

PERSONAL ADJUSTMENT AND SOFT SKILLS ON NON-ASN STAFF READINESS IN BUREAUCRATIC CHANGE

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Abstract: Bureaucratic Change is a challenge that must be faced by non-ASN employees in the government sector. Personal adjustments and soft skills such as communication and conflict management are considered important to increase the readiness of non-ASN employees to deal with these changes. This study aims to analyze the effect of self-adjustment and soft skills on the readiness of non-ASN employees to face bureaucratic changes in the Indragiri Hilir Regional Government, Riau. Using the Structural Equation Modeling method and involving 200 non-ASN employees selected through purposive sampling, this study shows that self-adjustment and soft skills have a significant positive effect on employee readiness and adaptability. These results have important implications for the development of training programs that focus on improving soft skills relevant to bureaucratic dynamics. The study recommends increased skills training to strengthen the readiness of non-ASN employees to face bureaucratic changes in the public sector.

Keywords: Personal Adjustment, Soft Skills, Bureaucratic Change

1. Introduction

In recent decades, the public sector in Indonesia has faced increasingly complex challenges. This is due to global changes, technological developments, and increasing public demand for faster, more effective, and more efficient services. As the backbone of public services, the bureaucracy is faced with the need to adapt quickly to ensure that services continue to run optimally. However, the bureaucracy, which is often seen as slow and inflexible, requires deep reforms to be able to respond effectively to these changes. One of the important elements involved in this process is the State Civil Apparatus Employees (non-ASN), who have an important role in the daily operations of various government agencies.

The number of non-ASN employees in Indonesia is quite significant. According to data from the State Civil Service Agency (BKN), in 2023, there were around 410,000 non-ASN employees spread across various government agencies throughout Indonesia. They carry out a strategic role in supporting administrative and service tasks in the public sector but do not yet have the same employment status as the State Civil Apparatus (ASN). With changes in governance and bureaucracy that continue to occur, the readiness of non-ASN employees to adapt is a crucial issue that needs to be considered.

Employee readiness to face organizational changes is influenced by various factors. The two main factors that have been identified in various studies are personal Adjustment and soft skills. Personal Adjustment refers to an individual's ability to adapt to a new environment or Change that occurs. According to (Gimenez-Serrano, 2022), this adaptability is highly dependent on individual psychological factors, such as self-confidence, social support, and coping strategies used. In the context of bureaucracy, personal adjustments are very important to ensure that employees can face change positively and productively.

In addition to personal adjustments, soft skills also play an important role in employee readiness to face Change. (Caeiro-Rodriguez, 2021) States that soft skills, such as communication, collaboration, and conflict management skills, are essential in the modern work environment. Soft skills enable employees to work effectively in teams, face interpersonal challenges, and manage conflicts that arise during the change process. In a complex and hierarchical bureaucracy, this ability is key to ensuring smooth collaboration and productivity are maintained during periods of Change.

(Villarreal, 2020) emphasizes that individuals who have a high level of Adjustment tend to be better prepared for Change and show lower resistance. Meanwhile, identified that conflict management skills are crucial in managing interpersonal tensions that often arise during the change process, especially in environments that have hierarchical structures such as bureaucracy.

This study aims to analyze how personal adjustments and soft skills affect the readiness of non-ASN employees in Indragiri Hilir Regency, Riau Province, to face bureaucratic changes. By using the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) method, this study will provide a deeper understanding of the factors that affect the readiness of non-ASN employees and their implications for the development of more effective training programs. The formulation of the problem in this study is whether personal Adjustment and soft skills have an effect on readiness for Change among employees in the organization.

2. Literature Review

In this study, the two main variables used to analyze the readiness of Non-State Civil Apparatus (non-ASN) employees in dealing with bureaucratic changes are personal Adjustment and soft skills. These two variables have a strong theoretical foundation and have been studied in various previous studies. The following is an explanation of the literature related to personal adjustments and soft skills, along with relevant indicators to measure each variable.

Personal Adjustment

Personal Adjustment refers to the ability of individuals to adapt to changes that occur in the work environment. These adjustments include a wide range of aspects, from psychological abilities to the individual's adaptive behavior in responding to new situations. (Tsiligiris, 2021) defines personal Adjustment as a person's ability to cope with situational and cultural changes, as well as overcome the psychological challenges that arise as a result of these changes. Personal adjustments are essential in dynamic organizations, including bureaucracy, where procedures and policies often change (Gimenez-Serrano, 2022). Good Adjustment will allow individuals to face change more positively and constructively (Commodari, 2020). (Fuentes, 2020) in the context of non-ASN employees, the ability to adapt to changes in policies and work procedures is key to ensuring effectiveness and productivity in an environment that is often changing. Indicators of Personal Adjustment: (1) Mental readiness for Change. (2) Ability to manage stress. (3) Flexibility in work. (4) Self-motivation. (5) Openness to innovation. Research by (Gimenez-Serrano, 2022) found that individuals with a high level of personal Adjustment tended to be better prepared to face Change, showed lower resistance, and were more proactive in responding to new situations at work.

Soft Skills

Soft skills are interpersonal skills that support a person's effectiveness in communicating, cooperating, and managing interpersonal relationships in the work environment (Morrell, 2020). (Ng, 2020) states that soft skills are very important in the modern work environment, as they help individuals interact with colleagues, bosses, and stakeholders more effectively. In a bureaucracy that tends to be hierarchical, soft skills such as communication, collaboration, and conflict management play an important role in determining the success of employees in dealing with Change. Soft skills are also important in the process of organizational Change, as they often involve interaction between different parties with different interests. Good communication and conflict management skills will ensure that employees can contribute constructively in dealing with Change, as well as reduce resistance or tension that may arise (Fadhil, 2021). Soft Skills Indicators: (1) Communication skills. (2) Ability to collaborate. (3) Conflict management. (4) Leadership. (5) Empathy and interpersonal skills. (Fadhil, 2021) emphasized that conflict management skills are very important in organizations that are undergoing Change because Change often gives rise to tension or differences of view. Meanwhile (Antón-Sancho, 2021) highlights the importance of communication and collaboration as two of the most needed soft skills in a dynamic work environment.

Bureaucratic Change

Bureaucratic Change is a process of Change or transformation that occurs in the bureaucratic system of an organization, be it in the public or private sectors. These changes usually involve improvements in organizational structures, operational procedures, policies, and bureaucratic work mechanisms to increase efficiency, effectiveness, transparency, and responsiveness to changes in the internal and external environment (Jones, K., & McDonald, 2017). Bureaucratic Change is to overcome the challenges faced by traditional bureaucracies, such as the complexity of administrative processes, slow decision-making, and lack of innovation (Callander, 2024). With this Change, it is hoped that the bureaucracy can become more adaptive, flexible, and ready to face the demands of society, technology, and regulations that continue to evolve (Smith, L., & Allen, 2020). Indicators of Bureaucratic Change (1) Understanding of the purpose of Change. (2) Positive attitude towards Change. (3) Involvement in the change process. (4) Resistance management. (5) Behavioral adaptation. According to (Sibiya, 2023), Bureaucratic Change is influenced by a variety of factors, including effective communication and support from leadership, as well as the individual's ability to adapt to the Change.

Research Model

This model shows that personal adjustments and soft skills directly affect bureaucratic Change. Each independent variable has several indicators that can be measured to see its effect on the dependent variable.

The research model is shown in Figure 1.

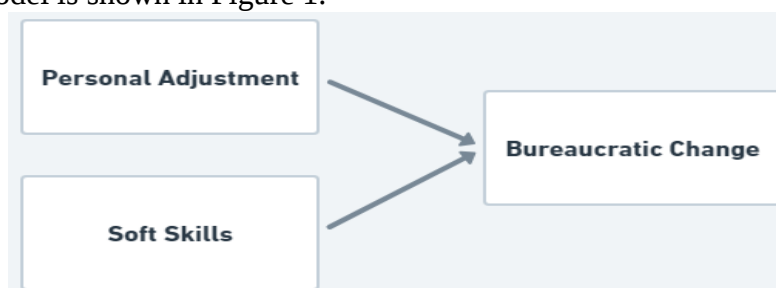


Figure 1. Research Model

Here are some hypotheses that can be made from the Personal Adjustment and Soft Skill variables towards bureaucratic Change:

H1: Personal Adjustment have an effect on Bureaucratic Change

H2: Soft Skills have an effect on Bureaucratic Change

3. Method

Research design

This study uses a quantitative method with an explanatory approach to explain the relationship between independent variables and dependent variables. This study is designed to test a relationship model that involves personal Adjustment, soft skills, and bureaucratic Change using SEM.

Population and Sample

The population of this study is all non-ASN employees who work in various government agencies of Indragiri Hilir Regency, Riau Province. Non-ASN employees have an important role in supporting the operational functions of the bureaucracy and are focused on understanding bureaucratic Change in the public sector. The sample was taken using the purposive sampling technique, where non-ASN employees who are involved in the bureaucratic process and deal with organizational changes are selected as respondents. The target sample size is a minimum of 200 respondents, which is in accordance with the recommendations in the SEM analysis.

Variable Measurement

In this study, the variables measured include Personal Adjustment, Soft Skills, and Bureaucratic Change. Each variable has an indicator that is used to measure those components. The following are the measurements of the variables and relevant indicators using the 5-point Likert scale. Personal Adjustment measures the ability of employees to adapt to changes in the work environment. These indicators for measuring personal Adjustment refer to the literature (Fuentes, 2020): Mental bureaucratic Change, Ability to manage stress, Behavioral flexibility, Self-motivation, and Openness to innovation. Soft skills indicators adapted from (Fadhil, 2021): Communication skills, Collaboration skills, Conflict Management, Leadership, Empathy, and emotional intelligence. Bureaucratic Change This indicator is adapted from (Smith, L. & Allen, 2020): Understanding of the purpose of

Change, Positive attitude towards Change, Involvement in the change process, Resistance management, and Behavioral adaptation.

Data Analysis

This structured approach to data analysis will provide a comprehensive understanding of how personal adjustments and soft skills affect the readiness of non-ASN employees in the context of bureaucratic Change.

Descriptive Analysis. Respondent Characteristics: This section will explain demographic information such as age, gender, education level, length of employment, and job roles of the 200 non-ASN employees surveyed. This data is important to understand the respondents' backgrounds and how it can affect their readiness for bureaucratic changes. **Respondent Responses:** This analysis will summarize responses to the questionnaire, highlighting trends in personal customization and soft skills. This can include average scores, frequency distributions, and striking patterns in how different groups respond.

Questionnaire Feasibility Test. Validity Test: The validity of the questionnaire will be assessed using a correlation coefficient. Questions that provide significant insight into personal adjustments and soft skills will be identified, ensuring that all items have a correlation coefficient greater than 0.3, which signals their validity. **Reliability Test:** The reliability of the questionnaire will be evaluated using Cronbach Alpha statistics. A Cronbach Alpha value greater than 0.70 will indicate that the questionnaire is reliable, which means that respondents' answers are consistent across items.

PLS-SEM Model Test. Outer Model: This will involve assessing the Outer loading, Composite Reliability (CR), and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). A high score in this metric will indicate that the personal adjustment construct and soft skills are well-defined and accurately measured. **Inner Model:** The R^2 value will indicate how much variance in employee readiness is explained by personal adjustments and soft skills, while the Q^2 value will assess the predictive relevance of the model (Looy, 2021).

4. Result and Discussion

Characteristics of Respondents

Characteristics of respondents from the study involving 200 non-ASN employees. This table provides a demographic overview of the respondents, which is the basis for further analysis of the study.

Table 1. Characteristics of Respondents

Characteristics	Category	Quantity	Percentage
Gender	Man	110	55
	Women	90	45
Education	High School	60	30
	Diploma	40	20
	Bachelor	100	50

Source: Processed Data, 2024

Based on the data, out of a total of 200 respondents, 55% are men, and 45% are women, showing a sufficient balance between the two genders. In terms of education, 50% of respondents have a bachelor's degree, 30% of high school graduates, and 20% of diplomas, with the majority having a bachelor's degree.

Validity and Reliability Test Results

Table 2. Validity and Reliability Test Result

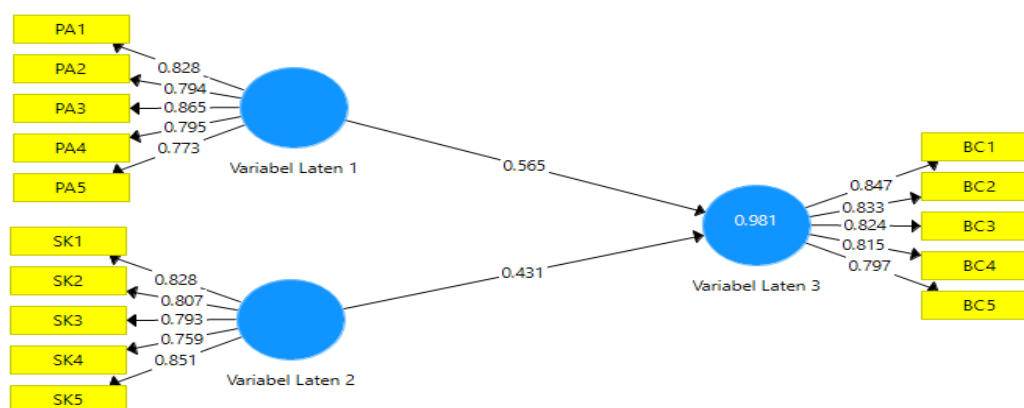
Variable	Item	Correlation (>0,30)	Validity	Cronbach's Alpha	Reliability
Personal Adjustment	Mental Readiness for Change	0,633	Valid	0,870	Reliability
	Ability to manage stress	0,670	Valid		
	Flexibility in work	0,699	Valid		
	Self-motivation	0,667	Valid		
	Openness to innovation	0,606	Valid		
Soft Skill	Communication skills	0,828	Valid	0,867	Reliability
	Ability to collaborate	0,807	Valid		
	Conflict management	0,793	Valid		
	Leadership	0,759	Valid		
	Empathy and interpersonal skills	0,851	Valid		
Bureaucratic Change	Understanding of the Purpose of Change	0,847	Valid	0,881	Reliability
	Positive attitude towards Change	0,833	Valid		
	Involvement in the change process	0,824	Valid		
	Resistance management	0,815	Valid		
	Behavioral adaptation.	0,797	Valid		

Source: Processed Data, 2024

The results of the analysis showed that the three variables, namely Personal Adjustment, Soft Skill, and Bureaucratic Change, had a significant correlation above 0.30, with all items declared valid. The reliability value (Cronbach's Alpha) for all three variables was above 0.8, indicating excellent measurement consistency. In Personal Adjustment, the correlation ranged from 0.606 to 0.699, with a reliability of 0.870. Soft Skill has a correlation of 0.759 to 0.851 and a reliability of 0.867. Meanwhile, bureaucratic Change has a correlation of 0.797 to 0.847, with the highest reliability being 0.881. Overall, this instrument is valid and highly reliable for measuring all three variables.

PLS-SEM Model Test Results

The results of the PLS Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) test in this study are shown in Figure 2.



Source: Processed Data, 2024

Based on the results of the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis, it was found that the Personal Adjustment and soft skill variables had a significant positive influence on Bureaucratic Change. The path coefficient obtained shows that Personal Adjustment has a greater influence, with a value of 0.565, compared to soft skills, which have an influence of 0.431 on Bureaucratic Change.

Each indicator used to measure these three variables shows a high loading factor value, ranging from 0.759 to 0.865. This indicates that these indicators have good validity. These findings indicate that the model used in this study can be relied upon to explain the relationship between the variables analyzed. Thus, the results of this analysis make a significant contribution to understanding the interaction between variables in the context studied.

Table 3. PLS-SEM Model Test Results

Variable	Indicators	Loading Factor >0.60	Composite Reliability (CR) >0.70	Average Variance Extracted (AVE) >0.5	R Square	Q Square > 0
Personal Adjustment	Mental Readiness for Change	0,828	0,906	0,659		
	Ability to manage stress	0,794				
	Flexibility in work	0,865				
	Self-motivation	0,795				
	Openness to innovation	0,773				
Soft Skill	Communication skills	0,828	0,904	0,653		
	Ability to collaborate	0,807				
	Conflict management	0,793				
	Leadership	0,759				
	Empathy and interpersonal skills	0,851				
Bureaucratic Change	Understanding of the purpose of Change	0,847	0,913	0,678	0,981	0,731
	Positive attitude towards Change	0,833				
	Involvement in the change process	0,824				
	Resistance management	0,815				
	Behavioral adaptation.	0,797				

Source: Processed Data, 2024

Based on the results of the analysis, the three main variables, namely Personal Adjustment, Soft Skill, and Bureaucratic Change, showed excellent performance based on the load factor (>0.60), composite reliability (>0.70), and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) (>0.5). Personal Adjustment has a loading factor value between 0.773 to 0.865, composite reliability of 0.906, and AVE 0.659, which shows that this variable is very reliable and able to explain most of the data variations. Soft Skill shows a loading factor value of 0.759 to 0.851, composite reliability 0.904, and AVE 0.653. It shows consistency and a strong ability to measure soft skills. Bureaucratic Change recorded a loading factor value of 0.797 to 0.847, the highest composite reliability of 0.913, AVE 0.678, R-square 0.981, and Q-square 0.731, which shows that this variable is the strongest in explaining bureaucratic change. All of these variables have excellent reliability and high validity, making them powerful instruments for measuring factors related to personal Adjustment, soft skills, and bureaucratic Change.

Hypothesis Test Results

Table 3. Hypothesis Test Results

Hypothesis	Variable Relationship	Original Sample (O)	T Statistics	P Values	Result
H1	Personal Adjustment -> Bureaucratic Change.	0,565	8,635	0,000	Significant
H2	Soft Skills -> Bureaucratic Change.	0,431	6,569	0,000	Significant

Source: Processed Data, 2024

The data presented shows the results of the analysis of the relationship between the variables in the study. Hypothesis 1 (H1): There is a significant positive relationship between Personal Adjustment and Bureaucratic Change, with a coefficient value of 0.565. The T-value of his statistics is 8.635, and the P-value is 0.000, which indicates that this hypothesis is accepted. Hypothesis 2 (H2): The relationship between Soft Skills and Bureaucratic Change also showed significant results, with a coefficient value of 0.431. The T-statistic is 6.569, and the P value is 0.000, which means this hypothesis is also accepted. Overall, both hypotheses suggest that both personal Adjustment and soft skills contribute significantly to changes in bureaucracy.

Discussion

Personal Adjustment on Bureaucratic Change

The findings of the Personal Adjustment variable have a greater influence and are also relevant to the study (M, 2019), which highlights the importance of adaptability in dealing with the dynamics of bureaucratic Change. The ability of individuals to adapt to changes in bureaucratic systems and procedures is considered a key factor in ensuring the success of bureaucratic transformation. In this study, personal Adjustment plays an important role because bureaucratic Change often involves complex processes and requires the ability to deal with uncertainty and adapt quickly to a new environment.

Soft Skills on Bureaucratic Change

On the other hand, the influence of Soft Skills of 0.431 is also significant, indicating that interpersonal skills such as communication, leadership, and collaboration also play an important role in supporting bureaucratic Change. This is in line with the findings (Smith, L., & Allen, 2020), which emphasize that soft skills are becoming increasingly important in the modern bureaucracy-oriented work environment, where cross-departmental collaboration and effective communication are necessary to support the change process. These skills, while not as powerful as personal adjustments, still contribute substantially to the effectiveness of Change in the context of bureaucracy.

Bureaucratic Change

Furthermore, an R Square value of 0.981 indicates that 98.1% of the variance in Bureaucratic Change can be explained by the variables of Personal Adjustment and Soft Skill. This indicates the very high predictive power of the model used, even after Adjustment with a fixed Adjusted R Square value of 0.981. These results indicate that these two variables significantly influence bureaucratic Change, which is relevant to research (Jones, K., &

McDonald, 2017), which found that individual factors such as personal skills and adaptation are decisive in the success of bureaucratic Change in public organizations.

Overall, the results of this study show that the model used has a very strong predictive ability in explaining bureaucratic changes. These findings provide significant insight into the importance of personal Adjustment and soft skills in supporting effective bureaucratic transformation, and are in line with relevant previous research in this area.

5. Conclusions

This study shows that personal Adjustment and soft skills have a significant positive influence on the Bureaucratic Change of non-ASN employees facing bureaucratic changes in the Indragiri Hilir Regional Government, Riau. These findings emphasize the importance of developing soft skills, such as communication and conflict management, as part of efforts to improve the adaptability of non-ASN employees to bureaucratic dynamics.

The implication of the results of this study is the need to develop a training program that focuses on improving soft skills to support non-ASN employees in facing the challenges of bureaucratic Change. With the right training, it is hoped that non-ASN employees can be better prepared and able to adapt to changes that occur in the government environment.

However, this study also has some limitations. First, the sample used is limited to non-ASN employees in one region, so the results may not be generalized to other regions. Second, the study only measured the effect of personal Adjustment and soft skills without considering other factors that may also contribute to employee readiness. Therefore, further research is recommended to explore other variables that can affect the readiness of non-ASN employees to deal with bureaucratic changes.

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