

Literature Review of Path-Goal Theory: Analysis and Approaches in Leadership

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Abstract. This study aims to explain the Path-Goal Theory of leadership through a literature review. Utilizing a literature study method, data were collected and analyzed from various books and scientific journals with similar topics. The findings indicate that the application of Path-Goal leadership can enhance employee motivation. The theory recognizes four leadership behaviors that can increase subordinate motivation: directive, supportive, participative, and achievement-oriented. By identifying the most effective paths for followers to achieve their goals, leaders can provide necessary support and remove obstacles. This research underscores the importance of adapting leadership styles to meet the needs of team members and the situational context, ultimately contributing to improved organizational performance and employee satisfaction.

Keywords: Path-Goal Theory, leadership styles, employee motivation, organizational performance

1 Introduction

Leadership as defined by Handoko, encompasses an individual's capacity to influence others towards the attainment of goals and objectives [1]. Effective leadership plays a pivotal role in realizing organizational objectives, with the effectiveness of a leader being shaped by various factors, including the leadership style employed. It is essential for leaders to discern the most efficacious path for their followers to achieve goals and to furnish requisite support throughout the process. A theory that correlates leadership with team member motivation is the Path-Goal Theory; this theory underscores the leader's responsibility in motivating subordinates by delineating a clear path to goal achievement and providing necessary support during the process [2].

The goal-path theory posits that a leader's primary duty is to eliminate impediments hindering goal attainment and to provide the necessary support for team members to achieve desired outcomes. In this context, leaders should adapt their leadership style - whether directive, supportive, participative, or achievement-focused - in accordance with the needs and attributes of individuals in the team and the prevailing circumstances.

Given the increasingly intricate dynamics of modern organizations, a deeper comprehension of how leaders can influence the motivation and performance of team members is growing in significance. Research conducted by Irwansyah & Dahniar [3] elucidates that employee performance is the culmination of the quantity and quality of work accomplished by an employee within a specified timeframe in executing their job responsibilities. The approach adopted by a company to enhance employee performance in line with organizational goals is referred to as a strategy. Thus, this study seeks to explore the application of the Path-Goal theory in the realm of leadership across diverse sectors, while also identifying the factors influencing the efficacy of leaders in motivating their teams. It is hoped that the findings of this study will yield insights for devising more effective leadership strategies and enhancing team performance in achieving organizational objectives.

2 Theoretical Studies

2.1 Leadership Theory

Leadership is the capacity to modify behavior and sway the thoughts or actions of initially individualistic and egocentric individuals towards organizational behavior [4].

Effendi Usman [5] in order to attain high performance from individuals within the organization, it is essential for leadership to provide guidance, motivation, direction, foster effective communication networks and offer efficient supervision [6]. According to G. R. Terry [7] Leadership is the relational process through which a leader influences others to consciously cooperate in a task-oriented relationship to achieve the leader's objectives.

Atmosudirjo [8] explained in his book entitled “Beberapa Pandangan Umum Tentang Pengambilan Keputusan”, that: “Leadership is the embodiment of an individual's personality that prompts a group of individuals to emulate or follow them. It is the demonstration of authority and influence in such a manner that motivates a group of people to align their actions with the leader's intentions”.

The concept of leadership can be defined as the capacity to influence and direct individuals or groups towards constructive collaboration, utilizing effective communication, motivation, and positive interpersonal relationships to attain shared objectives within an organization. The presence of trust and transparent communication within a leader's team signifies a strong rapport with team members. When team members feel appreciated and heard, they are inclined to make optimal contributions. Trust fosters an environment where team members are more inclined to openly share ideas and express their opinions without reservation, while effective communication minimizes misunderstandings and enhances teamwork.

In a book by Sutrisno [9] entitled “Manajemen Sumber Daya Manusia” the concept of leadership encompasses three primary components: (1) the active involvement of others by the leader; (2) the distribution of power within the leadership dynamic; and (3) the capacity to effectively employ power. A leader's ability to engage team members in decision-making and initiatives is essential for fostering a sense of ownership and accountability among them. Leadership extends beyond individual authority, emphasizing the importance of power and responsibility sharing among team members, thereby fostering collaboration and innovation.

Additionally, a leader must possess the skill to employ power judiciously to inspire, guide, and influence the team toward achieving collective objectives. By adhering to these three tenets, leaders can establish effective leadership within their respective communities.

The role of leadership in shaping the direction and success of a group is of utmost importance. In addition to establishing a vision, leaders must also assume responsibility for inspiring and guiding their team. To comprehend this dynamic, numerous theories of leadership have been formulated, including: (1) Trait Theory; (2) Behavioral Theory; (3) Contingency Theory; (4) Transformational Theory. Trait theory centers on the personal attributes of the leader, while behavioral theory focuses on the leader's actions and style to motivate team members. Furthermore, contingency theory posits that leadership effectiveness is heavily reliant on the current context and circumstances, whereas transformational theory underscores the significance of inspiration and vision in leadership. Contemporary leadership theories endeavor to elucidate how effective leadership can be actualized within an organization.

By applying these theories, leaders will shape a progressive work culture and strengthen employee contributions, as well as encourage innovation within their organizations. This theoretical study of leadership serves not only to understand the role of leaders, but also to identify effective strategies for managing team dynamics and achieving overall organizational goals.

2.2 Leadership Obstacles

Zabir [10] the fundamental issue of motivation in relation to leadership pertains to how a leader persuades a team of individuals, each with unique needs and personalities, to work together to achieve organizational goals. Successful leaders must be cognizant of the interplay between these components.

Dubrin [11] emphasizing that the primary challenge of leadership is to cultivate a supportive culture and foster an environment conducive to teamwork. This presents a significant challenge for leaders, attributable to various factors such as entrenched organizational habits and mindsets that are often resistant to change. Leaders are required to confront resistance from team members. Additionally, the diverse backgrounds and characteristics of each team member can give rise to conflicts and misunderstandings. Inadequate communication between team members can further impede the comprehension of the envisioned goals and objectives.

Furthermore, unfavorable situations can cause anxiety for team members and affect morale. A strong, positive culture requires a significant amount of time and resources, which are generally not productive in the short term. Finally, without proper measurement tools, leaders will find it difficult to assess the effectiveness of the existing culture and work atmosphere. All these factors further complicate the challenges leaders face. Individual egos and desires will cause teams to collapse if they do not have a supportive culture and atmosphere. Therefore, we must realize that leadership requires not only self-satisfaction of respect, but also responsibility for the conditions, performance, and well-being of team members.

2.3 Types of Leadership

The types of leadership described by the Lecturer Team of the Department of Educational Administration (2010) in [7] are generally classified as follows:

a. Autocratic Leadership Type

In this model, authority is fully concentrated on the leader, who makes decisions and policies without including suggestions from subordinates. One-way communication and intense supervision create an atmosphere that can lead to resistance and apathy among members. Autocratic leaders demand loyalty and perfect performance, take full responsibility for the success of the organization, and often receive more criticism than praise.

b. Pseudo-Democratic Leadership Type

This leadership can be referred to as pseudo-democracy or manipulative democracy, which is the type where the leader looks democratic but is actually autocratic. Despite giving decision-making rights and authority to their subordinates, superiors use strategies to manipulate the situation through mathematical means that ultimately encourage their subordinates to realize their desires.

c. “Laissez-faire” Leadership Type

Laissez-faire leadership is characterized by delegating full responsibility to the team to act and express without being controlled or changed by the leader. Since tasks and collaboration are fully delegated to members without direction, the success of the organization depends more on individual awareness and commitment than the influence of the manager. Disorganized organizational structure, unplanned activities, and unclear supervision lead to confusion. The characteristics of this type of leadership include: Leaders delegate decisions to subordinates, communication occurs only when necessary, supervision is minimal, initiative comes from below, little direction, self-interest takes precedence, and responsibility is individualized.

d. Traditional Leadership Type

Traditional leadership is a form of leadership that arises in response to life problems faced by developing societies. This type of leadership tends to be feudal in nature, and individuals who dare to gain and maintain power often pass it on to their descendants. It seeks to direct the thoughts and actions of its members to praise a particular group.

e. Democratic Leadership Type

Democratic leaders see themselves as members of a group with a common goal to achieve together. They consider the needs and abilities of group members and try to motivate all members to work productively. The characteristics of this leadership include: the autonomy of the leader is not absolute, willing to share responsibilities, decision making is done jointly, and with open communication, reasonable supervision, provide opportunities for members to take the initiative, and deliver tasks in a friendly manner, praise and criticism delivered in balance, thus creating an atmosphere of mutual trust and shared responsibility.

f. Rational Leadership Type

The rational leadership type prioritizes logic and analysis in decision-making, utilizing objective data and information to achieve clear goals. Rational leaders meticulously analyze situations, consider various options, and effectively communicate their decisions and reasoning to the team. They are open to criticism and ready to revise decisions if needed, fostering a transparent and results-focused work environment.

g. Collective Leadership Type

Collective leadership entails a collaborative approach where no single individual dominates the leadership role. It emphasizes teamwork and active participation from all team members in the evaluation and monitoring of business results.

2.4 Leadership and Path-Goal Theory

Leadership is one of the essential elements in organizational management that significantly impacts workforce performance and motivation. One significant leadership theory is the path-goal theory developed by Robert House[2], which emphasizes the leader's role in assisting team members in achieving their goals by removing obstacles and providing necessary support. The Path-Goal Theory focuses on how leaders can influence follower motivation and performance through different approaches, depending on the situation and follower characteristics.

According to House [2], the goal of leadership in this context is to increase follower satisfaction and performance by removing obstacles that hinder goal achievement. Job satisfaction is reflected in each employee's attitude towards their job, both favorable and unfavorable. An unfavorable attitude reflects job dissatisfaction. Conversely, a favorable attitude reflects positive job satisfaction. Achieving a certain level of job satisfaction is crucial, as failure to achieve this will result in a poor attitude towards their work [12]. The correlation between leadership and Path-Goal Theory is evident in how leaders can impact the motivation and performance of team members. Studies indicate that a leadership style tailored to the needs of followers can enhance work efficiency and job satisfaction [13].

A leadership style that matches the needs of the team has a positive effect, as leaders who can adapt their style to these needs can increase intrinsic motivation among followers [14]. For instance, a participative style can foster greater engagement and a sense of belonging among team members. Furthermore, the appropriate leadership style can help overcome obstacles. A supportive leadership style can mitigate stress and uncertainty in the workplace, ultimately leading to enhanced productivity [15]. Customizing leadership style based on the situation and individual characteristics is crucial. For instance, leaders who employ a directive approach may be more effective in complex situations or within newly formed teams [16].

The relationship between leadership and Path-Goal Theory implies that leaders' effectiveness hinges on their ability to align their leadership style with the needs and characteristics of their followers or subordinates. The implementation of this theory can offer leaders guidance in fostering a supportive and more productive work environment.

2.5 Path and Goal Theory

Path goal is a leadership theory initiated by Robert House[2], which focuses on how leaders can motivate team members to reach their targets by providing direction and support. According to this theory, leader effectiveness depends on the situation and the characteristics of the followers. Path and Goal Theory is based on two main elements: the goal and the path. Leaders are tasked with directing and supporting team members so that they can achieve the desired goal.

The motivational process in Path-Goal Theory involves several steps:

1. Identifying the Goal: Leaders play a crucial role in helping team members understand and establish goals to be achieved.
2. Defining the Route: The leader's responsibility lies in providing the necessary information and resources to facilitate the accomplishment of the set objectives.
3. Overcoming Obstacles: Effective leaders focus on addressing and overcoming any obstacles that team members may encounter during the pursuit of their goals.
4. Rewarding: Leaders are tasked with providing positive feedback and rewards to acknowledge and encourage the achievements of their team members.

The effectiveness of leaders in applying the Path-Goal Theory is influenced by various factors, including follower characteristics and work situations. Follower characteristics, such as their level of experience, individual needs, and motivation, can significantly impact their response to the applied leadership style. Additionally, work situation characteristics, including the complexity of the task and the work environment, play a pivotal role in determining the most effective leadership style.

While the Path-Goal Theory offers a valuable framework, it is not without criticisms. Some researchers argue that empirical evidence supporting this theory remains limited, highlighting a key limitation. Furthermore, the theory's second criticism pertains to the flexibility of leadership style, as not all leaders are adept at adapting their approach to suit the needs of different situations and individuals. Nonetheless, the Path-Goal Theory provides valuable insights into how leaders can effectively motivate followers to achieve their goals. Despite facing criticisms, the theory continues to hold relevance in the context of modern leadership.

2.6 Path-Goal Leadership Theory

The Path-Goal Leadership Theory elucidates the leader's role in assisting team members to achieve their objectives by providing direction, support, or both, particularly when individual goals align with organizational goals. Farida and Hartono [17] have identified four distinct leadership styles (as referenced in the work of Lusy Rahmawati et al):

1. Directive Leadership

This style is characterized by an authoritarian approach, wherein leaders make decisions independently without soliciting input from others, often giving orders and critiquing subordinates.

2. Supportive Leadership

Leaders who adopt this style exhibit friendliness and concern for their subordinates, fostering a collaborative work environment. Research conducted by Anissa & Claudia [18] indicates that employees typically anticipate support and recognition from their leaders, making this style particularly favorable among employees.

3. Participative Leadership

In this approach, leaders actively involve employees in the decision-making process. However, it is notable that many managers continue to make unilateral decisions without seeking the input of their subordinates.

4. Achievement-Oriented Leadership

Leaders employing this style establish challenging goals for their subordinates, encouraging them to excel in their roles and meet their targets.

The Path-Goal Theory does not confine leaders to a singular style. Instead, it underscores the necessity for leaders to adapt their leadership approaches based on situational needs and contexts. Leaders must exercise flexibility in modifying their strategies as circumstances and challenges arise. The effectiveness or failure of an organization is predominantly influenced by the quality of its leadership. Day and Lord, as cited in [17], assert that the quality of leadership is integral to organizational success.

Ultimately, the success or failure of an organization hinges on its leaders and their leadership capabilities. Managers bear the responsibility for the efficacy or ineffectiveness of task execution, with Day and Lord, as cited in [17] indicating that the success or failure of most organizations is contingent upon the leadership quality of those entrusted with its management.

2.7 Two Key Points in Goal-Path Theory

The goal-path theory encompasses two primary components: follower characteristics and task characteristics. These elements significantly influence a leader's behavior in fostering subordinate motivation [14]. Leadership behaviors are shaped and adapted in response to the attributes of subordinates as well as the specific nature of the task at hand.

2.8 Subordinate Characteristics Component

The traits or characteristics of subordinates impact how leaders guide them within the scope of their assigned tasks. Subordinates' traits include their need for control, desire for relationships, and evaluation of their own performance. The extent to which followers view the leader's actions as a source for their future fulfillment and satisfaction is determined by certain traits.

Leadership style in goal-path theory affects subordinates' performance, satisfaction and [19]. Goal-path theory suggests directive leadership in ambiguous situations because it offers task clarity and psychological structure. When leaders provide certainty in the workplace, their authoritarian subordinates will feel more comfortable.

Goal path research also focuses on subordinates' control desires by considering the control center, which is divided into external and internal components. Subordinates with an external center of control believe that external forces influence outcomes. Subordinates with an internal center of control, on the other hand, usually feel responsible for the outcomes they face. According to this idea, participative leadership is more satisfying for subordinates with an internal center of control because it allows them to feel responsible for their work and to participate in decision-making. Directive leadership, on the other hand, is more appropriate for subordinates who have an external control center because they believe that external factors shape their circumstances.

A leader who uses a directive leadership style will explain the job at hand, how to solve the problem, the anticipated results, and the estimated time to complete it [19]. Research states that directive leadership sacrifices adaptability [20]. The obstacles in this leadership style do not provide space for subordinates in conducting discussions so that the absence of subordinate involvement is a participatory work culture. This leadership style makes subordinates dependent on the leader which makes them lack initiative [21].

2.9 Task Characteristics Components

Task characteristics are the second thing that significantly influences leadership behavior. Lubis [22], The definition of job characteristics is the design or strategy of tasks. Job characteristics according to Stoner in [23] include the nature of the job, such as the type of task, level of responsibility, and work that has qualities that make people happy.

The design of tasks assigned to subordinates, the organization's formal authority system, and the subordinate's primary work group are examples of task characteristics [14]. When there is a situation that provides structured tasks and subordinates can understand them so that productivity goals are met, then there is not much need for a directive leader. So that there is satisfaction of subordinates with their tasks because they feel as if they can complete their work. But if there is a situation that finds unclear and ambiguous tasks, it requires input and support from the leader.

Path-goal theory places special emphasis on helping subordinates cope with challenges. Different types of jobs require different amounts of autonomy, task identity, and skills. People must meet the requirements because of variations in job characteristics [24]. If the work is not performed by the individual according to specifications, then obstacles will occur which will create frustration and threat to the individual. According to the path-goal theory, it is the leader's job to help his followers overcome obstacles. Helping subordinates overcome these obstacles will increase their self-confidence that they can complete the task and help them understand it better.

2.10 How Does Path-Goal Theory Work?

This path-goal theory, developed by House & Mitchell [15] focuses on how leaders influence followers' perceptions of their own goals, their career goals, and how to achieve those goals [25]. Meanwhile, the core of this idea, according to Robbins and Judge in [25], is that the role of the leader is to help followers achieve their goals and provide guidance on which ones need help to

achieve organizational goals. According to this path-goal theory, the leader's job is to provide information and inspire followers with additional resources so they can achieve desired outcomes.

In addition to being theoretically complex, path-goal theory has a pragmatic approach to leadership [14]. According to the path-goal approach theory, leaders can choose the leadership style that best suits the characteristics of their jobs and subordinates. The first leadership style in the path-goal paradigm is directive. When the tasks are complex, the demands and rules are unclear, and the subordinates are authoritarian and dogmatic, then the directive leadership style will be appropriate. Therefore, in this case, the leadership that directs completes the task by providing direction and psychological support to subordinates [15].

Supportive style is the second type of leadership. According to the path-goal theory, leaders should adopt a supportive attitude when dealing with repetitive, unpleasant, or boring task situations. When subordinates are engaged in repetitive and uninteresting activities, a supportive leadership style provides the motivation they need to get the job done. This style provides a human touch to employees performing monotonous tasks.

Participative or involvement-based leadership is the third style. When the task at hand is imprecise, ambiguous, and unstructured, participative leadership is thought to work best [14]. Additionally, there are subordinates who react well when involved in decision making regarding task organization, which is another benefit of participative leadership.

In addition, according to path-goal theory, achievement-oriented leadership is predicted to work best when subordinates are given difficult, complex, and confusing tasks. In these situations, leaders who set high expectations and provide difficulty can increase followers' confidence in their capacity to achieve goals.

2.11 Advantages of Path-Goal Theory

Path-goal theory is a tool for leaders who are flexible enough to adapt leadership models. The most obvious and powerful thing is that employees are results-oriented. When team members understand what they are doing and why they are doing it, they tend to be more effective. Therefore, the advantage of this theory is that leaders provide rewards to their subordinates and integrate these rewards with the achievements of their subordinates. According to Bass in [1], the advantage of the path-goal theory is that it can motivate individuals to increase their work capacity and they are always motivated to improve their performance through the rewards given by their leaders.

2.12 Weaknesses of Path-Goal Theory

The main weakness is that this theory can be quite complicated to apply in practice because it involves many management and leadership concepts that must be considered. The effectiveness of this theory is also difficult to evaluate and its acceptance in the management community is not universal. In addition, the design of this theory only discusses the influence of a leader on his employees and pays little attention to the reverse process. Landrum and Daily in [26] also stated that the absence of a clear code of ethics and the absence of a supervisory body make the leadership model proposed by this theory

rather unstructured. In addition, sustainable companies must have clear guidelines regarding the responsibilities of each team member, which is not provided by this theory. Other disadvantages according to Bass in [1] are the emergence of competition among individuals, subordinate commitments in the organization are generally short-term, work activities carried out by members are only focused on salary negotiations and ignore related problems.

2.13 Application of Path-Goal Theory

Leaders at all levels of the organization and across a variety of tasks can apply the ideas of this theory. Leaders should carefully assess their subordinates and their tasks before selecting a leadership style that fits those traits to take advantage of path-goal theory. Leaders should use a style that boosts subordinates' confidence when they are hesitant about completing a task. Leaders should show their subordinates that their efforts will still be appreciated and productive even when they are unsure of success. Because it consistently reminds leaders that their primary goal is to help subordinates set goals and then help them achieve those goals in the most efficient manner possible, path-goal theory is helpful.

There are four main formats of this theory that can be applied to corporate training programs:

a. Achievements

Leaders who use the achievement approach set high goals or standards for their employees to achieve. For this approach to be successful, leaders must demonstrate confidence in their team's ability to meet challenges. In the case of employee training programs, this program sets high standards. List courses to be taken and set deadlines for completion. Connect these courses to higher goals, projects, or priorities. Make sure the company states that these are achievable goals, even if the deadlines are tight.

b. Directive

The directive approach sets specific goals for the present and future. It is task-oriented. The leader is more hands-on and provides strict guidance on goals and performance standards. In terms of training, this approach may involve more classroom training and one-on-one coaching rather than self-directed, independent learning. The directive approach will also use rewards for achievement and disciplinary action. According to research Hariati & Yulianto [27], discipline in the workplace is very important for the relationship and impact of performance. This implies that effective employee performance can be the result of implementing discipline within the organization. With good discipline, workers will be productive and successful. The level of responsibility of a person towards his/her work is reflected in the level of discipline.

c. Participatory

Involve the team in setting goals and provide a way for employees to interact with the training program. Having good communication between superiors and coworkers during the work process makes subordinates feel free to communicate with each other and will encourage friendly competition and independent learning. The success of a company's goals is largely dependent on its human resources, and if workers are not productive, this can have a negative impact on the company's operations [28].

d. Supportive

In this approach, the leader is friendly to his or her team and shows a personal interest in their problems. This style is similar to people-centered leadership. Coaching naturally falls into the realm of support. The leader is very attentive to the needs of his or her subordinates and wants to help them grow. Opening a comprehensive training library for self-study makes it easy for employees to find what they need.

2.14 Situational factors in Path-Goal Theory

According to Gibson as cited in Sarta[25], the path goal theory model identifies two situational factors: subordinate characteristics and the environment:

a. Characteristics of Subordinates (Personal Characteristic of Subordinate)

Regarding this situational factor, path-goal theory provides an assessment that a leader's behavior will be accepted by subordinates if it is considered to bring satisfaction or be used as a means of satisfaction in the future. Sub-features include:

1. Location of Control, this requires personal belief in the results to be achieved. Individuals who hold the internal control role believe that their own efforts are responsible for the results they achieve. On the other hand, those who hold the external control position believe that factors outside their control determine the results they get. As a result, although external employees usually choose a directive leadership style, internal employees usually prefer a participative leadership style.
2. Willingness to Accept Influence, namely the attitude of actively accepting the influence of others is transmitted from subordinates to superiors. Subordinates with low levels of authoritarianism are more likely to choose a participative leadership style, those with high levels of authoritarianism usually react to a direct leadership style.
3. Ability, the success of subordinates in working with achievement-oriented leaders is influenced by their skills and experience. Achievement-oriented leaders are characterized by ambitious goals and high expectations of their subordinates, while supportive leaders focus on encouragement and guidance. Subordinates who have strong abilities are more likely to lean towards an achievement-oriented leadership style, while those with lower abilities tend to prefer supportive leaders..

b. Environmental Pressures and Demand according to this situational component is that a leader's actions will be a source of inspiration for his followers, if:

1. This behavior will meet the requirements of employees, thus facilitating effective work implementation.
2. This behavior has a function as a refinement of the subordinate environment, which can include providing training, support, and rewards needed to help the successful implementation of tasks.
3. Determining a good task structure will reduce the need for directive leadership.

3 Methods

This research uses the method of literature study or literature study. A literature review is a comprehensive summary of research that has been done on a particular subject to inform the reader about what is known and what is still unknown, and to provide justification for previous research or proposals for additional research [29]. The data we obtained came from books, online journals, online articles, and previous research.

This article begins with an introduction, and provides an easy-to-understand and systematic summary of the background of the writing, problem setting, objectives, etc. The purpose of this introduction is to provide initial context and clarify my reasons for writing the article. Next is the "Literature Review" or "Review of Literature" section which discusses the main theory used in the article, namely path-goal theory, and contains the results of previous research related to the topic. The purpose of this literature review is as a strong theoretical foundation, places the research in a broader context, and shows how this research contributes to a deeper understanding of path-goal theory in leadership.

4 Result and Discussion

Robert House created path and goal theory, an approach to leadership that combines motivational expectancy, structure and reflection theory, and other aspects of leadership research conducted at Ohio State University. The theory is based on the idea that the role of a leader is to assist group members in achieving their goals and to provide the guidance and encouragement they need to ensure their goals are aligned with the overall goals of the organization. The phrase "path and goal" refers to the idea that a good leader will clarify the path that followers must take from the beginning to their goals and make the journey simpler by removing obstacles and potential hazards. Judge and Robbins in [17].

Several studies have investigated the role of path and goal leadership style in motivating employees in the workplace. This indicates that the path and goal leadership style is the style that plays the most role in increasing employee motivation and performance. Employee motivation and performance are encouraged by providing appropriate salaries and wages for achieving company goals. This is in accordance with previous research related to employee work motivation by Safitriyah & Dahniar [30] which states that by paying attention to salaries and wages, giving workloads to employees, providing self-development based on employee capacity, and sorting employees who will be involved in active activities, will improve performance and achieve company goals. Other research related to path and goal leadership style was conducted by Mu'faridah [31] with the aim of knowing the style and role of leadership in PT. Daya Maha Berkarya. The study found that business leaders use various leadership styles to improve employee work performance. Managers are always open to their subordinates, suggestions and criticisms are encouraged when making decisions, employees participate in certain development activities, and employees are given full trust in carrying out their respective duties and will be given responsibility. Through the role of managers, higher employee performance can be achieved. The

quality of human resources, budget, and lack of equipment are factors that hinder operational implementation.

The Influence of Path Goal Leadership Style on Organizational Commitment with Job Satisfaction as an Intervening Variable (Study at Pdam Tirta Dhaha, Kediri City) is a study conducted by Sabekti & Sudiro [32], According to the findings of the study, path-goal leadership style has an impact on job happiness. The stronger the implementation of path-goal leadership style by the leader, the more satisfied the employees of PDAM Tirta Dhaha Kota Kediri are with their work.

Further research conducted by Nur Azizah [33], with the aim of knowing the Influence of Path Goal Theory Leadership Style on Village Official Productivity. The results of the study indicate that of the four leadership styles studied, namely directive, supportive, participative, and achievement-oriented, only the achievement-oriented leadership style is proven to have a significant influence on productivity. This achievement-oriented leadership style is considered capable of increasing the productivity of village officials by setting challenging targets, providing encouragement to achieve goals, and showing confidence in the abilities of subordinates. Meanwhile, the directive, supportive, and participative leadership styles do not show a significant influence on the productivity of village officials. The conclusion of this study confirms that the achievement-oriented leadership style is an effective performance to improve the performance of the village government sector, and can be used as a reference in managing human resources in the environment.

5 Conclusion

Path-goal theory explains how a leader can inspire his or her team members to be more productive so that they are happy in their jobs. There are various leadership styles identified by path-goal theory, including directive, participative, supportive, and achievement-oriented. Leaders will be more successful in achieving organizational goals if they can match their leadership style to the characteristics of their subordinates and the demands of the job. Each leadership style offers benefits that are suited to the specific needs of each subordinate and the situation.

This study also emphasizes the importance of leader flexibility in applying different styles according to the situation and individual characteristics of the team. Thus, leaders can help subordinates overcome obstacles, provide clear directions, and create a work atmosphere that is conducive to goal achievement. Path-Goal Theory provides a useful framework for leaders to motivate teams and improve overall organizational productivity.

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