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PARTICIPATIVE LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

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ABSTRACT

The study examined participative leadership and organizational performance. Leadership is a social interaction where there is a process of influencing between leaders and subordinates or members in a social community or organization. Participative leadership which encourages and supports employees to participate in the decision-making process of organizations, has received increasing attention in both theory and practice. In the digital age, organizations are actively taking accurate decisions such as using advanced technology to enhance their competitive advantage in the marketplace. The study examined some concepts like participative leadership, organizational performance, types and strategy of participation, do's and don't's of participative leadership and so on. The study concluded that participative leadership motivate employees by allowing them to assume a certain degree of responsibility and enabling them to make joint decisions. When employees are given opportunities to exert influences over a wide range of issues, they perceive that their leader relies on them for alternative solutions, which may increase their confidence to engage in creative tasks. The study suggested that leaders should foster a culture of trust and open communication, involve employees in decision-making, delegate decision-making authority, encourage collaboration and teamwork, provide necessary resources and support, recognize and value contributions of employees in the decision making of the organization.

Keywords: Leadership, Participative Leadership, Organization, Performance.

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INTRODUCTION

Organizations are supposed to produce people with good character because, in life, it is not enough to have a bright and intelligent brain. Good character and values are absolute things that humans must have (Haryanti, 2014). Organizations always experience changes, developments, and improvements by developments in all areas of life. In the digital age, organizations are actively taking accurate decisions such as using advanced technology to enhance their competitive advantage in the marketplace (Su et al., 2021). With the dramatic changes in the competitive business environment, it is difficult for organizational leaders to make timely and effective decisions on their own, which has led to the active presence of employees in organizational decision-making today (Peng et al., 2021). At the same time, due to the use of modern information technology such as computer networks and system integration, there is a bottom-up flow of information within the enterprise, and these cross-level, multi-dimensional “employee opinions” play an increasingly important role in leadership decision-making. Improving an organization’s competitive advantage, sustainable development goal and performance is increasingly dependent on the active participation of the organization’s employees in decision-making (Chang et al., 2021; Jia et al., 2021).

Leadership is a social interaction where there is a process of influencing between leaders and subordinates or members in a social community or organization (Guzmán et al., 2020). The issue of leadership is one element that is often discussed today. A leader is a driving force, an individual who has the authority to lead, and leadership is an art and ability that needs to be possessed by a leader to influence members to take action within the same container, namely the organization.

Over time, the leadership styles in this world have developed quite a lot. There is a coercive leadership style that places the leader as the only person in control in making decisions in the organization. A leadership style with a humanitarian approach provides an opportunity for the organization to have good interpersonal relationships among its members (Melton et al., 2013). A leadership style also focuses on creating a conducive organizational culture, where members feel empowered and encouraged to try and learn new things to grow together as the organization develops (Obama et al., 2015). All of these are choices that can only be controlled by the role that exists in a leader.

Participatory leadership is the same as applying delegation, making a decision together, consultative and autocratic. This participatory leadership model is usually interpreted by a leader who, in the process, involves subordinates and actively participates from various parties, from teachers, students and other community members. Because in its application, participatory leadership has a high morale value, which will affect work achievement (Nurman, et al., 2018). The importance of a leader will have a significant impact by adhering to several views of how good a leader's attitude is.

In participatory leadership, a leader is not only able to realize community participation but is also required to have the ability to coordinate all efforts and policies in the field of development so that the potential of related parties can be utilized so that it is hoped that it can assist the process of implementing development (Suyono et al., 2022). Coordination is also needed in the implementation of development as an organized movement. Participatory leadership is one of the leadership styles used by those who are trusted; that is, with trust and credibility, it motivates the people who involve them in the decision-making process.

The effect of participative leadership style on employee's productivity is a planned effort knowledge and skills of the behavioral sciences (Armstrong, 2009). The main thrust in organizational development is on the organizations problem-solving abilities. The employees must integrate their goals with the organizational goals. Employee involvement at every level of hierarchy in matters concerning the overall wellbeing of the employees can be achieved through participative leadership (Duncan, 2014).

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

Organizational Performance

According to Hasibuan (2018) performance is a result of work achieved by a person in carrying out the tasks assigned to him based on skill, experience, and sincerity as well as time. Performance is a function of motivation and ability. A view of employee performance refers to the level of achievement of the tasks that make up an employee's work (Rivai & Sagala, 2014, Rizqina, et al., 2017). Organizational performance is basically the responsibility of every individual who works in the organization. If in an organization, each individual works well, achieves, and is passionate and also gives their best contribution to the organization, the overall performance of the organization will be good. Thus, organizational performance is a reflection of individual performance. To create high performance, an increase in work and utilization of optimal human resources is needed, so as to make a positive contribution to the development of the organization. In addition, organizations need to pay attention to various factors that can affect employee performance.

According to Keban (2008), performance in the organization is defined as the level of achievement of the "degree of accuracy" or performance is the level of achievement of organizational goals on an ongoing basis. Understanding organizational performance is the level that shows how far the implementation of tasks can be carried out actually and the mission of the organization is achieved. Organizational performance is a picture of the level of achievement of the implementation of an activity, program or policy in realizing the goals, objectives, mission, and vision of the organization as outlined in the strategic planning of an organization (Mahsun, 2007).

Participative Leadership

Participative leadership also known as democratic leadership style is a method of leadership that involves all team members in terms of identifying important goals as well as developing strategies and procedures to achieve the goals. The participative leader possesses consultative behaviors, such as imploring subordinates for ideas prior to making an ultimate decision, although, they retain final decision authority. The participative leader shares duties with subordinates by encompassing them in the preparation, decision-making, and implementation phases (Wiesenthal et al., 2015). Workers participation in decision making process which affects staff and their job is one of the psychological motivational activities which could be used to raise employee's morale and productivity (Brown, 2011).

Participative leadership is defined as the process of making joint decisions or at least sharing influence in decision making by the superior and his or her subordinates (Puni & Okoe, 2014). It has become increasingly important in African organizations than ever before (Ijeoma,

2010). Modern business organisations reflects a growing recognition among leaders and managers that a high productivity/high wage economy require new labour management relationships, including ways to share gains and organized work that more fully develop and utilize the skills, knowledge, and motivation of the workforce (Fincham & Rhodes, 2005). Fincham and Rhodes (2005) identified this type of style as one that involves the leader including one or more employees in the decision making process (determining what to do and how to do it). However, the leadership maintains the final decision making authority. Using this style is not a sign of strength that your employees will respect (Sinek, 2014). Participative management addresses the relationship between the organisations and the role of employees and stakeholders in all levels of organisational decision making (Dhamika et al., 2013). In addition to philosophical issues of governance and the appropriate relationship between workers and their employers, participative management can help managers dealing with the fundamental challenges facing today's dynamic and competitive environment (House et al., 2004). Maintaining levels of effectiveness, productivity, innovativeness and worker motivation in an increasingly dynamic, competitive environment should be the concern of all organization (Monzani, 2015).

Participation is one of the important ingredients in gaining employees' commitment on an overall basis (Griffin et al., 2017). The commitment can lead to less need for the use of formal authority, power, discipline, threats and pressure as a means of obtaining job performance (Ijeoma, 2010). Greater goal concern by reducing conflicts, improves cooperation and enhance condition without the need for elaborate control or systems for checking and correcting difficult behaviour (Fincham & Rhodes, 2005). Human outcomes of poor leadership include employee stress, disenchantment, lack of creativity, cynicism high employee turnover, and low productivity. Poor leadership destroys the human spirit essential to ensure work effectiveness (Robbins, 2014).

Participative leadership is a democratic leadership that involves subordinates in organizational decision-making and management, with the aim of effectively enhancing employees' sense of ownership and actively integrating their personal goals into organizational goals. Therefore, in the daily leadership process, leaders actively implement "participation management" for their subordinates, such as conveying meaningful values, actively organizing reporting and other flexible promotion strategies (Jing et al., 2017).

The American scholar Likert (1961), after extensive experimental research on democratic leadership, formally introduced the concept of participative leadership in his book "A New Model of Management" and revealed the three main principles of participative leadership theory, including the mutual support principle, the group decision principle and the high standards principle. Since the introduction of participative leadership, it has received much attention from a large number of researchers. Based on previous research, Kahai et al. (1997) redefined participative leadership as a leadership style in which leaders ask employees for their opinions before making decisions, delegate decision-making authority to subordinates in practice, and encourage active participation by employees to make decisions together. The literature also reflects two core characteristics of participative leadership: first, employees are consulted before decisions are made in order to solve problems together; second, employees are given resources to support them in the work process (Kahai et al., 1997; Lam et al., 2015; Li et al., 2018).

Participative leadership is also characterized in practice by the following features: first, in the process of employee participation in decision-making, leaders and subordinates are on an equal footing and trust each other completely, and organizational issues are resolved through

democratic consultation. Second, in general, although participative management involves a wide range of employees in decision-making, the final decision is still made by the leaders. Huang et al. (2010) also explored participative leadership in-depth and argued that participative leadership requires more encouragement and support for employees in the decision-making process and sharing of information and ideas, which has been recognized by many scholars (Lam et al., 2015; Li et al., 2018). It is easy to see that the core of participative leadership is to encourage employees to participate in organizational decision-making, and the key to the leadership process is to make a series of management tasks such as consulting employees before making decisions (Benoliel & Somech, 2014). Thus, based on many previous studies and practical experience, we consider participative leadership as a set of leadership behaviors that promote subordinates to participate in decision-making by giving them a certain degree of discretionary powers, effective information and other resources, as well as care and encouragement, so that they can be consulted enough before making decisions to solve work problems together (Huang et al., 2010; Chan, 2019).

Organizations today are moving towards more democratic structures which allow employees to influence the decision made because of concern for quality and the requirement of a high degree of commitment by employees to their work (Rost, 2013). The average Nigeria employee in recent times appears satisfied with an open door policy of management with adequate avenues for effective communication consultation and delegation of powers which covers some degree of participation (Bergen & Bressler, 2014). The aim of involving people in decision making process of the organization is to create in such a person a sense of recognition and belonging which could raise the person morale, as they will see themselves as very important in the organization and this will invariably lead such person(s) to a higher output in terms of productivity (Goodnight, 2011; Hartong & Koopman, 2011).

The feeling of empowerment or psychological empowerment has been understood as a form of intrinsic motivation to perform the job and is shown in four cognitive dimensions; meaning, impact, competence and self-determination (Huang et al., 2010). Robbins (2003) considered the distinction between the sharing of decision with individual subordinates and with the group as a whole. He emphasized that the criteria for choosing the proper style include among others, the importance of acceptance of a decision by subordinates' time and cost minimization. Leaders should therefore be able to analyze the relevant factors and decide on the degree of decision that would be appropriate (Dvir et al., 2002). Adams (2017), Javad (2013) and Ejimabo (2015) found that the level of trust is high in leaders; subordinates may expand more effort to accomplish work tasks.

Participation can lead to enhanced creativity in the work context (De Jong & Den Hartog, 2010). Participation, underscoring interpersonal social interactions within the organizational context, strengthens employees' desires to share information and undertake risks while participating in creative endeavours (Zhou et al., 2012). Wang et al. (2015) concluded that employee participation has a strong positive effect on innovation, highlighting the importance of engaging employees in the participatory process and activities.

Christensen and Jonsson (2011) reviewed studies on the effects of the implementation of participation in decision making, and showed that participation in decision making leads to freedom, which facilitates individuals' creative search activities. Consistent with the participation literature, scholars claim that participative leadership specifically represents the core value of organizational participation, based on which leaders involve employees in the decision-making process (Huang et al., 2010). Given the fact that the premier role of

participative leadership is making followers conform to leaders' expectations of creative solutions, a participative leader would be expected to consider team members' creative suggestions and solve problems based on consultations and joint discussions (Sagie & Koslowsky, 2000).

Participative leadership can act as a facilitator of employee creativity for the following reasons. First, participative leaders consult with employees before making a decision. This consultation process allows the leader and employees to share their knowledge and discuss different solutions (Huang et al., 2010, 2006), which in turn stimulates creative ideas. Second, through such joint decision making, employees fulfill their innate psychological needs (Zhang & Bartol, 2010) to realize their full potential and attain growth towards better achievement. In this way, they can utilize participation opportunities to demonstrate their abilities and leverage their knowledge to propose creative ideas and solutions. With this increased sense of competency and the development of self-determination, employees are internally motivated to do their work and thereby achieve high creative performance (Lam et al., 2015; Zhang & Bartol, 2010).

Third, during participation, supervisors and employees work together with frequent communication and interactions, and employees can voice their ideas and opinions safely to improve decision quality (Lam et al., 2015; Price et al., 2006). As a result, employees feel highly trusted by leaders, which increases their willingness to put more effort into returning novel and useful ideas as a form of reciprocation for leaders' trust (Atwater & Carmeli, 2009). The previous research has already found that participative leadership relates to follower creativity by developing follower trust in the leader (He, 2013). Aligned with the previous research, we expect participative leadership to foster employee creativity.

According to Huang et al. (2010), participative leadership enhances employees' work performance from two different perspectives. From the motivational mechanism perspective, we argue that participative leadership evokes employees' creative self-efficacy by showing leaders' willingness to listen and adopt employees' valuable solutions (Zhang & Zhou, 2014). From the exchange-based mechanism perspective, with participative leadership, employees experience a close relationship with leaders, which promotes their reciprocal exchange obligations to engage in creative endeavours (Chen & Tjosvold, 2007; Miao et al., 2014).

Participative leaders motivate employees by allowing them to assume a certain degree of responsibility and enabling them to make joint decisions. When employees are given opportunities to exert influences over a wide range of issues, they perceive that their leader relies on them for alternative solutions, which may increase their confidence to engage in creative tasks (De Jong & Den Hartog, 2010; Benoliel & Somech, 2014). Additionally, these valuable opportunities provided by leaders signal to employees that they (employees) can utilize these opportunities to acquire and expand their knowledge, skills, and abilities, which will help them become more confident in performing creative tasks. This personal confidence substantially helps employees address the problems they face and increases their creative self-efficacy (Shalley et al., 2009; Zhang & Bartol, 2010). Furthermore, participative leaders offer employees more discretion in making decisions (Huang et al., 2010). Such behaviour evokes employees' sense of control, which is a crucial facilitator of creative self-efficacy (Tierney & Farmer, 2011). Therefore, we expect that employees are likely to be more confident in bringing forth creative ideas if their supervisors engage in participative leadership.

Types and Strategy of Participation

There are basically dual forms of participation namely direct and indirect participation. Direct participation in decision –making is the participative processes whereby employees are involved in decision relating to their immediate task or environment (Werner, 2007). This form of participation is mainly found in productivity bargaining which is an arrangement between a worker and his employer to the effect that an increase in his productivity will make him earn an additional wage. Productivity bargaining arises mainly in circumstances where working practices need changes (Chiek, 2001).

Dull (2010) noted that indirect form of participation is the participation process whereby employees are involved in decision making through their selected representatives or delegates. Looking at the strategy applied by managers to involve employees in decision making in organization, participative principles is normally employed to achieve the desired result. Managers have many opportunities for involving subordinates in organizational planning and decision making. Mission refers to defining a meaningful long term direction for the organization (Brown, 2011). Leaders have an important role in managing shared values and mission. However, Joashi and Roh (2011) identified four participative methods which are:

- Delegation: means the transfer of authority from the superiors to the subordinates
- Committee Action: Committees are a vital mean of continually gaining inputs from at large number of organizational members. Most companies have certain standing committees to deal with continuing or receiving problems facing the organization. These could be related to corporate policy goals and operations. Depending upon the organizational structure special committees may be established to deal with budgets, employment policies, grievances, disciplinary problems and a variety of other organisational problems and activities.
- Question Asking: Managers who respect the knowledge, opinions and judgment of their subordinates may achieve a relatively high level of participation by simply asking questions. Here, the participative leader asks for information and insights that will improve the quality of their responsibility of their subordinates in terms of intelligence and problem solving.
- Shared Goals: Participative leaders are prone to become involved in management by objectives and similar goals–oriented programmes. Ideally, an MBO programme is highly participative.

Do's and Don'ts Participative Leaders

Schein (2010) pointed out some Do's and Don'ts of participative leaders. These are:

Participative Leaders Do's

- i) Communicate the big picture-company priority performance results, work units connection to the large organization.
- ii) Involve employees in developing realistic goals sensible performance measures and appropriate rewards.
- iii) Delegate appropriately and develop employee talent.

- iv) Support employees with clear direction and necessary resources. v) Facilitate team work by focusing on process as well as task.

Participative Leaders Don'ts

- i) Withhold information and act as if the group, is an isolated unit
- ii) Tell employees what to do and hope for good performance.
- iii) Manage in a detailed, hands – on fashion
- iv) Set people up for failure by not providing support
- v) Create competition and focus only on task

Participative leaders are described as such because their job is to see that employee participate in decisions that affects their work, in short they tap the full potential of their work force. Participative leaders orchestrate high performance by providing director information resources and group facilitation. It is easy to see that employee participation, a key component of organizational decision-making, is an important influencing factor for business organizations to adapt to the dynamic business environment and improve the effectiveness and science of leaders' decisions. Therefore, it is an important issue that leaders need to focus on in real-time, especially in organizations with a high power distance culture, to promote the participation of their subordinates in organizational decision-making (Huang et al., 2010). This requires leaders to adopt a supportive, democratic leadership style, known as participative leadership. A large number of scholars also agree that organizational leaders are increasingly relying on highly engaged employees to meet the challenges of a competitive marketplace, so participative leadership, which seeks to promote behaviors that support staff participation in organizational decision-making, is gaining attention in many organizations (Huang et al., 2006).

Participative leadership exists in organizations of any size, of any type and at any stage, where openness and empowerment of employees in the organizational decision-making process are core characteristics that distinguish it from other leadership styles (Huang et al., 2021). When making strategic decisions, participative leaders are able to share decision-making power and fully consult employees to jointly deal with the work problems (Chan, 2019).

CONCLUSION

Participative leaders encourage and support employees to participate in the decision-making process in order to make effective organizational decisions and to solve work problems together through a range of measures. In order to accelerate the exploration of participative leadership and promote the research on the effectiveness of participative leadership, we systematically reviewed the literature on participative leadership and organizational performance. Participative leaders motivate employees by allowing them to assume a certain degree of responsibility and enabling them to make joint decisions. When employees are given opportunities to exert influences over a wide range of issues, they perceive that their leader relies on them for alternative solutions, which may increase their confidence to engage in creative tasks.

Suggestions

Here are some suggestions for implementing participative leadership in an organization:

- Foster a culture of trust and open communication: Build trust among employees by promoting open and transparent communication. Create an environment where employees feel comfortable sharing their ideas, concerns, and feedback without fear of retribution. Encourage two-way communication channels and actively listen to employees' perspectives.
- Involve employees in decision-making: Actively involve employees in the decision-making process. Seek their input, opinions, and ideas when making important decisions that affect the organization. Provide opportunities for participation through team meetings, brainstorming sessions, surveys, or suggestion boxes.
- Delegate decision-making authority: Empower employees by delegating decision-making authority. Assign responsibilities and grant employees the autonomy to make decisions within their areas of expertise. This not only distributes decision-making across the organization but also fosters employee engagement and growth.
- Encourage collaboration and teamwork: Create opportunities for cross-functional collaboration and teamwork. Encourage employees to work together on projects, problem-solving initiatives, or process improvements. Facilitate communication and cooperation between different teams and departments to promote a collective approach to decision-making.
- Provide necessary resources and support: Ensure that employees have the necessary resources, information, and support to actively participate in decision-making. This may include providing training, access to relevant data, and tools for collaboration. Support employees by removing barriers and addressing any concerns or obstacles they may encounter.
- Recognize and value contributions: Acknowledge and appreciate employees' contributions to decision-making. Recognize and reward their efforts to encourage continued engagement and participation. Publicly celebrate successes and share the outcomes of participatory decision-making processes to reinforce its value.
- Embrace diversity and inclusion: Recognize the importance of diverse perspectives and ensure inclusivity in decision-making processes.

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