



The Influence Of Leadership And Training On Employee Performance Through Job Satisfaction As An Intervening Variable At The Department Of Communication And Information Technology In Karo Regency

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ABSTRACT

This research seeks to analyze the impact of leadership and training on employee performance with job satisfaction as an intervening variable at the Department of Communication and Information Technology (Kominfo) in Karo Regency. The study focused on all permanent employees, consisting of 43 individuals. Due to the limited population, a saturated sampling method was applied, making the entire population the sample. Data were obtained through two main sources: primary data collected using questionnaires and secondary data gathered through documentation. The analytical technique employed was quantitative analysis using SPSS version 25, which included the t-test, Sobel test, and path analysis to evaluate the relationships among variables. The study findings highlight several important points. First, leadership has a significant and positive influence on job satisfaction. Second, training also demonstrates a significant and positive effect on job satisfaction. Third, leadership contributes directly and positively to employee performance, while training likewise shows a positive and significant impact on performance. Fourth, job satisfaction is proven to significantly enhance employee performance. In addition, the analysis indicates that job satisfaction mediates the relationship between leadership and performance, as well as between training and performance. In summary, the results confirm that leadership and training not only have direct effects on employee performance but also indirectly improve performance when mediated by job satisfaction. These findings emphasize the importance of developing effective leadership practices and



implementing structured training programs to foster employee satisfaction and, in turn, strengthen overall organizational performance.

Keywords: Leadership, Job Satisfaction, Performance, and Training

INTRODUCTION

In the current era of globalization and rapid technological development, organizations are increasingly required to improve their efficiency and effectiveness in order to remain competitive and relevant. One of the key factors in achieving organizational success is human resources, as employees play a central role in carrying out tasks, implementing strategies, and realizing institutional goals. Therefore, the ability of an organization to manage, motivate, and develop its employees has a direct impact on overall performance outcomes. Leadership is one of the most critical aspects in determining the quality of employee performance. Effective leadership not only involves the ability to give instructions and make decisions, but also the capacity to inspire, motivate, and foster commitment among employees. Leaders who are able to build good relationships and create a positive work environment tend to enhance job satisfaction, which in turn contributes to better performance. Training is another strategic effort to improve employee competence. Through well-planned training programs, employees are given opportunities to develop knowledge, skills, and attitudes that are relevant to their responsibilities. This process not only increases individual capabilities but also strengthens organizational performance. Inadequate training often results in limited employee productivity, while effective training leads to higher confidence, innovation, and achievement. Job satisfaction has been recognized as a significant mediating factor that connects leadership and training to performance. Employees who feel satisfied with their jobs usually demonstrate higher commitment, loyalty, and productivity. Conversely, dissatisfaction can result in low motivation, increased turnover intention, and decreased performance. Therefore, job satisfaction is considered an essential intervening variable in the relationship between organizational practices and employee outcomes.

Based on these considerations, this study aims to analyze the influence of leadership and training on employee performance through job satisfaction as an intervening variable at the Department of Communication and Information Technology (Kominfo) in Karo Regency. The findings are expected to enrich academic discussions on human resource management and provide practical recommendations for government agencies in improving leadership effectiveness, developing training strategies, and enhancing job satisfaction to optimize employee performance.



LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Performance.

Performance generally refers to the level of achievement of an individual or group in carrying out tasks in accordance with established standards, objectives, or responsibilities. According to Rivai (2011), performance is the result or overall success achieved by a person in relation to the tasks assigned to them within a certain period. In other words, performance illustrates how effectively and efficiently an employee carries out their work duties. Mathis and Jackson (2010) describe performance as what employees do or do not do that affects the success of the organization. This definition emphasizes that performance is not only about results, but also about the processes and behaviors that contribute to achieving organizational goals. Performance therefore covers both quantitative aspects, such as productivity, and qualitative aspects, such as accuracy and innovation. Mangkunegara (2015) further explains that performance is the result of work in terms of quality and quantity achieved by an employee in carrying out their duties according to the responsibilities given. This perspective highlights that performance is influenced by various factors, including skills, knowledge, motivation, and the work environment.

From these definitions, it can be concluded that performance is a multidimensional concept that reflects the extent to which employees can achieve expected outcomes. It is not only measured by the quantity of output but also by the quality, timeliness, and contribution of employees to organizational objectives.

2. Leadership

Leadership is a fundamental aspect of organizational life that determines how individuals are guided, motivated, and influenced to achieve common goals. According to Robbins and Judge (2017), leadership is the ability of an individual to influence a group toward the achievement of a vision or set of objectives. This definition highlights the role of a leader as someone who provides direction and motivates others to contribute effectively. Yukl (2013) defines leadership as a process of influencing others to understand and agree on what needs to be done and how it can be accomplished effectively, as well as facilitating individual and collective efforts to achieve shared goals. This perspective emphasizes leadership as both an influence process and a cooperative relationship between leaders and followers. Northouse (2016) adds that leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of people to achieve a common objective. Unlike management, which is more focused on systems and procedures, leadership involves vision, inspiration, and the ability to foster commitment. In the context of organizations,



leadership can take many forms, including transformational leadership, which inspires and motivates employees beyond their self-interest, and transactional leadership, which focuses on structured tasks and rewards. Effective leadership is closely linked with job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and ultimately employee performance. From these definitions, it can be concluded that leadership is not merely about authority or position, but about the ability to guide, influence, and inspire employees in achieving both individual and organizational goals.

3. Training

Training is an essential human resource development activity designed to enhance employee knowledge, skills, and attitudes so that they can perform their jobs more effectively. According to Dessler (2015), training is a process by which employees acquire the skills necessary to perform their jobs. This definition stresses the role of training as a practical approach to improve employees' ability to meet work demands. Mondy (2016) defines training as any activity aimed at improving the performance of employees in their current jobs or preparing them for future roles. Training not only focuses on technical abilities but also on behavioral aspects, such as teamwork, problem-solving, and communication.

From these perspectives, training can be understood as a structured and continuous process of developing human resources. It is intended to increase productivity, adaptability, and performance while fostering job satisfaction and employee motivation.

4. Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is a psychological condition that reflects how employees feel about their work, whether they experience positive or negative emotions regarding their roles and responsibilities. Robbins and Judge (2017) define job satisfaction as a positive feeling about a job resulting from an evaluation of its characteristics. This suggests that job satisfaction is not only influenced by the nature of the work itself but also by how employees perceive and evaluate their work environment. According to Luthans (2011), job satisfaction represents an emotional response to one's job and is determined by how well the outcomes meet or exceed expectations. Employees who feel that their needs and expectations are fulfilled tend to display higher levels of satisfaction, which in turn affects their motivation and performance.

From these definitions, it can be concluded that job satisfaction is a multidimensional concept that plays a vital role in shaping employee behavior. High job satisfaction tends to foster commitment, loyalty, and improved performance, whereas low satisfaction often leads to absenteeism, turnover, and reduced productivity.



METHODS

Pendekatan The research applies an associative approach. An associative approach is a method used to determine the existence of relationships or influences between two or more variables, specifically the independent and dependent variables. This approach is often used in social science research to explain causal linkages and to test hypotheses regarding the effects among variables. In the context of this study, the independent variables consist of Leadership (X1) and Training (X2). These variables are assumed to have both direct and indirect influences on employee performance. Job Satisfaction (Z) is positioned as an intervening variable, functioning as a mediator that connects the independent variables with the dependent variable. The dependent variable (Y) in this research is Employee Performance, which reflects the overall outcome of how well employees carry out their tasks and responsibilities within the organization. By employing an associative approach, this study aims not only to examine the direct impact of leadership and training on performance but also to explore how job satisfaction mediates these relationships. Thus, the model provides a comprehensive understanding of the interplay among leadership, training, job satisfaction, and performance within the Department of Communication and Information Technology in Karo Regency.

Sampling

Morissan (2014:109) describes a population as a set of subjects, variables, concepts, or phenomena that can be examined to understand the characteristics of the entire group. In a similar sense, Sugiyono (2018) defines population as a generalization area consisting of objects or subjects that possess particular qualities and characteristics identified by the researcher for study and from which conclusions can be drawn. In the context of this research, the population comprises all employees of the Department of Communication and Information Technology (Kominfo) in Karo Regency. Based on records from October 2024, the total number of employees included in the population is 43 individuals.

Data collection

This study makes use of both primary and secondary data sources to obtain comprehensive research findings. The primary data were gathered through structured questionnaires distributed to employees of the Department of Communication and Information Technology in Karo Regency. The questionnaires were designed using a Likert scale and aimed at measuring



variables such as leadership, training, job satisfaction, and employee performance. Meanwhile, the secondary data were obtained through documentation studies, which included organizational reports, internal regulations, and other official documents related to employee performance and organizational practices. In addition, secondary information was also collected from relevant books and academic journals discussing leadership, training, job satisfaction, and performance to strengthen the theoretical foundation of the study.

Measures (Alternatively: Measurement)

t-test (Partial Test)

The partial t-test is a statistical method used to determine whether each independent variable has a significant effect on the dependent variable when examined individually. In other words, it tests the contribution of one predictor variable while controlling for the influence of other variables included in the regression model. According to Ghazali (2018), the t-test is employed to assess the extent to which the independent variable (X) explains variations in the dependent variable (Y).

Sobel test (criteria of mediation)

The Sobel test is applied to assess the role of a mediating variable, in this study represented by job satisfaction. A variable is categorized as an intervening variable when it serves to influence the relationship between an independent variable and a dependent variable. Testing for mediation can be carried out using the procedure developed by Sobel (1982), which is widely known as the Sobel Test (Ghozali, 2018). As explained by Ghazali (2018), the Sobel test specifically measures the indirect effect of an independent variable (X) on a dependent variable (Y) through a mediating variable (M). The calculation of this effect is conducted using the following formula:

$$\sqrt{b^2Sa^2 + a^2Sb^2 + Sa^2Sb^2}$$

Path Analysis

In practice, path analysis is often applied in studies that involve intervening variables, making it possible to separate total effects into direct and indirect components. The total effect is the sum of the direct effect of an independent variable on the dependent variable and the indirect effect that passes through the mediating variable. In this research, path analysis is used to test the relationships among Leadership (X1), Training (X2), Job Satisfaction (Z), and Employee



Performance (Y). This approach helps identify whether Leadership and Training affect Performance directly, or indirectly through Job Satisfaction as an intervening variable. By applying path analysis, a clearer understanding of the causal structure between variables can be achieved, providing stronger evidence for hypothesis testing.

RESULTS

Path Analysis Sub Model II

The coefficient of determination (R^2) shown in the table represents the percentage of variation in the dependent variable that is accounted for by the independent variables in the model.

Test Path Analysis

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.674 ^a	.455	.413	.310

a. Predictors: (Constant), Job Satisfaction, Leadership, Training

The The model summary results demonstrate that the correlation coefficient (R) is 0.674, which indicates a relatively strong positive relationship between the independent variables—Job Satisfaction, Leadership, and Training—and the dependent variable. The coefficient of determination (R Square) is 0.455, meaning that 45.5% of the variance in the dependent variable can be explained by the three predictors included in the model. Furthermore, the Adjusted R Square value of 0.413 confirms that, after accounting for the number of predictors and sample size, the model is still able to explain approximately 41.3% of the variation in the outcome variable. The standard error of the estimate, reported at 0.310, suggests that the model's predictions deviate from the actual observed values by an average margin of 0.310, which reflects the model's overall accuracy and goodness of fit.

Sobel Test

Sobel Test

Variables	<i>Unstandardized</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>Test Statistics</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>P-Value</i>
Leadership and Job Satisfaction	0,219	0,071	2,085	0,013	0,037
Job Satisfaction with	0,133	0,047			



Performance					
Training on Job Satisfaction	0,291	0,085			
Job Satisfaction with Performance	0,133	0,047	2,181	0,017	0,029

Sumber: Data Diolah Dengan *Calculation for the Sobel Test*, 2025

The The results of the Sobel test analysis indicate that Leadership has a significant positive effect on Job Satisfaction, with an unstandardized coefficient of 0.219, a standard error of 0.071, and a test statistic of 2.085 at a significance level of $p = 0.037$. This finding suggests that improvements in leadership contribute meaningfully to higher job satisfaction among employees. Furthermore, Training also demonstrates a significant positive influence on Job Satisfaction, with a coefficient of 0.291, a standard error of 0.085, and a test statistic of 2.181, reaching significance at $p = 0.029$.

Meanwhile, the relationship between Job Satisfaction and Performance shows an unstandardized coefficient of 0.133 with a standard error of 0.047, indicating a positive contribution of job satisfaction toward enhancing employee performance. Overall, these results provide empirical evidence that both leadership and training significantly enhance job satisfaction, which in turn positively impacts employee performance.

DISCUSSION

1. The Influence of Leadership on Job Satisfaction

This indicates that effective leadership plays an important role in enhancing employees' satisfaction with their jobs. Leaders who are able to provide clear direction, encouragement, and support contribute to higher levels of employee satisfaction. The results support the theoretical perspective that leadership is a central determinant of employee attitudes and work-related outcomes. Leaders who adopt supportive and transformational behaviors can increase job satisfaction by creating a positive work environment, fostering trust, and recognizing employee contributions. This is in line with the findings of Robbins and Judge (2019), who emphasized that effective leadership styles, particularly those that involve employee participation and recognition, are positively related to job satisfaction.

Similarly, Bass and Riggio (2006) noted that transformational leadership significantly enhances employee satisfaction by inspiring and motivating subordinates to go beyond their own interests for the collective good. Furthermore, Goh and Wong (2019) found that leadership that



emphasizes communication and empowerment improves employees' job satisfaction across various organizational settings.

In this study, the significant relationship between leadership and job satisfaction provides empirical evidence that leadership is not only about achieving organizational goals but also about fulfilling employees' psychological and emotional needs. Improving leadership quality, therefore, can be considered a strategic initiative to raise job satisfaction and, indirectly, organizational performance.

2. The Influence of Training on Job Satisfaction

This finding demonstrates that training programs contribute to higher job satisfaction among employees, as opportunities for skill development and career growth enhance employees' sense of value and confidence in their work. This result supports the theoretical notion that training is a vital component of human resource development, directly influencing employees' attitudes and behaviors. Training not only equips employees with the skills required to perform effectively but also signals that the organization invests in their professional growth, thereby increasing their satisfaction and commitment.

These findings are consistent with Noe (2017), who emphasized that effective training programs enhance employee motivation and satisfaction by improving competencies and reducing role ambiguity. Similarly, Jehanzeb and Bashir (2013) found that training opportunities positively impact job satisfaction, as employees perceive training as an investment in their personal and career development. In addition, Elnaga and Imran (2013) highlighted that continuous training and development programs foster a sense of belonging and appreciation, leading to higher levels of satisfaction.

In this study, the significant relationship between training and job satisfaction provides strong evidence that training initiatives play a strategic role not only in improving employee performance but also in fostering satisfaction. Organizations that prioritize training can enhance both individual and organizational outcomes by creating a workforce that feels competent, valued, and motivated.

3. The Influence of Leadership on Performance through Job Satisfaction

These findings suggest that leadership does not only affect performance directly, but also indirectly by improving employees' job satisfaction, which serves as a mediating variable. This result is consistent with the notion that leadership effectiveness extends beyond direct task accomplishment and influences employee outcomes through psychological mechanisms such as



satisfaction and motivation. Leaders who demonstrate supportive, communicative, and transformational behaviors create a work environment where employees feel valued and satisfied, which subsequently enhances their willingness to perform better.

The findings align with Judge et al. (2001), who argued that job satisfaction serves as a significant mediator between leadership and performance, as satisfied employees are more motivated to contribute to organizational goals. Similarly, Bass and Riggio (2006) emphasized that transformational leaders indirectly enhance performance outcomes by raising employees' satisfaction and commitment. Yukl (2013) also highlighted that effective leadership builds trust and satisfaction, which serve as important pathways to improved performance.

In this study, the mediating role of job satisfaction strengthens the conclusion that leadership should not only be evaluated by its direct influence on performance but also by its capacity to foster satisfaction among employees. Enhancing leadership quality—through coaching, mentoring, or adopting participatory styles—can therefore be a strategic mechanism to improve both job satisfaction and performance outcomes in the organization.

4. The Effect of Training on Performance through Job Satisfaction

These results indicate that training programs not only improve employee skills but also increase their level of job satisfaction, which subsequently contributes to better performance outcomes. This finding supports the view that training is a critical human resource strategy that enhances performance both directly and indirectly through psychological factors such as satisfaction. Employees who receive adequate training feel more competent, valued, and supported by the organization, which strengthens their satisfaction and encourages them to perform optimally.

The result is consistent with Elnaga and Imran (2013), who found that training significantly enhances employee satisfaction and, as a consequence, improves job performance. Similarly, Jehanzeb and Bashir (2013) emphasized that training opportunities strengthen job satisfaction, which acts as a mediator in achieving higher performance. Noe (2017) also highlighted that continuous training programs develop employees' knowledge and skills, while simultaneously increasing satisfaction, leading to improved overall performance.

In this study, the mediating role of job satisfaction confirms that training is not only a technical intervention to improve competencies but also a motivational tool that shapes employees' attitudes. By investing in structured and continuous training initiatives, organizations can enhance job satisfaction, which in turn boosts employee performance and contributes to long-term organizational effectiveness.



CONCLUSION

Based on the results of this study, it can be concluded that Leadership and Training have significant impacts on Job Satisfaction and Performance among employees. Leadership positively influences job satisfaction, as effective leaders provide guidance, support, and motivation, fostering a more satisfying work environment (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Robbins & Judge, 2019). Likewise, training enhances job satisfaction by improving employees' skills, providing career development opportunities, and signaling organizational support, which aligns with previous research highlighting the role of training in both skill enhancement and employee motivation (Jehanzeb & Bashir, 2013; Elnaga & Imran, 2013). Furthermore, Leadership indirectly affects Performance through Job Satisfaction, demonstrating that satisfied employees are more motivated and committed, thereby performing better (Judge et al., 2001; Bass & Riggio, 2006). Similarly, Training indirectly improves Performance via Job Satisfaction, confirming that human resource development initiatives contribute not only to employee competence but also to positive work attitudes that enhance performance (Noe, 2017; Jehanzeb & Bashir, 2013). Overall, Job Satisfaction serves as a key mediating variable, explaining how Leadership and Training translate into improved employee performance. Therefore, organizations seeking higher performance should invest in effective leadership development and comprehensive training programs to foster both satisfaction and productivity.

LIMITATION

Despite the valuable findings of this study, there are several limitations that should be considered. First, the research was conducted on a relatively small population, which may limit the generalizability of the results to other organizations or contexts. Second, the study relied primarily on self-reported questionnaires to measure Leadership, Training, Job Satisfaction, and Performance. This method may be subject to response bias, as participants could overestimate or underestimate their perceptions and behaviors. Third, the study focused on only a limited number of variables, and other organizational or individual factors, such as organizational culture, work environment, or personal motivation, were not included, which might also influence Job Satisfaction and Performance. Lastly, the cross-sectional design of the study restricts the ability to establish causal relationships, as data were collected at a single point in time rather than over a period. Future research could address these limitations by using larger sample sizes, incorporating additional variables, employing longitudinal designs, and combining self-reported data with objective performance measures to provide more comprehensive insights..



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