Resistance to Change is Mediator Between Trust to Immediate Supervisor and Work Engagement

Zulmi Yusra, Erni Masdupi, Syahrizal
Universitas Negeri Padang, Padang, Indonesia ✉ zulmi.yusra@fip.unp.ac.id
Universitas Negeri Padang, Padang, Indonesia ✉ emasdupi@yahoo.com
Universitas Negeri Padang, Padang, Indonesia ✉ syahrizal@fe.unp.ac.id

Abstract

The aim of this study is to demonstrate the relation between trust to immediate supervisor and resistance to change to work engagement as mediator variable. This research was a quantitative, conducted on 84 administrative staffs of Universitas Negeri Padang from various work units. This study uses purposive sampling technique. Furthermore, the research data was analyzed using regression analysis and Baron & Kenny procedure. The results showed that trust to immediate supervisors had a direct impact on work engagement. Furthermore, resistance to change was a perfect mediator variable that mediates between trust to immediate supervisors and work engagement.

Keywords: work engagement, trust to immediate supervisor, resistance to change.

Introduction

Higher education as part of the national education system has a strategic role in educating the life of the nation and advancing science and technology by paying attention to and applying the values of humanities and the sustainable cultivation and empowerment of the Indonesian nation. In achieving these common goals, people who feel bound to their work are needed. Therefore people who work in universities should have work engagement.

Work engagement was first popularized by William Kahn in 1990. He stated that employees who engage fully are tied to their work roles, both physically, cognitively and emotionally (Kahn, 1990). Due to positive attitudes and levels of activity, bound employees create positive feedback for themselves, in the sense of appreciation, recognition, and success. Although bound employees feel tired after working all day, they describe their fatigue as something fun because it is related to the completion of a positive task. When compared to workaholism, employees who are bound work hard not because of the inner drive they cannot bear, but rather because they feel that the work they are doing is a pleasant thing (Gorgievski, Bakker, & Schaufeli, 2010). Other studies have found that employees who are engage to their jobs are more productive, less stressed, more satisfied with their personal lives, and more loyal to the organization than employees who are less involved (Pitt-Catsouphes & Matz-Costa, 2008).

In the Higher Education Law, the government and the House of Representatives have agreed to provide three options for governance for state universities (PTN), namely as work units that are subject to the Ministry of Research and Technology, public service agencies (BLU), or Legal Entity PTN (PTN BH). According to the Ministry of Education and Culture (2012) BLU is an institution within the Government that is formed to provide services to the community in the form of the provision of goods and / or services that are sold without prioritizing seeking profit and in carrying out its activities based on the principles of efficiency and productivity.

One of BLU on Higher Education is Universitas Negeri Padang which has changed the status of the work unit under the Ministry of Research, Technology and Higher Education since 2015 with the issuance of Decree of the Minister of Finance of the Republic of Indonesia (RI) Number 335 / KMK.05 / 2015. The status change to BLU that occurred at UNP demands other changes so that the status of the BLU can be maintained, and the plan to become

PTNBH by 2020 can be realized. The biggest change announced by the rector towards this goal is the use of information systems technology that is more optimal starting in 2019. These changes will only be achieved if the members of the organization, namely lecturers and adminstrative staffs in the UNP environment, have a better commitment This commitment will only be obtained from people who engage with their organization (Saks, 2006; Huynh et al., 2012)

Every change that occurs within the organization is not always addressed by its members. Some can accept it quickly, while others refuse to accept the change. The form of refusal is also divided between those who are active, openly rejecting change and even demonstrating, or simply not willing to work in accordance with the changes that occur, even though verbally declaring their willingness.

One of the causes of this is because history proves that change does not always end well. Changes that occur within an organization even though they are needed, but can have a negative impact on the happiness of their employees. Based on longitudinal studies conducted on 709 people in 30 work units, the resistance to changes was related to emotional exhaustion (Turgut, Michel, Rothenhöfer, & Sonntag, 2016). Emotional fatigue is a sign of a decrease in work engagement, because one indicator of work engagement is the existence of vigor, which refers to the high level of energy used and the mental ability to deal with difficulties during work (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). It can be concluded that work engagement is also influenced by resistance to change.

Another variable that can affect work engagement is a trust to immediate supervisor. Immediate supervisors in an organization act as an intermediary of the organization with subordinates, therefore subordinates tend to trust their direct supervisor if the supervisor (a) has the ability, which is considered to have adequate, competent skills, and has a character that can encourage the emergence of trust from subordinates, (b) have virtue, which is considered to have the desire to do good in the name of subordinates, and (c) have integrity, which is considered to have words that are in harmony with actions and have similar values and can be accepted by subordinates. (Warren, 2012). Other studies have found that trust to immediate supervisors influence the level of commitment and work engagement of employees in the organization (Hassan & Ahmed, 2011).

In organizations that are changing, trust to immediate supervisors, besides being able to affect work engagement directly, can also be mediated by resistance to change. According to Kotter and Schlesinger (1999), the existence of trust between management and employees will help the changing more effective when all members understand each other's positions and roles (Schlesinger, 2008).

Research Hypothesis

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┌─────────────────┐     ┌──────────────────┐     ┌──────────────────┐
│  Trust to       │────▶│  Resistance to   │────▶│  Work engagement │
│  immediate      │     │  Change          │     │                  │
│  supervisors    │     │                  │     │                  │
└─────────────────┘     └──────────────────┘     └──────────────────┘
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Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

Trust in his immediate supervisor can influence the work attachment of employees to his organization. Employees in carrying out their daily work are always in touch and respond to their immediate supervisor. The direct supervisor here is a representative of the organization. Employees who believe in their immediate supervisor will tend to feel more attached to their work than those who do not trust their immediate supervisor. Besides trust to immediate supervisor, employee engagement can also be influenced by their resistance to change.

An organization must always adjust to changing times. To be able to survive, a little or a lot of changes must be made. But not all members of the organization will accept change. Rejection of this change can affect employee work engagements. This can occur when employees perceive that these changes do not occur at the right time or a change can harm

them. When they reject the changes, their engagement to their work will be decrease (Beijer & Gruen, 2016).

Study showed that the relationship between trust to immediate supervisor and work engagement mediated by resistance to change. Furthermore, trust to immediate supervisor has been shown to have directly positive relationship to work engagement, and resistance to change have directly negative relationship to work engagement. Trust to immediate supervisors, in addition, to directly influencing work engagement, can also be mediated by the resistance to change. This means that work engagement will only be affected if a change in trust to immediate supervisors is accompanied by a change in the resistance to change variable. In other words, work engagement will only increase if an increase in trust to immediate supervisors is directly accompanied by a decrease in the resistance to change.

Ha1: Trust to immediate supervisor affects the resistance to changes in the administrative staffs of Universitas Negeri Padang

Ha2: Resistance to change affects the work engagement in the administrative staffs of Universitas Negeri Padang

Ha3: Resistance to change mediates the affects of trust to immediate supervisors and work engagements in the adminstrative staffs of Universitas Negeri Padang.

Methods

This research was conducted in the Universitas Negeri Padang (UNP) to see the relationship between work engagements, resistance to change, and trust to immediate supervisors. This study is classified as correlational research. In this study, the population is all administrative staffs in the UNP environment. Samples were taken by purposive sampling technique, meaning that some of the population were meet specific characters was taken as responden (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2008)

Operational Definition

This study discusses 3 variables, which consist of 1 independent variable, namely work engagement and 2 dependent variables, namely resistance to change, and trust to immediate supervisors.

a. Work Engagement:

Active and positive attitudes and behaviors shown by UNP education personnel with enthusiasm (high level of energy and ability to rise from failure in work), dedication (full involvement in work accompanied by meaningful, enthusiastic and challenged feelings), and preoccupation (which characterized by full concentration and a feeling of happiness during work so that time goes without being felt).

b. Resistance to Change:

Resistance to change is the behavior of UNP administrative staffs who try to challenge, disrupt, or reverse existing assumptions and discourses in order to avoid themselves from the negative effects of the imagined changes.

c. Trust to Immediate Supervisors:

Trust to immediate supervisors here is the extent to which UNP education personnel believe in the good intentions, words, actions, and decisions of their respective immediate supervisors.

Research Instruments

The data for this study were taken using a questionnaire for all the measured research variables. The whole questionnaire was arranged using a Likert scale with 5 answer choices that move from SS (Strongly Agree), S (Agree), R (Hesitate), TS (Disagree), and STS (Strongly Disagree). Thus there are 3 questionnaires distributed to research subjects. The respondents were given 3 questionnaires because there were three variables to be measured: work engagement, resistance to change, and trust to immediate supervisor.

Data analysis technique

The research data obtained were analyzed by regression analysis techniques using the Baron & Kenny procedure. This technique was chosen to test whether the model proposed in this study was a fit or not model, and to test whether mediator variable is a perfect mediator between independent and dependent variable (Baron & Kenny, 1986). This procedures consist of 4 steps analysis:
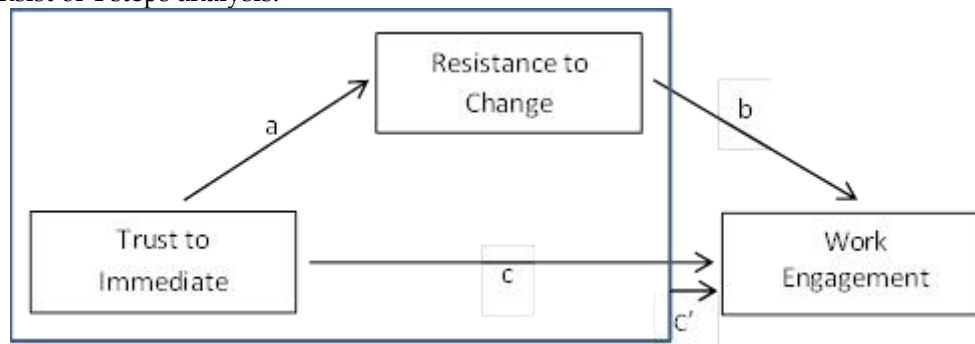

Figure 2 Data Analysis Procedure

Step 1 : path c : regress Work Engagement with Trust as predictor

Step 2 : path a : regress Resistance to Change with Trust as predictor

Step 3 : path b : regress Work Engagement with Resistance to Change as predictor

Step 4 : path c': regress Work Engagement with Trust and Resistance to Change as predictor

Results

To ensure that research data can be processed with regression analysis techniques, normality data is tested. From the normality test, it is known that the overall research data was spread normally.

Regression analysis with Baron & Kenny procedure is applied to determine the effect of independent variables and mediator variables on dependent variables. From the results of the analysis obtained the following results:

Table 1 Result of Regression

Path	Variables	B	Error	t	Significancy	interpret
C	WE - Trust	,254	,109	2,342	,022	sign
A	RTC - Trust	-,465	,091	-5,139	,000	sign
B	WE - RTC	-,587	,100	-5,877	,000	sign
c'	WE - RTC	-,600	,116	-5,193	,000	sign
	WE - Trust	-,025	,109	-,226	,822	not sign

This result indicated that resistance to change was the perfect mediator in the relationship between trust to immediate supervisors and work engagement. According to Baron & Kenny (1986) if correlation between independent variable was not significant with dependent variable on path c', we can conclude mediator variable was a perfect mediation between independent variable with dependent variable (Baron & Kenny, 1986). In this study work engagement is influenced by the trust to immediate supervisors through resistance to change. The increase in trust to immediate supervisors followed by a decrease in resistance to change will result in an increase in work engagement.

Work Engagement indicated by Vigor, refers to the high level of energy used and the mental ability to deal with difficulties during work. Dedication, refers to a deep engagement with a job and feeling as a meaningful part of the completion of a job. Absorption, which is

marked by full concentration and happiness in doing a job so that time goes by without being felt (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004).

Resistance to changes according to Palmer, et al (2009) indicated by Affective, which is about a person's feelings in the face of a change; Cognitive, which is about a person's mind in the face of change; Behavior, which is about what someone does in the face of change. This behavior is divided into two, namely active which is shown by criticizing, finding fault, making silliness, using facts selectively, blaming or accusing others, or even sabotaging. Then there are also those who are passive which are shown by expressing agreement on a change verbally but not doing what should be done, procrastinating doing work, storing the information that should be shared, keeping silent doing nothing, and so on. (Palmer, Dunford, Akin, 2009)

Trust is the extent to which a person believes in the good intentions, words, and actions of others (Cook & Wall, 1980); beliefs from within the individual, and willingness to act on the basis of the words, actions, and decisions of others (Lewicki, 2006).

Conclusion

The conclusion of this study shows that resistance to change mediates the relationship between trust and work engagement. This shows that efforts to increase trust in subordinates to immediate supervisor in universities will only increase work engagement for subordinates if their resistance to change decreases. Efforts to increase trust in superiors will not work effectively if employees still do not want to make changes in each process so that employee work engagement becomes low.

Previous research results stated that when changes occur in an organization, work engagement will decrease. Efforts to increase engagement with employees can be done by increasing understanding, ownership and trust in employees (Hackett, 2015). Employees who are resistant to change state that they are overwhelmed with their organization (Smollan, 2011).

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