

Leadership Strategy in Facing Organizational Change: Case study within the Kendari City Government

Leadership Strategy
in Organizational
Change

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Submitted:
JUNI 2024

Accepted:
JULI 2024

ABSTRACT

This study explores effective leadership strategies in dealing with organizational change in the Kendari City government environment. By identifying the leadership approaches and practices adopted, this study seeks to provide insight into ways that can be applied to improve organizational adaptability and effectiveness in responding to the dynamics of change. This qualitative study collected data through in-depth interviews with 30 informants consisting of leaders in various departments of the Kendari City government. Data analysis was carried out using content analysis techniques to understand the perspectives, experiences, and leadership strategies used in managing change. This study uses a qualitative method with data collection through in-depth interviews with 30 informants consisting of leaders in various departments within the Kendari City Government. The data analysis technique used is content analysis, where data from interviews and documents are analyzed to identify key themes, patterns, and relationships between the concepts of leadership and change management. The research findings indicate that transformational and participatory leadership are key in dealing with organizational change. Successful leaders are those who are able to inspire, motivate, and involve team members in the change process. In addition, effective communication, consensus-based decision making, and employee empowerment are identified as practices that support the successful implementation of change strategies. Effective leadership strategies in dealing with organizational change require a combination of transformational and participative leadership styles. This study suggests the importance of leadership training that focuses on developing communication, decision-making, and empowerment skills for leaders in government environments. These findings are expected to contribute to the development of more adaptive and responsive leadership policies and practices to change in the public sector.

Keywords: Leadership Strategy, Organizational Change, Kendari City Government, Qualitative Study, Transformational Leadership, Participative Leadership.

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini menggali strategi kepemimpinan yang efektif dalam menghadapi perubahan organisasi di lingkungan pemerintah Kota Kendari. Dengan mengidentifikasi pendekatan dan praktik kepemimpinan yang diadopsi, penelitian ini berupaya memberikan wawasan mengenai cara-cara yang dapat diterapkan untuk meningkatkan adaptabilitas dan efektivitas organisasi dalam merespon dinamika perubahan. Penelitian kualitatif ini mengumpulkan data melalui wawancara mendalam dengan 30 informan yang terdiri dari para pemimpin di berbagai

JIMKES

Jurnal Ilmiah Manajemen
Kesatuan
Vol. 12 No. 4, 2024
pp. 1227-1238
IBI Kesatuan
ISSN 2337 – 7860
E-ISSN 2721 – 169X
DOI: 10.37641/jimkes.v12i4.2729

departemen pemerintah Kota Kendari. Analisis data dilakukan dengan teknik analisis konten untuk memahami perspektif, pengalaman, dan strategi kepemimpinan yang digunakan dalam mengelola perubahan. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan pengumpulan data melalui wawancara mendalam terhadap 30 orang informan yang terdiri dari para pemimpin di berbagai dinas di lingkungan Pemerintah Kota Kendari. Teknik analisis data yang digunakan adalah analisis isi, di mana data dari wawancara dan dokumen dianalisis untuk mengidentifikasi tema, pola, dan hubungan utama antara konsep kepemimpinan dan manajemen perubahan. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kepemimpinan transformasional dan partisipatif menjadi kunci dalam menghadapi perubahan organisasi. Pemimpin yang berhasil adalah mereka yang mampu menginspirasi, memotivasi, dan melibatkan anggota tim dalam proses perubahan. Selain itu, komunikasi efektif, pembuatan keputusan berbasis konsensus, dan pemberdayaan pegawai teridentifikasi sebagai praktik yang mendukung keberhasilan implementasi strategi perubahan. Strategi kepemimpinan yang efektif dalam menghadapi perubahan organisasi memerlukan kombinasi antara gaya kepemimpinan transformasional dan partisipatif. Penelitian ini menyarankan pentingnya pelatihan kepemimpinan yang berfokus pada pengembangan keterampilan komunikasi, pengambilan keputusan, dan pemberdayaan untuk pemimpin di lingkungan pemerintah. Temuan ini diharapkan dapat memberikan kontribusi bagi pengembangan kebijakan dan praktik kepemimpinan yang lebih adaptif dan responsif terhadap perubahan di sektor publik.

Kata kunci: Strategi Kepemimpinan, Perubahan Organisasi, Pemerintah Kota Kendari, Studi Kualitatif, Kepemimpinan Transformasional, Kepemimpinan Partisipatif.

INTRODUCTION

Organizational change is an inevitability triggered by various factors, both internal and external. In the Kendari City government environment, these changes are often related to social, economic, technological, and policy dynamics. Adjusting to these changes requires an effective leadership strategy to ensure that the organization can adapt and continue to function optimally. However, challenges arise when the existing leadership structure is not fully responsive or adaptive to the needs of these changes (Sufyanah, 2023). Leaders in the public sector are faced with the need to inspire and motivate members of the organization while ensuring their involvement in the change process. Transformational and participatory leadership have been identified as approaches that can support success in dealing with change (Pratiwi et al., 2022). However, the implementation of these approaches is often hampered by a lack of understanding or skills in their application. This raises questions about how leadership strategies can be developed and adapted to improve the effectiveness of government organizations in responding to change.

Continuous changes in public policy and technological innovation demand rapid adaptation from government organizations. In Kendari City, as in many other areas, the government is faced with the challenge of implementing these changes in a short time, while ensuring that public services continue to run effectively. Failure to manage change not only impacts organizational performance but also public trust and satisfaction with the government. Therefore, identifying and implementing effective leadership strategies in managing change is crucial. In addition, effective communication and consensus-based decision-making are key elements in the change process, which require the development and strengthening of leadership practices in the government environment. Employee empowerment is also an important aspect that must be considered to ensure active participation and initiative by organizational members in facing change. The difficulty in integrating leadership practices that support adaptability and innovation indicates a gap in the literature and practice that needs further research (Ziegert & Dust, 2021). Research that focuses on developing and implementing leadership strategies in the context of organizational change in the public sector is needed to address this challenge.

Table 1. Research that focuses on the development and implementation of leadership strategies

Questions	Don't understand (%)	Misunderstanding (%)	Understand (%)
Is transformational leadership effective in inspiring organizational change?	30	50	20
How important is participative leadership in organizational decision-making?	20	60	20
Is there sufficient understanding of the importance of organizational adaptability amidst change?	25	55	20
How effective is communication in the process of organizational change in government?	40	45	15
How often is employee involvement practiced in the process of organizational change?	35	50	15
Is existing leadership training adequate to improve communication, decision-making, and empowerment skills?	30	40	30

The table 1, shows the views of government leaders in Kendari City on various aspects of leadership strategies in the context of organizational change. First, when asked about the effectiveness of transformational leadership in inspiring organizational change, 30% of respondents admitted that they did not understand the concept, while 50% had misconceptions, and only 20% fully understood it. This shows that although transformational leadership is recognized as an important approach, there is still a significant need to provide leaders with further education and training on how to implement this leadership style effectively. Second, regarding the importance of participatory leadership in the decision-making process, 20% of respondents did not understand, 60% had misconceptions, and 20% understood. This shows that, similar to transformational leadership, there is still significant room to improve the understanding and implementation of participatory leadership in the Kendari City government environment. Third, when it comes to understanding organizational adaptability amidst change, 25% did not understand, 55% had misconceptions, and only 20% understood. This reiterates the importance of providing effective and comprehensive training to government organizational leaders to ensure that they can successfully lead their teams through necessary change. Fourth, the effectiveness of communication during the organizational change process was shown to be an area that requires special attention, with 40% of respondents not understanding, 45% having misunderstandings, and only 15% fully understanding. This suggests that there are still significant barriers to overcome in order to achieve effective communication, which is a key component in successful change management. Fifth, regarding the frequency of employee involvement in the change process, 35% did not understand and 50% had misunderstandings, while only 15% understood. This highlights the need for a clearer and more effective strategy to encourage employee participation, so that they feel more involved and contribute to the change process. Finally, when asked about the adequacy of existing leadership training to

improve communication, decision-making, and empowerment skills, 30% of respondents did not understand, 40% had misunderstandings, and 30% understood. This provides a more positive outlook than the other questions but still suggests that there is significant room for improvement in government leadership training.

Previous studies have explored the influence of transformational and participative leadership on organizational adaptability in the context of business and education, but specific research on the government sector, especially in Kendari City, is still limited. This indicates the need for more in-depth studies on leadership strategies in government environments facing unique change dynamics. Research conducted in various sectors has shown the importance of leadership styles that involve, motivate, and empower team members. However, adapting these findings to the government context requires a more nuanced understanding of the local conditions and specific needs of government organizations, which have not been widely discussed in the existing literature (Azahari et al., 2021). The global context, many studies have revealed the importance of adaptation and innovation in leadership to respond to the challenges of change. However, local socio-cultural and political conditions have a significant influence on the effectiveness of certain leadership strategies (Lesnussa et al., 2023). Kendari City, with its unique social and policy dynamics, requires research that can consider these local factors in developing leadership strategies. This allows research findings to be not only theoretically relevant but also practical and implementable in the local context.

In the description of the problem and the existing literature review, the researcher identified the need to explore. The main questions are focused on how leadership strategies can be developed and implemented effectively in the Kendari City government environment to deal with organizational change and how transformational and participatory leadership approaches and practices can improve the adaptability and effectiveness of government organizations in responding to the dynamics of change. This study aims to develop an in-depth understanding of leadership strategies that can be implemented effectively in the Kendari City government environment to deal with organizational change. Furthermore, this study seeks to explore how transformational and participatory leadership approaches and practices can improve the adaptability and effectiveness of government organizations in responding to the dynamics of change. The expected benefits of this study include providing a strategic framework for government leaders in designing and implementing effective leadership strategies, as well as providing practical recommendations that can support improved employee performance and job satisfaction. Thus, this study not only contributes to the academic literature in the field of leadership and change management but also offers applicable guidance for practitioners in the public sector.

The novelty of this study lies in its specific focus on the local context of the Kendari City government, which has not been widely studied in the literature on leadership and change management. Through a qualitative approach, this study provides new insights into how transformational and participative leadership strategies can be adapted and implemented in such contexts to enhance organizational adaptability. The main contribution of this study is the development of a leadership model that is not only theoretically relevant but also practically applicable, taking into account local social, cultural, and political nuances. This allows this study to provide concrete and evidence-based recommendations for improving leadership practices in government environments, especially in facing the challenges of organizational change. Thus, this study offers valuable new perspectives for policymakers, government leaders, and academics in understanding and implementing effective leadership strategies in an era of rapid change.

LITERATURE REVIEW

As explained by Ariyanti & Sawitri (2023), transformational leadership focuses on the leader's ability to inspire and motivate followers to go beyond personal interests for the benefit of the group or organization. Transformational leaders are recognized by four main characteristics: idealistic influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual

stimulation, and individualized consideration. A study by Ahmad (2022) found that this leadership style increases employee job satisfaction and performance by creating a clear vision and communicating it effectively to team members. Participative leadership, on the other hand, emphasizes member involvement in the organization's decision-making process. According to Sari et al. (2022), participative leadership allows team members to contribute to decision-making and problem-solving, which in turn can increase their commitment to organizational goals.

Wibowo & Suharnomo (2022) shows that the application of participatory leadership in teams can increase creativity and innovation. Organizational adaptability refers to an organization's ability to adapt to changes in the external or internal environment in a way that allows them to remain competitive. Adriana & Nugraha (2023) show that organizational adaptability is not only important for survival but also for thriving in a dynamic environment. They identified that the key to adaptability lies in the organization's ability to be flexible, responsive, and proactive to change. Effectiveness in dealing with change is often associated with how the organization manages and implements change. Bairizki et al. (2021) stated that successful change management requires a series of steps that begin with creating a sense of urgency and are followed by forming a strong coalition, developing a vision and strategy, and communicating the vision. Widiastuti et al. (2022) added that for effective change, organizations need to adopt a more inclusive and participatory approach, allowing organisational members to actively participate in the change process.

Azahari et al. (2021) study shows that leadership style has a significant influence on how organizations respond to and manage change. They found that transformational leadership is closely related to the success of change implementation, as indicated by higher levels of organizational adaptability and effectiveness. Similarly, (Maulidi et al., 2022) emphasized that participative leadership can facilitate organizational adaptation to change by increasing employee engagement and commitment. The importance of integrating transformational and participative leadership in the local context, especially in the Kendari City government environment, is becoming increasingly relevant. Madi Odeh et al. (2023) study emphasized that adapting leadership strategies to local cultural and social contexts can increase their effectiveness in dealing with change. They suggested that leaders need to understand the values, expectations, and specific needs of local communities in order to design a more resonant and effective approach. Furthermore, the literature indicates a positive relationship between the application of transformational and participative leadership and organizational performance.

Ambarwati (2021), organizations led by individuals with transformational and participative leadership traits tend to perform better, both in terms of innovation and employee job satisfaction. Effective leadership is able to create a work environment that is conducive to growth and adaptation, which is important in the context of organizational change (Setiawan et al., 2021). Effective communication is identified as a critical component in transformational and participative leadership, as well as in the change management process. According to Ali (2023), clear and open communication can facilitate a better understanding of the purpose of the change, reduce uncertainty, and increase employee commitment to the change. Effective communication allows leaders to convey a vision, gain support, and overcome resistance to change (Mansaray, 2019).

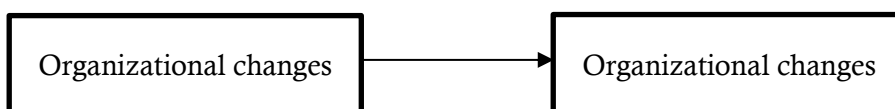


Figure 1. Cross-sectional (qualitative descriptive and normative juridical approach) qualitative

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative method by collecting data through in-depth interviews with 30 informants consisting of leaders in various departments of the Kendari City

government. Data analysis was carried out using content analysis techniques to understand the perspectives, experiences, and leadership strategies in managing change. In addition, a normative approach was applied to explore and understand effective leadership strategies in dealing with organizational change in the Kendari City government environment. The normative approach was chosen because it allows researchers to analyze and interpret data within the framework of leadership theory and change management principles, with the aim of determining the norms that should be applied in government organizational leadership (Khairuddin & Murtopo, 2022). Through this approach, the study aims to identify leadership practices and strategies that are not only effective but also normative, in accordance with recognized standards and values in the management of government organizations that adapt to change. The data sources used in this study include primary data from in-depth interviews with 30 informants, who are leaders in various departments of the Kendari City government, and were selected based on their direct involvement in decision-making and implementation of organizational change. In addition, this study also uses secondary data such as official documents, government policies, and scientific literature relevant to leadership and change management. The research location in Kendari City was chosen because this city represents the dynamics of organizational change in a developing government environment, with unique challenges and opportunities that provide important insights into the study of leadership and organizational adaptation. The data analysis technique used content analysis, where data from interviews and documents were analyzed to identify key themes, patterns, and relationships between leadership concepts and change management. Content analysis allows researchers to interpret verbal or written data objectively and measurably, ensuring that research findings are based on strong and repeatable evidence. Through this technique, the study seeks to provide recommendations based on in-depth analysis on how leadership can be developed and adapted to improve the effectiveness of government organizations in dealing with change.

RESULT

This study focuses on the analysis of leadership strategies in facing organizational change in the Kendari City government environment with 30 government leaders as research respondents. The majority of leaders who participated in this study have work experience in the government sector for more than 10 years (60%) and between 5-10 years (40%). In terms of education, most leaders have master's degrees (55%) and bachelor's degrees (45%). The results of data analysis regarding the understanding of 30 Kendari City government leaders who were respondents in this study related to transformational and participatory leadership strategies in the context of organizational change are presented in the Table below.

From the table small number of leaders (20%) fully understand the importance of transformational leadership in inspiring change, indicating that there is a need for capacity building and further leadership training. In the context of participatory leadership, although some leaders are aware of the importance of employee involvement (25%), many still only have a basic understanding or do not understand at all (35% understand enough and 15% do not understand). This emphasizes the importance of developing programs that encourage active employee involvement in decision-making and organizational change processes. The results of in-depth interviews from several indicators in the context of organizational change faced as a leader in the Kendari City government environment, how to understand and apply the principles of transformational leadership to inspire and motivate the team? As a leader in the department, I consider transformational leadership to be the key to bringing about meaningful change. I strive to be a good example and set high standards, while maintaining open communication with my team. I try to motivate them with a clear vision and goals, and recognize and celebrate every small achievement we achieve together. However, I admit that bringing energy and enthusiasm every day is a challenge, especially when faced with resistance or lack of resources.

Table 1. Data analysis results

Indicators	Fully Understanding (%)	Understand (%)	Just Understand (%)	Do not understand (%)	Totally Ignorant (%)
Understanding of the importance of transformational leadership in inspiring change.	10	20	30	25	15
Awareness of the role of participative leadership in facilitating organizational adaptability.	15	25	35	15	10
Recognition of the importance of effective communication during organizational change.	20	30	25	15	10
Assessment of the extent to which employees are involved in the change process.	5	15	40	30	10
Knowledge of adequate leadership training programs to develop the necessary skills.	10	20	30	25	15

Strong understanding of transformational leadership principles, Respondents identified the importance of being a role model, creating a clear vision, and communicating that purpose to the team as key factors in driving organizational change. This reflects one of the key elements of transformational leadership, namely the ability to inspire and motivate (Lee & Hidayat, 2018; Prabowo et al., 2018; Bastari et al., 2020). However, respondents also recognized challenges in implementing transformational leadership consistently, including resistance from the team and limited resources. This highlights the importance of building capacity and resources to support change, as well as the need for adaptive strategies to overcome internal barriers (Sadikin et al., 2023).

Participatory leadership plays a very important role in our organization, especially in the context of change. I believe that when employees are involved in the decision-making process, they become more committed and open to change. On several occasions, we hold brainstorming sessions to gather input from all levels of employees before making important decisions that will affect the direction of the organization. This helps us to not only identify potential problems early but also find more creative and innovative solutions that might not have emerged if decision-making was only done by top management. In this way, organizational adaptability becomes stronger because it is supported by collective thinking.

The interview results above indicate that leaders in Kendari City recognize the importance of employee involvement in the decision-making process as an integral part of participatory leadership. This is in line with the research objectives, which aim to

explore effective leadership strategies for responding to the dynamics of organizational change. Respondents indicated that this involvement not only increases employee commitment but also enriches the decision-making process with diverse perspectives, which ultimately strengthens organizational adaptability. Analysis of the importance of identifying transformational and participatory leadership approaches and practices that can improve organizational adaptability and effectiveness (Han et al., 2018; Lasrado & Kassem, 2021; Madi et al., 2023). The results of interviews with these respondents confirmed that participatory leadership can be key in facilitating organizational adaptability, especially in a government environment that is often considered rigid and hierarchical. This shows that leadership practices in Kendari City have begun to change and adapt to a new, more collaborative and inclusive paradigm, which is necessary for successful navigation of organizational change.

In the context of organizational change in the Kendari City government environment, how important is the role of effective communication in your opinion, and how do you apply it in your leadership? Effective communication is a key element in managing organizational change. As a leader, I recognize that providing clear and timely information to employees is essential to ensure that the entire team understands not only the purpose of the upcoming change but also their role in the process. I implement two-way communication, where I convey the vision of change and actively listen to employee input and concerns. This creates a sense of trust and transparency, which I believe facilitates a smoother transition and increases acceptance of the necessary changes. Based on the interview results above, it is confirmed that effective communication is one of the main pillars of an effective leadership strategy, showing a high awareness of the value of two-way communication in building trust and creating a transparent work environment. This reflects one of the findings in the article abstract, where effective communication is identified as a practice that supports the successful implementation of a change strategy (Stouten et al., 2018; Bel et al., 2018).

This respondent has applied the principles of effective communication in his transformational and participatory leadership, indicating that successful leaders in the Kendari City government environment do utilize communication as a tool to inspire and motivate their employees. This also reflects a deep awareness of how good communication can affect the adaptability and effectiveness of the organization in responding to change. In the context of the organizational change that you have recently experienced, how did you involve employees in the process, and how often did this involvement occur? As a leader, I recognize the importance of involving employees at every stage of the change. We hold weekly meetings where employees can voice their opinions and provide their input. In addition, for more significant changes, we form working teams consisting of representatives from each division. However, I must admit that while the intention to involve employees consistently is there, the frequency can vary greatly. Sometimes this involvement becomes more reactive than proactive, especially when there are tight deadlines or pressure from above.

The interview results above illustrate a paradox that is often found in leadership practices in the Kendari City government environment. While there is awareness and intention to involve employees in the change process, its implementation is often inconsistent or not systematic. Respondents admitted that employee involvement occurs more often as a reaction to circumstances rather than as part of a sustainable proactive strategy. This suggests that although leaders understand the theory, the practical application of employee involvement as part of a participatory leadership strategy is still lacking. This analysis is directly related to the title and abstract of the article which emphasizes the importance of developing effective leadership strategies in dealing with organizational change. This finding supports that leadership training and development in Kendari City needs to be strengthened, especially in terms of implementing participatory leadership practices more consistently and strategically. This will not only increase the effectiveness of organizational change but will also strengthen employee involvement and commitment to the desired change.

How has your leadership training program helped you develop the skills needed to lead organizational change in government? The leadership training program I recently attended emphasized the importance of communication and team engagement. I learned how to actively listen and facilitate constructive discussions. However, I felt the training was lacking in practical techniques for addressing real-world challenges in leading change, such as managing resistance or building consensus. We need more simulation sessions or case studies that are closer to real-world conditions in government. The data analysis above shows that there is an appreciation for the communication and engagement aspects of the leadership training that was attended. However, these responses also reveal a gap in the existing training program, particularly in terms of practical application of the concepts taught. Respondents emphasized the need for more practical approaches, such as simulations and case studies, that are more relevant to the challenges faced in government.

The respondents' answers confirm that while theoretical understanding of transformational and participatory leadership exists, there is a gap in its practical application. This suggests that leadership training programs need to be refined to meet the specific needs of the Kendari City government environment, taking into account the real complexities of organizational change. Training that focuses more on developing practical skills will help leaders not only understand theory but also apply it effectively in their work contexts. The results of this analysis imply that improving the quality of leadership training can significantly impact the ability of leaders in Kendari City to lead and manage organizational change. This is in line with the findings of Azmy's (2021) research which suggests the need for improvement in the development of leadership training programs, to equip leaders with the skills needed to face the challenges of dynamic change in the public sector. The findings of this study suggest the need for strategic intervention in the development and refinement of leadership training programs in Kendari City, with a particular focus on improving communication skills, decision-making, and empowerment. It is hoped that through this improvement, government organizations in Kendari City can be more adaptive and effective in facing the challenges of constant organizational change.

This study reveals that the development and implementation of effective leadership strategies in dealing with organizational change in the Kendari City government environment requires a comprehensive and adaptive approach. Key findings suggest that transformational and participative leadership play a crucial role in facilitating adaptation to change. Successful leaders are those who can inspire vision, motivate higher performance, and actively engage team members in the change process (Mansaray, 2019 and Paais & Pattiruhu, 2020). This differs from traditional practices that focus more on top-down decision-making and less on employee participation. Furthermore, this study found that effective communication and consensus-based decision-making are key to supporting the success of change strategies. Effective leaders in the Kendari City government environment demonstrate the ability to communicate clearly and consistently about the goals and processes of change, and open up space for feedback and participation from employees. This marks a shift from an authoritative leadership style to a more inclusive and dialogical model.

Employee empowerment has also been identified as a critical factor in ensuring the success of organizational change (Errida & Lotfi, 2021). Leaders who are able to empower employees by giving them autonomy and responsibility in change projects tend to experience higher levels of success. This indicates a paradigm shift from employees as task implementers to active partners in the change process. Compared to previous publications, these findings highlight the importance of a more adaptive and participatory leadership approach in the local government context. While previous literature has recognized the importance of transformational and participatory leadership styles, this study specifically identifies how these elements can be adapted and applied in the unique context of the Kendari City government. This provides new insights into how leadership

strategies can be customized to address the specific challenges faced by government organizations in the local context.

This study also suggests that there is a need for locally tailored leadership training programs that focus on developing communication skills, consensus-based decision-making, and employee empowerment techniques. These training programs should take into account the local social and cultural context to enhance their effectiveness. This study specifically evaluates how transformational and participative leadership can enhance the adaptability and effectiveness of government organizations in responding to the dynamics of change. The findings indicate that transformational leadership, with its focus on inspiration and motivation, significantly enhances organizational readiness for change. Transformational leaders in Kendari City successfully created a clear vision for change, inspired employees to achieve higher goals, and mobilized commitment to organizational goals. Furthermore, participative leadership practices, which emphasize employee involvement in the decision-making process, have been shown to enhance organizational adaptability. By involving employees in decision-making, government organizations in Kendari City have demonstrated an increased ability to implement change effectively. This participation not only enhances employee acceptance of change but also facilitates the identification of innovative and relevant solutions to organizational needs.

Compared with previous research, these findings add empirical evidence to the literature that directly links transformational and participative leadership practices to increased organizational adaptability and effectiveness in the government context. Previously, studies have often generally discussed the positive effects of both leadership styles on organizational performance without exploring in depth how they specifically affect organizational adaptability to change. Furthermore, this study identifies that the combination of transformational and participative leadership creates a synergy that strengthens an organization's ability to adapt to change. This suggests that it is not enough for leaders to be inspirational; they must also actively engage employees in the change process to achieve maximum effectiveness. This study also found that developing transformational and participative leadership competencies requires a deep understanding of the local context and specific needs of the organization. This underscores the importance of tailored training and development for leaders in government settings, which focuses not only on skill development but also on a contextual understanding of how to implement the practices effectively.

CONCLUSION

This study explores effective leadership strategies in dealing with organizational change in the Kendari City government environment, focusing on transformational and participative leadership approaches and practices. The main findings indicate that leaders who apply transformational and participative leadership styles successfully increase organizational adaptability and effectiveness in responding to the dynamics of change. Team member involvement, effective communication, and consensus-based decision-making are identified as key elements that support the implementation of successful change strategies. From these findings, it can be concluded that to face the challenges of organizational change in the government environment, a combination of transformational and participative leadership styles is needed. This leadership strategy not only increases the readiness of the organization to face change but also facilitates a smoother and more effective adaptation process. The implications of these findings indicate the importance of developing and implementing leadership training programs that focus on developing communication, decision-making, and empowerment skills. Such programs can help leaders in the government environment to prepare their organizations for change more effectively, ensuring that employees feel involved and contribute to the change process. To overcome the challenges of organizational change, this study suggests that the key to success lies in the implementation of adaptive and inclusive leadership strategies, which enable organizations not only to survive change but also to thrive. Future research directions could include comparative studies across

different government environments to identify contextual factors that may influence the effectiveness of leadership strategies in the face of change. In addition, further research could explore the long-term impact of implementing transformational and participative leadership strategies on government organizational performance.

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