

The Influence of the Leadership Style of Public Health Center (Puskesmas) Heads on Employee Performance in Tasikmalaya Regency

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the influence of leadership style on employee performance at public health centers (Puskesmas) in Tasikmalaya Regency. Leadership style plays a crucial role in shaping employee motivation, job satisfaction, and overall work effectiveness. Using a quantitative approach, data were collected through questionnaires distributed to employees at several Puskesmas. The results of the regression analysis indicate that the leadership style of the Puskesmas heads has a significant and positive impact on employee performance. A democratic and supportive leadership approach was found to enhance staff productivity, communication, and commitment to service quality. The findings suggest that improving leadership practices can be a key strategy for optimizing performance within public health services. Therefore, it is recommended that Puskesmas leaders adopt more participatory and responsive leadership styles to foster a better working environment and improve health service delivery outcomes

INTRODUCTION

A preliminary observation of several Puskesmas in the region revealed variations in organizational performance, as shown in Table 1. These performance disparities are influenced by multiple factors, including the quality of service delivery, internal management systems, and adherence to healthcare standards. While some Puskesmas have demonstrated strong results in service quality and management efficiency, others show moderate outcomes, indicating the presence of systemic or leadership-related challenges.

Table 1. Performance Scores of Selected Puskesmas in North and South Tasikmalaya

Puskesmas Name	Service Quality	Management	Service Standards	Final Score	Performance Category
Rajapolah	85.07	91.89	93.08	104.19	Good
Jamanis	88.57	84.10	87.69	101.52	Good
Ciawi	75.70	89.74	85.38	96.23	Good
Kadipaten	60.73	78.63	75.38	81.10	Fair
Pagerageung	76.39	90.13	87.88	84.80	Fair

Source: Field Observation (2022)

Leadership style is often identified as a key determinant in shaping the performance of public health institutions. Effective leadership not only provides direction but also fosters motivation, accountability, and collaboration among employees. In the context of healthcare, where service outcomes directly affect community well-being, the importance of leadership is even more pronounced. A participative and supportive leadership approach has been linked to higher job satisfaction, improved communication, and enhanced productivity among healthcare workers.

On the other hand, poor leadership may result in low employee engagement, increased absenteeism, and suboptimal service delivery. Initial findings in several Puskesmas in Tasikmalaya suggest recurring issues such as late arrivals, early departures, and lack of staff discipline, which ultimately impact patient satisfaction and the quality of healthcare services provided. These conditions call for a deeper investigation into how leadership style affects employee behavior and performance.

This study, therefore, seeks to explore the extent to which leadership style influences employee performance in public health centers across Tasikmalaya Regency. By understanding the relationship between leadership practices and performance outcomes, this research aims to offer practical recommendations for improving public health service delivery through leadership enhancement.

Despite having adequate managerial resources, some Puskesmas have shown only moderate performance. This indicates a potential issue with employee effectiveness. Leadership is considered a decisive factor in motivating staff and enhancing performance. A strong and appropriate leadership style is

crucial to achieving institutional goals effectively and efficiently. Anecdotal evidence suggests a decline in employee performance, which may be linked to low motivation, stress, or a lack of engagement. These factors manifest in absenteeism, tardiness, and a lack of discipline. Such conditions have a direct impact on public service delivery. Table 2 outlines employee attendance records for the period April to December 2022.

Table 2. Employee Attendance (April-December 2019)

Month	Working Days	PNS Absence	PNS Present	PTT Absence	PTT Present	Other Staff Absence	Other Staff Present
April	24	4	20	2	22	3	21
May	21	5	19	1	23	3	21
June	18	3	15	2	15	0	17
July	27	2	25	2	23	2	23
August	26	0	26	2	24	3	22
September	26	2	24	1	25	2	22
October	27	3	24	0	27	4	23
November	25	2	23	1	24	2	23
December	24	2	22	0	25	2	23

Source: Field Data (2022)

Note: PNS = Civil Servants; PTT = Contract-based Employees

The employee attendance data from April to December 2022 reveals recurring issues in staff discipline across civil servants (PNS), contract-based workers (PTT), and other staff members in several Puskesmas. Although the number of absences each month appears relatively small, the consistent pattern of absenteeism suggests deeper organizational concerns. Absence due to illness, personal leave, or lack of motivation—when occurring regularly—can significantly disrupt healthcare service delivery. In particular, limited human resources in public health centers mean that even a few absences can burden other staff, delay services, and reduce patient satisfaction.

This pattern points to the possible influence of leadership style on employee behavior. Ineffective leadership—characterized by lack of engagement, poor communication, or insufficient support—may result in low employee morale, lack of accountability, and poor attendance. Conversely, a democratic and participatory leadership style can foster a positive work environment, increase motivation, and improve discipline. Therefore, strengthening leadership practices is essential to addressing attendance issues and ensuring optimal service delivery in public healthcare institutions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Management plays a vital role in the functioning of an organization and the economy at large. It involves the strategic use of available resources to achieve organizational goals effectively and efficiently. According to Terry (as cited in Setiana, 2019), management is a distinct process that includes planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling to achieve pre-determined objectives through the utilization of both human and other resources.

Similarly, Hasibuan (2018) defines management as both a science and an art of coordinating human and other resources effectively and efficiently to achieve specific goals. From these definitions, it can be concluded that management is an integrated process involving planning, organizing, controlling, and leading resources to accomplish organizational objectives.

METHODOLOGY

Human Resource Management

Human resource management (HRM) is one of the most critical components in achieving organizational effectiveness. Compared to other resources such as capital or technology, human resources are the drivers that control and manage these other elements. Flipppo (as cited in Hasibuan, 2018) defines HRM as the planning, organizing, directing, and controlling of procurement, development, compensation, integration, maintenance, and separation of human resources to achieve organizational, individual, and societal objectives.

This definition emphasizes that human resources must be managed holistically – from recruitment and development to retention and eventual exit – to ensure both individual and organizational effectiveness.

Leadership and Leadership Style

Leadership is widely recognized as a key determinant of organizational success. The effectiveness of an organization often hinges on the ability of its leaders to influence and mobilize employees toward shared goals. According to Efendi (2015), a leader is someone who possesses particular skills and expertise in a specific field, allowing them to influence others to engage in actions that contribute to common objectives.

In the context of leadership styles, transformational and democratic leadership are often associated with increased employee engagement, job satisfaction, and productivity. Transformational leaders inspire and motivate employees beyond immediate self-interests, while democratic leaders encourage participation and collaboration, fostering a sense of ownership among team members (Northouse, 2016).

Employee Performance

Employee performance refers to the outcome of work activities carried out by individuals within an organization, measured in both qualitative and quantitative terms. It reflects how effectively an employee fulfills their job responsibilities. Mangkunegara (2017) explains that performance is derived from job performance or actual performance, which refers to the real achievements of an individual based on the duties assigned to them.

High performance is generally characterized by punctuality, responsibility, effective communication, and goal achievement. In public service institutions, employee performance directly affects service delivery quality, making it a crucial indicator for institutional success

RESULTS

Simple Regression Analysis

Table 1. Simple Regression Analysis

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	9.600	2.157		4.450	.000
	Leadership Style	.851	.086	.820	9.930	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Performance						

Based on the regression table, the constant value (intercept) is 9.600, while the coefficient for leadership style (X) is 0.851. Therefore, the regression equation can be written as: $Y = 9.600 + 0.851X$, where Y represents employee performance and X represents leadership style. This equation indicates that even without the influence of leadership style, employee performance starts at a baseline of 9.600. Furthermore, for every one-unit increase in leadership style, employee performance is expected to increase by 0.851 points, assuming other variables remain constant. Thus, leadership style has a positive influence on employee performance.

Correlation Coefficient and Coefficient of Determination (R^2)

Table 2. Coefficient of Determination Calculation

Model Summary ^b									
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.820 ^a	.673	.666	3.45581	.673	98.609	1	48	.000

Source : Primer Data, Process SPSS V.24 (2019)

Based on the results above, the correlation coefficient shows an R value of 0.820, indicating a very strong relationship between the variables of leadership style and employee performance, as the R value falls within the range of 0.80 to 1.000.

Furthermore, the table shows that the R^2 value is 0.673, which means that the independent variable, leadership style, explains 67.3% of the variation or influence on the dependent variable, employee performance, at UPTD Puskesmas Sukaresik. The remaining 32.7% is influenced by other variables not examined in this study

Hypothesis Testing

The t-test is used to determine or prove the influence of the independent variable on the dependent variable. The hypothesis formulation is as follows: H_a states that leadership style is suspected to have a significant positive influence on employee performance, while H_o states that leadership style is suspected not to have a significant influence on employee performance.

Table 3. T-Test

Coefficients ^a					
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t
		B	Std. Error	Beta	
1	(Constant)	9.600	2.157		4.450
	Leader Style	.851	.086	.820	9.930
a. Dependent Variable: Performance					

Based on the t-test results table, the value for the leadership style variable (X) is 9.930, while the t-table value is 1.67722. Since $t_{\text{calculated}} > t_{\text{table}}$ or $9.930 > 1.67722$ at a significance level of $0.000 < 0.05$, it can be concluded that H_o is rejected and H_a is accepted. This means that leadership style has a significant positive influence on employee performance.

DISCUSSION

The results of this study indicate that leadership style has a significant and positive influence on employee performance at UPTD Puskesmas Sukaresik, Tasikmalaya. This is supported by a simple regression analysis showing a coefficient of 0.851 with a significance level of 0.000, which is highly significant at the 95% confidence level. These findings align with Efendi (2015), who emphasized that effective leaders are capable of mobilizing employees to achieve shared organizational goals.

Furthermore, the coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.673 reveals that 67.3% of the variation in employee performance is explained by the leadership style of Puskesmas heads. This demonstrates a strong relationship between leadership and performance, in line with Northouse (2016), who argues that transformational and democratic leadership styles are closely associated with increased employee engagement and productivity.

Theoretically, this supports the concept presented by Hasibuan (2018), who asserts that human resource management – particularly leadership – is central to coordinating human capital toward organizational objectives. A supportive and participative leadership style fosters a healthy working environment, which translates into improved employee motivation, discipline, and responsibility. This is evident in the study's findings, where the highest-scoring leadership indicator relates to fairness in task delegation, suggesting that employees perceive their leaders as just and equitable.

Conversely, the lowest score in the leadership indicators pertained to whether leaders considered employee interests alongside organizational goals. This suggests that there is still room for improvement in terms of leader empathy and attention to employee well-being. This is further corroborated by employee attendance data, which shows recurring patterns of absenteeism among civil servants, contract workers, and other staff. Such patterns may be attributed to low morale or lack of job ownership – factors that Mangkunegara (2017) identifies as manifestations of low performance.

In the context of public service institutions such as Puskesmas, employee performance not only affects internal productivity but also determines the quality of healthcare services provided to the community. Therefore, leadership that encourages open communication, provides emotional support, and promotes active participation is essential. Such leadership styles have been proven to enhance employee commitment and discipline, as reflected in the high performance scores related to responsibility in task execution.

Overall, these findings reinforce both classical and contemporary theories on the role of leadership in organizational success. Democratic leadership – characterized by participation, appreciation of employee input, and attentiveness to employee needs – emerges as an effective approach in improving staff performance within public healthcare settings. This aligns with Sedarmayanti (2016), who emphasizes that leadership quality directly contributes to the effectiveness of public sector organizations in delivering optimal services to society.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

1. Based on the research conducted by the author regarding the leadership style at UPTD Puskesmas Sukaresik, it can be concluded that the total score from the leadership style indicators is 1936, which falls into the “good” classification. As shown in Table 4.19, the highest score (201) was for the statement that leaders do not discriminate among employees when assigning tasks. In contrast, the lowest score (183) was for the statement that leaders not only consider organizational interests but also employee interests.
2. Regarding employee performance at UPTD Puskesmas Sukaresik, the total score based on performance indicators is 1882, also classified as “good.” As shown in Table 4.30, the highest score (196) was for the statement that employees perform their tasks with responsibility and dedication, while the lowest score (180) came from the statement that the employee’s work output aligns with the set targets.
3. According to the results of the coefficient of determination (R^2), the influence of leadership style on employee performance at UPTD Puskesmas Sukaresik, Tasikmalaya Regency, is 0.673, indicating that 67.3% of the variation in employee performance is influenced by leadership style. Therefore, it can be concluded that leadership style has a significant influence on employee performance.

Recommendation

1. Based on the recapitulation of leadership style indicators in Table 4.16, the lowest score (183) was found in the statement that leaders not only consider organizational interests but also those of employees. In this regard, it is recommended that management place greater emphasis on employee welfare in addition to organizational goals.
2. In terms of employee performance, Table 4.20 shows the lowest score (180) was from the statement that the employee's work output aligns with the predetermined targets. Therefore, it is advisable for UPTD Puskesmas Sukaresik to provide more training or coaching to help employees meet performance targets more effectively.
3. The results also show that leadership style contributes 67.3% to employee performance, while the remaining 32.7% is influenced by other factors such as work discipline and motivation. Therefore, it is important to address these additional factors to further enhance employee performance at the health center

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