

## Assessing Organizational Readiness for Change of UTama's Lecturers

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**Abstract:** The escalating uncertainty as a result of the rapidly changing business environment, forces organizations to make changes in order to adapt to its environment. The ability to make change depends on the readiness for change of each member of the organization. The readiness for change of organizational members is therefore important to measure. This research is intended to measure and describe the readiness for change of UTama lecturers. To measure this readiness for change, a total of 160 questionnaires is distributed to UTama lecturers. A total 106 of them were returned and could be analyzed further. Descriptive statistics show that UTama lecturers' readiness for change is marginally low. This means that the lecturers' resistance to be involved in the change process is relatively high.

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**Keywords:** Organizational readiness for change, UTama.

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### 1. Introduction

In today's rapidly changing business landscape, change becoming the most important issue that organization has to deal with. Szamosi & Duxbury (2002) argued change will affect all member within an organization. In order to succeed in the change process, organizations put a lot of efforts, such as downsizing, mergers and acquisition, reshaping organization' structure, and others as well (Pellettiere, 2006). American Management Association found out that 84 percent of American companies were trying to make at least one change, and approximately 46 percent of them deals with three or more changes (Recardo, 1995). However, according to some statistics, the success of those change management was only between 20 to 50 percent (Appelbaum & Wohl, 2000; Beer & Nohria, 2000; Costella & Arghade, 2020; Elving, 2005).

The term change become an interesting term since this term describing chaos in business world. It is known that organization capability to succeed in making change will determine its ability to sustain in such turbulence environment (Costella & Arghade, 2020; Mariotti, 1998). Szamosi & Duxbury (2002) argued that organizational success depends on to what extent the organizatios understand the importance of change, and on how they manage their change process.

The success of change process depends on the readiness of the entire member of the organization. Readiness refers to the forwardness of an individual to accept the change process (Beer & Nohria, 2000; Elving, 2005; Vaichnavi, Suresh & Dutta, 2019).

Problem is, many organizations realize and understand that they should deal with change and have to make changes, unfortunately their member are not yet ready to deal with it, and this is the main reason why organization fail to make change (Val and Fuentes, 2003). Studies revealed that resistance is the reason why organization unready to deal with change (Cummings & Worley, 2001; Mabin, Forgeson & Green, 2001; Val & Fuentes, 2003). Interestingly, Mariotti (1998) argued that resistance is very significant determinant for the success of making change, but many are not clearly understood it. Resistance is an expression and attitude that reflect rejection towards change (Beer & Nohria, 2000; Meyer & Habanabakize, 2019). Resistance mostly related with negative and counterproductive attitude that could prevent the change process (Shah, 2011). The reason behind this resistance mostly comes from the anxiety of the bad consequences of change.

Readiness is basically a cognitive precursor to the development of both resistant behavior and behavior which support change. Regarding change, there may be behavioral disparities in an organization. Some may show positive behavior, and there may also be negative ones (Cole, Harris & Berneth, 2006; Douglas & Ochieng, 2017). Furthermore, Peach, Jimmieson & White (2005) described readiness as the extent to which individuals positively view the importance of change, and also the extent to which these individuals believe that these changes will bring positive implications for themselves and for the organization as a whole. Based on the importance of understanding

the readiness of people within an organization toward change, this research intended to measure the extent of UTama' lecturers' readiness toward change. UTama stands for Widyatama University in Bandung – West Java.

## 2. Literature Review

Studies tends to differentiated two types of individual responses in change situation: readiness and unreadiness toward change (Armenakis & Harris, 2002). In dealing with change, people tend to analyze and observe the shape, direction, and impact of change. In general, from these observations, people may accept or reject these changes (Bovey and Hede, 2001; Self, 2007).

Studies revealed that individual and organizational factors are very influential on individual's response to change (Armenakis & Harris, 2002). Although resistance is seen as things that un-avoided and is a form of natural behavior response to a fear or threat, basically the reason for the failure of change is the reluctance of people to be involved in the change process itself (Bovey & Hede, 2001; Washington & Hacker, 2005). As a result, efforts to reduce resistance become a major challenge in the success of a change process (Washington and Hacker, 2005; Costella & Arghade, 2020; Uluskam, Mc Creery, John & Rothenburg, 2018). Armenakis & Harris (2002) argued that despite the debates of the concept of resistance to change, opinions regarding readiness become more increasingly attracting attention. Armenakis & Harris (2002) argued that resistance could be approached in two ways, namely:

1. by increasing pressure that can suppress reactive behavior,
2. by minimizing or reducing the forces that influence aversion or resistance (proactive approach).

Some scholars argued the second approach is away better than the first (Washington & Hacker, 2005).

Powelson (1995) defines readiness as an attitude which is based on beliefs, personality, history, or other factors that precede the acceptance or the rejection of change. Holt (2002) defines readiness as the degree to which a person has readiness to participate in different organizational activities. Berneth (2004) simplifies these definitions by saying that readiness for change is a condition of a person's belief that reflects his willingness or unwillingness to change the way of thinking of others. Armenakis & Harris (2002) observed that readiness for change is formed when the environment, structure, and attitudes of organizational members support the formation of a willingness to deal with change.

Creating readiness for change involves proactive efforts by change agents in the organization, to influence beliefs, attitudes, intention and behavior of people who must be involved in change (Jansen, 2000). He further argued that in this process, the change agents were seen as coaches and winners of change, and not as supervisors who would react to change aversion or resistance behaviors. From various definitions above, it is clear that readiness could be seen as a sign of behavior that rejects or supports organizational change (Armenakis & Harris, 2002). Readiness for change is often studied in term of reluctance or resistance to change, and the focus is on how to minimize resistance (Armenakis & Harris, 2002).

Scholars seemingly agree that in the absence of readiness factors, a passive attitude or resistance to change will arise (Chreim, 2006). An intervention may not produce the desired for change if the people involved are not ready. Holt (2002) emphasizes the importance of the concept of readiness is reflected in managers' effort trying to avoid workers' reluctance. In a very seminal study, Coch and French (1948) first suggested the term avoids rejection in order to arise readiness attitude. Most studies in the context of readiness depart from this Coch & French conception. Generally, however, most of these studies emphasize only on management aspects or efforts that could avoid rejection. Jacobson (1957) was the first researcher who claimed that the Coch & French conception did not only talk about managing resistance but it also implied the emergence of the construct of readiness. Bernerth (2004) found that Jacobson was the first to use the term readiness. Although Jacobson may be the first to specifically identify the term or concept of readiness, basically the concept is clearly implicit in some theoretical models (Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999; Armenakis & Wohl, 2000).

From the literature review, it can be found that readiness as a concept has extensively used in the literature on change. Much efforts have been made to try to reveal how aversion and resistance can be reduce or minimize. While the concept of readiness for change has been recognized as important, there has not been much research operationalized readiness as a unique construct, and using it in the perspectives of preparing and facilitating leaders in how to make appropriate changes. It was Armenakis & Bedeian (1999) who first emphasized the importance of perspectives of those affected by change. They argued that change leaders should inspire and guide organizations members to deal with change, not resist it. They claimed that readiness is a trigger for behavior that rejects or accepts change. The focus is on creating readiness, and not avoiding resistance to change. Effective readiness management will greatly assist leaders in forming a positive attitude towards change. Thus, readiness is the capability to involve individuals within the organization in the unfreezing process.

Armenakis and Bedeian (1999) proposed a comprehensive theoretical framework of change that centers in three stages of a linear process, ranging from readiness to institutionalization. They define readiness to be a cognitive condition that appears when organizational members have positive attitudes, beliefs and intentions toward change. When this cognitive condition is arising by the development of relevant attitudes, beliefs and intentions, the individuals involved in the process will start to adopt changes, and tend to have expected behavior. In the final stage, change process is completed and change is fully integrated in organizational structure, in other words, change has been institutionalized. In same sense, Dunham, Grube, Gardner, Cummings and Pierce (1989) in Cummings & Worley (2001), argued that change process follows three stages, namely, cognitive reaction, affective reaction and behavioral tendency.

### 3. Methodology

Unit of analysis of this study is individual, namely every lecturer of UTama. The total 160 lecturers of UTama are the population of this study. Questionnaires will be sent to all 160 lecturers, and the number of questionnaires returned and completely filled out will be considered as the ample of this study.

Readiness is measured using a scale developed by Dunham et al., (1989), consist 18 items. The scale measure readiness for change by operationalizing three subscales (dimensions), namely: cognitive and affective reaction, and behavioral tendency. 7-point Likert Type Scale is use to tap organizational readiness for change. Cronbach Alpha Criterion is used to check the scale reliability, and Factor Analysis (CFA) for the validity. Descriptive statistics is use to measure and describe the readiness of UTama' lecturers.

### 4. Findings & Discussion

A total 160 set of questionnaires were sent to almost every lecturer of UTama, and as a response, a total of 106 questionnaires were completely filled, returned, and fit for the next analysis. Response rate of this study is 66 percent.

Table 1 below shows the result of reliability analysis for readiness for change measures. The value of Cronbach Alpha is above 0.70. which according to Sekaran & Bougie (2016) the measures of readiness for change are reliable.

Table 1  
Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.883	.882	18

Table 2  
KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		.842
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square df	1347.463 .105
	Sig.	.000

Table 3  
Rotated Component Matrix

	Component
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	1	2	3
ORC1	-	.889	.258
ORC2	.036	.878	.282
ORC4	.035	.873	.242
ORC5	-	.910	.098
ORC6	.070	.910	.107
ORC8	.082	.217	.859
ORC9	.129	.153	.750
ORC10	.160	.161	.797
ORC12	.001	.263	.848
ORC13	.158	-	.218
ORC14	.168	.035	-
ORC15	.834	-	.039
ORC16	.855	.071	.068
ORC17	.877	.011	.193
ORC18	.847	.088	.019
	.854	.120	.142
	.856	.060	

Table 4  
Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
ORC1	106	4.1415	1.57019
ORC2	106	4.0566	1.59063
ORC4	106	4.3208	1.61862
ORC5	106	4.3302	1.37821
ORC6	106	4.4717	1.34665
ORC8	106	4.4906	1.79547
ORC9	106	4.1132	1.41637
ORC10	106	4.4161	1.62051
ORC12	106	4.5943	1.59630
ORC13	106	4.4906	1.36099
ORC14	106	4.3868	1.29152
ORC15	106	4.3019	1.28856
ORC16	106	4.3113	1.31919
ORC17	106	4.1321	1.35980
ORC18	106	3.9717	1.40379

Table 2, and Table 3 shows the result of confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). CFA is convergence in four iteration. There were three items found not valid, which are: item number 3 (ORC3), item number 7 (ORC7), and item number 11 (ORC11).

The sample is adequate, the Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity is significant, and the 15 items grouped into three factors, namely: behavioral tendency, affective reaction, and cognitive reaction. Therefore, the readiness for change scale is valid.

Descriptive statistics (Table 4) shows that the mean value of readiness ranges from 3.9717 to 4.5943. On a scale of 7, it could be concluded that organizational readiness for change of UTama’s lecturers are relatively low.

In this study, readiness is defined as a construct consisting of three dimensions, namely: cognitive reaction (ORC1 to ORC6), affective reaction (ORC7 to ORC12), and behavioral tendency (ORC13 to ORC18). Looking at the respondents’ answers, it looks like UTama’ lecturers tend to view change as a threat, and they seem tend to avoid and resist change.

Cognitively, it seems that the lecturers still view change as something that is unnecessary and will not bring any benefit to them. This attitude is most likely due to the lack or poor understanding to the importance of change that organization should make. It is clear that education on the importance of organizational change is a task and a responsibility of the management. Management must design an educational program so that lecturers have a

complete and clear understanding of the importance of making changes. Management must be able to educate lecturers that change will lead the organization toward better future.

Good understanding of the importance of change will in turn produce positive cognition reactions since the lecturers have clear understanding. This cognitive reaction will be proceeding positive affection reaction in the minds of the lecturers. This in turn will trigger and produce a good behavioral tendency of the lecturers. A good behavior tendency will arouse from an attitude of openness and a high willingness to involved in change process.

## 5. Conclusion

Readiness for change is a must have to every organization amid rapidly changing business environment. Without making changes, the organization will be left behind. The key to this change lies in each individual in the organization. How to move and motivate each individual towards change is definitely the responsibility of the management. Management must promote the important of change to every member within the organization. Before the management design and implementing such promoting program, firstly, management should measure the degree of their employee' readiness.

This finding indicates UTama's lecturers are marginally not yet ready to deal with change. UTama' management should promote a program that could educate the lecturers of the importance of change for the future of UTama as an organization. Management should be able to convincing the lecturers that changes is the key in facing the turbulence of the environment, and changes depends on the willingness of all organization' member to involved in change process. Further research is suggested to investigate factors which could determine readiness. Furthermore, it also important to examine the determinants that affect organizational readiness for change in various industry sectors.

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