

The Effect Of Democratic Leadership On Employee Performance At The Marioriaja Village Office

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the effect of democratic leadership style on employee performance at the Marioriaja Village Office, Marioriwawo District, Soppeng Regency. Democratic leadership is viewed as an approach that can create a participatory and open work environment while encouraging employee involvement in decision-making processes. The research employs an associative quantitative approach using a survey method. The population consists of 18 employees, all of whom were selected as the sample through a saturated sampling technique. Data were collected using a Likert-scale questionnaire and analyzed through simple linear regression. The results indicate that democratic leadership style has a positive and significant effect on employee performance, as reflected by the regression equation $Y = 9.68 + 0.608X$ and a significance value of 0.007. These findings demonstrate that the better the implementation of leadership that values employee opinions and promotes cooperation, the higher the level of productivity and the quality of public services within the village government.

INTRODUCTION

Leadership is a key element that determines the success of an organization, particularly in the context of human resource management to achieve predetermined productivity levels. In the era of continuously transforming village governance, organizations are required to have leaders who not only act as holders of authority but also serve as drivers capable of guiding subordinates harmoniously while paying attention to efficiency and effectiveness. Contemporary leaders must possess the ability to create a supportive work environment through high integrity and moral values for the common good. One leadership approach that has become increasingly important in the context of public service is the democratic leadership style. Democratic leadership does not merely focus on achieving administrative targets; rather, it seeks to stimulate the potential of each employee through collaboration and active participation. Leaders who adopt this style are able to establish two-way communication, value employee input, and encourage their involvement in decision-making processes through deliberation. Furthermore, leaders within this model respect the values and dignity of each individual, recognizing

that every employee plays a vital role as a valuable asset in achieving the organization's vision. The presence of a democratic leadership style has a significant impact on the work environment within government offices. In a participatory atmosphere, employees feel valued and develop a stronger sense of moral responsibility to contribute optimally to public service delivery. This condition creates a conducive work climate for increasing productivity, which ultimately leads to improved performance outcomes in terms of both quality and quantity. Empirical evidence indicates that democratic leadership is closely associated with employee performance, as actively involved employees tend to demonstrate higher work motivation and stronger loyalty. In this context, the Marioriaja Village Office, as the center of administrative services and village-level development, relies heavily on the performance and dedication of its village officials in delivering effective and transparent public services. Employees who are committed and work with high levels of innovation are capable of providing satisfactory services to the community, which in turn contributes to the sustainability and advancement of village governance. Therefore, this study is important and relevant in evaluating the extent to which democratic leadership style influences employee performance at the Marioriaja Village Office.

METHOD

This study adopts an associative quantitative approach using a survey method. The research was conducted at the Marioriaja Village Office, located in Marioriwawo District, Soppeng Regency. The population of this study comprised all employees working at the Marioriaja Village Office, with a total sample of 18 individuals selected using a saturated sampling technique. The independent variable in this study is the democratic leadership style (X), which is measured through four indicators: joint decision-making, appreciation of subordinates' potential, openness to criticism and suggestions, and cooperation with subordinates. Meanwhile, the dependent variable is employee performance (Y), which is evaluated based on several aspects, namely quality, quantity, independence, and initiative. The research data were collected by distributing questionnaires directly to the respondents. Prior to data analysis, the measurement instruments were tested for validity and reliability to ensure the accuracy and credibility of the data obtained. Data analysis was conducted using simple linear regression to evaluate the effect of democratic leadership style on employee performance.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study provide a comprehensive overview of the respondents' profiles as well as the effects of the variables examined. Data on respondent characteristics indicate that the Marioriaja Village Office is dominated by female employees, accounting for 66.7%, while male employees represent 33.3%. In terms of age, the largest group falls within the 23–30 year range (55.5%), indicating that the organization is driven by a workforce in an optimal productive age. Regarding job distribution, staff positions constitute the highest proportion at 38.6%, followed by hamlet heads and other structural positions. This condition confirms that most respondents are operational personnel who interact directly with public services, making their performance highly dependent on leadership direction and motivation in the field. Descriptive analysis indicates that the democratic leadership style at the Marioriaja Village Office is perceived very positively by employees. The indicator of

joint decision-making emerges as a particular strength, where leaders are considered capable of valuing subordinates' potential and being receptive to criticism and suggestions. In line with this, the employee performance variable also shows high values. Employees demonstrate a strong sense of responsibility toward work quality and punctuality in delivering public services. These findings suggest that positive perceptions of participatory leadership are correlated with a high level of employee awareness in achieving organizational targets optimally. Hypothesis testing using simple linear regression analysis produced the regression equation $Y = 9.68 + 0.608X$. The regression coefficient value of 0.608 indicates that every one-unit increase in the quality of democratic leadership is followed by an increase in employee performance of 0.608 units. Based on the t-test results, a calculated t-value of 3.009 was obtained with a significance value of 0.007. Since this significance value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H_1) is accepted. This empirically proves that democratic leadership style has a positive and significant effect on employee performance at the Marioriaja Village Office. From a deeper analysis, this significant effect occurs because the leadership at the Marioriaja Village Office has successfully implemented the dimensions of deliberation and cooperation effectively. Leaders who pay attention to employee aspirations and involve subordinates in strategic decision-making create a supportive work environment, leading employees to feel valued. Furthermore, leaders who encourage two-way communication patterns motivate employees to engage in innovation in public service delivery for the advancement of Marioriaja Village.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTION

Based on the results of data analysis and the discussion conducted, it can be concluded that the democratic leadership style has a positive and significant effect on employee performance at the Marioriaja Village Office. These findings demonstrate that the implementation of a leadership approach that emphasizes deliberation, active participation, and two-way communication is empirically capable of enhancing productivity and the quality of public services delivered by village officials. The more effectively leaders appreciate the potential of their subordinates and involve them in strategic decision-making, the stronger the sense of moral responsibility and performance demonstrated by employees. In line with this conclusion, it is recommended that the Marioriaja Village Government, particularly the Village Head, consistently maintain and further enhance the implementation of a democratic leadership style in daily organizational activities. This can be achieved by continuously providing opportunities for employees to express their aspirations, criticisms, and suggestions in order to create a transparent and collaborative work environment. Furthermore, future researchers are encouraged to expand the scope of the study by incorporating additional variables such as motivation or work discipline to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing organizational performance at the village government level.

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