developed the coding scheme that represented the various kinds of resistances during the movement. We broadly divided the resistances under two categories- internal resistance and external resistance. Here, we have represented the various forms of resistances that existed because of issues within the Anna's team as internal resistance. All other sorts of resistances are termed as external resistances.

We developed five subcategories under the dimension internal resistance: inflexibility, un- negotiable-all or nothing stand, unwilling to engage in dialogue, aging Anna's health concern and distrust on government. Statements under the subcategory 'inflexibility' indicate the uncompromising and intransigent attitude of Anna's team. The statements under the next subcategory 'un-negotiable- all or nothing stand' point towards the pressure made by Anna's team by insisting that their version of bill alone should go to parliament. 'Unwilling to engage in dialogue' is an in vivo code. It represents the extreme reaction by Anna's team to the extent that they are highly resistant to even have a dialogue with the government to reach a resolution. At the time of this movement Anna was

seventy-four years old and his health during the fast was a major concern for everyone in his team. The category under the heading ‘distrust on government’ represents those statements that convey the distrust of civil society people on government s actions and intentions.

Insert Table 1 here

The subcategories under the dimension external resistance are: PM in office, not in power, Inapt political leadership in Congress, PM office undergoing transition, Gov. distrust of civil society, Initial wrong strategies, Gov. justifying its action, Gov. inaction for week, Ignorance of public expectation of MP s, and Critics. Statements that indicated that PM was not the ultimate authority to take decisions are covered under the subcategory. Next subcategory represents those statements that point towards the vacuum of top leadership in Congress due to various factors such as- absence of Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi was not able to handle the situation etc. At the time of this movement the PM office was undergoing changes; new bureaucrats have taken their posts and hence their understanding with PM affected the important decisions in handling the situation. The statements under the subcategory ‘PM office undergoing transition’ points towards this change. ‘Gov. distrust of civil society’ is an in vivo code and indicates that government was not trusting the team Anna members. Statements under ‘Initial wrong strategies’ indicate the various strategies that government s top ministers like Sibal and Chidambaram suggested initially of arresting Anna, denying him right to do demonstration etc. All these strategies backfired on the government. But, the government tried to

justified its action and the statements under the subcategory 'Gov. justifying its action' indicates this point. The statements under the next subcategory 'Gov. inaction for week' indicates government's reaction of no action during the week 17-22 August. Statements under the subcategory 'Ignorance of public expectation of MP s' indicate that elected representatives in government are unaware of the expectations of them from common man. So, they were unable to address the situation properly. The statements under the subcategory 'critics' measure the opinion of those who think that Jan Lokpal bill is not properly drafted, Anna's team stand is rather fascist etc.

The coding of the articles resulted in 63 coded statements. Here, we have considered paragraphs and not sentences or words as coding unit. This means each paragraph is considered as a single unit for coding, considering a single sentence or words as a unit of data analysis will lead to lot of data under analysis. Also, author's perception is more clear when we consider the whole paragraph instead of a single sentence or few words (Daedlow et al., 2011). The examples that are given in Table1 are single statements; they are used here for illustration purpose only, these sentences are able to communicate the meaning in the whole paragraph.

Insert Figure 2 here

Coding was completed by two independent coders and when agreement could not be reached, the code was rejected (12 codes were rejected). After the coding process got over, we put the individual codes assigned to internal and external resistances separately according to the dates (of movement). Here, we have considered the day of reference of the code

according to the whole paragraph, where it is mentioned. Since, some codes were applicable for more than one day of the event so they were considered more than once. Others were day specific. After that we plotted the trends in relative frequency of the statements indicating internal and external resistance over the time period of the event.

Results-

The pattern that is emerging through the plot of relative frequency of internal and external resistance over time supports the hypothesis 1 and 2. The graph for external resistance has a decreasing trend till 18th August: the external resistance from 18th to 21 August is somewhat constant, which reflects government's inaction during this period. On 22nd August there is a peak in the graph which shows sudden increase in external resistance. This peak can be explained by government's unwillingness to compromise on six points. But on 23rd August the peak again comes down which can be explained by PM's surrender letter to Anna. On 25th August PM requested Anna to end the fast in parliament which is also visible in the graph. The graph of internal resistance has several ups and downs but it has an overall decreasing trend. The episode of Swami Agnivesh that came to limelight after the fast got over may explain some of peaks in graph. Overall both of these graphs confirmed our hypothesis.

After the movement, future of JanLokpal Bill remains uncertain, but this movement established Anna Hazare as an iconic figure against corruption. People across the country explored non-violent and constitutional ways of expressing their voice through this movement. The various groups and social classes came together for this movement, so this movement became a platform to integrate various social

groups across the country. This movement also established India as a liberal democracy in the eyes of the wider world. The larger issues like tribal rights, black money etc. came to limelight because of this movement. The weak governance of the current government got exposed. Leadership of Rahul Gandhi who is seen as future PM of India was also tested through this movement. Overall, this movement can be celebrated as people's victory. All the points describing the post movement are listed in Figure 1.

Conclusion and Discussion

The objective of our study was to look at the trend in resistance to change during a social movement. Though the results of the study are case specific, still we get an insight of the various factors that contribute to resistance to change in a democratic setup. We tried to explain resistance to change during the movement both analytically and methodologically.

Here, the study has some limitations also. Study considers the factors contributing to resistance to change during the time interval of the movement only, though it tried to capture some points prior the movement but other factors could have been considered. Semi-structured interviews with people connected with the movement as a supplementary data can be used to make the study better. But, due to lack of time and resources that was not done.

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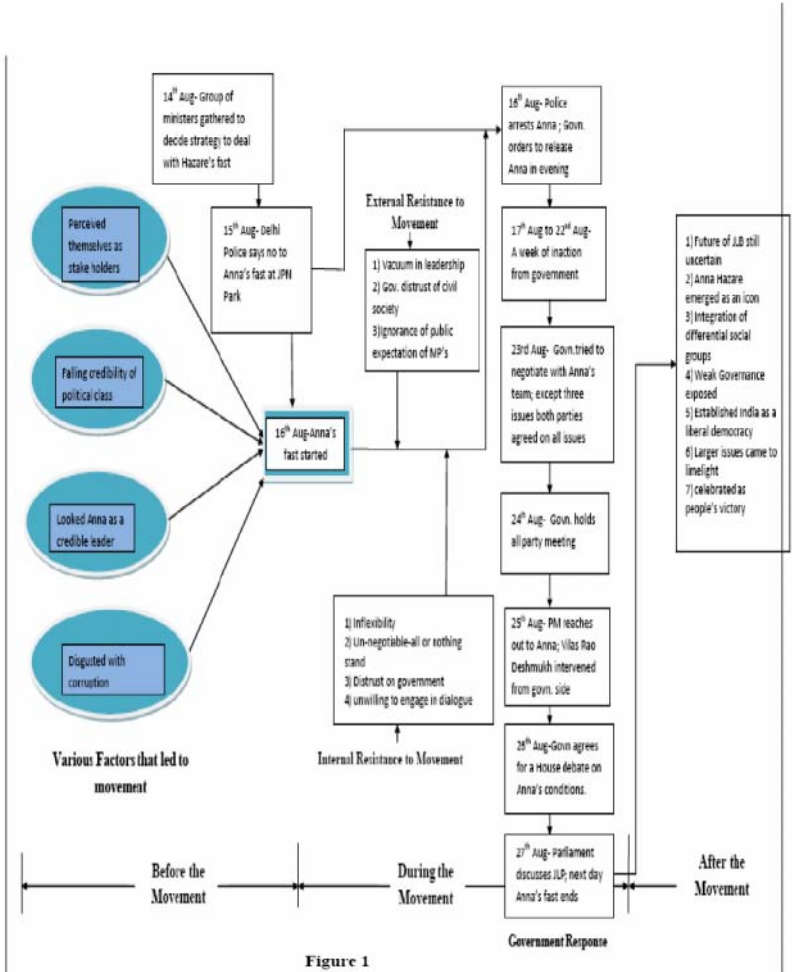
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Dimensions and subcategories	Examples of supporting statements
Internal Resistance:	
Inflexibility (6 statements)	"they had appeared stubborn"
Un-negotiable-all or nothing stand (5 Statements)	"seek the moon for crumbs to come your way"
Unwilling to engage in dialogue (1 Statement)	"in vivo code"
Aging Anna's health concern (2 Statement)	"Aging and adamant Anna"
Distrust on government (4 Statement)	"The dialogue process has to be honest, and it has to be recorded"
External Resistance:	
PM in office, not in power (5 Statement)	"Manmohan was reduced to a pastiche of authority".
Inapt political leadership in Congress	"Rahul Gandhi has been unable to fill the vacuum"

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(6 Statement)	
PM office undergoing transition (2 Statement)	"Manmohan is losing the bureaucratic comfort zone as well"
Gov. distrust of civil society (1 Statement)	"in vivo code"
Initial wrong strategies (9 statements)	"A political problem was given an administrative solution".
Gov. Justifying its action (3 statements)	(Prime Minister Manmohan Singh defended his Government's decision to arrest Hazare"
Gov.inaction for week (5 statements)	"a timid conservatism in the face of crisis"
Ignorance of public expectation of MP's (4 statement)	"The language used by Congress and UPA mocked at people's outrage at corruption"
Critics (10 statements)	"Anna Hazare has been ill advised"

Table 1

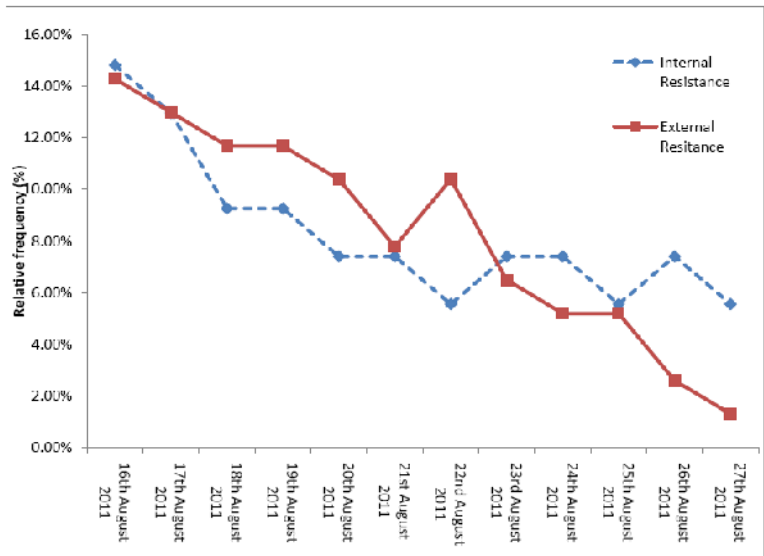


Figure 2