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Readiness of Makassar Public High School Counsellors in Coping Organizational Change

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Abstract

This study aims to determine the readiness of State High School counsellors in the city of Makassar who are confronted with organizational change. The assessment is viewed from the aspect of preparedness of counsellors that includes self-esteem, optimism and perceived control. A mixed method was used in this study that was simultaneously embedded. Survey questionnaires were distributed to 68 counsellors of State High Schools in Makassar for purposes of quantitative analysis, while an interview was conducted to five counsellor-coordinators for purposes of qualitative analysis. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were employed to best analyze the quantitative data, while the qualitative data was analyzed manually. The study revealed that the level of readiness of the 68 counsellors' performance was low in coping with organizational change. This implies that there is a need for the counsellors to improve their performance in the future. Through the qualitative analysis, it was found out that the counsellors have numerous difficulties in their ability to cope with organizational change, while the result of good performance was noted in the quantitative analysis that was conducted.

Keywords: *Organizational Change, Self-esteem, Optimism, Perceived Control*

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Introduction

The quality of human resource in any country is determined through an effective implementation of its educational system; as education completely occupies a central position in the human form. In 2003, the Indonesian government has declared a statute with national coverage stating among others the purposes of the national education through the “*Undang-Undang*” law no.20, 2003. This law has laid the foundation for the understanding of the intellectual efforts of national life. Basically, this law provides for the life of the nation in question which is founded on the development potential of students to possess faith and fear of God Almighty, noble, healthy, knowledgeable, skilled, creative, independent, and become citizens of a democratic and accountable citizens (UU No. 20, 2003).

One of the human resource development measures that was adopted by the Indonesian government is the United Nations Development Program’s (UNDP) human development index (HDI), which is translated locally to *Indeks Perkembangan Manusia* (IPM) by the government. The index is focused on hope of life, level of ability to read and write, the combination of each level of education (secondary school, high school, senior high school). In 2012, the IPM index of Indonesia was at the level of 121st in the world ranking with a modest increase from 0.624 in 2011 to 0.629. However, despite Indonesia’s low HDI ranking which is far below than that of Japan, which ranked ranked seventh, Indonesia have shown that its HDI ranking could still be enhanced as indicated with its modest improvement.

Essentially, an improved IPM is determined through a number of indicators that have direct and significant effects in the process of education and learning in every educational institution. It is typical that educational outcomes between the performance is largely determined by the school counsellor. While the school’s guidance and counselling services are embedded in a counsellor’s job description within the scope of the education system, there is an inevitable aspect in the whole education process where the need for close collaboration with school principals, teachers, counsellors and supervisors are indeed indispensable.

Dahir and Stone (2009) stated that the accountability of a school counsellor is in its ability to guide students toward social justice and systemic change. Kartadinata (2006) offered a broad yet contextually similar view averring that the job of an academic counsellor is to conduct humanitarian service that aims to establish independent individuals in navigating through the course of his life’s decisions on education, career choice and maintenance. Hence, it would facilitate for an individual to realize a productive and prosperous life, and become citizen with a concern for the common good through education.

This study aims to assess the readiness of counsellors in government high schools in Makassar who are facing to cope with organizational change which includes organizational culture, strategy, structure, power distribution and control systems. Meanwhile, the readiness of a counsellor is measured through self-esteem, optimism and perceived control. The emphasis of this study is to analyze the performance of government high school counsellors in the city of Makassar who are confronted with the changes in the organization and the kind of personality factors that can affect their ability in the face of organizational change.

This study is important for the school counsellors in terms of coping with organizational changes in school. Coping with organizational change requires the counsellor to have individual readiness in terms of self-esteem, optimism, and perceived control to be able to perform the duties and functions to the fullest. Through basic understanding the self-esteem, a counsellor should possess a quality of high confidence about the ability, values, and interests of his success. Moreover, counsellors are expected to have optimistic attitude, best hope as prejudice across time and situations. Similarly, counsellors should dominate through the perceived control as the ability to control or dominate the environment, establish a difference and help make effective decisions for others.

Furthermore, this study is expected to contribute to the knowledge of organizational change and the influence aspects of one’s personality. The results are also expected to be beneficial in enriching the data and information in the field of education when making changes. The purpose of the study is to increase public awareness about the changes that frequently happen in education and how educators would face the changes in coherence with the needs of the larger community.

Finally, the study intends to provide the Indonesian government an operational guide in formulating policies related to educational change particularly in the city of Makassar. The findings and recommendation of this study would significantly benefit government high schools, school principals, school committees, administrative staff, teachers and students. For researchers on similar discipline, the results would be of importance as this could be used as a model in furthering studies concerning changes in the realms of education.

Research Method

This study is a descriptive quantitative study which focuses on the relationship between coping with organizational change and personality characteristics such as self-esteem, optimism and perceived control. To present a comprehensive result, this study used qualitative analysis to combine the results of research. Wiersma (1995) has indicated that descriptive studies provide images or information on situations at a particular time, as well as a robust foundation in aid to plan for the future. Hence, this research employs methods such as mixed methods with the concurrent embedded approach. The data was collected through survey questionnaires distributed to respondents to generate quantitative data, and face-to-face interview was conducted in generating the needed qualitative data. The results were analyzed using descriptive data collection and inference through correlation and regression analysis through SPSS software. The analysis of qualitative data was done manually, analyzed, described, and the results were broadly discussed.

1.1 Conceptual Framework

There are various terms associated with the change. In the ordinary course of change, Jaafar (1999) introduced a new adaptation as a result of the past behavioural modification. Similarly, change is fundamentally an activity or process of making something or someone who is not the same as the previous state and the cause of the change patterns of behaviour of individuals or institutions (Brooten, 1978; Atkinson, 1987; Dictionary Edition House of Three, 2000, Robbins, 2001, Potts and La Marsh, 2004).

In an organization, change involves all forms of modification by the leaders of some or all the machinery of the organization (Quinn 1996), and as to Hussey (2000) the change is one of the most critical aspects of effective management. This means that not only changes become more frequent, but also complex and extensive. Change cannot be avoided due to the strong external impetus and because of internal needs. While the change usually encounters resistance, the individual and organizational constraints can be overcome with transparency, communication, and fellowship all participants (Potts and La Marsh, 2004).

Based on the understanding of organizational changes put forward by experts on a number of variables and the dependent variable bound (dependent variable I) as well as an intermediate variable (intervening variable), is the completion of (coping) counsellor covering the problems and strengths, while the dependent variable and the variables. The second bound (dependent variable II) is the change in the organization such as organizational culture, strategy, structure, power distribution, ethnicity and control systems. The framework of the study can be described as follows.

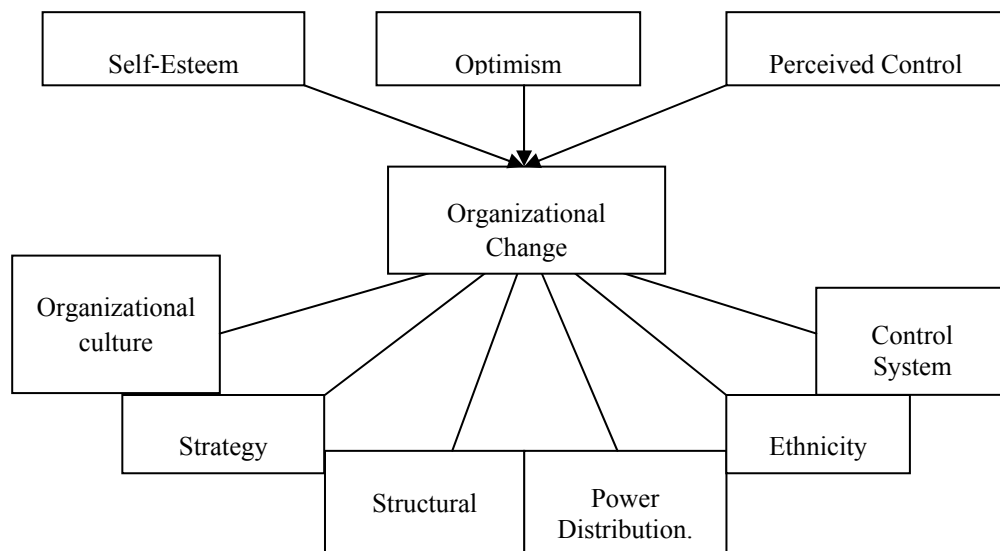


Figure 1. Schema theory research framework

The study focuses on the teachers-counsellors at State High Schools in Makassar. Thus, the result of this study reflects the level of coping (coping) with the changes within the organization of the

teacher-guidance and counselling (counsellor) in the School District of Makassar; hence, cannot be applied to other departments. Included in this study is absolutely limited to counsellor's personality which includes self-esteem, optimism and perceived control.

1.2 Conceptual Definition

a. Self-esteem

Scheier, Carver and Bridges (1994) define self-esteem as the feeling of self-value that belongs to someone which would be accepted by others, and by us is not failure take his life. Past studies have shown that individuals who have low self-assessments tend to respond in a balanced passable experience (i.e. positive experience has beneficial effects while negative experience has an adverse psychological impact). Individuals with high self-assessments tend to receive positive experience and the impact of a negative experience tends to become weak; a situation that can maintain a positive psychological state (Brown and Mankowski, 1993; Campbell, 1990; Dogson and Wood, 1998).

This study, adopts the definition of self-esteem as forwarded by Coopersmith (1967) who states that appraisal of self (self-esteem) is the belief in one's capabilities, values and interests of one's success.

b. Optimism

Optimism has been defined as a positive anticipatory state "an inclination to put the most favorable construction upon actions and events or to anticipate the best possible outcome" ("Optimism", 2011). Optimism is described as a cognitive process (Bruiniks & Malle, 2005) focusing on outcome expectancies determining goal- directed behavior. Furthermore, Bruiniks and Malle (2005) defined optimism as a generalized expectancy that one will experience good outcomes in life.

Optimism in an individual is characterized as having positive thinking and realistic way of looking at a problem and has the belief that exists within the country (Segerström, 1998; Lopez and Snyder, 2003; Seligman, 2001; Scheier and Carver, 1985). According to Marshall and Lang (1990) optimism relates to a person's confidence that the future promises desired results regardless of a person's ability to control the outcome. Basically, a sense of optimism stems from a variety of internal and external sources, including support from others and personal capabilities. Green Jr., Medlin, and Whitten (2004) likewise conveyed as a prejudiced optimism and positive expectations across time and situations. On the one hand, Peterson (2000) concluded that the notion of optimism as a cognitive nature is a science-based outreach and thoughts. Thus, this study opts to the definition that optimism is a way to think positive and taking realistic in view of a problem and exists to be within the country (Segevestrom, 1998; Lopez and Snyder, 2003; Seligman, 2001; Scheier and Carver, 1985).

c. Perceived Control

Generally, the concept of 'control' is often associated with bargaining power, reference power, authority official, informal leadership, employee autonomy, access to resources, among others (Ashfort and Saks, 2000), while 'perceived control' is defined as a combination of job autonomy and effective participation in decision making in a job (Ashforth, 1989; Gardel, 1986).

Perceived control is the confidence in a person that he can control himself that can affect the environment and could eventually bring the desired changes (Wallston, Smith and Dobbins, 1987; Rotter, 1966). Thus, this study adheres to the notion that 'perceived control' is a person's ability to control or dominate the environment, leading change, and help make effective decisions for others (Ashforth, 1989; Gardel, 1986).

d. Coping Organizational Change

Anshel, Kim, Kim, Chang and Horn (2001), defines 'face' as a conscious effort either physically or psychologically to improve one's ability to cope with stressful situations. Hence, this study espouses the concept of 'coping' organizational change as a continuous process to change the behavior for managing internal and external requirements, specific or manage conflicts beyond the ability of a person (Lazarus and Folkman).

e. Counsellor

Counsellors are professional educators who have attained educational proficiency (S-1) on Guidance and Counselling courses and various programs under the Professions Education Counsellors of Colleges of Education, and the provision of accredited maintenance programs (UURI No. 20, 2003).

The duty of a counsellor is to maintain humanitarian service and aims more independently individuals in navigating his way through the decision-making about education, career choices and care

to create a productive and peaceful life, and to become citizens who care about the well-being of society at large through education (Kartadinata, 2006). This study defines a counsellor as a professional educator who organizes guidance and counselling services in the path of formal education (UU no. 20 in 2003).

Research Result

1.3 Quantitative Analysis Result

All of the 68 respondents who participated in the survey were state high school counsellors in the State of Makassar City with a 100% response rate. The survey revealed that 82.4% are female while the remaining 17.6% are male. Most respondents are married with work experience of 20 to 30 years in service with an average education level of university graduates, while more than half are 50 years of age.

Table 1. Descriptive Analysis Results

Coping Organizational Change	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation	Coefficient of Variance (C.V.) %
Coping	3.65	0.39	Moderate	10.68
Optimism	3.77	0.54	High	14.32
Self Esteem	3.87	0.58	High	14.99
Perceived Control	3.42	0.77	Moderate	22.51

Table 1 shows the mean and standard deviation of the four factors of personality characteristics which are coping, optimism, self-esteem and perceived control. These results were obtained by using the analytical coefficient of variation (CV). The coefficient of variation is a measure to find out which factors have the greatest variable. The variable is measured in percentages. The factor with the highest CV has the greatest diversity of all factors measured.

$$C.V = \frac{SD}{Mean} \times 100\%$$

'Self-esteem' has the largest variable as shown in Table 1, followed by 'optimism', 'coping', and lastly the 'perceived control' in descending order.

From the results of the study, 'coping' was identified to have a high rate in dealing with organizational change. It basically implies that the counsellors at the High School District in the city of Makassar possess a positive attitude about organizational change. The other three independent variables, namely self-esteem, optimism and perceived control were also analyzed. The findings on the level of achievement, 'self-esteem was between the range of medium and high mean, similar to the level of achievement of 'optimism' which was also within the range of medium and high levels, while 'perceived control' is within the range from moderate to high.

The results also show that the correlation coefficient between the relationship of 'coping' with organizational change and 'optimism' has a significance of $p = 0.000$ with the correlation Pearson of 0676; both factors have high and positive relationships. This implies that when 'optimism' changes to a higher level, the counsellor's ability to the impact of organizational change would also have a higher level of adaptability. Similarly, this trend applies to the relationship between 'coping' and 'self-esteem' both having high and positive levels. The correlation is significant at 5% with $p = 0.000$, having a Pearson correlation of 0606. This indicates that the movement of 'self-esteem' changes in a counsellor is directly followed by the ability to cope with organizational change. Meanwhile, the relationship between 'perceived control' and 'coping' was moderate and positive due to the significance of $p = 0.000$ and 0.485 as large as the Person correlation. This shows that any change in 'perceived control', the counselors follow a slow movement on their ability to face organizational change.

Table 2. Correlation Analysis Result

Variable/Correlation		Coping	Optimism	Self Esteem	Perceived Control
Coping	Pearson Correlation	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)				
	N	68			
Optimism	Pearson Correlation	.676**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000			
	N	68	68		
Self Esteem	Pearson Correlation	.606**	.419**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		
	N	68	68	68	
Perceived Control	Pearson Correlation	.485**	.328**	.370**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.006	.002	
	N	68	68	68	68

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The regression analysis conducted on the data yielded a result where the independent variable in the variable determination dependent high enough for the size of the Adjusted R Square 60.1%. This means that there is as much as 39.9% of other factors that determines the ability of the counsellors facing organizational change. In sum, all independent variables have a significant effect on the dependent variable because the significance is smaller than its alpha and high F values. Consequently, all the independent variables have partial yet significantly affect the dependent variables and successively saw 'optimism' ($\beta = 0.469$) with major influence on the ability of counsellors facing organizational change. This is followed by 'self-esteem' ($\beta = 0.332$), and finally the 'perceived control' ($\beta = 0.209$).

Table 3. Regression Analysis Result

Independent Variables	Beta	Standard Error	t	Significant
Constant	.803	.472	6.065	.000
Optimism	.469	.103	5.399	.000
Self-Esteem	.332	.097	3.763	.000
Perceived Control	.209	.088	2.458	.017

Dependent Variable: Coping Organizational Change.
R Square = .619 F = 34.695
Adjusted R Square = .601 Sig = .000

1.4 Qualitative Analysis

At this stage, interviews were conducted by the researcher and the prospective interviewees were given seven items based on the research questions of this study. They were asked about their opinions regarding preparedness within the concept of organizational change. The questions were focused on the change of forms, preparing for changes, the availability of staff to cope with the changes, problems, obstacles to change, and actions that have been done to alleviate the problems and the confidence of the counsellor during the implementation of organizational change.

Overall, the counsellors have summarized the various opinions stating among others that an organizational change is a process of transformation from the present into the future. The transition from a previous state, prior resistance against organizational change diminishes when rapid changes occur which is viewed to have disruptive impact. The need for a thorough socialization is necessary in order to provide a common understanding for all the concerned parties for the purpose of achieving the needed organizational change. Generally, the counselors' core problem is due to the inadequacy of support facilities. Usually state high schools do not have enough funds for the counsellors to upgrade their knowledge through their attendance to training and seminars. Unfortunately, there are still state high schools where counselling services are done by teachers with inadequate counselling backgrounds and specializations to serve the needs of the students.

During an interview with one of the counsellors at the leading state high school - SMA Makassar, it was mentioned that one of the key issues that hinders the implementation of many activities is the lack of financial support. The counsellor and the MGMP revealed that there are times they shell out their own funds just to conduct meetings. More often, routine academic activities are partly funded by the teachers since the school may not bear all the necessities. Support facilities such as

computers cannot be readily used due to school's financial limitations coupled with the high cost of repairs and maintenance. One has to be creative enough to meet the various issues and challenges to have your way out of the problems.

It is a general perception that change always brings out positive impacts where improvements are significantly addressed. The respondents unanimously agree that as government demand changes in the role of professional counsellors, it often correlates with an improved quality in the services of guidance counselling at state high schools. Counsellors are expected to be proficient in their tasks of providing benefits to independent students who are capable of developing their personality in a professional and sustainable manner. As society develops, the demand for more appropriate guidance counselling services and programs should be tailored to the needs of the growing community.

Counsellors who are facing organizational change indicate that there is a need for an increased academic performance, competencies, and professionalism among their ranks. Educational institutions should consider an expanded vision for improving this field of discipline to generate more skilled counsellors as a profession, and being an educator who emphasizes the implementation of tasks in the field. The need for an increased competence and professional counsellors should be addressed by making more improvements in order to meet the needs of day-to-day activities. The Consultative Teacher Guidance Counsellor (MGBK) organization should establish a vision for a continuous improvement and learning and to meet the changing demands of performance assessment that focuses on professionalism. In the interest of enhancing the competence of high school counsellors, the city government of Makassar should be more pro-active in proficiency development of the counsellors by allocating the needed budgetary allocation. The school administrators are also expected to provide priority funding for programs and activities that would support faculty development for the benefit of strengthening guidance counselling services.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Thus far, this study concludes that all descriptive variables have a positive impression because its mean value is greater than the neutral value (mean = 3). Inferentially, it was found out that the correlation between 'optimism' and 'coping' organizational change is positive and have a very strong relationship. Similarly, there is a positive and very strong relationship between 'self-esteem' and 'coping' organizational change. However, the relationship between 'perceived control' and 'coping' despite organizational changes has positive relationship, although the range is relatively low to moderate. 'Optimism' has a major influence on the ability of counsellors to cope with organizational change, followed by 'self-esteem' and 'perceived control'.

The results of qualitative analysis indicated that organizational change could happen very quickly. Thus, there is a need for counsellors to adapt and have the capability to cope with organizational change. Relatedly, this study has revealed that counsellors are less responsive to organizational change. This unresponsiveness of the counsellors is exacerbated due to lack of facilities, advance trainings and seminars, which is caused by the unavailability of funding support. Finally, this study concludes that the quantitative results are very encouraging. However, as shown further, the quality of the counsellors is largely dependent on the provision of school facilities related to counselling, and their accessibility to improve their profession as counsellors through advance trainings and seminars. The provision for funding of professional advancement is indeed essential if the state high school intends to acquire and sustain quality, efficient and responsive guidance and counselling services.

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