THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THREE CONSTRUCTS OF EMPLOYEE ATTITUDES TOWARDS ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

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ABSTRACT

The Relationship between Three Constructs of Employee Attitudes towards Organizational Change. This research examines three constructs of employee attitudes towards organizational change variable; employee commitment to organizational change, employee readiness for organizational change, and employee openness to organizational change. This research analyzed the influence of employee readiness for organizational change and employee openness to organizational change on employee commitment to organizational change in public sector organizations in West Sumatra. It would help the public organization to understand their employee attitudes during change. This research is quantitative. Respondents are 100 civil servants in a public sector organization in West Sumatra Province. Data was collected using a questionnaire. The result shows both independent variables; openness to change and readiness to change have a positive and significant effect on the commitment to change. Employee commitment to changes in this research is influenced by the readiness for change and openness to change. These results show that civil servants in public organizations in West Sumatra Province felt that if they would benefit from the change, then they would do what was needed to make the change successful.

Keywords: employee attitudes towards change, commitment to change, readiness for change, openness to change

INTRODUCTION

Organizations will experience change at a point in their development. Employee individual reactions in facing and responding to change in their organization depend on many factors and conditions. During organizational change, organizations have to pay attention to how far the organizational change is important to an individual, and how the individual considers the change will affect their career. If a change is considered to be very close and has the potential to affect the work situation, the employee in an organization tends to react more strongly compared to if the change is considered to be very far away and only slightly affects the work. Previous research on organizational change found that employees who react negatively to change have bad attitudes related to their overall attitude toward work (Oreg, 2006).

Choi (2011) argues that four constructs explained the employee attitudes towards change, which are employee readiness for organizational change, employee commitment to organizational change, employee openness to organizational change, and employee cynicism about organizational change. The four constructs are considered as determining the success or failure of a change. This is because, in the process of change, organizations must be able to play a role in managing employee attitudes to then coordinate change mechanisms, adjust operational activities to strategies, build structures, and develop rewards (Bommer, Rich, & Rubin, 2005). Among the four constructs that represent the employee attitudes toward organizational change variable, three of them are positive attitudes, namely employee readiness for organizational change, employee commitment to organizational change, and employee openness to organizational change. Several previous research (Chawla & Kelloway, 2004; Choi & Ruona, 2011) found the relationship between employee commitment to organizational change with employee readiness to organizational change and employee openness to organizational change.

Public sector organizations, including in Indonesia, are often regarded as too big and not efficient as an organization. Employees in public sector organizations or civil servants often address as lazy and selfish employees. The public sector organizations or government institutions in Indonesia are characterized as a bureaucratic and complicated organization with an overemphasis on strict rules, procedures, hierarchies, and formal process of decision-making, and contain political elements. Leadership in public sector organizations is linked to hierarchical organizational structures and has little independence and strength in managing their subordinates. Besides, in government organizations in Indonesia, there are often conflicts of interest that lead to unclear organizational goals. As a result, civil servants in government institutions will find it difficult to adapt to unclear organizational goals. It also makes it difficult for employees to determine the impact of their contributions on the organization.

Therefore, this research wants to examine the effect of employee readiness to organizational change and employee openness to organizational changes on employee commitment to organizational change in public sector organizations in West Sumatra.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Commitment to Change

Every individual sees a change in the organization in their unique way. For some employees, change is an opportunity to gain happiness and an opportunity to increase profits, while for some other individuals, change is considered a source of suffering and stress, and will bring problems (Bouckenooghe, 2012). This different point of view can also be seen from a variety of different concepts regarding employee reactions to changes that occur in the organization. The positive

attitude shown by employees towards change will lead to employee commitment to the change itself, while the negative attitude will make employees resistant to organizational changes.

This research focuses on employee commitment to organizational change because this concept already has a conceptually clear definition (Oreg, Vakola, & Armenakis, 2011). Employee commitment to organizational change refers to the power that binds each individual to take the action needed so that the planned change goal can be implemented (Bouckenooghe, 2012). Employee commitment to organizational change represents (1) employee desire to give their support based on the belief that it will bring benefits (employee affective commitment to organizational change), (2) employee recognition that costs are associated as a result if it fails to provide support for change (employee continuance commitment to organizational change), and (3) employee sense of obligation to give support for organizational change (employee normative commitment to organizational change). Although the three dimensions of employee commitment to the organization reduce the likelihood of employees leaving the organization, perhaps the most important reason to distinguish between them is that they can have very different implications for employee behavior at work. Allen and Meyer (1996) argue that employees who have an affective commitment to organizational change tend to attend work regularly, perform tasks assigned to their abilities, and do a little extra to help the change process. The employee who remains out of a sense of obligation (employee normative commitment to organizational change) can do the same thing only if they see the change as part of their job, or if the change means benefits for themselves. Conversely, employees who want to avoid costs incurred as a result of moving or leaving the workplace (employee continuance commitment to organizational change) can do a little more effort than what needed to keep their job. Empirical research gives support for a three-component model, including predictions about the implications of differential behavior for employee affective commitment to organizational change, employee continuance commitment to organizational change, and employee normative commitment to organizational change.

Commitment is one important aspect in explaining employee behavior in an organization (Ahmad & Cheng, 2018). Commitment to change is the willingness to give the best effort for change, a construct that illustrates a positive and proactive attitude towards change (Fedor, Caldwell, & Herold, 2006). Commitment to change not only shows a positive attitude towards change but also an attitude that is in line with the change, intention to accept, support, involve, and willingness to do extra work for the success of this change.

Readiness for Change

When changes occur, employees try to understand the new environment and draw conclusions about the possible outcomes of these changes by actively seeking information. This action will later make them have assumptions, impressions, and expectations about the change. These assumptions, impressions, and expectations will encourage employee readiness for organizational change. Readiness for change is the beliefs, feelings, and intentions of the employee in the organization regarding the extent to which change is needed and the capacity of the organization to make this change successful (Armenakis, Harris, & Mossholder, 1993). Readiness for change also shows the extent to which employees have a positive view of the organization's need to make changes, as well as the extent to which employees believe that these changes will have a positive impact on themselves and the organization.

Hypothesis 1: Employee readiness for organizational change has a positive and significant influence on employee commitment to organizational change in public sector organizations in West Sumatra

Openness to change

Openness to experience is part of the Big Five Personalities theory which is defined as an individual's personality who has an interest in novelty. This individual behavior is associated with an open attitude towards a change. Very open individuals are generally creative, curious, and sensitive (Choi, 2011). Employee openness to change is employee willingness to support organizational change and positive feelings about the potential consequences (benefits) of a change (Devos, Buelens, & Bouckenooghe, 2007). Individuals who are open to organizational change are also willing to accommodate and accept change. When changes occur, organizational members who are open to change will support the implementation of the change. All efforts will be made to make these changes successful. Focusing on openness to change, Devos et al., (2007) examine how the environment and information circulation influence employee attitudes towards organizational change. They find that when employees have sufficient information about their roles and circumstances in the organization at an early stage of change and when they feel included in tasks and social information networks, they tend to be open to change. Choi's (2011) research also found that the perceived quality of the information received about a change, and not the exchange of information itself, can affect employees' openness to change.

Hypothesis 2: Employee openness to organizational change has a positive and significant influence on employee commitment for organizational change in public sector organization in West Sumatra

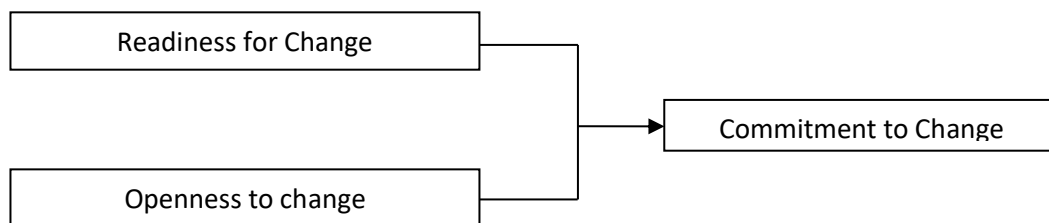The model in this research can be shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Research Model

METHOD

The research is confirmatory. The research design includes research objectives, unit of analysis and types of data. The objective of this research is hypothesis testing using survey methods. Commitment to organizational change is a social phenomenon that will be captured and can be generalized better if using survey methods (Kerlinger & Lee, 2000). The unit of analysis in this research is the individual who works at a public sector organization in West Sumatra. The type of data used is cross-sectional data, which is data that collects at one time to answer research questions.

The definition of the population is the collection of every element or object in research (Cooper and Schindler, 2014). The objects in this research are employees who work in public sector organizations in West Sumatra. For populations that are unknown and do not have a

sample frame, the sampling technique that can be used is a non-probability sampling (Cooper & Schindler, 2014). In this research, the sampling technique used is the purposive method, with established criteria, namely employees who have experienced changes in the same organization before.

For survey research using regression, the minimum number of respondents is 30 people (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2014). This research is a survey research with one of the advantages is in the generalization, so the number of respondents used are more than required (Kerlinger & Lee, 2000). Therefore this time the researchers tried to get more respondents than the minimum requirements, namely 100 respondents. The hypothesis testing in this research used regression analysis using SPSS as an analysis tool.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

This research examines the effect of employee readiness for organizational change and employee openness to organizational change on employee commitment to organizational change in public sector organizations in West Sumatra. The results of hypothesis testing using multiple regression analysis can be seen in table 1.

Table 1
Results of Multiple Regression Analysis

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	22.508	5.585		4.031	.000
	Readiness for Change	.363	.050	.528	7.255	.000
	Openness to change	.380	.071	.392	5.385	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Commitment to Change

In this research, readiness and openness to change are independent variables denoted by X_1 and X_2. From the results of the multiple regression analysis conducted, the following equation is obtained:

$Y_i = 22.508 + 0.363X_1 + 0.380X_2 + e$

The multiple regression results above show a constant value of 22.508, which means that without the variable readiness for change (X_1) and openness to change (X_2), there will be a decrease in the constant from the variable commitment to organizational change as much as 22.508.

The regression coefficient (β) of the readiness for change (X_1) obtained is positive 0.363 which shows that with every increase in the variable readiness for change one unit, there will be an increase in commitment to change by 0.363. This shows that if employee readiness for organizational change increases, the employee commitment at public sector organizations in West Sumatra to change will also increase.

The regression coefficient (β) from openness to change (X_2) obtained is positive 0.380 which shows that with every increase in the variable openness to change one unit, there will be an increase in employee commitment to organizational change by 0.380. This shows that if openness to organizational change increases, employee commitment at public sector organizations in West Sumatra to change will also increase.

Discussion

Government institutions in Indonesia often address as large and inefficient organization. Civil servants in government organizations are often regarded as a lazy and selfish employee. Public sector organizations are often characterized as a complicated organization with an overemphasis on strict rules, complicated procedures, hierarchies, and formal process in decision making, and also contain political elements. Hence, the leader in public sector organizations is linked to hierarchical organizational structures and has few independence and strength in managing their employees. Then, government institutions are often having conflicts of interest that lead to unclear organizational goals. As a result, civil servants in government institutions will find it difficult to adapt to unclear organizational goals. The condition also makes it difficult for a civil servant to assess their contributions and influence on the organization.

Civil servants in public sector organizations are often considered to be less involved, less engaged, less loyal, and less committed to their institution than individuals who work in private sector organizations. This behavior is caused by the ambiguity in the organizational goals of public sector organizations that are too broad. The condition is different from private sector organizations, where every organizational goal is stated specifically and clearly. However, public sector organizations are changing, including in Indonesia. Changes in public sector organizations or government institutions in Indonesia are done through bureaucratic reform. The bureaucratic reform defined as one of the government's efforts to achieve its goals to improve good governance, creating effective, efficient, and accountable institutions. This reform is aimed to be the first step to achieve the progress of the country. Through bureaucratic reform, there has been a change in the governance system. Bureaucratic reform is applied to every public sector organizations or government institutions in Indonesia.

Public sector organizations as government institutions are required to serve the community quickly, accurately, and professionally. Therefore, the goals of bureaucratic reform are the realization of professional, legal, transparent, participatory, accountable, and credible governance. Hence, this bureaucratic reform is also expected to develop bureaucratic culture and behavior based on ethics, service, and public accountability and integrity. Bureaucratic reform in Indonesia is an effort to implemented the fundamental reforms and changes to the government system, especially in terms of institutional aspects, business processes, and human resources. This research will help public organizations to cope with change. This will help public organizations to understand the attitudes of their employees during change and maximize the role of leaders to make successful changes.

Employees' attitudes toward change can be categorized into four, namely employee readiness for organizational change, employee commitment to organizational change, employee openness to organizational change, and employee cynicism about organizational change (Choi,

2011). Commitment to change is often referred to as encouraging employees to make efforts to support the success of the changes implemented by the organization (Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002). Employee readiness to change and openness to change are often associated with commitment to change. All three are constructs of employee attitudes towards change.

The readiness for change is the readiness of employees in dealing with changes in this study can be categorized quite well. This means that employees feel confident that they can go through the change process well (Choi, 2011). Besides, employees also feel that changes in their organizations are indeed needed. Employees feel that change will benefit them. Employees at public sector organizations in West Sumatra also feel the support of organizations and superiors for the changes that occur. Many factors affect employee readiness for change, including organizational culture, organizational ability to change, and employee attitudes at work.

In this research, readiness for change has a positive and significant influence on the commitment to change. This finding means that the more prepared the employees of public organizations in West Sumatra are for change, the higher their commitment to change will be. High commitment to change will affect the success of a change because employees who are committed to changes that occur in the organization will make all the efforts needed for the change to succeed (Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002).

In addition to readiness for change, this study also measured the effect of openness to change on the commitment to change. The result, found a positive and significant effect of the variable openness to change on the commitment to change. Openness to change or openness in accepting change is the variable with the highest value in this research. These results indicate that employees in public sector organizations in West Sumatra are open to change. Individuals in the organization in this research eagerly await every change that occurs in their organization (Devos et al., 2007). Also, the changes that occur are believed to make their jobs easier. Openness to change is influenced by information circulating about change, individual trust in the organization, and participation in change.

Changes that occur in organizations are generally associated with components in the organization. Fraccaroli et al., (2017) argue that an organization has five main aspects that need to consider when changes happen. The first aspect is the people or employees in the organization. Changes relating to the employee in an organization namely changes in the number of employees (addition or reduction in the number of employees) and changes in incompetency (through training or education). The second component in an organization is the activities carried out in an organization, namely the activities of employees in the organization. These activities can change when a new technology is introduced, when a new product begins to be produced, when a new service is introduced to the customer or when the latest work practices are introduced. The third component that may experience changes in the organization is the purpose of the organization. Existing organizational goals can be adjusted and new goals may emerge in the development of an organization. The fourth component of an organization is the organizational structure. Organizational structure can change when the leadership and management of an organization changes. These changes will likely make an organization more centralized or vice versa. The fifth component is the organizational culture. Organizational culture is generally difficult to change. One reason is that organizational culture consists of the four components mentioned earlier (people, activities, goals, and structure). Part of the organization, when most components in the organization change, the old organizational culture can still accommodate these changes.

The next thing to consider in organizational change is how much change is needed by an organization. There are two main perspectives in measuring the scale of organizational change; radical change and gradual change. Radical change or evolutionary change is a change on a

large scale. Changes like this rarely occur. This large-scale change has an impact on the overall components of the organization. Changes like these are usually planned carefully and are initiated strategically by top management and the implementation period is limited to a certain period. While change on a smaller scale, often called gradual change, is a form of change that often occurs in an organization. The gradual change in an organization is change based on three main assumptions, namely: 1) an organizational change can have a starting point; 2) it is possible to direct and control the direction and nature of change; 3) an organizational change can end and there is a possibility to make the change permanent. This changed perspective assumes that change is an ongoing process that will continue to occur in an organization. This change usually takes place over a long period.

Organizational change is needed to ensure that new and existing performance targets are met quickly and effectively. There are three types of changes that are most common in organizations, namely changes in the form of development, transitional change, and transformational change (Arbaugh, 2002). Change in the form of development is defined as an internal improvement from what is already known or learned by the organization. This development presents an improvement in existing skills, methods, performance standards, or conditions and for some reason does not fit the needs of the organization now or in the future. Whereas the second form of change, transitional change covers more complex aspects. These changes occur due to the response to significant changes in the environment as a requirement for an organization's success. The final type of change, i.e. transformational change, is defined as a radical change of strategy, structure, system, process, or technology, thus making a significant shift to organizational culture, behavior, and mindset. This significant shift is to implement a program of change that is carried out successfully and continuously. Change agents need to know the difference between the three types of change. This is because each type has a different approach and the difference affects the reaction to the change program itself. Therefore, change management is needed to help implement a change program.

Change management integrates the human consultation process with technical interventions that aim to change the organization's system and structure. To succeed in a change program, change management requires the integration of all components in the organization, and one of the most important factors is human. Human attitude, in this case, employees, towards changes has a significant effect on the behavior exhibited during the change (Vakola, Tsaousis, & Nikolaou, 2004).

As explained earlier, there are many types of organizational changes and each of these changes affects the organization and its employees at various levels. The type of change and scale of change are factors that influence the effects that changes bring to the organization and its employees. In the initial stages of an organizational change, there will usually be chaos and many rumors. This situation arises as a result of the unclear impact of organizational change on employees, which makes it difficult for employees to assess the situation when the change occurs. Also, uncontrolled situations and rumors that occur when changes occur will confuse employees to determine the resources needed to deal with these changes. The uncertainty that occurs during the change process will make employee stress levels higher. This will later affect employee performance. Therefore, organizations need to pay attention to employee commitment to organizational change.

CONCLUSION

Employee commitment to changes in this research is influenced by the readiness and openness of employees to change. These results show that employees in the organization under study felt that if they would benefit from the change, then they would do what was needed to make

the change successful. Employees in public sector organizations in West Sumatra also feel obliged to provide support for changes in their organizations. They also know the risks that must be faced if the changes that occur fail.

Theoretically, this research will be the first to examine three employee attitudes towards change: commitment, readiness, and openness. This research will later help determine whether employees will support or reject change plans. This research will be the beginning to make a model about the factors that become antecedents and the consequences of employee attitudes toward change.

Practically, this research will help public sector organizations in Indonesia to anticipate employee attitudes towards changes that will and are ongoing, as well as being an input for leaders about the policies taken when changes are happening.

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