

The Effect of Authentic Leadership on Openness to Change with Organizational Trust as a Mediating Variable

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Abstract

The world is full of destruction, and much change is needed for organizations to survive conditions full of volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity. Changes that are not accompanied by an employee's openness in accepting the change will prevent the change from failing. Leadership is also essential in the process of change. This research aims to understand the extent of the impact of leadership roles, in particular authentic Leadership, on openness to change and organizational trust. This research takes the object of research in the government sector. The respondents analyzed 181 civil servants Central Bureau of Statistics (Regency, city, and Province) of Jambi Province. Data is collected from questionnaires distributed via email and social media. The findings show a link between significant and positive authentic Leadership affecting openness to change and organizational trust. Meanwhile, organizational trust has proven to significantly mediate the relationship of authentic Leadership with openness to change. The conclusions of this study of the four hypotheses built four were significantly supported and positively influenced. The limitation of this research is only within the scope of the province of Jambi, and further research can be done at the national level.

Keywords: Authentic Leadership, openness to change, organizational trust, organizational change

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

In a world where disruptions are common, change is a necessary action. Organizations worldwide frequently face rapid changes due to their environment's Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, and Ambiguity, commonly known as VUCA (Pearse, 2017). Organizations must step out of their comfort zones to avoid being left behind and crushed by their competitors. More than outdated methods are needed to solve various problems in today's competitive business world. Therefore, managing change is essential for organizations' growth, success, and survival. To remain competitive and gain an advantage, organizations must continuously adopt new technologies, restructure their organizations, and streamline their processes.

According to Burns (2020), change initiatives have a failure rate ranging from 40% to 70%. Several factors can lead to the failure of change initiatives, including lack of leadership support, inadequate resources, deficient leadership skills, and insufficient understanding of how the change will impact work. Resistance to change among employees is another cause of change

failures, which managers should manage better. Leadership is crucial in shaping employee behaviors and attitudes during change processes and addressing social and organizational issues. The American Management Association survey conducted by Gill (2002) reveals that successful change is mainly characterized by Leadership, followed by corporate values and communication. Various leadership styles, including transformational, transactional, and authentic, can influence employee openness to change.

Organizations face more changes than ever and strive to maintain their competitive advantage by implementing new technologies, streamlining processes, and restructuring. The traditional concept of "work" has become obsolete as jobs become more project-based, and employees are expected to go beyond their regular job descriptions. This study proposes that employee organizational trust acts as a potential mediator underlying authentic Leadership during changes in openness to change (Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002) due to the innate relationship between Leadership and employee trust (Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1996; Yue, Thelen, Robinson, & Men, 2019).

Dealing with change can be a challenging task for certain individuals. The feeling of uncertainty and fear of the unknown can make employees feel disoriented and apprehensive about the future, which may cause them to struggle with new responsibilities and assignments (Coch & French, 1948). While some employees may embrace change as an opportunity for personal and professional growth, others may negatively react to even minor changes. Numerous case studies, literature reviews, and practical articles have identified various factors that could influence an individual's willingness to accept organizational change. However, this research aims to explore employee restructuring in public sector organizations as a change subject, which has yet to be extensively studied compared to the business sector.

1.2 Literature Review

Lewin's Change Theory

Lewin's Change Theory is a framework that helps organizations manage and understand change. The theory, developed by Lewin (1951), consists of three stages: unfreeze, change, and refreeze. In addition to his theory of leadership styles, Kurt Lewin is also well-known for his theory of change. Lewin's model of change is often referred to as the "unfreeze-change-refreeze" model, and it is based on the idea that change involves a process of moving from a stable state to a new, desired state.

According to Lewin's theory, the first step in the change process is "unfreezing" the current state. This involves disrupting the status quo and creating a sense of discomfort or dissatisfaction with the way things are currently done. This can be done through a variety of means, such as communicating a vision for change, highlighting problems with the current approach, or creating a sense of urgency.

The next step in the change process is the actual change itself. This involves introducing new ideas, practices, or processes to move the organization towards the desired state. This can involve experimentation, pilot projects, or other means of testing and refining new approaches.

Finally, the change must be "refrozen" to ensure that it becomes a permanent part of the organization's culture and practices. This can involve creating new policies, procedures, and norms that support the new approach, as well as ensuring that people have the necessary skills and resources to implement the change effectively.

Lewin's theory of change is closely related to his theory of leadership, as it emphasizes the importance of leaders in driving change. According to Lewin, effective leaders are those who are able to create a vision for change, motivate and inspire others to take action, and provide the necessary support and resources to make change happen. Effective leadership is critical at each stage of the change process, from "unfreezing" the current state to "refreezing" the new approach. Overall, Lewin's theories of change and leadership provide a useful framework for understanding how organizations can successfully navigate change and achieve their goals.

Authentic Leadership

On the other hand, Authentic Leadership is a complex leadership style that emphasizes honesty, self-confidence, integrity, and self-development. According to George (2003), Authentic Leadership is about being honest and continually learning to lead oneself and others. Brouwer et al. (2015) define it as a leadership style that focuses on self-confidence, integrity, and open and honest interactions with followers. Cameron and Quinn (2006) describe Authentic Leadership as a leadership style that emphasizes self-development, openness in communicating with followers, and directing followers to achieve good results through integrity and self-confidence. Hersey et al. (2001) describe it as a leadership style that focuses on integrity, self-development, and openness in communicating with followers and directing followers to achieve good results through self-confidence.

Organizational trust

In the disciplines of marketing, management, economics, political science, psychology, communications, law, and information systems, as well as at the relational, organizational, and societal levels, trust is a subject that gets much attention (Cook & Schilke, 2010). In earlier research, trust was defined from a trait viewpoint, and traits that can predict trust dispositions were examined. However, recent discussions have focused on the idea that confidence is a component of organizational connections (Hon & Grunig, 1999; Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman, 1995; McKnight, Choudhury, & Kacmar, 2002; Shockley-Zalabak & Ellis, 2006). For instance, trust is defined as "a party's willingness to be vulnerable to the other party's activities" and "a party's choice to rely on another party under circumstances of danger" (Mayer et al., 1995). In organizational-public relations, dependency (dependence) and risk (vulnerability), two crucial components of relational trust, are highlighted (Currall & Epstein, 2003; Rawlins, 2008). The example provided by Men et al. (2020) demonstrates how trust varies from physical capital regarding its qualities, even though it is regarded as moral or human capital. The value of confidence increases over time as opposed to decreasing. This is different from tangible money, which will lose value over time.

Openness to Change

Being open to change refers to thinking that values attempting new things at work, a desire to learn new things, and an effort to comprehend our surroundings fully (Miller, Johnson, and Grau, 1994). Although it may be an innate trait characterized by adaptability and innovation, this investigation sees this inclination as a state primarily influenced by situational factors related to a specific organizational transformation. It encompasses perceptions, assessments, and personal encounters with the change (Fugate & Kinicki, 2008).

1.3 Hypothesis Development

Authentic Leadership and Organizational Trust

Honesty, concern for workers, high ethical standards, integrity, trustworthiness, and a willingness to accept and offer feedback, as well as transparency and consistency in beliefs, words, and actions, are characteristics of authentic Leadership, according to the study. These traits are thought to contribute to the development of followers' confidence. According to empirical data, Authentic Leadership influences confidence directly and indirectly at the individual level through personal identification (Hassan & Ahmed, 2011; Wong & Cummings, 2009; Wong et al., 2010). Authentic leaders also influence trust directly and indirectly at the group level. Based on prior studies and theoretical studies, it is hypothesized that authentic Leadership increases trust within a company (Hassan & Ahmed, 2011).

Hypothesis 1: Authentic Leadership has a positive effect on organizational trust.

Authentic Leadership and Openness to Change

Choi (2011) identified some constructs frequently used in the literature to assess employee views of the success of planned organizational changes. One of the most pertinent and comprehensive constructs was Armenakis and coworkers' readiness for organizational change (Armenakis & Harris, 2009). Another crucial construct is a commitment to change, which measures employees' intentions to back or oppose change based on analyzing its costs, benefits, and normative requirements (Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002). In addition, the review found two important constructs—cynicism and openness to change—that, despite having similar characteristics, differ from one another and serve as representative constructs. Despite the lack of valid data on the subject, it is generally accepted that weaknesses in the implementation process are the primary cause of the failure of most change efforts (Choi, 2011).

Armenakis, Harris, and Mossholder (1993) assert that leaders' failure to acknowledge workers' crucial role in the change process frequently results in unsuccessful organizational change. Research has shown that individual perceptions and responses to change are crucial factors in the success or failure of planned changes, making managing the human element of change difficult for leaders. Based on their views of the change's content, context, and processes, employees' responses to organizational change can range from excitement to resentment, anxiety relief, and more (Oreg, 2006). Leaders are accountable for the success or failure of planned changes, and organizational change is only effective if employees' old behavior is altered (Burnes, 2011;

Kalyal, 2009). As a result, one of the key responsibilities of leaders is to foster an atmosphere that fosters the success of change and this is where Authentic Leadership can make a difference. The following hypothesis is put forth in light of a prior study connecting authentic Leadership and openness to change:

Hypothesis 2: Authentic Leadership has a positive effect on openness to change.

Organization trust and openness to change.

According to Nyhan and Marlowe (1997), trust in a superintendent is when a worker has confidence that their boss will look out for their best interests. According to studies by Meyer and Allen (1997) and Sekhar and Anjaiah (1996), supervisory trust is related to organizational communication and participatory management practices. Since most changes happen face-to-face, it has been discovered that employee openness to change, which is affected by interpersonal factors and group-level interactions, is correlated with trust in supervisors. Edmonson and Woolley (1999) demonstrated that although most studies have been done in individualist cultures in the US or Europe, the relationship between employees and supervisors can be crucial in encouraging employee openness to change. This conclusion is supported by Erturk's (2008) research, which claims that openness to change and trust in the company has a favorable and significant relationship. Therefore, it is suggested based on prior research and theoretical studies.

Hypothesis 3: Organization trust has a positive effect on openness to change.

Organizational trust as mediation on relationship Authentic Leadership and Openness to Change

According to Ertürk's (2008) study, managerial communication and openness to change are mediated by an employee trust. There has, however, been little study on the relationship between employee-organizational confidence levels and behavioral and attitudinal responses to change (Yue et al., 2019). Employees with high organizational trust during change are more likely to embrace the justification for change, demonstrate openness to change, and offer behavioral support for change, according to Yue et al. (2019). These results indicate that transparent communication and transformational leadership have a positive relationship with employee organizational trust, which positively impacts change openness.

Furthermore, Basit and Siddiqui's (2020) shows that organizational trust mediates the link between Authentic Leadership and adaptability. Therefore, organizational confidence can facilitate the relationship between Authentic Leadership and organizational openness to change. Authentic Leadership can promote employee confidence in the company, and dependable businesses can foster a climate that encourages adaptability. The research hypothesis is Hypothesis 4: Organizational trust mediates the relationship between authentic Leadership and openness to change.

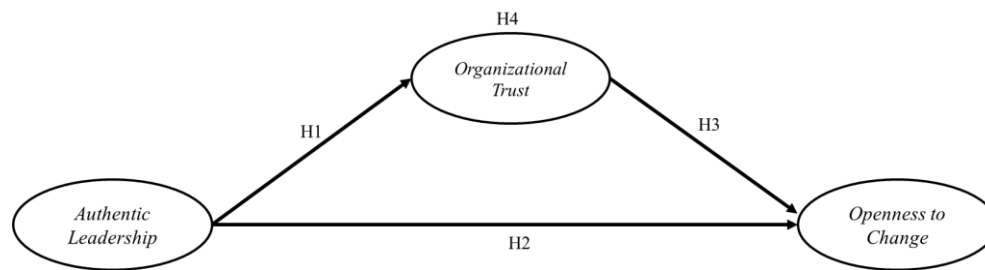


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

2. Method

This research uses quantitative methods through surveys. The objects in this study were civil servants Central Bureau of Statistics (Regency, city, and Province) of Jambi Province. The respondents of this research were taken using convenience sampling technique. The advantages of convenience sampling include: convenience sampling is a quick and inexpensive way to gather data because researchers can select participants who are easily accessible and readily available, since the researcher can quickly and easily obtain participants, it saves time compared to other sampling techniques and convenience sampling is a low-cost way to collect data, as it does not require extensive planning, resources or specialized expertise. Respondents in this study were all employees except echelon 2 and 3 officials. The variables in this study consist of dependent, independent, and mediating variables. The independent variable used in this study is Authentic Leadership, and the dependent variable is openness to change. Demographic variables describe characteristics that can be important in predicting employee attitudes (Williams & Hazer, 1986). The mediating variable used in this research is Organizational trust. The survey was carried out using the self-enumerated method or self-filling by the respondents. Dissemination of information and survey-filling links will be disseminated through various online media. Considering the number of samples taken in this study refers to Hair et al. (2010), as many as 100-200 respondents for SEM analysis. The number of samples in SEM research using the Maximum Likelihood Estimator method is 5-10 times the number of measured variables or dimensions for the secondary Confirmatory Factor Analysis. Authentic Leadership variable measurement uses The Authentic Leadership Inventory (ALI) developed by Walumbwa et al., (2008) with 16 question items on a 1-5 Likert scale. Openness to change was measured using the Wanberg and Banas (2000) & Miller et al. (1994) questionnaires with as many as 4 question items Likert scale 1-7. Organizational trust uses 6 question items adopted by Rawlins (2009) and Hon and Grunig (1999) Likert scale of 1-7

3. Results

The results of this study started with forming a model, testing the instrument's validity and reliability, and testing each hypothesis. The research model based on bootstrapping results can be seen in the figure below

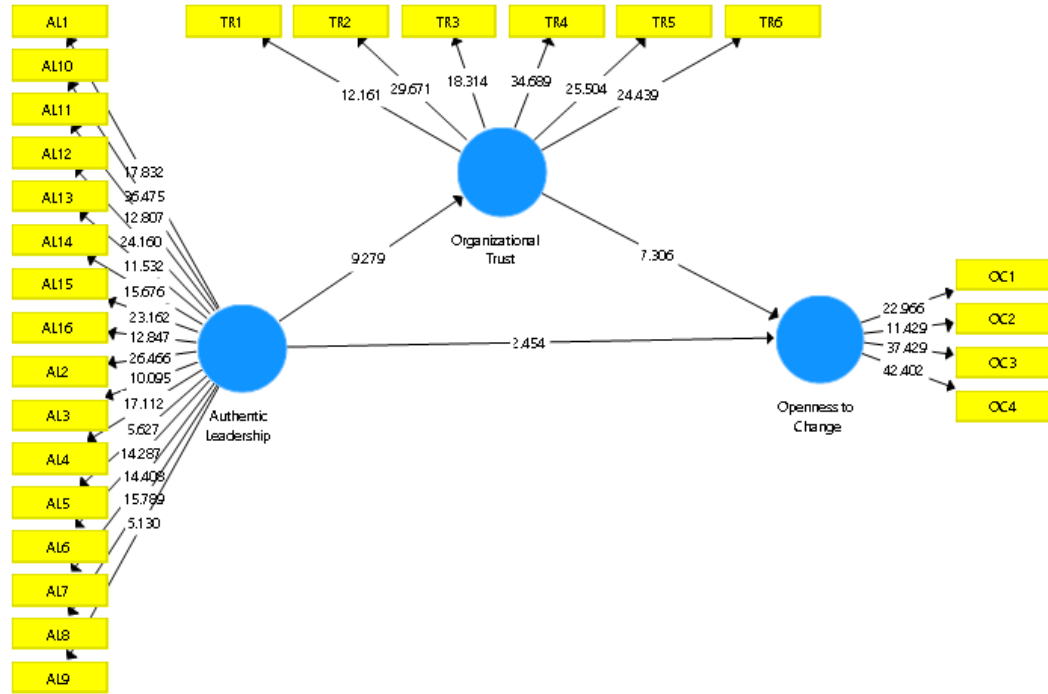


Figure 2. Bootstrapping test

Test Instrument

According to Gadermann et al. (2019), Cronbach alpha can indicate construct validity if the measurement instrument has many items. However, using Cronbach's alpha to measure construct validity should be combined with other validity measurement methods, such as confirmatory factor analysis. An instrument is considered highly valid if it can provide measurement results that follow its purpose. In this study, the analytical technique used to test the instrument's validity is Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). Each research instrument must have a factor loading ≥ 0.50 ; thus, the instrument is declared valid.

The outer loadings value is at least above 0.7, and the AVE value is > 0.5 (Hair et al., 2017). The test results, as shown in the table below, show that all indicators and variables meet the predetermined recommendation limits, and the AVE value of each variable is above 0.5. The lowest outer loadings value is 0.713, namely the TR6 indicator.

Table 1. Outer Loading and AVE Values

Indicator	Outer Loading Value			AVE
	Authentic Leadership	Openness to change	Organizational trust	
AL1	0.724			0.686
AL10	0.777			
AL11	0.770			
AL12	0.901			
AL13	0.735			
AL14	0.862			
AL15	0.887			
AL16	0.814			
AL2	0.919			
AL3	0.719			
AL4	0.785			
AL5	0.802			
AL6	0.900			
AL7	0.930			
AL8	0.878			
AL9	0.796			
OC1		0.876		0.835
OC2		0.907		
OC3		0.932		
OC4		0.938		
TR1			0.763	0.688
TR2			0.913	
TR3			0.779	
TR4			0.868	
TR5			0.919	
TR6			0.713	

In addition to the validity test, the reliability test of the research instrument was also carried out. Reliability is carried out to ensure that the indicators used in the research are reliable. Research indicators can be reliable if repeated measurements produce consistent results (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). The method used for reliability testing can use two methods: Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability. Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values have values between 0 to 1, while the limits used are that both values are greater than 0.70 (Hair et al., 2017). The table below shows that all the instruments in this study are reliable in value above the

reference indicators. The lowest Cronbach's Alpha value is in the organizational trust variable, with a value of 0.907.

Table 2. Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability Values

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability
Authentic Leadership	0.969	0.972
Openness to change	0.934	0.953
Organizational trust	0.907	0.929

Characteristics of Respondents

Following Table 3, respondents analyzed 181 civil servants Central Bureau of Statistics (Regency, city, and Province) of Jambi Province. There were 90 male respondents and 91 female respondents. Respondents in this study were dominated by employees with functional positions as much as 95% and the rest were structural. While the educational characteristics of the respondents, most of the respondents had last education at the undergraduate level, namely 119 respondents or 65.75 percent. In the second rank, 28 people, or 15.47 percent, occupied respondents with a Master's degree. In the next rank, 22 employees with high school and diploma education, respectively (12.15 percent) and 12 people (6.63 percent).

Table 3. Characteristics of Respondents

Demografic		Frecuency	Percentage
Gender	Male	90	49,72
	Female	91	50,28
Job Position	Functional	172	95,02
	Structural	9	4,98
Education	High School	22	12,15
	Diploma	12	6,63
	Bachelor	119	65,75
	Master	28	15,47
Total		181	100

Relations Between Variables

Table 4. Direct Effects

	Original Sample (O)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values	Results
Authentic Leadership -> Openness to change	0.180	2,548	0.011	Supported
Authentic Leadership -> Organizational trust	0.550	9,877	0.000	Supported
Organizational trust -> Openness to change	0.513	7,448	0.000	Supported

As shown in Table 4, the coefficient value of the original sample Authentic leadership on openness to change is worth 0.180, meaning that the higher Authentic Leadership will impact employee Openness to change. Next, seen from the t-statistics value of 2.548 and the p-value of 0.011 show that the effect of Authentic Leadership on openness to change is significant. So hypothesis 1, Authentic Leadership has a positive effect on openness to change, is supported. Authentic Leadership is proven to have a significant positive influence on Organizational trust. This can be evaluated from the original sample value of 0.550, the t-statistics value of 9.87, and the p-value of 0.000. So hypothesis 2 states that Authentic Leadership positively affects organizational trust. The results of further hypothesis testing state that Organizational trust in openness to change is significant and has a positive value. This is supported by the original sample value of 0.513, the t-statistics value of 7.448, and the p-value of 0.000. That is, Organizational trust in openness to change is significant, so hypothesis 3 is supported.

Table 5. Indirect Effect Through Organizational Trust

	Original Sample (O)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values	Results
Authentic Leadership -> Organizational trust -> Openness to change	0.282	5,652	0.000	Supported

Table 6. Total Effect Result Through Organizational Trust

	Original Sample (O)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values	Results
Authentic Leadership -> Openness to change	0.462	8,284	0.000	Supported
Authentic Leadership -> Organizational trust	0.550	9,877	0.000	Supported
Organizational trust -> Openness to change	0.513	7,448	0.000	Supported

The conclusions from the results of testing the hypothesis in Table 5 show that Organizational trust can mediate a positive influence on openness to change. Supported by the original sample coefficient value of 0.282, t-statistics of 5.652, and p-values of 0.000. So hypothesis 4, which states that organizational trust mediates the positive effect of Authentic Leadership on openness to change, is supported. Table 6 shows that the magnitude of the influence of Authentic Leadership on openness to change mediated by Organizational trust increases compared to the direct influence of Authentic Leadership on openness to change. This study's results support previous studies in Pakistan (Basit & Siddiqui, 2020).

4. Discussion

Effect of Authentic Leadership on Organizational Trust

This research aligns with previous research (Basit & Siddiqui, 2020); the results provide important findings with practical implications. Psychological capital can be increased, which includes a readiness to change and relationship capital (trust). Authentic leaders in the organization should create an effective framework so that employees get feedback from authentic leaders, which leads to accountability, and employees will feel emotionally involved. Authentic leaders also tend to communicate more effectively with their followers, which can help build trust within the organization. By being open and transparent, authentic leaders create an environment where employees feel comfortable sharing their concerns and ideas. This helps build a culture of trust where employees feel valued and respected. In short, Authentic Leadership is an important factor in building organizational trust. Leaders who act authentically are more likely to gain the trust of their followers, which can lead to increased trust in the organization as a whole.

Effect of Authentic Leadership on Openness to Change

Organizational leaders must communicate a clear and compelling vision for change that can help unite employees, guide them in the right direction, and describe common goals that motivate employees to support change (Men & Bowen, 2017). Leaders at various levels must demonstrate confidence and determination in their communications and actions and act as role models for advocating and supporting change (Yue et al., 2019). They must also challenge employees to think outside the box and be creative and innovative, taking advantage of change's transformative opportunities. Most importantly, leaders must recognize legitimate employee feelings, such as anxiety and uncertainty over change, and demonstrate Authentic concern and consideration for employee concerns, feelings, needs, and well-being.

Authentic Leadership and openness to change are interrelated in the context of organizational change. Authentic Leadership includes honesty, transparency, integrity, and a commitment to ethical behavior. Authentic leaders understand the importance of change and embrace it as an opportunity to improve organizational performance. The leader seeks to motivate employees to support the change by providing the necessary direction and support.

In the context of organizational change, openness to change is an important factor that contributes to the success of the change. Openness to change can be defined as a positive attitude, willingness to accept change, and the skills to adapt quickly. Authentic leaders who are

open to change can communicate the benefits of change and encourage employees to see change as an opportunity for growth and development.

The Influence of Organizational Trust on Openness to Change

This study's results confirm a strong positive relationship between Organizational trust and openness to change. Employees who increasingly believe in their organization during a period of change it is more likely that employees will have a positive attitude of openness to change and support it. Organizational trust can significantly impact openness to change within a company or organization. When employees believe in their organization, employees are more likely to be open to change and willing to adapt to new ways of doing things (Yue et al., 2019). One of the reasons for this is that trust creates a sense of psychological security. Employees who feel psychologically secure are more likely to take risks, try new ideas, and be open to feedback. This, in turn, makes them more open to change. In addition, when employees believe in their organization, they are more likely to believe that the changes implemented are in their best interests and will lead to positive outcomes. This belief can help overcome resistance to change and create support from employees (Men et al., 2020).

Organizational trust as Mediation Authentic leadership on openness to change

This research also shows that Organizational trust mediates the relationship between Authentic Leadership on openness to change. As with previous research, employees make inferences about trust in the organization based on their assessment of the trustworthiness of supervisors or leaders found in interactions (Casimir, Waldman, Bartram, & Yang, 2006). These findings support the notion that trust is important in an uncertain and rapidly changing environment and can be fostered by authentic Leadership. This research helps complement previous research that explains the influence of Authentic Leadership on openness to change during changes in the public sector. In addition, this research highlights Organizational trust in facilitating the implementation of organizational change and provides empirical evidence for organizational leaders to build employee trust. Authentic leaders have to inquire about the needs and requirements of employees and make them participate and inquire about their communication needs; authentic leaders in the organization have to create an effective framework for employees to get feedback from authentic leaders, which leads to accountability and employees will feel emotionally involved (Basit & Sidiiquei, 2020).

Limitations

First, this research is only limited to the scope of the public sector organizations in Jambi. For future research, can take a broader research object, public sector organizations in throughout Indonesia.

Second, this research only focuses on Authentic Leadership; furthermore, other Leadership approaches, such as ethical Leadership and transactional Leadership, can be important factors for employee openness to change. Future research may focus on the different outcomes of the variables mediating empowerment and communication satisfaction.

Conclusion

This study concludes that the four hypotheses proposed produce positive and significant results. Following are the conclusions of this study

- The first Hypothesis that Authentic Leadership has a significant and positive direct effect on Organizational trust is supported.
- The second Hypothesis, Authentic Leadership has a significant and positive direct effect on openness to change, is supported
- The third hypothesis that Organizational trust has a significant and positive direct effect on openness to change is supported.
- The fourth Hypothesis, Organizational trust mediates the relationship between Authentic Leadership and openness to change, is supported.

The research findings indicate that authentic leadership plays a crucial role in establishing trust and confidence, which in turn leads to effective decision-making. When leaders are perceived as credible, employees feel a sense of responsibility to increase productivity, thereby supporting the sustainability of the organization in dynamic and ever-changing environments. The study yields significant practical implications; authentic leaders must prioritize employee needs by facilitating their participation and soliciting feedback. By creating a framework for effective communication and accountability, employees feel emotionally connected to the organization and are better equipped to meet the evolving needs of the organization.

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