



The Effect of Participatory Leadership Style and Organizational Culture on Employee Performance

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Abstract

In the current research, the authors conduct research aimed at determining the determinants of performance among the employees in government institutions; however, they argue that employee performance cannot be attributed to factors/determinants like managerial initiative alone but the collective influence of the leadership behaviour and the institutional culture combined. The empirical study, with quantitative research design and a sample of 50 employees taken as a random sample of Perumda Tirta Mangkaluku, Palopo City, uses multiple regressions in statistically examining the correlation between participative leadership, organisational culture and performance. This result shows that there is a positive relationship between participative leadership and performance but a point must be made that this effect is significantly weaker compared to that of organisational culture. In particular, participative leadership contributes only 27.9 percent of the variance in performance yet organisational culture contributes 59.6 percent. The findings give the impression that performance is not only dependent on the managerial efforts but is inherent in the organisation itself in terms of normative architecture. Culture, unlike appearing as a peripheral variable, is utilized as a constitutive power that influences behaviour among employees. The research, therefore, highlights the importance of programming not only to leadership training or institutional process reform, but to the development of meaning systems, symbolic integration and cultural conformity that would make high performance accessible and sustainable.

Introduction

A valuable component and asset that every business must possess is human resources. This is because human resources possess the ability to control and direct all business activities, determining the success of the business itself. Therefore, having ideal human resources is crucial for businesses and organizations seeking growth. Although abundant, this does not necessarily mean that human resources are the sole factor to consider. However, selecting ideal personnel can stimulate the operations and directed activities of an organization (Widarko & Anwarodin, 2022; Caruth et al., 2008; Bandura, 2023). These activities directed toward achieving business goals are referred to as employee performance.

Employee performance in a business is a form of support for the company's progress and goals. Employee performance is directly proportional to the company's performance (Vuong et al., 2022; Andreas, 2022; Anitha, 2014). Therefore, companies need to strive to motivate their employees to achieve high levels of performance. Employee performance is a term referring to employee achievement assessed against specific criteria determined by the company (Wahida

2019; Purnama, 2021; Szabó et al., 2017; Purnama, 2021; Ahmed et al., 2013). Performance is defined as the results achieved by an employee in each position according to the standards set for that position. The determination of positions and standards is naturally based on decisions made by leaders to foster employee motivation. A leader's role is not merely a matter of language, but also reflects leadership, organizational culture, and motivation as supporting factors that influence employee execution (Paais & Pattiruhu, 2020; Ribière & Sitar, 2003; Liden et al., 2014; Paredes-Saavedra et al., 2024; Liu et al., 2024).

A lack of communication between leaders and subordinates often leads to decreased employee motivation (Men et al., 2022; Tao et al., 2022; Alshamrani et al., 2023). Feeling uninvolved in decisions and appearing like subordinates who must always obey without objection, coupled with less than ideal placement, constitutes an authoritarian leadership style that is not applicable in all institutions, including the public service sector. For example, researchers at Perumda Tirta Mangkaluku, Palopo City, found that the leadership style there was deemed ineffective, especially in directing employees to be innovative in providing services to the public.

After interviews with several employees of Perumda Tirta Mangkaluku, Palopo City, researchers discovered that the leader there employed a bored leadership style, characterized by a lack of communication with employees and apathy towards the circumstances they faced. Leaders were also deemed to rarely involve their subordinates in decision-making, resulting in unfairness because unilateral decisions are undemocratic (Tarmizi & Hutasuhut 2021; Bessong, 2020; Tatum et al., 2003; Garcia-Gibson, 2022). This explanation raises speculation that an agency should adopt a participatory leadership style. This style can build good relationships between employees and leaders through discussions between subordinates and leaders regarding ideas, suggestions, and input in decision-making.

Another problem encountered was the organizational culture at Perumda Tirta Mangkaluku. One of these problems was the lack of teamwork, resulting in an individualistic culture that reduces collaboration among employees, which can hinder the achievement of shared goals. Robbins (Haeruddin et al., 2022) argues that the system of common meanings shared by members that distinguishes one organization from another is known as organizational culture. Meanwhile, Wood (Kesek et al., 2021) states that organizational culture consists of principles and systems developed by the organization, which determine how members behave. The importance of organizational culture in an organization is that it serves as a characteristic or distinctive feature that guides standards of behavior and decision-making in line with the goals to be achieved. Organizational culture is also believed to shape the work environment and live within it, based on the values upheld as the identity of the organization's employees.

The findings above are the reason for the researcher's interest in exploring the phenomenon in the company with the title "The Influence of Participative Leadership Style and Organizational Culture on Employee Performance at Perumda Tirta Mangkaluku, Palopo City".

Methods

Types of research

Quantitative research was chosen as the form of this research, because Sugiyono (2018) explained that the research involved numbers as aspects that represent the research object that were analyzed statistically using statistical processing tools called quantitative. By using a correlational approach to find the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable. By examining the symptoms and proving the scientific validity of the theoretical framework proposed in accordance with the research problem. In this regard, this

time the aim is to find out the influence of participatory leadership style and organizational culture on employee performance at Perumda Tirta Mangkaluku, Palopo City.

Location and Time of Research

This research was conducted at Perumda Tirta Mangkaluku, Palopo City, on Jl. Pongsimpin No. 14, Mungkajang District, Palopo City, South Sulawesi. The research was conducted from October 7 to November 20, 2024.

Population and Sample Discussion

Sugiyono (2018) describes a population as a target area containing items, individuals with specific numbers and attributes selected for observation, research, and analysis before drawing conclusions. Therefore, after conducting interviews, the researcher found a population of 350 employees of Perumda Tirta Mangkaluku in Palopo City.

The portion that meets the criteria for population characteristics is called a sample. Because researchers do not have the resources, time, and energy to investigate every population, they can utilize samples drawn from the population. However, if the population is too large, the sample must be truly representative. The number of 350 employees of Perumda Tirta Mangkaluku, Palopo City, was too large for the researcher to include. Therefore, in the sampling process, the researcher used probability sampling combined with basic random sampling methodology, namely random sampling that does not take population strata into account. Using the following formula:

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2} \qquad n = \frac{350}{1+350(0,1)^2}$$

$$n = \text{Sample} \qquad n = 0,01 \times 350 + 1 = 4,50$$

$$N = \text{Population} \qquad n = \frac{350}{4,50}$$

$$1 = \text{Conditions} \qquad n = 77$$

$$N = 1 \%$$

Data Source

The data sources used in this study are primary data collected directly, and secondary data obtained indirectly. This is explained by (Sugiyono 2013) who characterizes secondary data as information collected indirectly, such as from books, periodicals, journals, statistical data, or the internet related to the research topic, while primary data is data collected directly from field objects.

Data collection technique

A questionnaire was chosen as a direct data collection technique after conducting field observations. A questionnaire is a data collection technique that includes statements and questions from researchers to respondents who are part of the research object (Sugiyono 2013). Researchers used a questionnaire to collect data on a number of topics. The questions were closed-ended so that respondents could react according to the actual situation, thus collecting data from a number of topics. The questions were closed-ended to allow respondents to react in a way that reflects the actual situation. The purpose of the survey was to answer how organizational culture and participatory leadership style affect employee performance at Tirta Mangkaluku in Palopo City.

Data Analysis Techniques

Researchers conducted data analysis using techniques that began with exclusive instrument testing, summarized reliability and validity, and tested classical assumptions, including normality, linearity, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity. After applying a multiple linear regression analysis approach, t-tests and f-tests were used to test the hypotheses. The regression equation below was used:

$$Y = a + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + e$$

Keterangan :

Y = Employee Performance

b. a = Constant

c. β = Regression Coefficient

d. X_1 = Participative Leadership Style

e. X_2 = Organizational Culture

f. e = Standard Error.

Result and Discussion

Validity Test

To determine whether the information in the questionnaire is valid or not, a validity test is conducted. The Pearson correlation value is obtained by calculating the correlation between each respondent's item score and the total variable to conduct the validity test. If, at a significance level of 5% or 0.05, the calculated R value is greater than the table r value, the item is considered authentic.

Table 1. UI Validity

Variable	Item Number	r-count	r-table	Item Status
Participative Leadership Style (X1)	X1P1	0.717	0.279	VALID
	X1P2	0.738	0.279	VALID
	X1P3	0.639	0.279	VALID
	X1P4	0.746	0.279	VALID
	X1P5	0.712	0.279	VALID
Organizational Culture (X2)	X2P1	0.533	0.279	VALID
	X2P2	0.655	0.279	VALID
	X2P3	0.636	0.279	VALID
	X2P4	0.682	0.279	VALID
	X2P5	0.677	0.279	VALID
Employee Performance	YP1	0.703	0.279	VALID
	YP2	0.819	0.279	VALID
	YP3	0.779	0.279	VALID
	YP4	0.817	0.279	VALID
	YP5	0.729	0.279	VALID

Source: SPSS Processed Data, 2024

As seen in the table above, the reliability test results show that each variable has a Cronbach's Alpha score greater than 0.50. This indicates that each variable has a fairly high level of reliability, indicating that the questionnaire used is considered trustworthy.

Reliability Test

The reliability test used the Cronbach's alpha technique. Measurements are considered reliable if the Cronbach's alpha value is >0.6 and the Cronbach's alpha value is

Table 2. Reliability Test

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Description
Participative Leadership Style (X1)	0.747	Reliable
Organizational Culture (X2)	0.621	Reliable
Employee Performance (Y)	0.827	Reliable

All variables used as research instruments have been assessed as reliable based on the reliability test results shown in the table above. With a Cronbach's alpha value >0.600 , this instrument has a high level of reliability, making it suitable for use as a reliable measurement tool.

Normality Test

The Kolmogorov-Smirnov One Sample Test is a method used to test normality. A significance value $>5\%$ indicates that the data is normally distributed. Conversely, a significance value $<5\%$ indicates that the data is not normally distributed.

Table 3. Normality Test

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test			
			Unstandardized Residual
N			50
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean		.0000000
	Std. Deviation		1.36157458
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute		.144
	Positive		.128
	Negative		-.144
Test Statistic			.144
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)			.012 ^c
Monte Carlo Sig. (2-tailed)	Sig.		.234 ^d
	99% Confidence Interval	Lower Bound	.223
		Upper Bound	.245
a. Test distribution is Normal.			
b. Calculated from data.			
c. Lilliefors Significance Correction.			

Source: SPSS Processed Data, 2024

A significance value of 0.245 was obtained from the results of the data normality test using the One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test. When compared to a probability value of 0.05, the significance value ($0.245 > 0.05$) is greater than the probability value. Thus, the data can be considered to meet the normal distribution test.

Data Linearity Test

Regression analysis was used in this study, and variables were tested at a significance level of 0.05. The following is the basis for determining the linearity of the data: If the significance value of a variable is higher than 0.05, it indicates a linear relationship. Conversely, if the significance value is less than 0.05, there is no linear relationship with that variable.

Table 4. Data Linearity Test

ANOVA Table							
			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Participative Leadership Style and Organizational Culture Employee Performance	Between Groups	(Combined)	125.033	7	17.862	3.902	.000
		Linearity	.071	1	.071	.015	.000
		Deviation from Linearity	124.963	6	20.827	4.550	.235
	Within Groups		192.242	42	4.577		
	Total		317.276	49			

Source: Processed SPSS Data, 2024

ANOVA analysis of the data results shows a Deviation from Linearity of 0.235. The significance value ($0.235 > 0.05$) is higher than the probability value of 0.05. Thus, the Participative Leadership Style (X1) and Organizational Culture (X2) variables have a substantial linear relationship with the Employee Performance (Y) variable.

Multicollinearity Test

The most common cutoff is usually 0.10, equivalent to a VIF above 10. Because tolerance and VIF values are interrelated, a low tolerance value indicates significant collinearity.

Table 5. Multicollinearity Test

Coefficients ^a								
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	2.384	2.272		1.049	.299		
	Participative Leadership Style (x1)	-.009	.121	-.009	-.072	.943	.523	1.911
	Organizational Culture (x2)	.901	.148	.778	6.069	.000	.523	1.911

a. Dependent Variable: Kinerja Karyawan (Y)

Source: SPSS Processed Data, 2024

Based on the previous table, the tolerance value is 0.523, and the variance inflation factor (VIF) is 1.911. If the tolerance value is greater than or equal to 0.1 and the VIF (variance inflation factor) is less than or equal to 10, the regression equation model is considered free from multicollinearity. Table 4.9 shows that the data does not exhibit multicollinearity because the tolerance value of 0.523 is greater than or equal to 0.1, and the VIF values of the two X variables are 1.911, less than or equal to 10.

Heteroscedasticity Test

From the results of the heteroscedasticity test, it can be concluded that there is no tendency for heteroscedasticity because the points are randomly distributed above and below the Y-axis. Heteroscedasticity deviations will occur if the points above and below the Y-line are not randomly distributed.

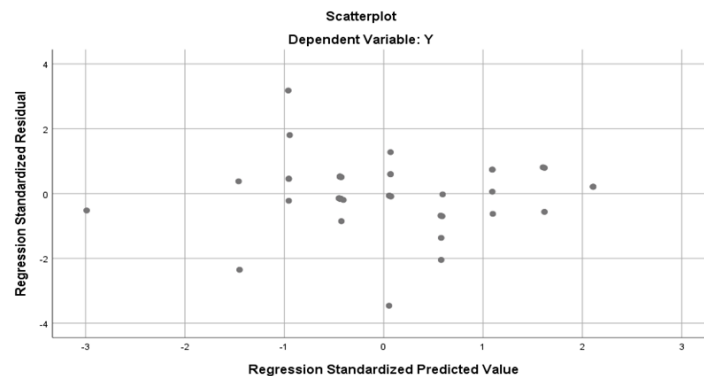


Figure 1. Heteroscedasticity Test

Source: SPSS Processed Data, 2024

The figure illustrates heteroscedasticity in the regression model. There is no clear pattern, but the points are scattered above and below the zero point on the y-axis. We can conclude that there are no signs of heteroscedasticity in the regression model.

Multiple Regression Analysis Test

To investigate how two or more independent factors influence the dependent variable, multiple linear regression analysis is used.

Table 6. Multiple Regression Analysis Test

Coefficients ^a								
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	2.384	2.272		1.049	.299		
	Participative Leadership Style (X1)	-.009	.121	-.009	-.072	.943	.523	1.911
	Organizational Culture (X2)	.901	.148	.778	6.069	.000	.523	1.911
a. Dependent Variable: Kinerja Karyawan (Y)								

Source: SPSS Processed Data, 2024

From the results of the multiple regression analysis, the following multiple regression equation can be obtained:

$$Y = 2,384 + (-,009X1) + 0,901X2 + e$$

The regression equation above has the following meanings: 1) The a (constant) value is 2.384, meaning that if there are no independent variables or if it is equal to zero, performance will be 2.384; 2) The participative leadership style coefficient (b1) is -.009, meaning that every one-unit increase in the participative leadership style variable (X1) will increase performance by -.009; 3) The organizational culture coefficient (b2) is 0.901, meaning that every one-unit increase in the organizational culture variable (X2) will increase performance by 0.901.

T-Test

By comparing the calculated T-value with the T-table at the 5% level, this study uses a t-test to assess the degree of partial understanding of the independent variable (X) relative to the dependent variable (Y).

Table 7. T-Test of Participative Leadership Style on Employee Performance

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	10.872	2.367		4.593	.000
	X1	.498	.116	.528	4.309	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Kinerja Karyawan (Y)						

Source: SPSS Processed Data, 2024

Based on the research results, the significance value of participatory leadership style was $0.000 < 0.05$, with the calculated and calculated T values 4.309 and 1.677, respectively. Thus, it can be concluded that employee performance at Perumda Tirta Mangkaluku, Palopo City, is significantly influenced by participatory leadership.

Table 8. T-Test of Organizational Culture on Employee Performance

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.361	2.226		1.061	.294
	X2	.894	.106	.772	8.409	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Employee performance (Y)						

Source: SPSS Processed Data, 2024

The results show that the organizational culture value is $0.000 < 0.05$, the calculated T value is 8.409, and the T table value is 1.677, or $8.409 > 1.677$. Therefore, it can be concluded that the performance of Perumda Tirta Mangkaluku employees in Palopo City is significantly influenced by corporate culture.

F Test

The test is conducted by examining the significance column in each F count or by comparing the calculated F value with the F table.

Table 9. F Test

ANOVA ^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	150.123	2	75.061	34.629	.000 ^b
	Residual	101.877	47	2.168		
	Total	252.000	49			
a. Dependent Variable: Employee performance (Y)						
b. Organizational Culture (X2), Participative Leadership Style (X1)						

Source: SPSS Processed Data, 2024

Based on the F-test results, the calculated F-value is 34.629, greater than the F-table value of 3.20 ($34.629 > 3.20$), and the significance value is 0.000, greater than 0.05 ($0.000 < 0.05$). Thus, it can be concluded that corporate culture and participatory leadership style both have a significant impact on employee performance.

Coefficient of Determination Test (R²)

The level of contribution of the independent variables to the explanation and the influence of the dependent variable were determined using the coefficient of determination test.

Table 10. Coefficient of Determination (R²) Test of Participatory Leadership Style on Employee Performance

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.528 ^a	.279	.264	1.946
a. Participative Leadership Style (X1)				

Source: SPSS Processed Data, 2024

The output shows that the coefficient of determination, or R-squared, is 0.279. This figure, $0.528 \times 0.528 = 0.279$, is the result of squaring the correlation coefficient, or R-squared. This indicates that while X1 has a partial effect of 27.9% on Y, factors not included in this regression equation or not investigated in this study contribute the remaining 72.1%.

Table 11. Test of the Coefficient of Determination (R² Test) of Organizational Culture

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.772 ^a	.596	.587	1.457
a. Organizational Culture (X2)				

Source: SPSS Processed Data, 2024

The output shows that the coefficient of determination, or R-squared, is 0.596. This figure, $0.772 \times 0.772 = 0.596$, is the result of squaring the correlation coefficient, or R-squared. This indicates that X2 has a partial effect of 59.6% on Y, with additional variables not included in this regression equation or not studied in this study contributing the remaining 40.4%.

The Impact of Participative Leadership Style on Employee Performance

The empirical findings presented in this research ostensibly demonstrate that participative leadership is an eminent predictor of employee performance at any given public service institutions, a fact that also concurs with the assertions of the current theoretical paradigms in

the field of leadership studies. By incorporating employees in the decision-making processes at organizational levels, their mental interest in institutional outcomes increases and thus delivers measurable results that are sustainable in the process of performance gains. The large statistical relationship that can be found at Perumda Tirta Mangkaluku and whereby participating leadership explained a significant percentage of the change in performance warrants support of the literature regarding democratic leadership models and its transformative power within the bureaucratic context. Adam et al. (2023) argue similarly against it and recall that participatory leadership enhances employee voice and at the same time, it prevents bureaucratic inertia because cognitive responsibility is distributed vertically. Similarly, Saputra et al. (2023) have discovered that the performance gains that can occur under a participatory process of decision-making are not only small, but more are systemic, presenting outcomes of a new organization of power relations between the superior and subordinate sides. In such institutional structure, employees no longer act as subjects towards whom top-down command is directed, but as co-agents of organizational strategy, a factor that the analysis by Tarmizi & Hutasuht (2021) also supportive of as they examine the dynamics of the civil service within decentralized administrations. Such theoretical findings are also supported by strong empirical studies such as those conducted by Supardi and Anshari (2022), Prajitiasari et al. (2022), and Purwanto et al. (2020), in which the authors contend that participative leadership enables the transformation of employee potential into the institutional performance by means of the mechanisms of mutual accountability and role clarity. Finally, the effect of participative leadership to the performance of the employees is of a psychological basis but structurally institutional, which is the fundamental knowledge that this study on participative leadership is grounded upon and even other projects in the democracy leadership aspect of research. Intrinsic motivation among workers who feel their input counts in the formation of organisation policies and operational decisions is higher, a similarity that according to social exchange theory as developed by Habi et al. (2022) would be consistent with workers who feel they have a voice in an organisation where they work. This motivational gain does not dissipate sufficiently when it is routinized to form a part of the regular routine part of the organization in the case where participation becomes regular instead of episodic. Wahida (2019) highlights the fact that once managers apply a systematic process to include suggestions made by employees in current structures, a feedback loop is created that can strengthen the sense of commitment to the task and support the role congruence process. This congruence is particularly conducive in government departments where bureaucracies have the advantage of demoralizing employees unless there are outlets of participation. This argument was also supported by Lestari & Wahyuni (2020), who examined the transport logistics industry, where participative leadership related to the increased employee job satisfaction level and a low turnover rate. The sustainability of such effects was further confirmed by Muis et al. (2018), as their results indicated the stronger relationship of participative environment effects on the stability of performance due to the high values of adaptability and employee discretion in these focus areas when it comes to tasks performance. Supplementarily, Haeruddin et al. (2022) have shown that in the case of the lack of participative leadership, there is no loss in productivity among employees because of shipwrecked ability but instead because of institutional disaffection. According to Kesek et al. (2021), such disaffection can be overcome by making intentional efforts at leadership to legitimate the views of the subordinates, through demonstrating strategic dialogue, which is referred to as institutionalized voice.

Cognitively, through participative leadership, greater processing of work-related facts and information is presented and there is fostering of common meaning of institutional goals. In distributed leadership, challenges are redefined by the employees to assume the form of shared

and thus not individual challenges that require group solutions. The intellectual change, observed in Insan & Yuniawan (2016), confirms that by changing the mode of leadership, which was solely based on a hierarchical model to participative, the authors of the change not only enhanced the quality of management decisions, but also increased compliance procedures and adherence to principles of initiative-taking. In organization where participative leadership is not applied, the decision making process is often reactive and compliance-driven leading to employees who simply work within narrowly defined areas of tasks. On the other hand, organisations that adopt participative leadership foster a practice of boundary spanning and inter-departmental co-operation, which is witnessed by Lestary & Chaniago (2018). Even further, Aida et al. (2023) confirm the above realization by singling out participative structures as central to the emergence of adaptive expertise in a public-service background.

Once leadership structures have expressed transparency, employees do not only view these practices as a matter of procedure, but also realise them as ethical commitment towards inclusion, a moving area explored by Amanda et al. (2017) and explained further by Nezha (2014), whose article shows that participatory actions support epistemic fidelity in employees when dealing with intricate decision-making contexts. In this context, acting, within the framework of this kind of setting, acts as an instrument both of knowledge sharing and symbolic token of collective ownership, and thus can contribute both to cognitive behavior and to sentimental allegiance.

Organisational learning and institutional memory are also influenced by the effect of the participative leadership. Entrepreneurs who always apply the principles of participation are more likely to maintain the knowledge over time and between personnel changes, and Prajitiasari et al. (2022) emphasise that their conclusion is proved with reference to Saputra et al. (2023), who indicate that participative leadership enables informal knowledge networks to thrive in addition to the formal structure. Specifically, when task fluidity and responsiveness to customer service demands are important aspects at Perumda Tirta Mangkaluku, participative leadership makes performance unaffected by harsh scripts which adapt to employee discretion and the situational judgement of employees.. The ability to adapt within organizations have proved to be a critical element in institutions of the public service where political unrest and financial insecurity is the order of the day. Based on a quantitative examination of 683 Indonesian public servants, Muis et al. (2018) were able to identify that participative leadership contains strategic improvisation, which allowed promptly readjusting the institutions without top-down instructions. By doing so, this leadership style provides a united account of mission correspondence as the employees absorb the values that this organization holds by sharing them through dialogical mechanisms, which, according to the qualitative research conducted by Tueno (2017) on the cultures of administrative learning, extend to all decision-making abilities. When kept up, these dialogical mechanisms lead to what Lestari & Wahyuni (2020) refer to as behavioral convergence, when the workers portray behavior that is self-regulated in line with the business imperatives even when not directly controlled.

Nevertheless, the effect of participative leadership needs to be considered in a wider circle of interdependent factors. Even though the data indicate a statistically robust proportion of performance variation is elucidated by this type of leadership, it should not be viewed in a vacuum of the cultural, procedural, and structural factors that also determine employee behaviour in the ecosystem. According to Supardi and Anshari (2022), organizational climate, resource availability, and institutional maturity enhance or reduce the effectiveness of the leadership. Thus, even though the given study reiterates the beneficial and influential position of participative leadership, it is also consistent with the more moderate understandings provided by the authors of Muis et al. (2018) and Haeruddin et al. (2022) due to their realization

that leadership can dynamically interact with organizational systems. Then it becomes irrelevant whether participative leadership figured in an official-form or the intensity with which it was practiced in routine operations. This is repeated by Wahida (2019), who argued that actual influence is much more important than symbolic participation, because it leads to cynicism rather than commitment.

As argued by Siregar et al. (2022), culture determines the “grammar of action” in organizations, creating a semiotic environment within which individuals construct meaning and coordinate behavior. This aligns with insights from Haeruddin et al. (2022), who observed that public institutions with robust performance systems often rest upon a lattice of shared values and informal norms that have accumulated and crystallized over time. In such environments, formal procedures and leadership behaviors become effective only when they resonate with cultural expectations. Culture, in this sense, does not merely support performance—it defines its terms.

What distinguishes organizational culture from other determinants of employee performance is its character as a slow-changing, historically embedded structure. While leadership can shift with appointments and training, culture persists across managerial regimes, silently conditioning how change is received, resisted, or reinterpreted. At Perumda Tirta Mangkaluku, the strength of the cultural effect suggests that performance is less a product of direct supervision than of internalized scripts that guide behavior even in the absence of oversight. This observation is supported by the longitudinal analysis of Amanda et al. (2017), who found that institutions with coherent cultures maintained performance continuity even through periods of organizational turbulence. Similarly, Tueno (2017) emphasized that in local government offices, performance fluctuations could be predicted less by policy changes than by the depth of cultural alignment among staff. These findings complicate the instrumental view of culture as a tool to be deployed by management. Instead, they point toward culture as a social ecology that individuals inhabit, which shapes their perceptual frames, moral intuitions, and behavioral propensities. Wahida (2019) further confirmed that employees embedded in cultures marked by clarity, fairness, and coherence display higher levels of task orientation and discretionary effort even when other structural supports are lacking.

It is also established in this study that organizational culture cannot be significantly reduced to slogans, artifacts, or managerial talk. It should be regarded as a generative system that orders institutional life on pre-conscious level. Employees react to what is literally stated, but also to the spirit of the workplace full of unwritten regulations, the cliques, the rumors that spread in office rumor mills. This constitutes the tacit curriculum of organizational behavior that Lestari & Wahyuni (2020) explained employees were given the knowledge of what was and was not important by reading these ambient signals. At Perumda Tirta Mangkaluku shared cultural expectations take the form of distributed cognition and this mechanism assists in action coordination and reciprocity without having to elaborate directives. This confirms the position expressed by Kesek et al. (2021) that culture replaces the formal systems of control in organizations serving the community because it internalizes performance norms within the unquestioned practice of the day-to-day labor. This is what Muis et al. (2018) also found in their comparative study whereby it was noticed that those institutions, which exhibit high cultural coherence, did not need to conduct all the performance audits as employees were able to self-regulate through mutual norms and peer accountability. In this notion, culture does not just supplement formal structures rather in most cases, it makes them irrelevant.

It is important to note that the culture is not fixed but undergoes a constant reproduction process based on interaction, narration and symbolic activity. Thus, strong cultures are not transmitted as a state of fixed assets but should be actively sustained, deconstructed and occasionally

challenged. The almost 60 percent attributions of performance variance through cultural factors, as found by the empirical results of this study, suggest that at Perumda Tirta Mangkaluku, similar reproduction may be taking place on some practices that reaffirm collective memory and moral order. According to Saputra et al. (2023), cultural continuity in state-owned enterprises depends on informal mentorship and ritualized meetings that could preserve the culture. Siregar et al. (2022) also indicated the performance culture was frequently conveyed in some form of narrative performance-anecdotes about a great service, morality tales of poor performance, or storytelling chat- which subsequently orient behavior by summoning up the symbolic references shared by the users. On a meta level, it was noted by Supardi and Anshari (2022) that myths and histories that institutions construct may ascribe a greater weight in behavior to than strategic plans or written policies. This is due to the fact that they embed value judgment into emotionally charged forms which present ethical basis to action that is both attractive to identity and to reason. Therefore culture can be viewed as a compass, in the way that it determines how people conduct themselves but also a mirror in the manner that it provides an appreciation of a shared identity.

It would, however, be wrong to perceive culture as positive and also a solution to performance issues. The impact of culture lies on its intra-consistency, compatibility with the goals of an institution, and its ability to address the changing environments. Although this study recognizes that culture serves as a performance enabler at Perumda Tirta Mangkaluku, it does not presume that every culture set up is equally productive. It is well documented with descriptions of toxic or stagnant organizational cultures that kills innovation, discourage divergent voices, and reinforces mediocrity. Aida et al. (2023) pointed out that within certain public agencies, cultural expectations concerning seniority or deference may kill initiative and lead to passive approval of practice instead of active involvement. Post-World War cultures where dedication instead of talent is the highlighted requirement can be damaging to an organization, and lead to a comfortable yet unproductive organization, as a caution by Nezha (2014) states. Thus, it is not culture as such that is important but certain values and norms presented by culture. Culture that favours openness, learning, fairness, and shared purpose will facilitate high performance. It usually sabotages it when it puts more emphasis on following hierarchies, avoidance and risk aversion. Even the empirical ability of culture to act as a predictor in this study does not warrant celebration but inquiry, the type of culture that is coming into such findings and whether it is adaptable to revisitations in the future.

This research paper confirms that organization culture is not a fact of the background but a main architecture of performance in the public sector institutions. In contrast to the leadership and its visible interventions and clear directions, culture is invisible in its infrastructures of meaning and belonging. It works outside the clock, beyond formal hierarchies, and largely to the unconsciousness of exponents of order. At Perumda Tirta Mangkaluku, the culture experience seems to have produced a stable fit between institutional objective and employee behavior to produce a performance pattern which is consistent and adaptive at the same time. The resulting implication, both to practitioners and scholars, is a clear one performance cannot be engineered by a set of rules and incentives. It has to be developed by continuously investing in the moral, symbolic, and historical stock of the institution. In this respect, a culture management is not an addition to the strategy of performance, it is a strategy itself.

Conclusion

This paper provides powerful empirical evidence that participative leadership, as well as organizational culture productivity, have substantial impacts on the performance of employees but not in an equivalent proportionate manner and with the same mechanism. Participative

leadership, which conveys a statistically significant influence, illustrates its impact mostly using the concept of relational immediacy - building motivation, fostering voice, and promoting the ownership. Its advantage is that it enables the employee to recognise themselves as builders and not minorities. Nevertheless, the figures clinically denote the fact that it is organizational culture that presents itself as the deeper structure around which all these leadership initiatives are meshed together in being interpreted, mediated and enhanced or pacified. The definition of culture in this institutional context involves the interpretive background upon which the performance expectations gain meaning, coherence and action. Almost sixty percent of the variance in performance in Perumda Tirta Mangkaluku is attributable to matters of culture, and this clearly shows that the performance at Perumda Tirta Mangkaluku is more of a reflection of shared norms, informal rules and symbolic conformity rather than the direct manager involvement.

This conclusion necessitates a basic rethinking about the manner in which performance in the public institutions should be tackled. Although leadership development is required, it should be implemented with an active cultural work: reaffirming common value systems, explaining sense of the institution, and instilling ethical consistency at every level of operation. Culture is not to be regarded as a cosmetic face or dead fact, but as a living, always changing medium in the process of which performance is being practiced. Thus, it is not a problem of controlling behavior via the process to enhance long-run performance improvement in the institution. It is through this symbolic framework that enduring organizational excellence is achieved--not decreed as through some top-down enforced regime of inspections but blossoming out of itself organically.

Suggestions

Based on the findings, this study proceeded without any obstacles. However, the researcher can offer several suggestions that can improve education in general. The researcher's recommendations are as follows: It is hoped that future research will 1) be able to further explore the influence of organizational culture and participative leadership style on employee performance, and 2) be able to expand the scope of research, because current research has not been able to fully describe the fulfillment of satisfaction obtained. Therefore, it is hoped that future research will be able to examine elements other than participative leadership style and organizational culture

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