

# The Impact of Personality Dispositions and Social Orientations on the Relocation Mobility Readiness: Lesson from an Indonesian Public Sector

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**Abstract**—This study aims to explain the impact of personality dispositions and social orientations on the relocation mobility readiness. This study was conducted in an Indonesian public audit institution. This institution applies a policy to relocate its employees periodically to any of 34 provinces in Indonesia. The samples were 374 non-structural employees. The survey was conducted to collect data about the relocation mobility readiness, the personality dispositions (neuroticism, openness to experience, and uncertainty tolerance) and the social orientations (social norm, individualism orientation, collectivism orientation). The convenience sampling method was used in this study, while the hierarchical regression was used as an analysis method. This study indicates that personality dispositions and social orientations significantly influence the relocation mobility readiness. The higher the value of the uncertainty tolerance and social norm, the higher the employees' readiness to be relocated. The higher the vertical collectivism, the lower the employees' readiness to be relocated. Therefore, the institution should provide its employees and their families with supporting programs so that they are ready to be transferred to other areas in Indonesia.

**Index Terms**—job relocation, personality dispositions, relocation mobility readiness, social orientations, Indonesia

## I. INTRODUCTION

Job relocation is one of the important activities in human resources planning and development. Relocation can give benefits for an organization such as knowledge transfer, employee development, and human resources distribution [1]. On the other side, relocation could become a source of stress for employees and their family [2], [3]. The Indonesian public audit institution has to implement a policy to relocate its employees periodically in order to maintain its independency. The employees of this institution are possible to be relocated to any of 34 provinces in Indonesia. The institution uses DKO or DOK pattern for the relocation policy. D stands for *Domisili* or Domicile that is chosen by the employee. K stands for “*Kantor Pusat*” or Headquarter in Jakarta. O stands for “*Organisasi*” or unit office that is chosen by the management based on the organizational needs. Based on data from Human Resource Department of the institution in 2014, 72.47% of employees are originally domiciled in Java while only 0.28% is based in the eastern part of Indonesia. With the policy of DKO/DOK

and the proportion of uneven distribution of domicile, there is an opportunity that not all employees will be placed according to their original domicile.

Jaturanonda, Nanthavanij, and Chongphaisal argue that readiness and willingness are aspects taken into account when making decisions about job rotation in private and public sectors in Thailand [4]. When an organization relocates its employees in an area that is far from the capital city and has low economic condition, the organization needs to ask about the employees' readiness and willingness before it makes a decision. Similar to Thailand, the diverse geographical and development conditions in Indonesia may influence the employees' readiness for their relocation. Thus, it is important for the institution to know the level of relocation mobility readiness of their employees.

According to Otto and Dalbert, the readiness of geographical relocation depends on each individual, which can be seen from their personality dispositions and social orientations [5]. This paper aims to examine the impact of personality dispositions and social orientations toward employees' relocation mobility readiness in a public sector institution in Indonesia—where relocation is mandatory—, emphasizing on the condition of Indonesia, a country that has 34 provinces with different geographical conditions, development level, and culture. The paper consists of six sections. First section is the Introduction. The second section is Theoretical Foundation and Hypothesis Development. The third section is Research Method. The fourth section is Results. The fifth section is Discussion, and the last section is Conclusion.

## II. THEORETICAL FOUNDATION AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

Relocation mobility is long-term work mobility which is in parallel with the geographical mobility, including migration or expatriation [2], [5]. A person's attitude towards relocation mobility and the possibility of moving in the future is called the relocation mobility readiness [5]. Longitudinal studies show that relocation mobility readiness is a predictor in the relocation mobility [6]. Relocation has a positive impact both

for the organizations and employees. The benefit for the organization is to get the best person in the right position and in the right time [7]. Employees get a significant leap for their careers [6]. On the other hand, Noe and Barber argue that relocation can become a serious threat toward social satisfaction and happiness for employees and their family because they might face problems in their relationship with their environment [8].

Some previous studies related to relocation mobility readiness focus on the influence of demographic aspects such as age, gender, marital status, number of children, level of education, cultural dimensions, gender role characteristic, and work experience [6], [9]. Otto and Dalbert conducted three cross sectional studies about the effect of personality dispositions and social orientations toward relocation mobility readiness with different respondent criteria [5]. Previous researches on the relocation mobility readiness also explore the international context, international relocation mobility readiness (IRMR), and personal and social factor as its antecedents [10].

Neuroticism means a low level of positive psychological adjustment and emotional stability [11]. Neuroticism is defined by the nature of anxiety [12]; when a person encounters a situation that is not in accordance with her expectation, a person with high levels of neuroticism will be easily irritated and nervous in dealing with trivial problems. This leads to:

$H_1$  : The neuroticism negatively affects the relocation mobility readiness

Openness to experience is related to ideas that are originality and open insight [12]. According to Costa and McCrae, people with high levels of openness to experience tend to like variations in life and have tolerance for something that is not familiar [11]. This leads to:

$H_2$  : The openness to experience positively affects the relocation mobility readiness

Ladouceur, Gosselin, and Dugas argue that people with high levels of uncertainty tolerance would perceive an uncertain situation as a challenge and actively look for it while people with low uncertainty tolerance would consider an uncertain situation as a threat which causes various forms of anxiety [13]. Previous researches indicate that uncertainty tolerance positively influences the relocation readiness [5], [14]. This leads to:

$H_3$  : The uncertainty tolerance positively affects the relocation mobility readiness

Social norms describe the expectations of the social environment for certain behaviors. According to Theory of Planned Behavior [15], social norms are important determinants of one's intention to perform certain behaviors. Dette and Dalbert argue that social norms are very relevant for individuals who make big decisions such as whether to move or not [14]. This leads to:

$H_4$  : The social norms, in this case a positive view of the nearest environment toward relocation mobility, positively affect the relocation mobility readiness

The extent to which a person feels socially bound, motivated by social environmental norms, and places group goals above himself is conceptualized within the framework of individualism-collectivism [16]. Then Singelis, Triandis, Bhawuk, and Gelfland add horizontal and vertical dimensions to the framework of individualism-collectivism [17]. Horizontal individualism means that individuals are autonomous, but not higher or lower than the others. Vertical individualism means that individuals are autonomous but there is a clear hierarchical structure among individuals with different statuses. Horizontal collectivism means group membership is more important and all group members share the same status. Vertical collectivism means group membership is important, but there are clear status differences between group members. Dette and Dalbert argue that how a person views himself within an environment in the framework of individualism-collectivism relates to the relocation mobility readiness [14]. The following hypotheses are therefore inferred:

$H_{5a}$  : The horizontal individualism positively affects the relocation mobility readiness

$H_{5b}$  : The vertical individualism positively affects the relocation mobility readiness

$H_{6a}$  : The horizontal collectivism negatively affects the relocation mobility readiness

$H_{6b}$  : The vertical collectivism negatively affects the relocation mobility readiness

This research model is the modification from previous research conducted by Otto and Dalbert [5]. In Otto and Dalbert's study, individualism and collectivism orientations are measured only by horizontal individualism and vertical collectivism. In the current study, individualism and collectivism orientations are measured by horizontal individualism, vertical individualism, horizontal collectivism, and vertical collectivism based on Dette and Dalbert's study about attitude toward geographic mobility.

### III. RESEARCH METHODS

The respondents in this study were nonstructural employees in an Indonesian public audit institution who have the possibility to be transferred to other regions in Indonesia. The sampling method was convenience sampling. There was a total of 374 respondents, including employees from the head office and 34 representative offices. This cross-sectional study distributed questionnaires both in hardcopies and online. The questionnaires used Likert-type Scale with six ranges from "1= Strongly Disagree" to "6 = Strongly Agree". An open question was added in the end of questionnaire.

The hierarchical regression was used for the data analysis with SPSS version 22 as the tool. The hierarchical regression was chosen because it allowed the researcher to evaluate the

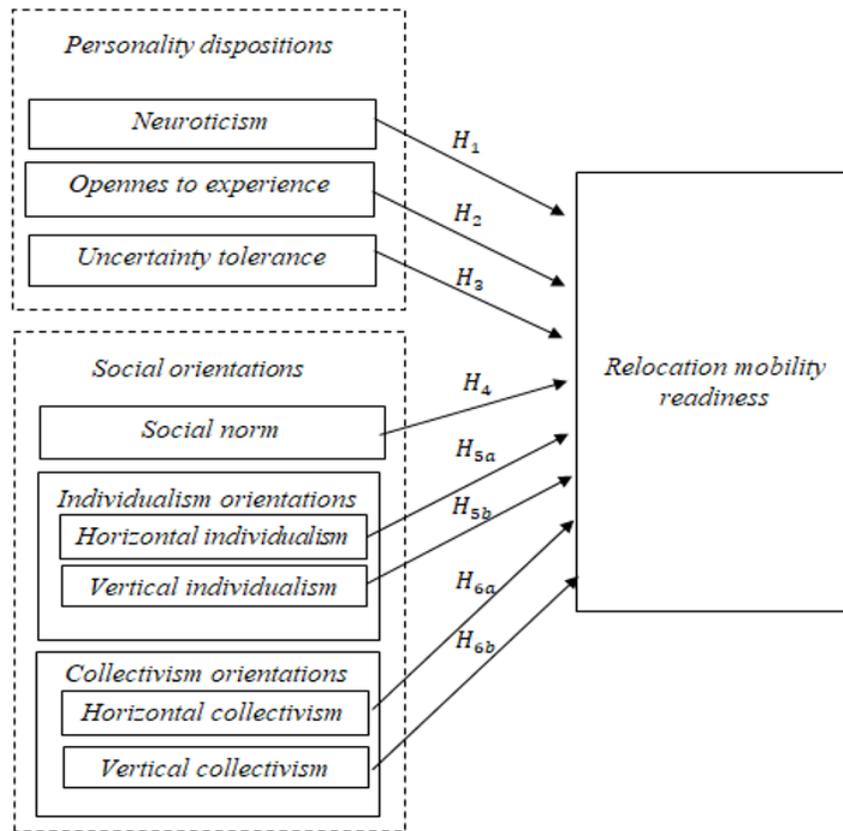


Fig. 1. Research model.

contributions of each predictor. The order of variable entry in the hierarchical regression is based on logical or theoretical considerations [18]. The order of variable entry in this study was based on the previous study by Otto and Dalbert [5]. In the first step, the control variable consisting of gender, age, education, and relocation experience was entered. In the second step, the personality dispositions variable (neuroticism, openness to experience, and uncertainty tolerance) was entered. The third step, the social orientations variable (social norms, horizontal individualism, vertical individualism, horizontal collectivism, and vertical collectivism) was entered.

The relocation mobility readiness was measured by a geographical mobility questionnaire developed by Dalbert [19]. The personality dispositions variable consisted of three dimensions: neuroticism, openness to experience, and uncertainty tolerance. Neuroticism and openness to experience were measured through Big Five Inventory from John [20] that had been translated to Indonesian by Ramdhani [21]. The uncertainty tolerance was measured through a questionnaire developed by Dalbert [22]. Furthermore, for the social orientations variable, the dimension of social norm was measured through a questionnaire developed by Otto [23] while the individualism and collectivism orientations were measured through a questionnaire developed by Triandis and Gelfand [24].

#### IV. RESULTS

The respondents are dominated by male (55.3%). The respondents' age is mostly in the range of 25–35 years old. About 38.8% of respondents are married in which the spouse is working outside the institution at the time of the research. Most respondents have one to two children. About 65.3% of respondents have tenure of 5–10 years. The respondents are dominated by auditors (51.6%). About 48.6% of the respondents have an experience in being relocated and 71.7% of the respondents have different domiciles from the current assignment area.

In Table I and Table II, Model 1 shows the first stage of data input where the demographic factor acts as the control variables. Model 2 shows the second stage of data input, where the researcher adds personality dispositions variables. Model 3 shows the third stage of data input, where the researcher adds social orientations variables. In the hierarchical regression analysis, R square change can show a comparison of the initial model with the next model. The result of processing data shows that Model 1 (demography) describes 3.5% variance (R Square) against relocation mobility readiness. The presence of the personality dispositions variable input (Model 2) results a change in R Square of approximately 11.9%. The addition of the personality dispositions increases the variance by about 11.9% so that it becomes 15.3% and Sig. F Change - 0.000 <

TABLE I  
ANOVA

Stage	Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	REG	432.060	4	108.015	3.335	0.011*
	RES	11952.253	369	32.391		
	TOT	12384.313	373			
2	REG	1900.606	7	271.515	9.479	0.000*
	RES	10483.707	366	28.644		
	TOT	12384.313	373			
3	REG	6291.120	12	524.260	31.061	0.000*
	RES	6093.193	361	16.879		
	TOT	12384.313	373			

\*) p < 0,05; REG= Regression; RES= Residual; TOT= Total

TABLE II  
MODEL SUMMARY

Model	R Square	Change Statistics		
		R Square Change	F Change	Sig. F Change
1	0.035	0.035	3.335	0.011*
2	0.153	0.119	17.090	0.000*
3	0.508	0.355	52.024	0.000*

\*) p < 0,05

TABLE III  
RESULT

Variable	B	T	Sig	Summary
(Constant)	11.434	-	-	-
GEN	-1.112	-2.465	0.014	-
AGE	0.528	1.212	0.226	-
EDU	-0.400	-1.085	0.278	-
REX	0.137	0.569	0.570	-
NE	0.011	0.299	0.765	H <sub>1</sub> is rejected
OE	-0.031	-0.433	0.665	H <sub>2</sub> is rejected
UT	0.394	4.180	0.000*	H <sub>3</sub> is accepted
SN	1.198	13.732	0.000*	H <sub>4</sub> is accepted
HI	-0.001	-0.010	0.992	H <sub>5a</sub> is rejected
VI	-0.183	-2.162	0.031	H <sub>5b</sub> is rejected
HC	-0.054	-0.592	0.554	H <sub>6a</sub> is rejected
VC	-0.291	-3.056	0.002*	H <sub>6b</sub> is accepted

\*) p < 0,05; B = (Unstandardized Coefficients); GEN= Gender; AGE= Age; EDU= Education; REX= Relocation Experience; NE=Neuroticism; OE=Openness to Experience; UT=Uncertainty Tolerance; SN=Social norm; HI=Horizontal Individualism; VI=Vertical Individualism; HC=Horizontal Collectivism; VC=Vertical Collectivism

0.05 (increasing the explanatory power). Furthermore, adding social orientations variable in Model 3 produces a change in R Square of 0.355 (35.5%). This means that the addition of social orientations variables increased the variance that explained from 35.5% to 50.8%. This increase is significant because Sig F. Change is - 0.000 < 0.05.

These results indicate that social orientations variables significantly generate stronger predictors rather than demographic variables and personality dispositions. R square in Model 3 shows that the influence of control variables (gender, age, education, moving experience), personality dispositions (neuroticism, openness to experience, uncertainty tolerance) and social orientations (social norms, individualism orientations, collectivism orientations) on the variable relocation mobility readiness is 50.8%. It means that 50.8% of the relocation

mobility readiness variable can be explained by the three variables while 49.2% is influenced by other variables that does not include in this regression model.

Based on Table 3, only uncertainty tolerance, social norm, and vertical collectivism have a significant effect on the relocation mobility readiness (p < 0.05). Uncertainty tolerance ( $\beta=0,394$ ) and social norm ( $\beta=1,198$ ) have a positive effect on the relocation mobility readiness. Vertical collectivism ( $\beta=-0,291$ ) has a negative effect on the relocation mobility readiness.

## V. DISCUSSION

The analysis results show that only uncertainty tolerance has a significant effect on the employees' relocation mobility readiness of all personality dispositions. Neuroticism has no

significant effect on the relocation mobility readiness because respondents consider the relocation policy as a consequence of their career at the institution. Employees, especially auditors, must maintain their independence by avoiding a long-term interaction with the auditee. Openness to experience has no significant effect on the relocation mobility readiness. This result contradicts with the research conducted by Mignonac which indicates that people with a high level of openness to experience have a higher desire to accept the opportunity to relocate [25]. It can be argued that this condition is caused by their perception of injustice and inconsistency in the implementation of relocation policy in the institution. The respondents think that the relocation policy at the institution has not been applied fairly; for example, there are many employees who have not been transferred from the head office for several years. In addition, the respondents also perceive that the institution has not implemented a relocation policy consistently, for example: the length of assignment period in a particular area is different between one employee and another.

The uncertainty tolerance has a positive effect on the employees' relocation mobility readiness. According to Ladouceur, et al., people with high levels of uncertainty tolerance consider an uncertain situation as a challenge and actively look for it while people with low uncertainty tolerance would perceive an uncertain situation as a threat and causes various forms of anxiety [13]. Employees with a high level of uncertainty tolerance are ready to face unexpected things; when they are told that they are going to be relocated, they would immediately accept the decision. Conversely, employees with low levels of uncertainty tolerance will consider uncertainty as a threat. Uncertainty about when and where the relocation would take place would make employees with low tolerance for uncertainty feel worried.

In the social orientation dimensions, the results show that only social norms, vertical individualism and vertical collectivism have a significant effect on the employees' relocation readiness mobility. Social norms have a positive correlation with the relocation mobility readiness. This indicates that employees who perceive that their immediate environment, such as parents, children and friends have positive perception about relocation mobility, they would be ready to be transferred to different geographical areas. This is consistent with the Theory of Planned Behavior [15], which states that social norms are important determinants of motive to perform a behavior. The perceptions from the reference people like spouses, parents, children and friends could also influence their readiness to be transferred. The results of the descriptive analysis show that the respondents' social norm is rather low. This means that the employees' families and friends do not perceive relocation as a positive practice. This is possible by looking at the characteristics of respondents who are mostly married to partners who work outside the institution. Their spouses must find a new job at the new location if they want to stay together. They would face a problem in asking their spouses to apply for relocation, especially if their spouses are working in an organization that does not have a branch in the

intended area.

The interesting results occur in the vertical individualism dimension. The vertical individualism has a significant effect on the relocation mobility readiness, but the correlation is negative. The result is contrary to the hypothesis. Singelis, et al. argues that people with high vertical individualism view individuals as autonomous but there is a clear hierarchical structure among individuals with different statuses [17]. Based on the study by Dette and Dalbert, vertical individualism has a positive effect on relocation mobility readiness which impacts on the additional incentives received by the employees, but it does not affect relocation without additional incentives [14]. People with high vertical individualism emphasize competition against others and they have high achievement orientation [14]. The negative influence of vertical individualism on the relocation mobility readiness in the institution is possible because there is no reward in terms of financial benefits and recognition for employees who are relocated. In addition, employees perceive that the relocation policy applied by the institution is not integrated with their career management.

The horizontal individualism has no significant effect on the relocation mobility readiness. According to Singelis, et al., people with high levels of horizontal individualism believe that they are autonomous but not superior or inferior compared with other individuals and they do not compete with others [17]. Some respondents think that the current relocation policy in the institution has not been applied fairly because some employees have not been transferred since their first placement. Their perception of injustice in the relocation policy implementation is their reason why the horizontal individualism does not significantly influence the relocation mobility readiness in the institution.

The horizontal collectivism has no significant effect on the relocation mobility readiness. According to Singelis, et al., people with high horizontal collectivism view if group membership is more important and all group members share the same status [17]. This situation can be explained by looking at the characteristics of respondents. Most respondents currently work outside with their original domiciles. With the DKO/DOK pattern, an employee has the possibility to be moved to his/her domicile in the next relocation period.

The vertical collectivism has a significant negative effect on the relocation mobility readiness. This result is in line with the descriptive analysis which states that respondents' perception of vertical collectivism level is very high while relocation mobility readiness is low. According to Forster, the relocation mobility could show how family-related issues could affect an employee's performance and vice versa [26]. Furthermore, Forster states that the relocation mobility could cause a high level of stress for many employees and their families [26]. Respondents concern about the possible negative effects on themselves and their families when they are transferred to other areas. The problems are related to finding new accommodation, job for their spouses, and school and facilities for their children.

## VI. CONCLUSION

The results of this study indicate that the personality dispositions significantly influence the relocation mobility readiness but not all personality disposition dimensions. The neuroticism does not significantly influence the relocation of mobility readiness as respondents view the relocation policy as a career consequence at the institution. The openness to experience does not significantly influence the relocation mobility readiness as the employees perceive that the relocation policy has not been applied fairly and consistently. The uncertainty tolerance is proved to have a positive effect on the relocation mobility readiness. This can be explained because the periodic relocation with the DKO/DOK pattern is uncertain because there is no certain schedule and destination for the next relocation.

The social orientations significantly affect the relocation mobility readiness. Social norms positively influence the relocation mobility readiness. The results of the descriptive analysis show that the respondents' social norm is rather low. This means that their families and friends tend to have negative perceptions over relocation. The horizontal individualism does not affect the relocation mobility readiness because they have the perception of injustice in the implementation of relocation policies in the institution. The vertical individualism has a significant effect on the relocation mobility readiness but the correlation is negative as employees perceive that there is no rewards (both incentives or recognition) for employees who have been transferred. The horizontal collectivism does not have a significant effect on the relocation mobility readiness while the vertical collectivism has a significant negative effect on the relocation mobility readiness. When transferred to other area, the employees concern about the negative impact on themselves and their families.

Based on the results of the current study, there are several practical implications that can be used as the institution's consideration to increase its employees' relocation mobility readiness. The institution needs to improve the current relocation policy and provide support to the employees. The current relocation policy needs to be equipped with information on the relocation prediction map of each employee. This can help employees plan their move. The period of relocation needs to be clarified like how long the maximum time employees are placed in certain areas. This is to increase the sense of justice among employees. The institution also needs to provide employees with support by providing comprehensive guidance of transfer procedures including claims for moving costs and information about new areas. The assistance from the HR manager at a new office is needed to help employees adapt with their new environment. The institution could also provide training related to the skills needed in new assignment.

The institution needs to provide support to employees and their families so that they are more prepared to face relocations. Some respondents hope an increase in welfare and provision of shelter or fund for rent. Support can also be provided in the forms of information related to residence,

school, daycare, job vacancies for couples, and assistance in the process of introducing the new environment including risk mitigation in the new area. The provision of consulting services to assist employees and their family to cope with problems related to relocation should also be provided at each department unit in the institution. The institution also needs to integrate the relocation policy with employee career management, for example by giving rewards to the transferred employees in the form of career development. In addition, the institution needs to provide the employees with consultation services regarding their career development so that they do not feel worried that their career will be disrupted because of being transferred to other region.

This study provides a broad understanding of the predictor of relocation mobility readiness in a public institution where relocation is mandatory and emphasized on the condition of Indonesia, a country that has 34 provinces with diverse geographic conditions, development level, and culture. The independent variables in this model contribute to the influence of about 50.8% on the dependent variable while the remaining 49.2% is contributed by other variables. Variables like commitment, job involvement, compensation, career motivation can be added in the future studies. The research object is only one public institution in Indonesia. Future studies can use samples from public or private organizations that have representative offices spreading in all areas in Indonesia. The sampling method used is convenience sampling. Therefore, the result cannot be generalized to all population. Future studies can use probability sampling in order to generalize. This study is not completed with in-depth interviews with the human resource department to confirm the study results in exploring the problem deeply about relocation policy and the level of relocation mobility readiness. The next research can add a qualitative method to explore deeply the issues like in-depth interviews or focus group discussions.

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