



The Relationship between Leadership Style and Employee Job Satisfaction at the Ministry of Religion Office in Makassar City

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to determine the relationship between leadership style and employee job satisfaction at the Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs in Makassar City. Leadership style is an important factor in creating a conducive work environment and influences the level of employee job satisfaction. This study uses a quantitative approach with a survey method. Samples were taken as many as 60 respondents through purposive sampling technique. The research instrument used a questionnaire with a Likert scale. Data analysis was carried out using the Pearson correlation test and simple linear regression. The results of the study showed a positive and significant relationship between leadership style and employee job satisfaction, with a correlation coefficient value of 0.672 and a significance of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$). Thus, leadership style has a fairly strong influence in increasing employee job satisfaction in the Ministry of Religious Affairs environment.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Human resource management (HRM) is one of the important aspects in supporting the success of an organization, both in the private and public sectors (Zulkarnain, 2021), (Bairizki, 2020). In the context of government organizations, the challenges in human resource management are not only related to employee administration, but also how to build a professional, productive, and optimal public service-oriented work culture (Rachman, 2024). One of the strategic issues in HRM in the public sector is the low level of employee job satisfaction which has a direct impact on decreasing work enthusiasm, high absenteeism, and decreasing overall organizational performance. Therefore, job satisfaction is an important focus that needs to be managed seriously by agency leaders (Putri et al., 2024), (Mulia, 2021).

Job satisfaction is generally defined as a positive feeling that a person has towards his/her job, which is influenced by various factors such as work relationships, compensation, career opportunities, recognition, and the leadership style of the superior. In the public sector, leadership style has a significant influence on employee perceptions and work attitudes (Harvida & Wijaya, 2020), (Harahap & Khair, 2019). According to Handoko (2011), one of the main factors that determines job satisfaction is leadership style, in addition to compensation and career development. Open and communicative leadership can create loyalty and a positive work atmosphere. Leaders who are able to demonstrate a participatory, communicative, and inspiring leadership style will tend to create a conducive work climate and increase employee loyalty and job satisfaction. Conversely, an

authoritarian, closed, or unresponsive leadership style to employee needs can trigger job dissatisfaction, resistance to change, and even decline in individual and work unit performance (Efendy & Syamsir, 2025), (Febrina & Sesmiarni, 2024).

The Makassar City Ministry of Religious Affairs Office is one of the central government agencies that carries out public service functions in the religious field at the city level. As a work unit that has a high administrative and service workload, the challenges faced are not only limited to the quantity of work, but also concerning how to build harmonious working relationships between various service units and functional positions (Putra Widiyanto, 2023), (Suryani, 2023). In recent years, the dynamics of work within the Makassar City Ministry of Religious Affairs have become increasingly complex, marked by increasing bureaucratic burdens, digital service reforms, and public demands for better quality public services (Abdussamad, 2020), (Ibnu, 2023).

In such conditions, the leadership style used by the agency leader plays a central role in maintaining the stability of organizational performance. Leaders who are able to be role models, open up dialogue, and encourage employee participation in the decision-making process will have a positive influence on the work atmosphere and feelings of being appreciated among employees (Sitorus, 2020), (Affandi et al., 2021). This is in line with Robbins' (2015) view which states that effective leadership will create high job satisfaction, which ultimately encourages increased work productivity and achievement of organizational goals. "Sutrisno (2016) also emphasized that in human resource management in the public sector, leadership style is a strategic element in shaping employee work behavior, loyalty, and satisfaction. Therefore, it is important to examine the extent to which the leadership style applied by the leaders of the Makassar City Ministry of Religion Office contributes to employee job satisfaction (Duriah, 2024), (Priyantini, n.d.).

Leadership style is an approach used by a leader in directing, guiding, and influencing the behavior of team members or subordinates to achieve organizational goals effectively. According to Hasibuan (2017), leadership is a person's ability to influence others to voluntarily work together to achieve organizational goals (Padmasari et al., 2023), (Nahnudin et al., 2023). Effective leaders do not only rely on formal authority, but also prioritize personal integrity, good communication, and the ability to build harmonious working relationships (Sudrajat, 2021), (Hutahaean & SE, 2021).

In management literature, leadership styles are classified into various forms. One approach that is widely discussed is the transformational and transactional leadership theory developed by Bass (1985) (Herlina Budiono et al., 2021). Transformational leadership style is characterized by the leader's ability to provide inspiration, increase work motivation, provide individual attention, and encourage innovation in the work environment. Meanwhile, transactional leadership style focuses more on exchange work relationships, where rewards are given if performance is on target, and sanctions are imposed if there is a deviation (Risambessy & Wairisal, 2021), (Syakur et al., 2025).

Yukl (2010) added that effective leadership style is not singular, but rather situational and contextual. This means that leaders must be able to adjust their leadership style to organizational conditions, subordinate characteristics, and challenges faced (Iswahyudi et al., 2023). Robbins and Judge (2015) reinforced this by stating that the effectiveness of leadership style greatly influences the work environment, employee loyalty, job satisfaction, and even overall team performance. Supportive and communicative leaders can create a conducive work climate, which ultimately impacts employee satisfaction and work engagement. Bass and Riggio (2006) also emphasized that transformational leaders usually demonstrate four main dimensions: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. These dimensions make transformational leadership style very relevant to be applied in public organizations, including government agencies such as the Ministry of Religion (Latif, 2011), (Riza et al., 2024).

In the context of bureaucratic organizations such as the Ministry of Religion, the flexibility of leaders in adjusting approaches is also very important. Hersey and Blanchard (1982) developed a theory of situational leadership, which states that effective leaders must be able to change leadership styles based on the level of maturity and task readiness of their subordinates. The four styles offered

are telling, selling, participating, and delegating, all depending on the work situation and employee capabilities.

Job satisfaction is a positive psychological and emotional state that individuals experience in their work, as a result of evaluating aspects of the job. Locke (1976) defines job satisfaction as a pleasant or positive feeling that arises from the assessment of one's work experience. Factors that influence job satisfaction include interpersonal relationships in the workplace, job clarity, development opportunities, job security, and of course the leadership style of the boss.

Mangkunegara (2015) stated that job satisfaction reflects employee attitudes towards their work, which are influenced by motivation, work environment, and the reward system received. Handoko (2011) added that the level of job satisfaction is also greatly influenced by role clarity, workload balance, fairness in the promotion system, and trust between superiors and subordinates. Robbins and Judge (2015) emphasized that employees who are satisfied with their work tend to show better performance, low absenteeism, and high loyalty to the organization.

Furthermore, Herzberg's two-factor theory (1959) states that job satisfaction is influenced by two groups of factors, namely motivator factors (such as achievement, recognition, and responsibility) that produce satisfaction, and hygiene factors (such as working conditions, salary, and interpersonal relationships) which if not met can cause dissatisfaction. This theory is relevant in explaining the dynamics of job satisfaction of public sector employees who are vulnerable to administrative pressure and limited incentives.

Sutrisno (2016) emphasized that job satisfaction is not only a reflection of perceptions of work, but also an important indicator in measuring the effectiveness of human resource management in an organization. In the context of government bureaucracy, where organizational structures tend to be hierarchical and rigid, job satisfaction is very important to ensure the smooth running of public service processes and the achievement of institutional goals.

Various studies have shown that there is a close relationship between leadership style and employee job satisfaction. Adaptive, participatory, and supportive leadership styles for subordinates have been shown to significantly increase job satisfaction. Wahyuni (2020) found that transformational leadership style has a positive and significant influence on job satisfaction of civil servants in local government environments. Leaders who are able to provide motivation and individual attention will encourage employees to feel valued and involved in decision making.

The findings are reinforced by research by Indrayani, Erwin, and Danial (2023) conducted at the Makassar City Ministry of Religion Office. The study showed that the leadership style applied by the agency's leaders has a significant contribution to the level of employee satisfaction and work motivation. Leaders who are open to input, provide moral and technical support, and are able to foster two-way communication are considered to play a role in creating a pleasant and productive work atmosphere.

Thus, it can be concluded that leadership style not only acts as a tool for controlling the organization, but also as a key factor that shapes employee perceptions and attitudes towards their work. Effective leadership can be a catalyst for creating high job satisfaction, which ultimately has an impact on improving the overall performance of the organization.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a quantitative approach with a survey method, which aims to empirically test the relationship between leadership style and employee job satisfaction at the Makassar City Ministry of Religious Affairs Office. The quantitative approach was chosen because it allows researchers to measure and analyze the relationship between variables systematically and objectively through numerical data that can be processed statistically. With this approach, the study is able to produce generalizations that are relevant to the population studied, as well as provide a strong basis for data-based decision making. This method is also suitable for assessing the influence of one variable on another in the context of public organizations that have a formal and measurable work structure.

This type of research is associative, which aims to determine the extent to which there is a relationship or influence between two or more variables. In this case, the independent variable studied is leadership style, while the dependent variable that is the focus of influence is employee job satisfaction. These two variables were chosen because theoretically and empirically they are believed to have a close relationship in supporting employee performance and organizational effectiveness. Associative research is an important choice for identifying patterns of relationships that occur in real work environments and for formulating evidence-based managerial strategies.

Data collection was conducted using a closed questionnaire compiled based on indicators from relevant leadership and job satisfaction theories, such as transformational leadership theory and Herzberg's two-factor theory. This questionnaire uses a five-point Likert scale, ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree", in order to capture respondents' perceptions and assessments in a more measurable and consistent manner.

The data obtained from the results of the questionnaire distribution were then analyzed using statistical analysis techniques, namely Pearson correlation analysis to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between variables, and simple linear regression analysis to measure the extent of the influence of leadership style on employee job satisfaction. The entire data processing and analysis process was carried out with the help of the latest version of SPSS software, which provides accurate and efficient statistical analysis features. In addition to the main analysis, a t-test was also conducted to test the significance of the partial influence of leadership style on job satisfaction, as well as a determination coefficient test (R^2) to determine the extent to which leadership style is able to explain the variations that occur in the level of employee job satisfaction.

The results of this overall analysis are the basis for drawing conclusions about the extent to which the leadership style applied by leaders in the Makassar City Ministry of Religious Affairs Office contributes to increasing or decreasing employee job satisfaction. Through systematic methods and measurable data, this study is expected to provide an objective picture as well as useful recommendations in formulating leadership strategies and human resource development in the public sector.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Based on the results of descriptive statistical analysis, it is known that the respondents' perception of the leadership style at the Makassar City Ministry of Religious Affairs Office has an average value of 3.9 on a five-point Likert scale. This figure shows that the leadership style applied by the agency's leaders is perceived positively and quite high by the majority of employees. This reflects that the leaders in the Makassar Ministry of Religious Affairs environment, in the respondents' view, have implemented a relatively effective leadership approach and are oriented towards supporting employees. This leadership style includes aspects of open communication, providing clear direction, supporting employee initiatives, and the ability to manage conflict and make decisions fairly.

Meanwhile, the average level of employee job satisfaction is at 3.8, which is also in the high category. This indicates that in general, employees feel quite satisfied with various aspects of their work. This high job satisfaction reflects relatively good working conditions, such as harmonious relationships between employees, a reward and compensation system that is considered fair, and a work environment that supports productivity. The high average value of these two variables, both leadership style and job satisfaction, is an early indication that there is a harmonious relationship between the two.

To test the relationship statistically, Pearson correlation analysis was used. The test results showed that there was a positive and significant relationship between leadership style and job satisfaction, with a correlation coefficient (r) of 0.672 and a significance value (p) of 0.000. Since the significance value is less than 0.05, it can be concluded that the relationship is statistically significant. The correlation coefficient of 0.672 is included in the strong relationship category, which means that an increase in the quality of leadership style will be followed by an increase in the level of employee job

satisfaction. In other words, leadership style is one of the main determinants of employee job satisfaction in the agency environment.

Furthermore, simple linear regression analysis was used to determine the magnitude of the influence of leadership style on job satisfaction. The regression equation obtained is $Y = 2.014 + 0.645X$, which means that every one unit increase in the perception of leadership style will result in an increase of 0.645 units in the level of job satisfaction. This shows a linear and positive relationship, where increasing leadership quality will directly impact increasing employee job satisfaction. The coefficient of determination (R^2) value of 0.451 or 45.1% indicates that almost half of the variation in job satisfaction can be explained by leadership style. While the remaining 54.9% is likely influenced by other factors not included in this research model, such as incentive systems, career levels, organizational culture, work volume, to psychological factors and the personality of each employee. These findings strengthen the argument that the leadership style applied in a government agency has a real influence on the quality of work life of employees. In particular, the transformational leadership style, which emphasizes the provision of inspiration, motivation, individual attention, and idealistic influence from the leader, has been shown to have a significant impact on increasing job satisfaction. Leaders who are able to create a shared vision, listen to the aspirations of their subordinates, and provide support in career development, tend to create a more inclusive and supportive work environment, which has an impact on higher job satisfaction.

The results of this study are consistent with the findings of Wahyuni (2020) and several previous studies that also examined the relationship between leadership and job satisfaction in government agencies. In the context of the public sector, where the bureaucratic structure tends to be hierarchical and formal, an open, democratic, and participatory leadership style is an important key in building healthy and productive working relationships. Thus, it can be concluded that an adaptive and supportive leadership style is one of the strategic components in increasing employee job satisfaction, while strengthening the foundation of public organizations so that they are able to provide optimal services and are oriented towards the interests of the wider community.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study conducted at the Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of Makassar City, it can be concluded that there is a positive and significant relationship between leadership style and employee job satisfaction. The correlation coefficient value of 0.672 indicates that the better the leadership style applied by the leader, the higher the level of employee job satisfaction. The results of the regression analysis show that 45.1% of the variation in employee job satisfaction can be explained by leadership style, with a fairly strong contribution. The dominant leadership style and considered the most effective in increasing job satisfaction is the transformational leadership style, namely a style that is able to provide inspiration, build open communication, and show concern for the needs and development of employees.

These findings emphasize the importance of the role of leaders in creating a conducive, fair, and supportive work environment for employee career development. Effective leadership focuses not only on achieving organizational targets, but also on efforts to create a pleasant work atmosphere, appreciate individual contributions, and foster a collective work spirit. Therefore, the leadership style applied in government institutions such as the Ministry of Religion needs to pay attention to humanistic and participatory aspects in order to increase employee satisfaction and loyalty in the long term.

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