

Theoretical-empirical Article

Retention of Civil Organizations Members and Political Participation: Possible Relationships

Retenção de Membros de Organizações Cívicas e Participação Política: Possíveis Relações



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ABSTRACT

Objective: to explore the influence of retention of civil society organizations (CSOs) members on political participation. **Theoretical framework:** members of CSOs are likely to engage in various political activities. The propensity of members to participate in political practices may be influenced by their retention, which enables the development of democratic competencies and values, civic skills and virtues, and other political resources that foster political engagement. **Methods:** an explanatory quantitative research was carried out, using data from 234 members of CSOs in Mozambique, collected through a questionnaire consisting of validated scales of members' retention and political participation. Structural equation modeling was performed to test the five research hypotheses, using weighted least squares mean and variance adjusted (WLSMV) as the estimation method, considering member retention practices as a second-order construct to explain each of the dimensions of political participation. **Results:** The hypothesis testing pointed to the non-rejection of two hypotheses, demonstrating that: member retention practices significantly explain political contact; and member retention practices significantly explain civic engagement. **Conclusion:** the study demonstrates that the propensity of CSOs members to participate in various political practices can be explained by member retention, which adds value to the literature. The findings contribute to human resource management in CSOs seeking to foster individual capacity to participate in democratic political processes, as well as those aiming to promote the expansion of democracy in society.

Keywords: political engagement; Mozambique; civil society organizations; political participation; member retention.

RESUMO

Objetivo: explorar a influência da retenção de membros de organizações da sociedade civil (OSCs) sobre participação política. **Marco teórico:** membros de OSCs são suscetíveis a participar de diversas atividades políticas. A propensão de membros a participar de práticas políticas pode ser influenciada pela sua retenção, que oportuniza o desenvolvimento de competências e valores democráticos, habilidades e virtudes cívicas, e de outros recursos políticos que propiciam engajamento político. **Métodos:** realizou-se pesquisa quantitativa explicativa, usando dados de 234 membros de OSCs de Moçambique, coletados por meio de questionário constituído pelas escalas de retenção de membros e de participação política, previamente validadas. Realizou-se modelagem de equações estruturais para testar as cinco hipóteses da pesquisa, utilizando weighted least squares mean and variance adjusted (WLSMV) como método de estimação, considerando as práticas de retenção de membros como um construto de segunda ordem para explicar cada uma das dimensões de participação política. **Resultados:** o teste das hipóteses apontou para a não rejeição de duas hipóteses, demonstrando que: as práticas de retenção de membros explicam significativamente contato político; e as práticas de retenção de membros explicam significativamente engajamento cívico. **Conclusão:** o estudo demonstra que a propensão de membros de OSCs a participar de diversas práticas políticas pode ser explicada pela retenção de membros, o que acrescenta valor à literatura. Os resultados contribuem para a gestão de pessoas em OSCs que buscam fomentar a capacidade individual de participar nos processos políticos democráticos, assim como naquelas que têm por finalidade impulsionar a expansão da democracia na sociedade.

Palavras-chave: engajamento político; Moçambique; organizações da sociedade civil; participação política; retenção de membros.

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INTRODUCTION

Political participation is crucial in democratic systems as it allows citizens to make demands and express their interests and preferences to political actors toward influencing or affecting political decisions and outcomes (Magul & Cavalcante, 2022). Individuals can become more susceptible to participating in political practices by being members of civil society organizations (CSOs) for an extended period, considering that such institutions support collective actions and democratic political issues of public interest, while they promote and deepen democratic norms, values, and attitudes (Boulding, 2010; Dore & Jackson, 2020; Encarnación, 2017; Jaysawal, 2013; Lee & Glasure, 2007; Uhlin, 2009) which are resources for political action (Fung, 2003).

Thus, it is understood that retaining CSO members increases individuals' probability of participating in various political practices, and that CSOs raise their members' awareness about common issues in society, as they defend political themes of public interest (Ayala, 2000; Boulding, 2010; Dore & Jackson, 2020; Fung, 2003; Magul & Cavalcante, 2022; McVey & Vowles, 2005; Teorell, 2003; Ulzurun, 2002; Wallman-Lundåsen, 2015). In this perspective, this article aims to explore the influence of retaining CSO members on political participation.

Management practices for retaining people have been extensively researched, and the literature converges on the following factors: compensation; training and development opportunities; career opportunities; supervisor support; work-life balance; and job characteristics (Dhanpat et al., 2018; Döckel et al., 2006; Gani et al., 2020; Kashyap & Rangnekar, 2014; Presbitero et al., 2016; Samuel & Chipunza, 2009; Sanjeevkumar & Wei, 2012; Shibiti, 2019; Van Dyk & Coetzee, 2012; Yousuf & Siddqui, 2019).

Those factors make up the measurement scale proposed by Döckel et al. (2006), which has been applied in several studies (Dhanpat et al., 2018; Ferreira & Mujajati, 2017; Ferreira & Potgieter, 2018; Gani et al., 2020; Shibiti, 2020; Van Dyk & Coetzee, 2012) and has continuously shown its validity and reliability. Upon analyzing the measure's dimensions and respective items, no inadequacy was found for assessing CSO member retention, as evidenced by the factor analysis results in this paper.

Understanding that political participation encompasses many, sometimes divergent, dimensions that are dispersed in the literature, Magul and Cavalcante (2023) systematized those dimensions by conducting an extensive systematic review that supported the development and validation of an instrument for measuring political participation. The instrument consists of five dimensions, namely political campaigning; voting; political contact;

civic engagement; and political protest. Because it is a valid and consistent measure, it was adopted in this research.

Based on the assumption that retaining members provides opportunities for the prolonged development of civic virtues and skills, democratic competencies and values, and other political resources that result in the propensity of CSO members to participate in political practices (Magul & Cavalcante, 2022), political participation can be explained by member retention. To examine the influence of member retention on political participation, dependency relationships were established between the two constructs, based on the dimensions that make up the scale of Döckel et al. (2006) and the factors of the measure proposed by Magul and Cavalcante (2023). By appropriating the theoretical elements of the two psychometric measures, the structural relationships established between member retention and political participation were tested empirically, taking into account that member retention practices, considered as a second-order construct, are predictors of each of the five political participation factors (for example, member retention practices explain protest activity). In this perspective, five research hypotheses were tested.

The survey data come from CSO members from Mozambique, an African country that transitioned to a democratic system as of its 1990 Constitution (Rocca, 1998). Before the introduction of democracy and a multi-party parliament, Mozambique had followed a single-party regime since 1975, represented by FRELIMO, after achieving independence from Portuguese colonial domain (Brito, 2019; Darch, 2018). The new political system paved the way for freedom of speech, association, and protest; for the emergence and recognition of several political parties; and for regular elections at the national, provincial (state), and municipal levels, since 1994 (Magul & Cavalcante, 2022). Freedom of association (operationalized by Law n. 8 (1991) of July 18) (Lei n. 8, 1991) has led to the emergence of CSOs of different natures and purposes.

Empirical data were collected by means of a questionnaire that aggregated the member retention and political participation scales, applied to a sample of 266 CSO members selected on convenience sampling criteria, from which 234 valid observations were used. The hypothesis testing was preceded by factor analysis and by the analysis of the validity and reliability of the two psychometric measures, toward evaluating the adequacy of the data matrix to those scales. The results of those analyses proved the plausibility of the factor structure of the original scales, with goodness-of-fit (Brown, 2015; Hair et al., 2009), the results also showed that the measures achieved convergent and discriminant validity, and that they have good internal consistency (Costa, 2011; Hair et al., 2009).

To test the research hypotheses, we proceeded with structural equation modeling (SEM) was performed on the R software's lavaan package by using weighted least squares mean and variance adjusted (WLSMV) as the estimation method. The results suggested that two of the five hypotheses were not to be rejected, which demonstrates that: member retention practices significantly explain political contact, and member retention practices significantly explain civic engagement. This research partially corroborates the theorizations of [Magul and Cavalcante \(2022\)](#), and demonstrates that the propensity of CSO members to participate in several political practices may be explained by their retention in those organizations, which paves the way for future studies to continue examining the relationship between CSO member retention and political participation. This study's findings are relevant for people management in CSOs that seek to foster the individual capacity of citizens to participate in democratic political processes, and in CSOs that aim to promote the expansion of democracy in society.

This article is organized into four sections, including this introduction. The second section focuses on the theoretical framework that underpins the research, and on proposing empirically tested hypotheses. The methodological procedures are described in the third section, which presents the criteria used for selecting the sample, the instruments used for collecting the data, and the procedures used in the data analysis. The fourth section consists of the data analysis and discussion; it starts with the evaluation of the compatibility of the data with the scales adopted in the research, and it culminates with the analysis and discussion of the structural relationships established in the hypotheses.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

Connection between member retention and political participation

Political participation constitutes the essence of democratic systems; by political participation, citizens make demands, and express their interests and preferences to political actors in the governmental, state, or political spheres toward solving collective or community problems. Specifically, it is a vast set of observable political activities that citizens voluntarily carry out with a view to influencing or affecting political decisions and outcomes ([Magul & Cavalcante, 2022, 2023](#); [Teorell, 2003](#); [Van Deth, 2014](#)). Individuals can become more susceptible to participating in political practices by being members of CSOs, considering that such organizations support collective actions and democratic political issues of public interest ([Aggeborn et al., 2020](#); [Fahmy, 2006](#); [Rahbarqazi & Noei Baghban, 2020](#)),

which promotes the learning and practice of aspects inherent to the democratic political process.

CSOs ([Andion, 2005](#)) make their members more likely to participate in several political practices, since the agency and functioning of those organizations rely on democratic norms, values, and attitudes ([Boulding, 2010](#); [Dore & Jackson, 2020](#); [Encarnación, 2017](#); [Jaysawal, 2013](#); [Uhlen, 2009](#)) which, consequently, provides opportunities for developing democratic skills and values ([Ayala, 2000](#); [Dore & Jackson, 2020](#); [Wallman-Lundåsen, 2015](#)). In addition, when CSOs offer solutions to common problems in society, and when they engage in political issues of public interest, they lead to the development of civic skills and virtues ([Fung, 2003](#)), as well as other political resources that facilitate the participation of their members in political activities ([Boulding, 2010](#); [Putnam, 2000](#); [Ulzurrun, 2002](#)).

Although the dimensions of political participation are fragmented in the literature, [Magul and Cavalcante \(2023\)](#), provided a systematization, which includes a measurement scale consisting of the following factors: political campaigning; voting; political contact; civic engagement; and political protest ([Magul & Cavalcante, 2023](#)). This article is based on those five dimensions of political participation since they were identified in a rigorous systematic literature review.

This article assumes that the propensity of CSO members to participate in several political practices can be explained by member retention practices, considering that high rates of member turnover can compromise the continuous development of political participation capacity ([Magul & Cavalcante, 2022](#)). Member retention should be understood as a set of people management practices that seek to stimulate members' interest to remain in the organization for a longer period, whether until the completion of projects or retirement ([Haider et al., 2015](#); [Hong et al., 2012](#); [Shibiti, 2019](#); [Wijesiri et al., 2019](#); [Yousuf & Siddiqui, 2019](#)).

Retention practices seek to stimulate members' interest in continuing to provide activities and services that CSOs offer to society for an extended period, thereby reducing turnover rates. In this perspective, CSO member retention provides opportunities for continuously developing democratic competencies and values, civic skills and virtues, and other political resources that stimulate member engagement in various political practices.

People management practices aimed at retention have been reported in several publications, where greater convergence falls on the following factors: compensation; training and development opportunities; career opportunities; supervisor support; work-life balance; and job characteristics ([Dhanpat et al., 2018](#); [Döckel et al., 2006](#); [Gani et al., 2020](#); [Kashyap & Rangnekar, 2014](#); [Presbitero et al., 2016](#); [Samuel & Chipunza, 2009](#); [Sanjeevkumar](#)

& Wei, 2012; Shibiti, 2019; Van Dyk & Coetzee, 2012; Yousuf & Siddqui, 2019). The validity and reliability of those six retention practices have been demonstrated by several surveys conducted in various organizational contexts (Dhanpat et al., 2018; Döckel et al., 2006; Gani et al., 2020; Imna & Hassan, 2015; Presbitero et al., 2016; Shibiti, 2019; Van Dyk & Coetzee, 2012).

Proposition of the research hypotheses

The research hypotheses, which establish structural relationships between member retention and political participation, were proposed based on the theoretical elements of the factors that make up the scale of Döckel et al. (2006), and the dimensions that constitute the measure of Magul and Cavalcante (2023). However, it is useful to highlight that the 'job characteristics' dimension of the member retention scale was not suggested by the exploratory factor analysis (EFA), as highlighted in this article; therefore, it was excluded from the analyses.

Understanding that each of the structural relationships relates member retention practices (i.e., compensation; supervisor support; training and development opportunities; career opportunities; and work-life balance), as a second-order construct, with each of the five factors of political participation (political campaigning; voting; political contact; civic engagement; and political protest), five hypotheses were tested. The research hypotheses are presented next.

Relationship between member retention and political campaigning

Political campaigning is the mode of political participation centered on individuals' active engagement in political parties or organizations belonging to those parties, as members or activists. It covers a set of political actions aimed at persuading, mobilizing, and influencing the behavior of voters during the election campaign period, with a view to voting for a specific candidate and/or a specific political party (Bean, 1991; Kalaycioglu & Turan, 1981; Ohme et al., 2017; Talò & Mannarini, 2014; Teorell et al., 2007; Theocharis & Van Deth, 2018; Van Deth, 1986).

It is understood that as members remain in CSOs for an extended period, they are likely to deepen their civic knowledge, skills, and virtues that stimulate them to actively participate in political actions, such as the political campaigning dimension. Such a political engagement can be a consequence of the promotion and dissemination of democratic norms, principles, values, and attitudes (Encarnación, 2017; Jaysawal, 2013; Lee & Glasure, 2007) which are inherent in those organizations' agency in society. This way, member retention enables disseminating

democratic ideals, which members internalize and practice; such attitude can lead to members' political engagement in political campaigning. Thus, understanding that CSO member retention can encourage member engagement in political actions of the political campaigning dimension, the following was proposed:

H₁: Member retention practices explain political campaigning.

Relationship between member retention and voting

The voting dimension concerns citizen participation in electoral processes, by attending at the polls or by exercising the right to vote to elect leaders, representatives, or officials at the national, provincial/state, and municipal levels (Kim & Hoewe, 2020; Ohme et al., 2017; Teorell et al., 2007; Theocharis & Van Deth, 2018). Voting is one of the widely spread political practices and one of the fundamental pillars in democratic systems, as it provides individuals with the opportunity to express their political preferences and contribute to the formation and legitimization of elected governments.

Becoming a CSO member strengthens individual capacities on democratic issues by raising members' awareness of the importance of participating in democratic political processes (Magul & Cavalcante, 2022), while it favors the increase in the level of political awareness, by means of the development of political resources that stimulate participation in several types of elections. However, the development of the political capacity that makes CSO members likely to actively participate in the political activities of voting can be explained by member retention; therefore, the following was proposed:

H₂: Member retention practices explain voting.

Relationship between member retention and political contact

Political contact refers to citizens' political actions directed to political actors toward influencing political decisions and outcomes. Such actions consist not only in presenting and discussing citizens' opinions on political issues with politicians, but also in presenting community problems, specifically, to civil servants, members of district/municipal, state, or central government in an attempt to obtain political solutions (Bean, 1991; Ekman & Amnå, 2012; Ohme et al., 2017; Talò & Mannarini, 2014; Teorell et al., 2007; Theocharis & Van Deth, 2018; Van Deth, 1986, 2016).

Such political actions are stimulated by CSOs, not only because they defend democratic political interests, but also because they provide political information to their members, put them in contact with political institutions, and incorporate them into political networks (Ulzurun, 2002). In fact, the relationship between civil association membership and participation in contact activities had been found by Aggeborn et al. (2020), in a study conducted in Sweden, whose results demonstrated the existence of a significant relationship between CSO membership and participation in contact activities. However, it is understood that the development of the potential of CSOs that enables the participation of members in political contact activities may depend on member retention practices; therefore, the following was proposed:

H₃: Member retention practices explain political contact.

Relationship between member retention and civic engagement

Civic engagement consists of the political involvement of citizens at the community level (Zúñiga et al., 2014), with the aim of promoting changes of public interest relying on political actions for finding solutions to local problems, and for improving local conditions or certain community groups (Ekman & Amnå, 2012). Concretely, civic engagement integrates actions linked to donating money to charity, fund raising for charitable organizations and for implementing local community projects, while it involves doing volunteer work to help solve local community problems (Bean, 1991; Ekman & Amnå, 2012; Ohme et al., 2017; Talò & Mannarini, 2014; Theocharis & Van Deth, 2018; Van Deth, 1986; Zúñiga et al., 2014).

Such civic skills can be developed by CSOs, where individuals can learn the value of collective action, solidarity, promoting society well-being (Jaysawal, 2013), and defending the common welfare and the welfare of others. Fundamentally, CSOs enable civic skills when their members witness the delivery of activities and services that have an impact on communities and society, which leads them to take interest in and support collective actions that benefit communities or society at large. Thus, because it is believed that the development of civic skills that stimulate CSO members to actively participate in political actions toward finding solutions to local problems or the well-being of society may depend on member retention, the following was proposed:

H₄: Member retention practices explain civic engagement.

Relationship between member retention and political protest

Political protest is a means by which citizens make their opinions heard by specific actors, expressing their demands, their interests, and their preferences. It is a way of political participation by which citizens demonstrate their objection to some policy or decisions made by political actors. In addition, political protest activities may mean disapproval of certain policies, of specific issues that are considered inappropriate for citizens or society, which demand the need for change (Bean, 1991; Ekman & Amnå, 2012; Ivaldi et al., 2017; Ohme et al., 2017; Quaranta, 2012; Teorell et al., 2007; Theocharis & Van Deth, 2018; Van Deth, 1986).

Boulding (2010) found an association between CSO membership and participation of members in political protest activities in Bolivia, which shows that CSO activities are directly proportional to the increase in protest activities. This finding indicates that CSOs promote and deepen democratic norms, values, and competencies that reinforce the obligations inherent in political citizenship, and they increase the political awareness of their members as they witness the involvement of their organizations in political issues (Boulding, 2010). Thus, it is understood that creating and developing political protest skills may relate to CSOs member retention, since, when members are encouraged to remain in their organizations for a long period, they have the opportunity to understand the relevance of participating in political protest activities in favor of their causes and interests. In this perspective, the following was proposed:

H₅: Member retention practices explain political protest.

METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURES

To test this study's hypotheses, empirical data were collected in 29 CSOs in Mozambique, covering a sample of 266 members selected on non-probabilistic procedures of convenience sampling, of which 234 valid responses were used. To do so, the link to a Google Form questionnaire was sent to electronic addresses of CSOs that provide activities and/or services outside Maputo, Mozambique's capital city; the same questionnaire was applied to members of CSOs located in the city of Maputo, which concentrates the largest number of CSOs and CSO members (Instituto Nacional de Estatística, 2017).

The CSOs involved in the research offer services in different areas, with significant emphasis on the education/healthcare/social work sector (45%), followed by the governance monitoring/advocacy sector (23.7%). The remaining areas include human rights/democracy (11.6%),

the environment/natural resources (11.6%), research and consultancy (3.6%), and strengthening civil society (3.6%). Based on that information, it is ensured that the results are not biased by an emphasis on a specific area of activity of the CSOs.

The data collection instrument aggregated the questions of the two measurement scales, namely, the member retention scale proposed by [Döckel et al. \(2006\)](#), and the scale of political participation developed by [Magul and Cavalcante \(2023\)](#). The questionnaire statements (for example “my work schedule often conflicts with my personal life”; “I have been wearing clothes or objects with a political message during the election campaign period”) were evaluated using a 10-point Likert scale, where 1 = strongly disagree and 10 = strongly agree. The instrument was subdivided into two parts, each part corresponding to each of the measures, where the statements were arranged in blocks of 10 questions covering variables of nearly all dimensions of the construct, selected at random, while the blocks of questions were interspersed by sociodemographic questions and other questions to characterize the subjects.

It is worth highlighting that from the sample of 266 responses, 17 questionnaires returned with no answers and were discarded, while 15 multivariate outliers were excluded from the data matrix, which were identified by calculating the Mahalanobis distance ([Hair et al., 2009](#)). Given that each of the scales consisted of 27 variables used in the hypothesis test, the 234 valid observations represent an average of 8.7 subjects per indicator, which is consistent with the suggestion of [Hair et al. \(2009\)](#) that the sample must correspond to at least five respondents per item. In addition, the data normality was evaluated by Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk ([Razali & Wah, 2011](#)) tests, whose results showed that the variables of the two scales have non-normal distribution ($p < 0.001$).

To evaluate the adequacy of the data matrix to the psychometric measures, EFA and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) were performed for each construct, separately. EFA was implemented by using the IBM SPSS 25 software, and aggregating all variables simultaneously, using main components as extraction method and orthogonal rotation, by varimax method. The decision on the number of factors to be retained was based on eigenvalues over 1, without establishing this number a priori, while it was decided to suppress factor loads with absolute values below 0.4 ([Costa, 2011](#)). The evaluation of the structures underlying the data matrix was based on the following criteria and cut-off points. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO): $> 0,7$ ([Hutcheson & Sofroniou, 1999](#)); Bartlett sphericity test: $p < 0.05$ ([Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007](#)); commonality: > 0.50 ([Hair et al., 2009](#)); factor load: > 0.40 ([Costa, 2011](#)); and total variance extracted: $> 50\%$ ([Costa, 2011](#)).

CFA was conducted on R software’s lavaan package, by aggregating all factors at the same time and employing the diagonally weighted least squares (DWLS) estimation method, suitable for categorical data ([DiStefano & Morgan, 2014](#); [Li, 2016](#)). The model fit was evaluated based on the following indices: chi-square (X^2); X^2/gl ; comparative fit index (CFI); Tucker-Lewis index (TLI); root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA); and standardized root mean residual (SRMR). In this perspective, the criteria established by [Brown \(2015\)](#) were considered, where the X^2 test must be statistically non-significant: $p > 0.05$; X^2/gl : < 5 , preferably < 3 ; CFI and TLI: > 0.90 , preferably > 0.95 ; RMSEA: < 0.08 , preferably < 0.06 , with a confidence interval (upper limit) < 0.10 ; and SRMR: < 1 . In addition to CFA, the convergent validity, discriminant validity, and the reliability of each construct were verified ([Costa, 2011](#)). The reliability of the measurement models was evaluated by means of Cronbach’s alpha and composite reliability (CR) coefficients; in addition, the average variance extracted (AVE) was examined. For this purpose, all dimensions of each construct were run simultaneously in the same CFA model. To evaluate those results, the following values were considered as acceptable criteria: Cronbach’s alpha > 0.70 ([Costa, 2011](#); [Hair et al., 2009](#)); CR > 0.70 ([Hair et al., 2009](#)); and AVE > 0.50 ([Costa, 2011](#)).

To test the hypotheses, a structural model was created in which the five practices of member retention were considered as a second-order construct to explain each of the five dimensions of political participation. For this purpose, SEM was run on R software’s lavaan package, using weighted least squares mean and variance adjusted (WLSMV) as an estimation method, as it is relatively stable in situations of deviations from normality and in different sample sizes ([Finney et al., 2016](#)); it is also the most adequate for measurements using Likert scales and it is a widely accepted estimator for categorical data ([Bandalos, 2014](#); [Finney et al., 2016](#)). The evaluation of the structural model took into account the results of X^2 , gl , p -value, CFI, TLI, RMSEA, and SRMR, in accordance with the criteria of [Brown \(2015\)](#). Based on the significance values, was verified whether or not the relationship of dependence established in each hypothesis was to be rejected.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Factor analysis and validation of the member retention scale

The model adopted for measuring member retention was that of [Döckel et al. \(2006\)](#), originally consisting of 30 indicators distributed into six dimensions. The evaluation of the possibility of performing an EFA to the data showed

sample adequacy, with a KMO index of 0.89, and a statistically significant Barlett's sphericity test (6003.818, $gl = 435$, $p < 0.001$), while the items in the matrix showed excellent internal consistency, indicated by a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.90. The matrix of the rotating component demanded excluding the WLB1 variable ("I often feel that there is a lot of work to be done") from the work-life balance dimension, since its commonality was

below 0.50; the job characteristics dimension (consisting of two indicators) was also excluded because its Cronbach's alpha coefficient was below 0.7. After those exclusions, the most representative factor structure of the data matrix suggested retaining five factors that represent a total variance explained of 76.95% altogether. Those factors and their 27 variables can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1. Member retention scale suggested by EFA.

Factor	Item	Statement
Supervisor support	SS1	My supervisor seeks opportunities to praise members' positive performance, both in private and in front of others
	SS2	I feel appreciated by my supervisor
	SS3	The supervisor gives me feedback on how well I do my job
	SS4	My supervisor rewards a good idea by implementing it and giving credit to the employee responsible for it
	SS5	My supervisor acknowledges an employee for a job well done
	SS6	My supervisor often tells me how well he thinks I am doing my job
Work-life balance	WLB2	My work schedule often conflicts with my personal life
	WLB3	My work affects my role as a spouse and/or parent
	WLB4	My work has negative effects on my personal life
Career opportunities	CO1	I have good chances of getting promoted
	CO2	There are enough career opportunities for me in this organization
	CO3	It can be easy to find a job in another sector/department in this organization
	CO4	Employees' career development is important in this organization
Training and development opportunities	TDO1	This organization is providing me with job-specific training
	TDO2	Sufficient time is allocated for product and solution training
	TDO3	I can apply the training I get in this organization
	TDO4	Enough money is allocated for product and solution training
Compensation	Com1	I am satisfied with my benefits package
	Com2	Personally, I am pleased with my latest pay raise
	Com3	I am satisfied with the information on salary provided by the organization
	Com4	I am satisfied with my current total pay package (basic pay, benefits, and incentives)
	Com5	Personally, I am satisfied with the payment structure of the organization
	Com6	I am satisfied with the competitiveness of my total pay package (basic pay, benefits, and incentives)
	Com7	Personally, I am satisfied with my benefits' worth
	Com8	I am satisfied with the consistency of the organization's payment policies
	Com9	I am satisfied with the current size of my financial incentive
	Com10	Personally, I am satisfied with the number of benefits I get

Note. Adapted from Döckel, A., Basson, J. S., & Coetzee, M. (2006). The effect of retention factors on organisational commitment: An investigation of high technology employees. *SA Journal of Human Resource Management*, 4(2), 20-28. <https://doi.org/10.4102/sajhrm.v4i2.91>

The CFA results indicated a perfect model fit (Brown, 2015), as shown in Table 2, which suggests that the measurement scale proposed by Döckel et al. (2006) is appropriate for CSO member retention.

The model diagram is represented in Figure 1, which shows that the variables presented high factor loads in their respective factors, statistically significant ($p < 0.001$).

Table 2. Member retention scale fit indices.

χ^2 (gl)	χ^2/gl	CFI	TLI	RMSEA (90% IC)	SRMR
524.035 (314)***	1.7	0.993	0.993	0.054 (0.045 – 0.062)	0.053

Note. Developed by the authors.

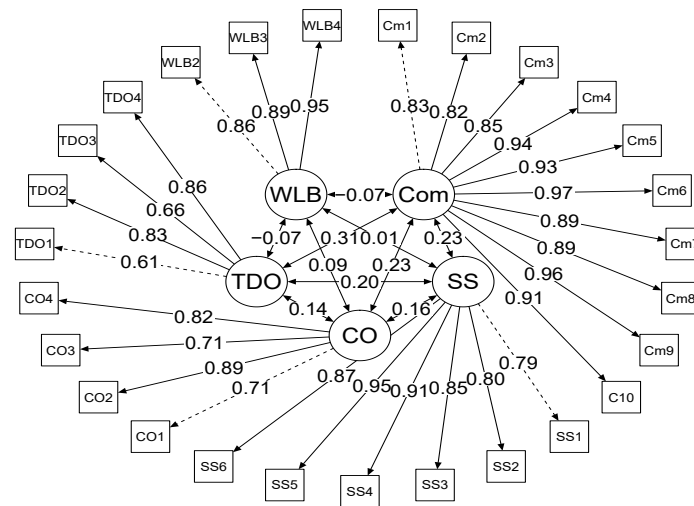


Figure 1. CFA diagram of the member retention scale.
Source: Developed by the authors.

In addition to the CFA, the validity of the measurement model was analyzed; convergent validity, discriminant validity,

and reliability were verified according to the criteria of [Costa \(2011\)](#), whose results can be seen in Table 3.

Table 3. Validity of the member retention scale.

Construct	Com	SS	TDO	CO	WLB
Compensation (Com)	0.900				
Supervisor support (SS)	0.230	0.864			
Training and development opportunities (TDO)	0.310	0.197	0.749		
Career opportunities (CO)	0.227	0.161	0.144	0.787	
Work-life balance (WLB)	-0.066	0.014	-0.070	0.091	0.902
Alpha	0.973	0.942	0.807	0.846	0.893
CR	0.977	0.946	0.833	0.866	0.929
AVE	0.810	0.747	0.561	0.619	0.814

Note. Developed by the authors.

Table 3 proves the convergent validity of the measurement model, taking into account that the extracted variances are above 0.5, while the AVE square root values, in bold, are above 0.7. The scale also achieved discriminant validity in its five dimensions, understanding that the shared variances, that is, the correlation between the scale dimensions, are smaller than the variances extracted from the respective dimensions. In addition, Table 3 shows that the variables of each construct have internal consistency, considering that the Cronbach's alpha coefficient is greater than 0.7, while CR presented good coefficients, above 0.8 for all dimensions.

The factor analysis results, and the verification of convergent validity, discriminant validity, and reliability of the measure of [Döckel et al. \(2006\)](#), proved the scale adequacy for CSO members, which indicates that the measure is appropriate for the purpose of this research.

Factor analysis and validation of the political participation scale

The political participation scale adopted in this research was that of [Magul and Cavalcante \(2023\)](#), consisting of 27 indicators belonging to five factors. The analysis of the factorability of the data matrix demonstrated sample

adequacy for EFA, with a KMO value of 0.89, statistically significant Barlett's sphericity test (6198.474 $gl = 351$, $p < 0.001$), and a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.87, which is considered perfect. The EFA results confirmed the five-

factor structure and the respective 27 items of the original scale, which can be seen in Table 4. The five factors of the scale explain 78.35% of the total variance.

Table 4. Political participation scale.

Factor	Item	Statement
Political campaigning	PC1	I have been campaigning voluntarily
	PC2	I have been working for a candidate or political party during the election campaign period
	PC3	I have been taking part in political rallies during the election campaign period
	PC4	I have been wearing clothes or objects with a political message during the election campaign period
	PC5	I am a member of a political party
	PC6	I am a member of an organization that belongs to a political party
	PC7	I do volunteer work for a political party
Voting	Vt1	I have been voting for president of the Republic
	Vt2	I have been voting for members of the Republic Congress
	Vt3	I have been voting for members of the Province Congress
	Vt4	I have been voting for City President
	Vt5	I have been voting for City Councilor
Political contact	Cn1	I have been contacting members of the Provincial Government to present community issues
	Cn2	I have been contacting politicians to discuss political issues
	Cn3	I have been contacting members of the District Government to present community issues
	Cn4	I have been contacting members of the Central Government to present community issues
Civic engagement	CE1	I have been donating money to charity
	CE2	I have been raising funds for a charitable organization
	CE3	I have been raising funds for the implementation of a local project
	CE4	I have been doing volunteer work for my community
Protest	Pr1	I have been blocking traffic as a form of political protest
	Pr2	I have been participating in demonstrations as a form of political protest
	Pr3	I have been interrupting political meetings as a form of political protest
	Pr4	I have been participating in strikes as a form of political protest
	Pr5	I have been occupying buildings or factories as a form of political protest
	Pr6	I have been sabotaging or blocking roads or railways as a form of political protest
	Pr7	I have been causing property damage as a form of political protest

Note. Magul, D. R., & Cavalcante, C. E. (2023). Desenvolvimento e validação de uma escala de participação política. *Revista Eletrônica de Administração*, 29(2), 364-387. <https://doi.org/10.1590/1413-2311.385.130267>

CFA indicated a perfect model fit (Brown, 2015), as shown in Table 5, which suggests that the matrix of

the sample data is adequate for the measure of Magul and Cavalcante (2023).

Table 5. Political participation scale fit indices.

χ^2 (gl)	χ^2/gl	CFI	TLI	RMSEA (90% IC)	SRMR
542.712 (314)***	1.7	0.992	0.991	0.056 (0.048 – 0.064)	0.065

Note. Developed by the authors.

The model diagram is represented in Figure 2, where it is possible to observe that the variables presented high

factor loads in their respective factors, statistically significant ($p < 0.001$).

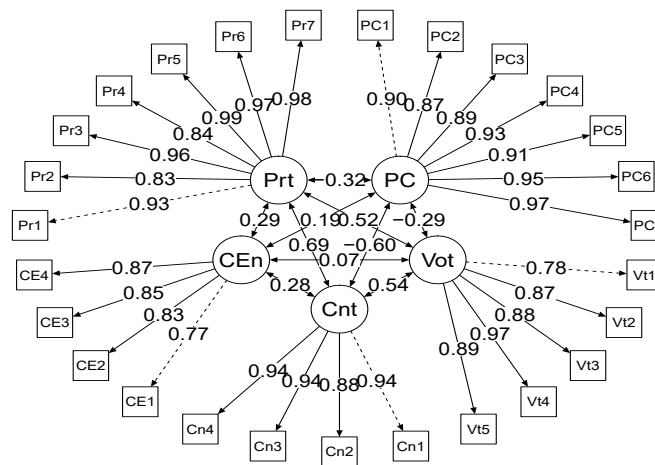


Figure 2. CFA diagram of political participation.

Source: Developed by the authors.

In addition to the CFA, the validity of the measurement model was examined, and the convergent validity, discriminant

validity, and reliability were verified according to the criteria of [Costa \(2011\)](#), whose results can be seen in Table 6.

Table 6. Validity of the political participation scale.

Construct	PC	Vt	Cn	CE	Pr
Political campaigning (PC)	0.917				
Voting (Vt)	-0.291	0.883			
Political contact (Cn)	-0.600	0.539	0.926		
Civic engagement (CE)	0.193	0.071	0.285	0.828	
Protest (Pr)	-0.324	0.523	0.686	0.286	0.932
Alpha	0.938	0.916	0.934	0.858	0.938
CR	0.974	0.947	0.960	0.897	0.979
AVE	0.841	0.780	0.858	0.685	0.868

Note. Developed by the authors.

Table 6 proves the convergent validity of the measurement model, taking into account that the extracted variances are above 0.5, while the AVE square root values, in bold, are above 0.7. The scale also achieved discriminant validity in its five dimensions, understanding that the shared variances, that is, the correlation between the scale dimensions, are smaller than the variances extracted from the respective dimensions. In addition, Table 6 shows that the variables of each construct have internal consistency, considering that the Cronbach's alpha coefficient is greater than 0.7, while the CR presented good coefficients, above 0.8 for all dimensions.

The factor analysis results, and the verification of convergent validity, discriminant validity, and reliability,

proved the adequacy of the sample data matrix to the scale of [Magul and Cavalcante \(2023\)](#), adopted in this study.

Evaluation of the structural relations and discussion of results

To test the research hypotheses, a structural model was created that established dependency relationships of member retention practices, as a second-order construct, with each of the dimensions of political participation (specifically, political campaigning; political contact; civic engagement; protest; and voting), to assess the degree to which member retention explains each factor of political participation. Based on the significance values of those

structural relationships, a decision was made as to whether or not reject each of the research hypotheses.

The results indicated an excellent fit of the structural model (Brown, 2015), presenting an X^2 of 1600.993 with 1357 degrees of freedom ($p < 0.05$), and the X^2/df ratio

below 3; CFI and TLI values were 0.995; SRMR value was 0.065; and RMSEA reached a value of 0.028, with a 90% confidence interval ranging from 0.022 to 0.033. The path diagram of the model is represented in Figure 3, with member retention practices as a second-order construct.

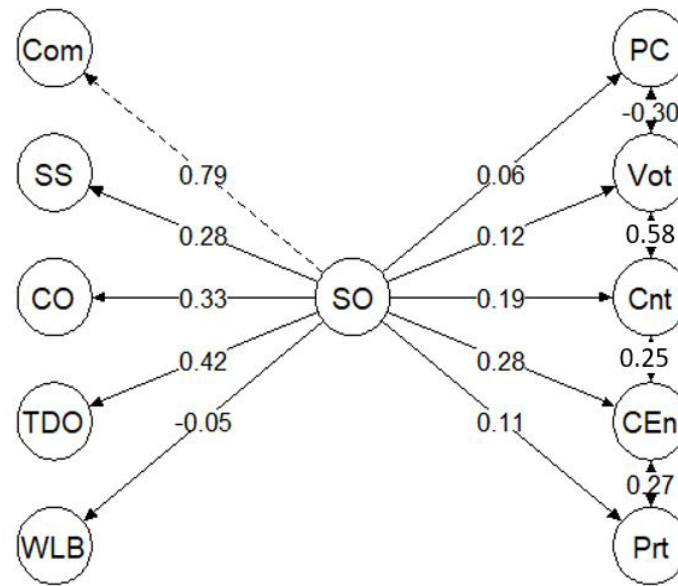


Figure 3. Structural model path diagram.

Source: Developed by the authors.

The statistical significance of the structural relationships of the model, established by hypotheses H_1 , H_2 , H_3 , H_4 , and

H_5 , can be seen in Table 7. It is worth noting that statistically significant structural relationships ($p < 0.05$) were not rejected.

Table 7. Hypothesis testing results.

Hypothesis	Structural relationship	β	p-value	Decision
H_1	Member retention \rightarrow Political campaigning	0.056	0.488	Reject
H_2	Member retention \rightarrow Voting	0.117	0.160	Rejeitar
H_3	Member retention \rightarrow Political contact	0.191	0.033	Não rejeitar
H_4	Member retention \rightarrow Civic engagement	0.279	0.004	Não rejeitar
H_5	Member retention \rightarrow Protest	0.112	0.186	Rejeitar

Note. β = Beta (standardized estimate). Developed by the authors.

Hypothesis H_1 , which postulates that member retention practices explain campaign activity, was rejected, possibly due to the fact that the CSOs of affiliation of the research subjects are not political organizations (that is, politically oriented), as highlighted in the description of the activity areas of the CSOs covered by the research, in the methodological procedures section. It can be inferred from this result that the scope of CSOs without a specific

political orientation may not make it possible to develop the capacity for political participation in the political campaigning dimension, taking into account the CSOs' role in promoting and deepening crucial aspects of democracy, such as pluralism and the respect for diversity (Boulding, 2010; Jaysawal, 2013). H_1 rejection may be related to the fact that the CSOs involved in the research do not develop the political capacity inherent in favoring or supporting specific

political parties during election campaigns, in the context of the democratic system that requires periodic elections to elect leaders and officials at the national, provincial (state), and municipal levels.

Therefore, it can be considered that CSOs without a specific political orientation do not offer a favorable environment for developing the skills necessary for political participation in campaigning, because they do not directly engage in the electoral political arena of certain political parties (for example, campaigning for a candidate and/or political party; influencing others to vote for a particular political party etc.). This result highlights the importance of considering the organizational context when analyzing the relationship of dependence between CSO members' retention and participation in several political practices, and it can be considered as an agenda for future research.

The dependence relationship between member retention practices and voting, established in H_2 , was not empirically supported, which suggests that the willingness of CSO members to participate in the election of leaders and officials at the national, provincial, and municipal levels is not explained by their staying in CSOs for an extended period. This result does not corroborate the theoretical basis that argues that CSO members may be likely to participate in political actions of the voting dimension, taking into account that membership in CSOs strengthens individual capacities in political issues (Dore & Jackson, 2020), by raising members' awareness of the importance of actively participating in democratic political processes (Magul & Cavalcante, 2022). In addition, based on the understanding that CSO members can deepen their awareness of the political system, which can reflect on their engagement in different types of elections, it is possible that the non-empirically supported estimates provided for in H_2 may require future studies that continue examining the degree to which member retention practices explain voting.

Hypothesis H_3 was not rejected, which indicates that the propensity of members to present and discuss their opinions on political issues and problems related to the community with politicians, civil servants, and members of the government at various levels, is explained by CSOs member retention. This finding is consistent with Aggeborn et al. (2020), who found a significant relationship between CSO membership and participation in political contact activities in Sweden. Thus, it can be understood that, over time, CSO members are more likely to engage in political contact activities, taking into account that not only do CSOs make their members aware of political issues of public interest, but they also stimulate participation in political contact actions, by providing political information and putting their members in contact with political institutions (Ulzurrún, 2002). Therefore, CSO membership can develop

a greater understanding of policy issues and decision-making processes, making members active actors in the political process, influencing decisions and policy outcomes by means of direct contact with decision-makers.

Hypothesis H_4 , which predicts that member retention practices explain civic engagement, was not rejected. Thus, it is understood that the prolonged stay of members in their organizations results in the propensity to engage in issues of collective interest at the community level, toward promoting change by actions aimed at finding solutions to local problems, and improving local conditions or certain community groups. This result is consistent with Jaysawal (2013), which considers that CSO membership can encourage collective action, solidarity, and the promotion of well-being in society. This underscores the importance of CSOs' work not only as agents of change in their specific areas of expertise, but also as promoters of their members' broader civic engagement in communities by developing civic skills and virtues (Fung, 2003) that enable the search for solutions to local problems, and contribute to the improvement of local conditions.

The proposition that member retention practices explain political protest (H_5) was not empirically supported. This finding contradicts the existing theoretical assumptions in the literature, understanding that some non-political CSOs defend political issues of public interest, which makes their members witness their engagement in political issues of public interest and in defending better political options (Boulding, 2010; Dore & Jackson, 2020; Jaysawal, 2013; Ulzurrún, 2002), which, consequently, stimulates the engagement of members in political actions that require courage to be taken, such as political protest activities. As an example, Boulding (2010) found an association between CSO membership and members' participation in protest activities in Bolivia, which demonstrates that CSO membership is directly proportional to the increase in protest activities.

Probably, H_5 rejection may be related to contextual factors of the survey sample, obtained in a country characterized by citizens' weak political engagement in protest activities, which was also proven by this survey's data matrix. However, it is worth mentioning that this low participation in political protest may, in some way, be explained by the fact that protest actions require authorization from government authorities, which has often been used abusively to contain protests (Chaimite, 2014; Honwana, 2020). Nevertheless, the result of H_5 may necessitate future studies that continue examining the degree to which member retention practices influence CSO members to be likely to participate in political protest actions, using samples from other geographic contexts with a democratic system.

The results of the research demonstrate that CSO member retention has a certain potential for providing a statistically significant explanation for political participation,

which not only partially corroborates the theorizations of Magul and Cavalcante (2022), but also paves the way for future studies to continue examining the effect of member retention on political participation, with the potential to contribute to the advancement of knowledge. It is worth noting that the results of this research were based on data from a sample obtained in a country with a democratic system that includes, among other aspects, freedom of association, which allows the emergence of CSOs of different natures and purposes, accompanied by the civic participation of citizens. Thus, future research on the object studied needs to consider that political context.

FINAL REMARKS

Based on the understanding that the prolonged permanence of CSO members provides opportunities for developing democratic competencies and values, civic virtues, and skills that stimulate participation in several political practices, this research analyzed the influence of CSO member retention on political participation, and empirically tested five hypotheses.

The results showed that member retention practices significantly explain political contact (H_3), suggesting that the prolonged stay of members in CSOs has an impact on the propensity to participate in political contact actions. Hypothesis testing also indicated that member retention practices significantly explain civic engagement (H_4), and it can be inferred that member retention can make them susceptible to participating in civic engagement political activities. On the other hand, the research demonstrated that member retention practices have no statistically significant explanatory power over political campaigning (H_2), voting (H_2), and political protest (H_5).

Despite the rejection of three hypotheses of the research, the two non-rejected hypotheses empirically confirmed, at least partially, the theorizations of Magul and Cavalcante (2022), and they demonstrate that CSO member retention has some potential for a statistically significant explanation of

political participation. These results suggest that when CSO members remain involved in these organizations for longer, they are more likely to participate in political practices, based on the apprehension of the potential for political engagement developed by CSOs. Thus, from the structural relationships established in the non-rejected hypotheses, it can be said that one of the possible ways by which individuals can become more likely to participate in political practices is being CSO members and remaining so for an extended period.

This research adds value to the literature by demonstrating that member retention can be a predictor of political participation, which can contribute to the advancement of knowledge inherent to organizational studies and society. The findings obtained have significant implications for CSOs interested in strengthening citizen participation in democratic political processes and promoting the expansion of democracy in society, which is consistent with the impact that some of them intend to have on society, specifically, in terms of improving the political and democratic environment, especially in the political context where democracy is maturing. These results must be interpreted in the context of a democratic system, which fosters the freedom of association capable of allowing the emergence of CSOs of different natures and purposes, and enabling the civic participation of citizens.

However, some caution is needed when interpreting the results reported herein to avoid hasty generalizations, since this is a pioneering research in examining the relationships of dependence between member retention and political participation. In this perspective, it is suggested that future studies continue examining these relationships in different geographical contexts in democratic systems; they may also analyze the relationship between member retention and political participation taking into account the time of membership in CSOs. Another important aspect for future studies concerns considering the participatory institutions created by the state (e.g., councils) to also examine the relationship between membership in such institutions and participation in political practices.

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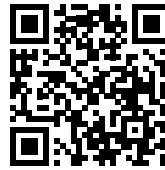
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The authors claim that all data used in the research have been made publicly available, and can be accessed via the Harvard Dataverse platform:



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