

THE EFFECT OF DEMOCRATIC LEADERSHIP STYLE ON THE PERFORMANCE OF EMPLOYEES AT THE MALAWEI COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER IN SORONG CITY

Ade Andriani Renouw^{1*}, Andrei Maryen², Meylani Lusye Fransina Ayer³

Universitas Kristen Papua
E-mail: lusyeayer@gmail.com

Received : 29 May 2025
Revised : 08 June 2025
Accepted : 28 June 2025

Published : 10 August 2025
DOI : <https://doi.org/10.54443/ijset.v4i7.1021>
Publish Link : <https://www.ijset.org/index.php/ijset/index>

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to determine the effect of democratic leadership style on employee performance at the Malawei Community Health Center. The analysis technique used was descriptive quantitative analysis using SPSS 26 software. The results showed a significant value of less than 5% (0.05), indicating that democratic leadership style influences employee performance at the Malawei Community Health Center. Therefore, the hypothesis (Ho) is rejected and H1 is accepted. The R² test obtained an R² value of 0.245, indicating that the contribution of democratic leadership style to employee performance at the Malawei Community Health Center is 24.5%, with the remaining 75.5% influenced by variables outside the study.

Keywords: *democratic leadership style, employee performance*

INTRODUCTION

Leadership is a crucial factor because it can significantly impact employee performance. A good democratic leadership style is one that can discipline its employees. Democratic leadership is important to examine because an organization's success or failure is largely determined by its leadership style. An inappropriate democratic leadership style will result in decreased employee performance, which will negatively impact the community health center. Democratic leadership arises from the actions or behavior of the leader in question. Leaders often order their employees as they please without considering the employee's condition. This will impact poor employee performance. (Destriani, 2023) A leader must apply a Democratic leadership style to manage his subordinates, because a leader will greatly influence the success of the organization in achieving its goals and also the performance of employees in the company. (Zahratulfarhah et al., 2022) Leadership is the backbone of organizational development. Without good leadership, it will be difficult to achieve established company goals.

If a leader seeks to influence the behavior of others, they need to consider the leadership style they will employ. A leader's success is reflected in employee performance. High or low employee performance generally indicates the effectiveness of a leader's democratic leadership style. A democratic leadership style significantly influences the attitudes of subordinates. If a leader provides insufficient direction and guidance to subordinates, a strained relationship will develop, creating an unpleasant work environment between them. (Bowo & Junaedi Hendro, 2023). Democratic leadership style is defined as the behavioral norms used by leaders when influencing the behavior of others. There are many types of democratic leadership styles used by leaders in leading their organizations. One of them is the democratic leadership style. A democratic leadership style emphasizes that a democratic leader is respected and esteemed, rather than feared, because of their behavior in organizational life. Leadership with a democratic leadership style is people-oriented, thus providing effective and efficient guidance to its members. Leaders will always coordinate the work of all their subordinates, paying attention to and emphasizing the responsibilities of each member, and good cooperation between the leader and his/her subordinates. (Dhanikhtiar Alvin Prayoga, 2025) Community Health Centers, hereinafter referred to as Puskesmas, are first-level health service facilities that organize and coordinate promotive, preventive, curative, rehabilitative, and/or palliative health services in their working areas. Health efforts are all forms of activities and/or a series of activities carried out in an integrated and continuous manner to maintain and improve the health status of the community in the form of promotive,

preventive, curative, rehabilitative, and/or palliative services by the central government, regional governments, and/or the community. Community health centers (Puskesmas) are the primary healthcare provider for the community because they are quite effective in providing first aid and meeting standard healthcare standards. The well-known affordability of Puskesmas services should make them the primary healthcare provider for the community, but in reality, many people prefer private practice doctors or other healthcare professionals. (RI, 2024)

Successful leadership requires all elements of management to align with the goals and values agreed upon by the group or organization in facing challenges or achieving the goals of the Community Health Center they lead. However, leaders have not yet made optimal efforts to encourage their employees to have high work morale. In carrying out their daily tasks, some employees still lack a strong work ethic, specifically a disciplined attitude in carrying out their duties. This is evident in the fact that some employees still arrive late, citing reasons such as living far from the Community Health Center, taking children to school, and so on. Considering the importance of the problem, and to address this condition, the author tried to conduct research at the Malawei Health Center, Sorong City to find out the type of Democratic leadership style carried out by leaders to subordinates (employees), as well as to find out the influence of Democratic leadership style on employee performance which will certainly have an impact on every area in the Malawei Health Center, Sorong City, this research is expected to provide benefits for the organization, so that organizational goals can be achieved optimally. Furthermore, this research is contained in a title, namely "The Influence of Democratic Leadership Style on the Performance of Employees at the Malawei Health Center, Sorong City".

LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Democratic Leadership Style

1. Understanding Democratic Leadership Style

According to Rakhma *et al.*, Democratic leadership style is a behavioral pattern designed in such a way as to influence subordinates to maximize the performance of their subordinates so that the performance of organizational employees and organizational goals can be maximized and motivated so that it is hoped that it will result in high productivity. A leader's leadership style significantly impacts the performance of employees and subordinates. Leaders must choose a democratic leadership style appropriate to the situation. A properly implemented democratic leadership style will help guide the achievement of both organizational and individual goals. Conversely, a poorly chosen democratic leadership style that is inappropriate for the situation will make it difficult to achieve organizational goals. (Rakhma *et al.*, 2022) According to Setiana, the democratic leadership style represents the philosophy, skills, and attitudes of a leader in politics. Democratic leadership is a behavioral pattern designed to integrate organizational goals with individual objectives to achieve specific goals. (Setiana & Dewi, 2022)

Apriyanto said that an effective Democratic leadership style can be successful if a leader is able to apply a situational Democratic leadership style and is willing to listen to the input of his subordinates selectively based on good knowledge and accountable studies. From the description of the Democratic leadership style above, the researcher concludes that the Democratic leadership style is a set of characteristics used by leaders to influence subordinates so that goals are achieved or the Democratic leadership style is a pattern of behavior and strategies that are preferred and often applied by a leader. According to Robbins Coulter in Prayoga, democratic leadership is a leadership style that describes a leader who involves employees in decision-making, delegates authority, and uses feedback as an opportunity to train employees. Leaders with a democratic leadership style will position themselves as participants, thus being active, dynamic, and directed. Leaders will always involve their subordinates in decision-making, so that in decision-making they will use a consensus method. A dialectic will occur between the leader and their subordinates. Thus, various forms of creative and innovative ideas, as well as all kinds of desires and wishes desired by their subordinates can be expressed naturally.

According to Gary and Rivai in Irdyanti, *et al.* in their journal, democratic leadership style is a leader who has democratic/participatory nature.¹⁸ Participatory leaders will always consult with their work groups regarding the problems that will be faced by the organization. In this leadership, communication has a very central role that must be considered, because with good and smooth communication, it can form a healthy organizational communication pattern so that it will solve organizational problems well. Suggestions for solving problems from the organization are not centralized only from leaders to subordinates but can come from subordinates to superiors. Subordinates can participate in goal setting and problem solving. This participation from subordinates can encourage their commitment to be involved in the final decisions taken by the organization. In democratic leadership, leaders will always create conditions where each individual can learn to actively participate in the

organization and be able to monitor their own performance. Leaders will also involve subordinates in setting challenging goals according to their subordinates' capabilities. Leaders will also provide opportunities for subordinates to continuously improve something related to the organization's work methods and the job growth of each subordinate. Leaders will also recognize the achievements of each subordinate and help each subordinate to continue to learn from existing mistakes. Therefore, a democratic leadership style is often referred to as a participatory leadership style. A leader of an organization with a democratic leadership style will demonstrate dominance as a protector and savior, and their behavior will be oriented toward developing the organization or group they lead. This allows both leaders and subordinates to participate in decision-making. Leaders will prioritize subordinates, respecting their opinions and creativity. They will involve their subordinates more and empower them to share responsibility for implementing programs the organization aims to achieve. (Irdyanti, 2021)

B. Democratic Leadership Style Indicators

Democratic leadership is also known as participative leadership. This style assumes that organizational members have the personal authority to participate in the decision-making process. This, in turn, leads to a greater commitment to the organization's goals and objectives. This approach allows leaders to better understand the organization's objectives, enabling them to leverage the knowledge of their members to achieve them.

According to Pasolong, the indicators of a democratic leadership style are as follows:

a. Decisions are made together.

This means that a leader with a democratic leadership style will not hesitate to collaborate with his subordinates to make decisions and carry out work activities to achieve organizational goals. Decision-making is carried out through deliberation so that the best possible decision can be made.

b. Appreciate the potential of subordinates

Leaders will value the potential of each individual and be willing to recognize the specialist expertise of their subordinates in their respective fields. This will enable them to utilize each member's skills as effectively and efficiently as possible, at the right time and in the right situation. Leaders will also encourage their subordinates to determine their own policies, provide insight into the steps and results achieved, and give them the freedom to initiate tasks, develop initiatives, maintain communication, and interact broadly.

c. Listen to criticism, suggestions and opinions from subordinates.

Leaders will welcome criticism, suggestions, and opinions from their subordinates. This is a natural part of organizational life. Therefore, leaders will tend to encourage their subordinates' potential to improve and learn from their mistakes.

d. Cooperate with subordinates.

A good leader is one who can collaborate or be directly involved in the implementation of tasks to achieve organizational goals. Leaders will also not hesitate to get involved directly in the field to carry out their duties. Leaders will also foster a supportive relationship with their subordinates. (Pasolong, 2021)

C. Performance

1. Definition of performance

According to Kurnia and Sitorus in Risky, employee performance is a person's overall ability to work optimally to achieve work goals and various goals created with smaller sacrifices compared to the results achieved. Similarly, according to Setyorini et al., in Risky, performance is a record of outcomes resulting from specific employee functions or activities performed over a specific time period. Meanwhile, the overall performance of a position is equal to the sum (average) of the employee's functional performance or activities performed. From the several definitions of performance above, it can be concluded that the definition of performance is the work results, both in terms of quantity and quality, achieved by employees in a certain period. (Risky, 2023)

2. Factors that influence performance

According to Sani et al., performance is a multidimensional construct encompassing many influencing factors. The factors influencing performance are:

- a. Personal/individual factors, including: knowledge (skills), abilities, self-confidence, motivation and commitment possessed by each individual.
- b. Leadership factors include: the quality of providing encouragement, enthusiasm, direction and support provided by managers and team leaders.

- c. Team factors include: the quality of support and encouragement provided by teammates, trust in fellow team members, and the cohesiveness and closeness of team members.
- d. System factors, including: work systems, work facilities or infrastructure provided by the organization, organizational processes, and performance culture within the organization.
- e. Contextual (situational) factors include: external and internal environmental pressures and changes.

D. Performance Indicators

Performance indicators are quantitative and qualitative measures used to describe the level of achievement of an organization's goals and objectives, both during the planning, implementation, and post-activity stages. Furthermore, performance indicators are used to ensure that day-to-day performance demonstrates progress toward achieving the organization's goals and objectives. According to Yulianto, there are five indicators used to measure employee performance, including:

- a. Quality, namely the quality of employee work is measured through employee perceptions of quality or perfection that describe employee skills and abilities.
 - b. Quantity, is the amount produced expressed in terms such as number, units, number of activity cycles completed.
 - c. Punctuality is the level of activity completed at the stated start time, seen from the perspective of coordination with output results and maximizing the time available for activities.
 - d. Effectiveness is the level of use of organizational resources (labor, money, technology, raw materials)
- Independence is the ability of employees to carry out their work functions. (Yulianto & Budi, 2020)

METHOD

A. Population and Sample

A population is the entirety of the symptoms or units being studied, or the entirety of the research objects or objects being studied. The population in this study was all 79 healthcare and administrative staff at the Malawei Community Health Center. The sample is a subset of the population studied and is considered representative of the entire population. The sampling technique used in this study was total sampling, which is based on the entire population of 79 healthcare and administrative staff.

B. Data Types

1. Primary data was obtained through interviews using questionnaires.
2. Secondary data in this study is data obtained from records or documents related to the research, such as the profile of the Malewei Health Center, Sorong City.

C. Data collection technique

The data collection techniques used in this study are as follows:

1. A questionnaire was administered to patients at the Malawei Community Health Center in Sorong City as respondents. The questionnaire used was a closed-ended questionnaire, with a list of questions with alternative answers provided by the researcher, with the categories "Yes" and "No."
2. Secondary data in this study is data obtained from records or documents related to the research, such as the profile of the Malawei Health Center in Sorong City.
3. Tertiary data is data obtained through literature studies, journals, and textbooks.

D. Variables and Operational Definitions

1. Research Variables

The research variables consist of independent variables and dependent variables. The independent variable is democratic leadership style, marked with the symbol (X), while the dependent variable is employee performance, a related variable marked with the symbol (Y).

2. Operational Definition

Operational definitions can be based on one or more sources, accompanied by a rationale for the desired definition. Once variables are classified, they must be measured using academically accepted standards. Variables need to be classified and defined operationally. The operational definition of a variable is a description of the concept and indicators for each research variable. This research consists of two variables

to be studied: democratic leadership style (X) as the independent variable and employee performance (Y) as the dependent variable. The following table shows the concepts and indicators of the variables: (Shulha et al., 2024)

Table 1 Operational Definitions

No	Variable Name	Operational Definition	Indicator	Source
1	Democratic Leadership Style	Democratic leadership style is a leadership style that describes a leader who involves employees in making decisions, delegates authority and uses feedback as an opportunity to train employees.	1. Decisions are made together. 2. Appreciate the potential of subordinates 3. Listen to criticism, suggestions and opinions from subordinates. 4. Cooperate with subordinates.	Pasalon (2021)
2	Employee Performance	Employee performance is a result achieved by each employee in completing the work assigned by the company within a certain time.	1. Quality of Work. 2. Quantity of Work. 3. Effectiveness 4. Punctuality. 5. independence	Yulianto (2020)

Source: Shulha., et al., (2023)

E. Data analysis

Data analysis, according to Sugiyono, is the process of systematically searching for and compiling data obtained from various sources such as interviews, field notes, and documents, with the aim of organizing the data into categories, describing them in units, synthesizing, compiling patterns, selecting important information, and drawing conclusions that are easy to understand.

1. Instrument testing

This instrument test consists of two tests: validity and reliability. According to Janna, instrument testing can be conducted as follows.

a. Validity test

A measure with a high validity value is an instrument's validity level. Furthermore, according to Janna, an instrument can be representative and used in research if it is declared valid. In other words, a validity test is a technique for determining whether a measurement instrument can accurately and consistently measure a variable. (Janna & Herianto, 2021)

b. Reliability test

According to Janna, reliability testing aims to evaluate how reliably an instrument can consistently measure the same phenomenon. In other words, an instrument is considered reliable if it can produce the same or consistent data.

2. Simple linear regression analysis

According to Trianggana, regression analysis is a statistical calculation technique to determine how closely the relationship between variables is. (Trianggana, 2020) With an equation model that shows the relationship between one independent variable (X) and one dependent variable (Y). Mathematically, this equation is usually represented by a straight line:

$$Y = a + bX$$

Where :

Y = regression line / response variable (employee performance)

a = constant

b = coefficient

X = independent variable (democratic leadership style)

Next, the results obtained will be tested using the t-test at a confidence level of 0.95 or a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$.

3. t-test (Partial Test)

The t-test, or partial test, is conducted to determine the extent to which an independent variable partially influences the variation of the dependent variable. The basis for drawing conclusions from the t-test is as follows:

- If the calculated t value $< t$ table and if the probability (significance) > 0.05 (α), then H_0 is accepted, meaning that the independent variable partially (individually) does not significantly influence the

dependent variable.

- b. If the calculated t value $>$ t table and if the probability (significance) < 0.05 (α), then H_0 is rejected, meaning that the independent variable partially (individually) influences the dependent variable significantly.
4. Coefficient of Determination Test (Adjusted R²)

The coefficient of determination (Adjusted R²) is a coefficient that shows the percentage of influence of all independent variables on the dependent variable. This percentage shows how much the independent variable can explain the dependent variable. The greater the coefficient of determination, the better the independent variable is in explaining the dependent variable. The value of Adjusted R² is between 0 - 1 ($0 < \text{Adjusted R}^2 < 1$) this coefficient of determination is used with the aim of knowing how much the independent variable influences the dependent variable. The Adjusted R-Square value is said to be good if the value is > 0.5 because the value of Adjusted R² is close to 1, then most of the independent variables explain the dependent variable, whereas, if the coefficient of determination is 0, then the independent variable has no effect on the dependent variable.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Research Results and Discussion

Respondent Characteristics

In this study, there were 79 respondents, the characteristics of the respondents were seen from several aspects of gender, age and length of service, including:

Table 2 Respondent Characteristics

No	Information	Frequency	Percentage
1	Gender		
	Man	24	30.4
	Woman	55	69.6
2	Age		
	20 – 29	20	25.3
	30 – 39	30	38.0
	40 – 49	16	20.3
	>50	13	16.5
3	Length of work		
	2 – 5	33	41.8
	6 – 10	26	32.9
	11 – 15	1	1.3
	16 – 20	7	8.9
	>20	12	15.2

Source: processed primary data, 2025

Based on table 1 regarding the characteristics of respondents, it can be seen that the most dominant based on gender are female respondents with 55 people or 69.6%. While the characteristics based on age status are more dominant at the age range of 30 - 39 as many as 30 people or 38.8%. Then at the age range of 20 - 29 as many as 20 respondents or 25.3, and continued with the age range of 40 - 49 and > 50 years as many as 16 respondents and 13 respondents or 20.3% and 16.5% respectively. Length of work at the Malawei health center ranges from 2 - 5 years as many as 33 respondents or 41.8 followed by length of work ranging from 6 to 10 years as many as 26 respondents, then length of work more than 20 years as many as 12 respondents, then length of work 16 to 20 years as many as 7 respondents.

1. Statistical Data Analysis

Validity and Reliability Test

This study used Pearson Correlation to test the validity of the research instrument. Decision-making was done by comparing the calculated r value and the table r value. The decision-making condition is that if the calculated r value $>$ table r value, the data used is declared valid. Conversely, if the calculated r value $<$ table r value, the data used is invalid. The df value = $79 - 2 = 77$, so df = 0.306.

Table 3 Validity Test Results

Statement statement	r-count	r-table	Information
Statement of variable X (democratic leadership style)			
Leaders act decisively in making decisions.	0.765	0.2213	Valid
Leaders provide encouragement to employees to increase enthusiasm for work	0.705	0.2213	Valid
Leaders are able to communicate well with subordinates regarding the strategies that will be implemented	0.644	0.2213	Valid
Leaders discuss problems with employees through deliberation	0.682	0.2213	Valid
Employee Performance Statement (Y)			
I feel that the quality of my work results is in accordance with the skills and abilities that I have.	0.577	0.2213	Valid
I am able to achieve the work targets set by the Health Center.	0.708	0.2213	Valid
I was able to complete the work faster than the Health Center had set.	0.699	0.2213	Valid
I arrived on time at work.	0.746	0.2213	Valid
I am able to provide good service to the community	0.388	0.2213	Valid

Source: processed primary data, 2025

The statistical test results using Pearson correlation values show that two indicators of variable X1 are declared invalid, thus these indicators are not used in the next statistical test process. Meanwhile, the other indicator values show numbers above 0.2213, so it can be concluded that variables X (democratic leadership style), X2, and Y (employee performance) are declared valid. Reliability testing in research using Cronbach alpha theory, there are several conditions for decision making, where if the value of CA (Cronbach alpha) > 0.60 (Binus University, 2021) then the data used can be stated to be reliable.

Table 4 Reliability Test Results

Variables	CA	Reliability Test Results	Information
Democratic leadership style	0.60	0.777	Reliable
Employee performance	0.60	0.743	Reliable

Source: processed primary data, 2025

Based on the output results, the Cronbach alpha value obtained was greater than 0.60 (CA > 0.60) so it can be stated that the 9 statement items are reliable.

Simple Linear Regression

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	13,820	2,981		4,637	.000
democratic leadership style	.327	.171	.213	1,915	.049

a. Dependent Variable: employee performance

From the results of the simple linear regression above, the simple linear regression equation is as follows:

$$Y = 13,820 + 0.327 X$$

Hypothesis Testing

The t-test is used to test hypotheses and show how much influence each independent variable has, either partially or individually, on the dependent variable. The t-test is conducted by comparing the calculated t-value and the t-table. Testing can also be done using significance values. The coefficient table shows that the significance value is less than 5% (0.05), so it can be said that democratic leadership style has an effect on employee performance at the Malawei Community Health Center. Therefore, the hypothesis (Ho) is rejected and H1 is accepted.

Coefficient of Determination Test

The coefficient of determination test aims to determine the extent of influence of the independent variable on the dependent variable. The coefficient of determination ranges from 0 to 1.

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Standard Error of the Estimate
1	.613a	.245	.033	2,308

a. Predictors: (Constant), democratic leadership style

b. Dependent Variable: employee performance

From the results of the R^2 test, the R^2 value was obtained = 0.245, which means that the contribution of the democratic leadership style to the high and low performance of Malawei Health Center employees was 24.5%, and the remaining 75.5% was influenced by other variables outside the research variables.

CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion, it can be concluded that the significance value is less than 5% (0.05) so it can be said that democratic leadership style has an effect on employee performance at the Malawei Community Health Center, so that the hypothesis (H_0 is rejected) and H_1 (is accepted). And the R^2 test obtained an R^2 value of 0.245, which means that the contribution of the democratic leadership style to the high and low performance of Malawei Health Center employees was 24.5%, and the remaining 75.5% was influenced by other variables outside the research variables.

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