

Hasil Uji Bu Neka Role of Communication Climate

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Role of Communication Climate on Readiness for Change Academic Staff University in Facing Higher Education Governance Changes

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INTRODUCTION

The world of education, notably higher education, as an important milestone in development, is currently facing challenges from changes in the global environment (globalization) which have caused significant changes in the higher education environment in Indonesia. The era of society 5.0, the ASEAN Free Market in 2015, and the Asia Pacific Free Market in 2027 demand the transformation of traditional society into an industrial society which causes the market and competition for higher education in Indonesia to be increasingly complex and dynamic. Without good management of resources, it is effortful to realize the higher education governance that could produce quality and competitive graduates (Shattock, 2002). The steps are taken to acquaint by investing more in supporting infrastructure and learning dare to establish innovations in education, teaching, and service management (Hendrarso, 2020).

As an effort to encourage universities to change immediately their governance to become more autonomous, the government provides ease of requirements for universities that want to carry out bureaucratic reform in the field of higher education governance (Astridina et al., 2017). The criteria for bureaucratic reform will be effortless if universities are more autonomous and supported by an administrative system with a management model that is suitable to the university's capacity and culture (Rahayu, 2019).

The role and quality of human resource (HR) highly influence the success or failure of the organization in the process of realizing its plans and goals (Inandriyana et al., 2021). HR in universities consists of campus management (leaders), lecturers, academic staff, and students (Zahara & Ridha, 2021). This change in governance is closely related to the demands of administrative tasks. In this stage, HR that will get changes and demands related to administrative tasks are the academic staff. Because in the application of their work, the academic staff is required to have operational and administrative technical skills (Amon et al., 2020). Academic staff is also on the front line and should be able to adapt quickly to changes related to administrative services and need to be encouraged to proactively prepare universities for change initiatives (Anardani et al., 2021 ; Marouf & Agarwal, 2016).

The initial step that must be taken by organizations planning to undergo change is to increase the readiness of leaders and their change agents (Gelaidan, 2018). Readiness for change is a key for organizations to respond quickly and successfully to change (Erlyani & Suhariadi, 2021). Mangundjaya (2016) also states that before starting change in the organization, what's needed is the readiness member for change. It's because readiness for change is one of the drivers for achieving the effectiveness of organizational change (Armenakis et al., 1993). To achieve change readiness, every member of the organization needs to communicate a change message (Smith, 2005). In line with this statement, Neves (2009) states that it's decisive to share the content about change to create change readiness and show all parties involved that changes are in the interests of everyone.

The result study from Gelaidan et al. (2018) show important for organizations to encourage employee readiness to make change where leaders and change agents must communicate with employees and ensure their participation in planning and implementing these changes. According to Gartner (2013), a supportive organizational climate can be created through internal and external communication to minimize ambiguity. therefore, internal and external communication that is manifested in the communication climate will represent the extent to which employees believe that they receive all necessary information regarding the problem, such as vision, strategy, policies, plans, organizational procedures, and others. Previous research has shown that individuals who receive adequate information are more

willing to accept change² (Miller et al., 1994; Schweiger & DeNisi, 1991; Wanberg & Banas, 2000). Honest, effective, and direct communication about change has been shown to reduce resistance to change (Paterson & Cary, 2002).

Several studies have examined the factors⁵ that play a role in readiness for change. One of those variables is communication climate (Farahana et al., 2017; Holt et al., 2007; Neill et al., 2019; Pace & Faules, 2013; Smith, 2005; Vakola, 2014). However, empirical evidence regarding the role of the communication climate in the context of readiness for change¹ universities in Indonesia is still immensely limited.

Overall, this study aims to empirically examine the role of communication climate on readiness for change academic staff university in facing higher education governance changes. Research related to the role of communication climate on readiness for change shows that communication climate is positively interrelated to change readiness factors (Holt et al., 2007). In addition, the creation of a communication climate and increasing positive communication can influence the level of individual readiness for change (Neill et al., 2019; Vakola, 2014)

LITERATURE REVIEW

Readiness for Change

Mangundjaya (2016) states that before starting change in the organization, what's needed is the readiness member for change. It's because readiness for change is one of the drivers for achieving the effectiveness of organizational change (Armenakis et al., 1993). Readiness for change according to Armenakis et al. (1993), are beliefs, behaviors, and intentions of organizational members regarding the extent to which change is needed and the organization's ability to successfully bring about these changes. Readiness for change is an individual's overall attitude in dealing with change¹⁰ which consists of feeling confident in their ability to achieve change success⁸ and having a view that the change can have a positive impact on themselves and the organization (Armenakis et al., 1993; Cunningham et al., 2002; Holt et al., 2007; Jones et al., 2005). According to Holt et al. (2007), there are four dimensions of readiness for change; appropriateness (the degree to which organizational members feel change is necessary and appropriate for the organization), change efficacy (the degree to which¹⁷ organizational members feel confident that they will perform well and will succeed in doing so), management support (the extent to which organizational members feel that organizational leaders support the changes made) and personal valence (the extent to which changes are considered personally beneficial for all members of the organization and the organization itself).

Holt et al. (2007) explained that there are factors that influence readiness for change, namely: change content, which refers to what an organization will change; change process, the steps to be followed during the process of implementing the planned change; organizational context, which refers to the conditions and environment in which the change process occurs. Cunningham et al. (2002) argue that the best predictors of readiness for change are individual factors and organizational factors. Mangundjaya (2016) adds that individual factors consist of self-efficacy, knowledge of work skills, locus of control, positive and negative affectivity, self-esteem, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, cynicism towards change, demographics, need for change, opportunity to participate. In the process of change. Meanwhile, organizational factors consist of procedural justice, leader-member exchange, management credibility, perceived organizational support, and trust in management (Mangundjaya, 2016).

Change can indeed be initiated by external demands, but the results will still be shaped by internal processes within the organization (Neves, 2009). If the external pressure is strong enough, then the organization is likely to change in the direction specified, even if there is internal resistance (Oliver, 1991). According to Farahana et al. (2017), the internal context can be used by university leaders as a strategy to provide the support needed by university staff to deal with change. Organizations must ensure that when organizational changes occur, employee behavior also changes to achieve the desired results (Armenakis

& Bedeian, 1999). Managing the internal context is one of the moneyless solutions that can help university leaders to influence employees' perceptions of upcoming changes (Farahana et al., 2017).

1 **Communication Climate**

Communication climate is defined as the shared perception that employees have about openness, voicing opinions, and participation (Smidts et al., 2001). Communication climate is employees' perceptions about the quality of relationships and internal communication as well as the level of involvement and influence possessed by employees (Harjana, 2007). Pace and Paules (2015) argue that the communication climate can be an important influence on organizational productivity because climate affects the efforts made by organizational members. The interaction processes involved in the development of organizational communication climate also contribute to several important influences in the change process such as restructuring and reorganization in organizations (Pace & Paules, 2015). Communication climate is very important when an employee tries to recognize the pros and cons associated with change, lack of effective communication will cause employees' cognitive and affective processes to be negatively affected regarding change and consequently, employees will be less prepared to keep up with changes (Vakola, 2014). A person who receives more adequate information about change will be more willing to accept the change (Miller et al., 1994; Wanberg & Banerjee, 2000; Vakola, 2014).

Smidts et al. (2001) explain that there are three dimensions of the communication climate, namely, openness (directness) in communication, perceived participation in decision making (feeling of having a voice in the organization), and support (feeling taken seriously). Furthermore, in the research of Neill et al. (2019), he adopted the two dimensions of the three dimensions proposed by Smidts et al. (2001). The reason Neill et al. (2019) only adopt two dimensions is that only two dimensions are relevant for research that focuses on corporate communication and leadership in the context of change. The two dimensions of the communication climate are openness in communication (directness in communication that occurs both between employees and superiors as well as between fellow employees) and participation (feeling of having a voice in the organization) (Neill et al., 2019; Smidts et al., 2001).

Some studies state the relationship between communication climate and readiness for change, including research conducted by Holt et al. (2007) which states that the perception of the communication climate is positively related to the factor of readiness for change. Then a study by Vakola (2014) found that if an organization has good communication and a positive communication climate, it will affect the level of individual readiness for change. In addition, some studies link the influence of communication climate on a person's reactions and attitudes towards change (Neill et al., 2019). Based on research by Neill et al. (2019), results found out an open and participatory communication climate directly influences employees' positive reactions to change. Based on several studies and expert opinions, the communication climate might be interrelated to readiness for change.

METHODOLOGY

Design

The design in this study uses quantitative research by spreading the scale of readiness for change and the scale of communication climate through a google form.

Participants

The population in this study amounted to 985 academic staff at one university in South Kalimantan. Furthermore, the results obtained were 277 participants (142 male, 135 female) who were both civil

servants and non-civil servants. Samples were taken using a random sampling technique by drawing the entire population to obtain that amount of participants.

Measurements

Data collection in this study used the readiness for change scale from Holt et al. (2007) and the communication climate scale of Neill et al. (2019), both of which have been adapted to the Indonesian language and culture. Both scales are a type of Likert scale using 7 response options with a score range of 1 for strongly disagree and 7 for strongly agree. The readiness for change scale has 25 items and reliability is classified as good with the Cronbach's alpha coefficient for appropriateness = 0.94, change efficacy = 0.82, management support = 0.87, and personal valence = 0.66. The communication climate scale has a total of 7 items and also has relatively good reliability with Cronbach's alpha coefficient, openness in communication = 0.86, and the participation dimension = 0.85. The reliability of the readiness for change scale after adaptation is good ($\alpha = 0.906$), as good as communication climate ($\alpha = 0.906$).

Analysis Techniques

This study used a simple linear regression to analyse the data using JASP 0.16.2 (JASP Team, 2022).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The research subjects taken were academic staff at one of the universities in South Kalimantan. The description of the subject data is as follows:

Table 1. Descriptive Data

Category	N	Percentage
Male	142	51.26%
Female	135	48.74%
Total	277	100%

The results of data analysis in this study obtained data that were normally distributed and there was a linear relationship between the two variables ($0.967 < .001$). The results of data categorization from the two variables showed that in the communication climate there were 219 people in the high category (79.1%), 57 people in the medium categorization (20.6%), and 1 person in the low categorization (0.3%). While on readiness for change there are 261 people in the high category (94.2%), 16 people in the medium categorization (5.8%), and none in the low categorization.

Based on the results of the linear regression test showed that the communication climate significantly positively predicts readiness for change in academic staff in universities ($\beta = 0.330$; $t(275) = 5,800$ $p < .001$). Communication climate is also able to explain significantly increased readiness for change, $R^2 = 0.109$; $F(1;275) = 33,645$; $p < .001$. It means that the communication climate has a positive role in readiness for change, the greater the communication climate score, the higher the readiness for change and vice versa.

12 Table 2. Model Summary Readiness for Change

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	RMSE
H ₀	0.000	0.000	0.000	9.164
H ₁	0.330	0.109	0.106	8.665

18

Table 3. Anova

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p.
H ₁	Regression	2526.389	1	2526.389	33.645	< .001
	Residual	20649.553	275	75.089		
	Total	23175.942	276			

12

Table 4. Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized	Std. Error	Standardized	t	p.
H ₀	(Intercept)	137.986	0.551		250.616	< .001
	(Intercept)	106.230	5.499		19.317	< .001
	Communication Climate	0.835	0.144	0.330	5.800	< .001

Discussion

The results of the data analysis show that the communication climate has a significant role in the readiness for change university academic staff towards higher education governance, ($\beta = 0.330$; $t(275) = 5,800$ $p < .001$). Readiness for change is known to have the basic principle that the change does not occur one by one but will impact the entire organizational system around it (Ahmad et al., 2017). Readiness for change is an individual, team, and organizational transition approach to the desired future situation. The focus is the broad and positive impact and can range from a simple change process to major changes to the policies or strategies the organization needs to reach its potential (Chapa et al., 2014).

Dynamic environmental changes make organizations need to adapt to circumstances by making changes to survive (Holt et al., 2007). Readiness for change is an individual's overall attitude in dealing with change, which consists of feeling confident in their ability to achieve change success and having a view that the change can have a positive impact on themselves and the organization (Armenakis et al., 1993; Cunningham et al., 2002; Holt et al., 2007; Jones et al., 2005). Smith (2005) states that to achieve change readiness in every member of the organization, one of the key steps that must be taken is to communicate the message of change and ensure the participation of all members of the organization in the change process.

Communication arguably plays an important role among the various factors that impact the management and implementation of change (Elving, 2005; Men & Bowen, 2017). Communication climate is a variable that can predict readiness for change (Farahana et al., 2017). This study found that the communication climate has positively related to readiness for change. In line with this, Holt et al. (2007) also stated that communication climate is positively related to readiness for change. Empirically, employee participation in decision-making before and during changes is associated with higher readiness for change (Eby et al., 2000; Glew et al., 1995). Open communication, supportive and participatory working relationships in decision making provide a receptive context for change initiatives are antecedents of organizational readiness to change (Gartner, 2013). Previous research has shown that change recipients who receive adequate information are more willing to accept change (Schweiger & DeNisi, 1991; Miller et al., 1994; Wanberg & Banas, 2000). A positive communication climate also predicts readiness to change (Oreg et al., 2011). There is broad support for the importance of communication during organizational change in determining how employees receive change (Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999). Research conducted

by Neill et al. (2019) found that the communication climate in organization positively creates a sense of belonging and a strong bond between employees and their organization. In addition, an open and participatory communication climate has a direct influence on employees' positive reactions to change.

The communication climate is very important when employees try to identify the pros and cons of changes, due to lack of effective communication will cause employees' cognitive and affective processes to be negatively affected by the changes, and result in a lack of readiness to follow change (Vakola, 2014). A person who receives further adequate information about change will be more willing to accept the change (Miller et al., 1994; Vakola, 2014; Wanberg and Banas, 2000). When the changes process is swift without any in-depth socialization or communication about why organizational change needs to be made, what will be changed, when it will be carried out, and what the impact will be, making organizational members less time to digest the importance and benefits of organizational change so that this makes organizational members less comfortable and tends to lead to resistance to change behavior (Mangundjaya, 2016). Experts have revealed several advantages of including employees in decision making during times of change including increased employee commitment to change, increased accuracy regarding the justification and objectives of change initiatives, and decreased resistance to change (Argote et al., 1983; Brown, 1991; Mainiero & DeMichiell, 1986; Neill et al., 2019; Paterson & Cary, 2002).

Several previous studies have examined the relationship between readiness for change and communication climate, but in the context of higher education in Indonesia, especially in the face of changes in higher education governance is rarely studied. The role of communication climate on readiness for change in this study was 11% while 89% was contributed by other factors. Not much different from the research conducted by Farahana et al. (2017) which states that the communication climate has a positive relationship but tends to be weak. Because according to Holt and Vardaman (2013) readiness for change is a multilevel and multidimensional construct that can be influenced by both the individual context (self-efficacy, trust, knowledge, ability that refers to change, etc) or organization context (organizational support, organizational commitment, and leadership style) which was unfortunately not investigated in this study.

The limitation of this research is that there is no subject classification based on length of service and employee status (non-civil servant or civil servant). It should also be examined to conduct group sampling. Also, to examine the impact of communication climate on employees' reactions to change, this study did not incorporate insights and perspectives from organizational change managers, communication professionals, or organizational leaders. In addition, suggestions for future researchers might be to examine what factors can affect the readiness for change university governance in Indonesia other than the communication climate.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study, it's summarized that the communication climate of university education personnel has a significant role in readiness for change. For this reason, it is necessary to pay attention to the communication climate so that it can be maintained for the readiness for change in the academic staff at the University.

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CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest. The funders also had no role in the design of the study, in the collection, analyses, or interpretation of data; in the writing of the manuscript, or in the decision to publish the results.

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