

DEMOCRATIC LEADERSHIP STYLE, MOTIVATION, AND COMMUNICATION AS KEY FACTORS IN IMPROVING EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE: A LITERATURE STUDY AND META-ANALYSIS

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Abstract: This study aims to explore the relationship between democratic leadership style, motivation, and communication as key factors in improving employee performance. By using the literature review and meta-analysis method of scientific articles published in 2019-2024. Through a literature review and meta-analysis of relevant studies, this paper finds that inclusive and participatory leadership, combined with high motivation and effective communication, contributes significantly to improving employee performance. The findings are expected to provide insights for organizational managers and leaders in creating a productive work environment.

Keywords: Democratic leadership, motivation, communication, employee performance, meta-analysis

Introduction

Employee performance is one of the main indicators of the success of an organization. In the era of modern organizations, improving employee performance is one of the main focuses for management. Various factors can affect employee performance, including leadership style, motivation, and communication. Democratic leadership style, which involves employee participation in decision-making, has been proven to increase motivation and job satisfaction, which in turn contribute to better performance.

This study aims to analyze the existing literature regarding the relationship between democratic leadership style, motivation, and communication on improving employee performance. Various factors influence employee performance, among which are leadership style, motivation, and communication. Democratic leadership style, which emphasizes employee participation in decision-making, has been shown to increase employee motivation and engagement. In addition, effective communication also plays an important role in creating a conducive work environment. This study aims to analyze how these three factors interact and contribute to employee performance.

Literature Review

Democratic leadership style is a leadership approach in which the leader involves team members in decision-making, provides freedom of opinion, and encourages active participation in the work process. Democratic leaders act as facilitators who create an inclusive work environment, where every team member has a sense of ownership of the organization's goals.

The democratic leadership style is characterized by employee involvement in the decision-making process. According to Rosmaini and Tanjung (2019), this leadership style can increase employee motivation and job satisfaction, which leads to improved performance. Bui

et al. (2019) added that good communication within the team also contributes to organizational success, especially in the context of team diversity.

According to Bass (1990), democratic leadership gives members the freedom to engage in discussions and decision-making, which in turn increases their sense of responsibility and work motivation. This style creates open and transparent communication between leaders and subordinates, thus strengthening interpersonal relationships within the organization.

Work motivation is one of the key elements in human resource management that plays a direct role in determining the level of productivity, job satisfaction, and employee commitment to the organization. Work motivation can be defined as the internal and external drives that encourage individuals to achieve certain goals in the workplace. Many theories have been developed to understand work motivation, including need theory, process theory and reinforcement theory, all of which provide different perspectives on how motivation affects human behavior in the workplace.

Work motivation is an internal drive that influences a person's behavior to achieve certain goals in the work environment. Motivation is one of the key factors in increasing productivity, job satisfaction, and employee engagement in the organization. Some motivational theories that are often used to understand this phenomenon are Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, and Vroom's Expectancy Theory.

Theories of Work Motivation are described as follows:

1. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory

Abraham Maslow (1943) developed the hierarchy of needs theory that describes five levels of human needs: physiological, safety, social, esteem, and self-actualization needs. In a work context, this theory suggests that employees will be motivated when their basic needs are met, such as adequate pay (physiological needs) and a safe work environment (security needs). Once basic needs are met, they will seek positive social relationships, recognition for their hard work, and ultimately the opportunity to develop their full potential.

2. Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory

Frederick Herzberg (1959) developed the motivation-hygiene theory, which states that there are two types of factors that influence work motivation:

Motivator Factors: Factors related to the work itself, such as achievement, recognition, responsibility and personal growth. Hygienic Factors: Factors related to the work environment, such as company policies, salary, and relationships with superiors. The study by Indrayana (2019) supports this theory by showing that employees who have opportunities to develop professionally and get recognition for their achievements tend to be more motivated at work.

3. Vroom's Expectancy Theory

Expectancy theory by Victor Vroom (1964) explains that work motivation depends on three factors: expectancy (the belief that effort will result in performance), instrumentalism (the belief that performance will produce certain outcomes), and valence (the value placed on those outcomes). This theory emphasizes the importance of an individual's understanding of the relationship between effort, performance, and outcome in motivating them.

4. Self-Determination Theory (Deci and Ryan)

This theory highlights the importance of basic psychological needs, namely autonomy, competence, and relatedness, in motivating individuals. The study by Alfian et al. (2019)

shows that employees who feel they have control over their work (autonomy) and feel competent in their tasks are more motivated to work optimally.

Work motivation is a force that comes from within an individual or the surrounding environment that encourages individuals to try to achieve targets or complete assigned tasks. According to Robbins and Judge (2018), motivation is a process that influences the intensity, direction, and persistence of a person's efforts to achieve certain goals. Intensity refers to how hard a person tries, direction refers to how the effort is directed towards organizational goals, and persistence measures how long a person persists in their efforts. The study by Harahap and Tirtayasa (2020) shows that high work motivation has a significant impact on job satisfaction and productivity. This shows that motivated employees tend to be more disciplined, have high work enthusiasm, and are able to make maximum contributions to the organization.

Communication is a fundamental element in human life, both in personal and professional contexts. In the world of work, communication plays an important role in connecting individuals, conveying information, and creating harmonious relationships within the organization. Effective communication can be key to the success of an organization because it helps ensure that each individual understands the goals, expectations, and their role in the organization. Communication can be defined as the process of exchanging information, ideas, or messages between two or more individuals through various channels.

According to Shannon and Weaver (1949), communication involves sender, message, channel, receiver and feedback. In the context of work, effective communication involves the delivery of a clear message and proper understanding by the receiver to achieve a common goal. The study by Bui et al. (2019) shows that good communication is essential in managing work teams, especially in the context of diversity. Effective communication helps to overcome cultural barriers, increase mutual understanding, and strengthen collaboration between individuals. Effective communication also plays an important role in improving employee performance. Santalla-Banderali and Alvarado (2022) emphasize that quality communication between leaders and team members can increase work engagement, which contributes to better performance. Well-known theories of communication include:

1. Shannon-Weaver Theory (1949): Linear Model of Communication

This model describes communication as a one-way process, where the sender conveys a message to the receiver through a specific channel. Communication barriers (noise) often interfere with this process, so the message is not received clearly. In an organizational context, communication barriers can be misunderstandings, cultural differences, or lack of communication skills.

2. Interpersonal Communication Theory (Berlo, 1960)

This theory emphasizes the importance of communication elements such as source, message, channel, and receiver. In this theory, the success of communication is highly dependent on the communication skills of the source and receiver, including the ability to listen, speak, and understand the context of communication.

3. Organizational Communication Theory (Barnlund, 1970)

Organizational communication is the process by which individuals in an organization share information to achieve common goals. Barnlund highlights that effective communication involves both formal and informal communication, where messages may be conveyed through meetings, reports, or everyday conversations.

4. Nonverbal Communication Theory (Mehrabian, 1971)

Nonverbal communication includes elements such as body language, facial expressions and voice intonation, which often give additional meaning to verbal messages. Mehrabian

emphasizes that more than 90% of communication is nonverbal, so it is important to understand this element of communication.

5. Social Exchange Theory (Homans, 1961)

This theory emphasizes that communication in organizations often involves a mutually beneficial exchange of information or support. In an organizational context, good communication can create mutually beneficial working relationships, increase trust, and strengthen employee loyalty.

Method

This study used a literature review and meta-analysis method of journal articles published in the 2019-2024 period. Each journal was analyzed to identify the relationship between democratic leadership, motivation, communication, and employee performance. This approach allows researchers to explore similarities and differences in research results, resulting in more comprehensive findings.

The research method uses a literature review with data sources in the form of scientific articles, official documents as the basis for collecting information. The literature review research method uses the Publish or Perish 8 application with the source google scholar. The keywords used are democratic leadership, motivation, communication, employee performance, meta-analysis with publication years 2019-2024 as the research data population. The criteria used in selecting scientific articles are based on relevant literature and sourced from accredited national journals. This study also uses a meta-analysis approach by collecting and analyzing data from various relevant studies. The data collected included the results of research on leadership style, motivation, communication, and employee performance. The analysis was conducted to identify patterns and relationships between these variables.

Result and Discussion

The results of searching, reviewing and tracking articles using Publish or Perish (PoP) using the keywords democratic leadership, motivation, communication, employee performance, and meta-analysis obtained 195 articles and years 2019 - 2024. From these results there are a total of 1372 citations, while the annual citation is 228.67 and cites per article are approximately 7.04 articles cited by the authors. While citations/author 847.47 and papers/author 146.25 so that the average citation perauthor reaches 1.89.

Citation metrics	
Publication years:	2019-2024
Citation years:	6 (2019-2025)
Papers:	195
Citations:	1372
Cites/year:	228.67
Cites/paper:	7.04
Cites/author:	847.47
Papers/author:	146.25
Authors/paper:	1.89
h-index:	18
g-index:	35
hI,norm:	12
hI,annual:	2.00
hA-index:	10
Papers with ACC ≥ 1,2,5,10,20:	66,38,21,10,7

Figure 1. Metrix of democratic leadership, motivation, communication,

employee performance, and meta-analysis on Publish or Perish

Source: Data processing

Some of the research results for the 2019-2024 period are based on sinta accredited journals with the titles and research conclusions below:

Tabel 1. Research Author and Conclusion

No	Author	Year	Journal/Sinta	Title	Conclusion
1	Rosmaini, & Tanjung	2019	Maneggio/ Sinta 5	The Effect of Competence, Motivation and Job Satisfaction on Employee Performance	There is a positive influence between competence, motivation, and job satisfaction on employee performance.
2	Bui, T. T., & et al.	2019	Applied Psychology	The Resilient Organisation: A Meta-Analysis of the Effect of Communication	Effective communication contributes to better team performance, especially in the context of diversity.
3	Suwanto, A.	2019	Jenius/ Sinta 4	The Effect of Work Discipline and Work Motivation on Employee Performance	Work discipline and work motivation have a positive effect on employee performance.
4	Alfian, A., & et al.	2019	Journal of Public Administration and Government/ Sinta 4	Employee Work Motivation at the Secretariat of the Regional House of Representatives of Gowa Regency	Employees' work motivation has a significant effect on their performance.
5	Arman, A., & Jasman, J.	2019	Jurnal Ilmu Administrasi Negara/Sinta 6	Relationship between Work Ethic, Leadership Behavior and Employee Motivation	Work ethic and leadership behavior have a positive effect on employee motivation.
6	Indrayana, I.	2019	JBMI/ Sinta 5	The Effect of Motivation on Job Satisfaction, Organizational Commitment and	Motivation has a positive effect on job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

No	Author	Year	Journal/Sinta	Title	Conclusion
				Employee Performance	
7	Harahap, R., & Tirtayasa, P.	2020	Maneggio/ Sinta 4	The Effect of Motivation, Discipline, and Job Satisfaction on Employee Performance	Motivation and work discipline have a significant effect on employee performance.
8	Purwanto, A., & et al.	2020	Jurnal Ilmu Kesehatan Masyarakat/ Sinta 4	The Impact of Leadership, Organizational Culture and Innovative Work Behavior on Employee Performance	Good leadership and a positive organizational culture improve employee performance.
9	Rusmitasari, D., & Mudayana, A.	2020	Jurnal Kesehatan Masyarakat Indonesia/ Sinta 4	Leadership and Work Motivation of Health Workers in Health Centers in Yogyakarta City	Good leadership increases the work motivation of health workers.
10	Arianto, A., & Kurniawan, R.	2020	Jenius/ Sinta 4	The Effect of Motivation and Work Environment on Employee Performance	A good working environment and high motivation contribute to improved employee performance.
11	S et al.	2020	Supremasi/ Sinta 5	Motivation and Work Experience of Village Officials in the Implementation of Village Government Duties	Motivation and work experience of village officials have a positive effect on task implementation.
12	Wirati, R., & et al.	2020	Jurnal Kepemimpinan dan Manajemen Keperawatan/ Sinta 3	Relationship between Burnout and Work Motivation of Executive Nurses	There is a negative relationship between burnout and nurses' work motivation, which affects their performance.

No	Author	Year	Journal/Sinta	Title	Conclusion
13	Sarbin, S.	2021	Jurnal Ilmu Manajemen Terapan/ Sinta 5	Factors Affecting Employee Performance: Compensation and Work Motivation	Compensation and work motivation have a significant effect on employee performance.
14	Santalla-Banderali, R., & Alvarado, A.	2022	International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health	Incidence of Leader–Member Exchange Quality, Communication Satisfaction, and Employee Work Engagement	Exchange quality and communication satisfaction have a positive effect on employee engagement.
15	An, Y., & et al.	2022	Journal of Navigation	The impact of communication on the work performance of Chinese seafarers	Effective communication has a positive effect on the performance of workers on the ship.
16	Josiah, J., & et al.	2022	Prosiding Seminar Nasional Ekonomi dan Bisnis	The Effect of Motivation and Job Satisfaction on Employee Performance	There is a positive influence between motivation and job satisfaction on employee performance.
17	Flannero et al.	2022	Journal of Environment and Management	The Influence of Work Environment and Motivation on Performance through Employee Job Satisfaction	A good working environment and high motivation increase job satisfaction, which in turn improves employee performance.
18	Liwing, L.	2023	Comserva Jurnal Penelitian dan Pengabdian Masyarakat	The Effect of Motivation on Employee Performance of PT. Sokonindo Automobile	Motivation has a significant effect on employee performance in automotive companies.

No	Author	Year	Journal/Sinta	Title	Conclusion
19	Mulyani, S.	2024	UPI YPTK Journal of Business and Economics	Effect of Communication, Work Ethics, Work Engagement and Work Environment on Employee Performance	Good communication and high work ethics improve employee performance.
20	Nugroho, A.	2024	World Journal of Advanced Research and Reviews	The influence of the work environment and communication on work morale	A good working environment and effective communication improve employee morale.

Data Source: Data Processing

Research on the factors that influence employee performance has been a major focus in various academic literatures. One aspect that is often discussed is the role of leadership, especially democratic leadership style, in improving work motivation and performance. Research by Rosmaini and Tanjung (2019) shows that competence, motivation, and job satisfaction have a positive influence on employee performance. This is in line with the findings of Purwanto et al. (2020) which highlight the importance of good leadership and organizational culture in creating innovative work behavior. In addition, research by Arman and Jasman (2019) emphasized that supportive leadership behavior, when combined with a high work ethic, can increase employee motivation. Another study by Rusmitasari and Mudayana (2020) showed that good leadership is also able to increase the motivation of health workers so that they can work more effectively in a stressful work environment.

The aspect of work motivation has also become a major focus in various studies. Harahap and Tirtayasa (2020) found that work motivation and discipline have a significant relationship with employee performance, especially in the public service sector. Work motivation also affects job satisfaction and organizational commitment, as revealed by Indrayana (2019). In the corporate context, Liwing (2023) showed that high employee motivation greatly affects their productivity, especially in the automotive sector. Other research, such as that conducted by Alfian et al. (2019), confirmed that employee motivation in government agencies also has a significant impact on the quality of services provided.

On the other hand, effective communication is proven to be a key factor in driving team and organizational performance. Research by Bui et al. (2019) highlights that effective communication contributes greatly to better team performance, especially in diverse work environments. This is reinforced by the findings of Santalla-Banderali and Alvarado (2022), who revealed that communication satisfaction increases employee engagement in their work. Research by Nugroho (2024) also found that good communication, if supported by a conducive work environment, can significantly improve employee morale.

In addition to these three main factors, the work environment also contributes to supporting employee performance. Sarbin (2021) showed that a positive work environment, when combined with good compensation and work motivation, can improve employee performance. Research by Flannero et al. (2022) also confirmed that a supportive work environment and high motivation can increase job satisfaction, which in turn has an impact on

employee productivity. Not only that, research by Wirati et al. (2020) identified that burnout has a negative relationship with nurses' work motivation, which in turn affects their performance. This suggests that good leadership and effective communication can help reduce the negative impact of burnout.

Overall, these studies show that democratic leadership, work motivation and effective communication are key interrelated factors in improving employee performance. They work synergistically to create a conducive work environment, increase job satisfaction and encourage employee engagement. In addition, supporting factors such as work discipline, work ethic, and work environment also have an important role in supporting organizational success.

The results of the meta-analysis show that there is a significant positive relationship between democratic leadership style, motivation, and communication on employee performance. Democratic leadership style not only increases employee motivation but also creates better communication channels in the organization. Democratic leadership has a significant influence on improving employee performance. This leadership style gives employees a sense of belonging, which in turn increases work motivation (Purwanto et al., 2020; Arman & Jasman, 2019).

Work motivation is proven to be one of the most important factors in determining employee performance. Research by Alfian et al. (2019) and Flannero et al. (2022) show that high motivation leads to increased productivity and job satisfaction. Motivation also affects employee loyalty to the organization (Indrayana, 2019). High motivation contributes to improving employee performance, as found in research by Indrayana which shows that motivation affects job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Suharto et al., 2019). In addition, Nugroho emphasized the importance of inclusive communication in creating high morale among employees (Widiani et al., 2019).

Good communication strengthens team coordination and accelerates task completion (Bui et al., 2019). Studies also show that effective communication improves interpersonal relationships between leaders and subordinates, thus creating a more harmonious work atmosphere (Santalla-Banderali & Alvarado, 2022).

The three factors of democratic leadership, work motivation and work communication work synergistically to create a conducive work environment. This combination results in a significant positive impact on employee performance, both individually and in teams. From the results of this study, it can be concluded that to improve employee performance, organizations need to implement a democratic leadership style, motivate employees effectively, and ensure good communication among all team members.

Conclusion

In order to improve employee performance, organizations should consider implementing a democratic leadership style, motivating employees, and building effective communication. This research reveals that democratic leadership, work motivation, and effective communication are the three main pillars in improving employee performance. The practical implications of the findings include the need for organizations to implement an inclusive leadership style, increase motivation through rewards and training, and establish an efficient communication system. This research also provides important insights for organizational managers and leaders to create a productive and competitive work environment.

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