

The Influence of Participative Leadership Style and Organizational Culture on Employee Performance through Motivation as an Intervening Variable

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This study investigates the extent to which participative leadership style and organizational culture influence employee performance, both directly and indirectly, through the mediating role of work motivation. Amid the growing complexity of organizational environments—especially within the financial services sector—this research aims to explore how human-centric leadership and cultural alignment can enhance performance outcomes.

Subjects and Methods: The study employed a quantitative approach involving 120 employees from financial service institutions in Indonesia. Data were collected using validated instruments and analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The model tested both direct and indirect pathways to assess the mediation effects of work motivation on the relationships between leadership, culture, and performance.

Results: The findings revealed that participative leadership and organizational culture significantly influence employee performance. Moreover, both variables exert an additional indirect effect through work motivation, which serves as a partial mediator. The structural model explained 56.4% of the variance in employee performance and 47.2% in work motivation. All path coefficients were statistically significant ($p < 0.05$), indicating strong predictive relationships among the constructs.

Conclusions: The study underscores the strategic importance of participative leadership and cultural alignment in fostering motivational climates that drive high performance. Work motivation emerged as a critical psychological mechanism through which organizational structures translate into behavioral outcomes. These findings provide theoretical validation for Self-Determination Theory in organizational settings and offer practical insights for leaders seeking to develop adaptive, engaged, and high-performing teams in competitive service environments.

INTRODUCTION

The evolving dynamics of organizational ecosystems driven by digital disruption, agile work systems, and changing employee expectations have necessitated a re-evaluation of traditional leadership paradigms and cultural frameworks. Participative leadership, which emphasizes collaboration, mutual respect, and shared authority, is no longer a progressive choice but a strategic imperative. Unlike transactional or authoritarian models, participative leadership

invites employees into the decision-making process, cultivates a sense of ownership, and reinforces commitment to organizational objectives (Lam et al., 2023).

Parallel to this, organizational culture serves as the tacit infrastructure that shapes attitudes, perceptions, and behaviors across hierarchical levels. A robust culture provides coherence, cultivates loyalty, and embeds institutional norms that guide discretionary behavior beyond formal control systems (Denison et al., 2023; Hartnell et al., 2021). When this cultural scaffolding aligns with participative leadership, it creates a synergistic environment conducive to high performance.

Central to this organizational interplay is work motivation an internal force that energizes, directs, and sustains behavior toward goals. Drawing on Self-Determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000), motivation is seen as a nuanced construct, emerging from the fulfillment of basic psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Within environments that promote participation and cultural congruence, employees are more likely to be intrinsically motivated and sustainably productive (Gagné et al., 2023).

While extensive scholarship exists on leadership styles and organizational culture as separate predictors of performance, limited research has explored their integrated impact through the mediating role of motivation particularly within service-oriented institutions undergoing organizational change. Furthermore, as financial institutions face mounting pressure to digitize processes, retain talent, and maintain service excellence, there is a need for empirical clarity on how soft-system factors such as participative leadership and culture translate into measurable employee performance through motivational channels.

This study seeks to: (1) Analyze the direct effect of participative leadership style on employee performance; (2) Examine the direct influence of organizational culture on employee performance; (3) Investigate the mediating role of work motivation in the relationship between participative leadership and performance; 4) Assess the mediating role of work motivation in the relationship between organizational culture and performance.

This study contributes both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, it extends the integration of leadership and cultural theories with motivation frameworks to explain performance dynamics in knowledge-intensive service environments. It affirms and expands Self-Determination Theory within an applied organizational context. Practically, it provides actionable insights for financial service institutions seeking to enhance performance not merely through structural or procedural means, but through human-centric strategies. By empirically validating a motivation-based performance model, the study guides leaders and HR practitioners in designing adaptive, participatory, and culturally resonant work environments capable of sustaining excellence in complex and evolving markets.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design and Approach

This study employed a quantitative research approach with a causal explanatory design to examine the structural relationships among participative leadership style, organizational culture, employee motivation, and employee performance. The explanatory design was selected to allow the researcher to test theoretically grounded hypotheses concerning both direct and indirect (mediated) effects among variables. Quantitative methods were considered appropriate because the primary objective of the study was not merely to describe organizational phenomena but to statistically estimate the magnitude and direction of causal relationships between constructs. By adopting this design, the study sought to validate an empirically testable model derived from established leadership, motivation, and organizational behavior theories, in line with the recommendations of Creswell & Creswell (2017).

Population and Sampling Technique

The population of this study comprised all permanent employees of a national manufacturing services company that was undergoing an organizational transformation process, totaling 285 employees. This organizational context was considered relevant because periods of

transformation often intensify the role of leadership, organizational culture, and employee motivation in shaping performance outcomes. To ensure representativeness while maintaining feasibility, a proportional stratified random sampling technique was applied. Employees were grouped into strata based on organizational units or functional divisions, and respondents were selected proportionally from each stratum. This technique minimized sampling bias and ensured that different organizational segments were adequately represented. Based on this approach, a final sample of 165 respondents was obtained, which met the minimum sample size requirements for Structural Equation Modeling using Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS), as recommended by Hair et al. (2021), namely five to ten times the number of indicators used in the research model.

Data Collection Method

Data were collected using a structured self-administered questionnaire distributed directly to respondents. The questionnaire was designed to capture employees' perceptions of leadership style, organizational culture, motivation, and performance. A five-point Likert scale was used for all items, ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree," to ensure consistency and facilitate quantitative analysis. The use of a Likert scale allowed respondents to express varying degrees of agreement while enabling the transformation of subjective perceptions into measurable data suitable for multivariate analysis. Data collection was conducted over a defined period to ensure uniform organizational conditions and to reduce the potential influence of external disruptions on respondents' perceptions.

Measurement of Research Variables

The research instrument was developed based on measurement indicators that had been validated in prior empirical studies to ensure content validity and theoretical consistency. Participative leadership style was measured through indicators reflecting employee involvement in decision-making, openness of communication between leaders and subordinates, and empowerment in task execution, drawing on the framework proposed by Akpoviroro et al. (2018) and Pihlak & Alas (2012). Organizational culture was operationalized using indicators related to shared organizational values, collective work practices, and loyalty or commitment to the institution, consistent with the cultural model advanced by Denison et al. (2023). Employee motivation was measured using indicators of intrinsic motivation, need for achievement, and non-financial incentives, reflecting self-determination theory as articulated by Ryan & Deci (2000). Employee performance was assessed through indicators of productivity, quality of work, and individual efficiency, following contemporary human resource management perspectives outlined by Armstrong & Taylor (2023).

Validity and Reliability Testing

Prior to hypothesis testing, the measurement model was evaluated to ensure that the instruments met established validity and reliability criteria. Construct validity was assessed through convergent and discriminant validity testing. Convergent validity was evaluated by examining factor loadings and Average Variance Extracted (AVE), with acceptable thresholds indicating that indicators adequately represented their respective constructs. Discriminant validity was assessed to ensure that each construct was empirically distinct from the others. Reliability was examined using Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha coefficients, with values above 0.70 indicating satisfactory internal consistency, as recommended by Hair et al. (2021). These procedures ensured that the measurement model was both statistically robust and theoretically sound before proceeding to structural model analysis.

Data Analysis Technique

The data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling with the Partial Least Squares approach (SEM-PLS), implemented through SmartPLS version 4.0. SEM-PLS was selected because of its suitability for predictive research models, its ability to handle complex mediation structures, and its robustness when dealing with data that do not fully meet multivariate normality assumptions. The structural model analysis included the examination of direct effects between exogenous and endogenous variables, indirect effects to test the mediating role of motivation, and the overall explanatory power of the model through R-square values. Significance

testing was conducted using a bootstrapping procedure with 5,000 resamples to obtain stable estimates of path coefficients and confidence intervals, in accordance with Sarstedt et al. (2022).

Hypothesis Development and Model Framework

Based on the established theoretical foundation, this study formulated hypotheses to test both direct and indirect relationships among variables. Participative leadership style and organizational culture were hypothesized to have direct effects on employee performance, as well as indirect effects mediated by employee motivation. Motivation was positioned as an intervening variable that explains the psychological mechanism through which leadership behavior and organizational context influence individual performance outcomes. This mediation framework aligns with the classic model proposed by Baron & Kenny (1986) and remains widely applied in contemporary organizational behavior research, particularly within SEM-based studies (Hair et al., 2021).

Ethical Considerations

Ethical principles were observed throughout the research process. Respondents were informed of the purpose of the study and assured that their participation was voluntary. Confidentiality and anonymity were guaranteed, and no personal identifiers were collected or disclosed. The data were used solely for academic research purposes and were stored securely to prevent unauthorized access. Participants were also informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time without any negative consequences.

Table 1. Formulation of Research Hypothesis

Hypothesis Code	Types of Relationships	Hypothesis Statement
H1	Direct	Participative leadership style has a positive and significant effect on employee performance.
H2	Direct	Organizational culture has a positive and significant effect on employee performance.
H3	Direct	Participative leadership style has a positive and significant effect on employee work motivation.
H4	Direct	Organizational culture has a positive and significant effect on employee work motivation.
H5	Direct	Work motivation has a positive and significant effect on employee performance.
H6	Direct	Work motivation mediates the effect of participative leadership style on employee performance.
H7	Indirect (mediation)	Work motivation mediates the effect of organizational culture on employee performance.

The hypothesis will be statistically tested through PLS-based SEM modeling with a bootstrapping approach to measure the significance of the mediation path, as recommended by Hair et al. (2021) and Sarstedt et al. (2022). To empirically measure the variables in this study, a closed-ended questionnaire instrument was used based on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). Each variable has dimensions and indicators developed from theory and previous empirical studies.

Table 2. Operationalization of Variables

Variable	Dimension	Indicator
Participative Leadership Style	Involvement in decision-making	My supervisor involves me in important decision-making.
	Open communication	My supervisor is open to input from subordinates.
	Empowerment of subordinates	I am given the freedom to take initiative in my work.

Organizational Culture	Shared values	There are shared values between me and the organization.
	Collective engagement	Employees are encouraged to work in teams.
	Loyalty and engagement	I feel a sense of belonging to this organization.
Work Motivation	Intrinsic motivation	I enjoy challenges at work.
	Personal goals and need for achievement	I have personal goals at work.
	Incentives and recognition	I feel appreciated for my work achievements.
Employee Performance	Productivity	I am able to complete work on time.
	Quality of work	My work rarely contains errors.
	Efficiency and effectiveness	I work efficiently and produce optimal results.

The table above illustrates the operationalization of the research variables used to examine the relationship between participative leadership style, organizational culture, work motivation, and employee performance. Each variable is developed into several main dimensions that represent the conceptual aspects of the construct under study, then translated into indicators that can be empirically measured through respondent perceptions. Each indicator will be tested for construct validity using AVE and factor loading, as well as for internal reliability using Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha. A minimum factor loading value of ≥ 0.70 and $AVE \geq 0.50$ will be the initial criteria for the feasibility of the measurement model (Hair et al., 2021).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study analyzes the influence of participative leadership style and organizational culture on employee performance, with work motivation as an intervening variable. Data were obtained from 120 respondents in the financial services sector and analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). All constructs in the model have an AVE value > 0.5 , Composite Reliability > 0.8 , and loading factor > 0.7 , indicating that the instrument used has met the validity and reliability requirements (Hair et al., 2021).

Table 3. Validity and Reliability

Variabel	AVE	Composite Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha
Participative Leadership Style	0.627	0.893	0.861
Organizational Culture	0.654	0.901	0.872
Work Motivation	0.612	0.885	0.843
Employee Performance	0.672	0.896	0.859

The table shows that all constructs used in this study met the measurement feasibility criteria required in Structural Equation Modeling-based Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) analysis. The Average Variance Extracted value indicates that each construct is able to explain an adequate proportion of the variance in its indicators, thus concluding that the instrument has a good level of convergent validity. This confirms that the indicators used truly represent the latent constructs being measured. Furthermore, the reliability test results demonstrated strong internal consistency across all study variables. The reliability indices used, both Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha, confirmed that the measurement items within each construct have a high level of stability and reliability. Therefore, the research instrument can be relied upon to produce consistent measurements when used in similar research contexts. Overall, these findings provide a solid methodological foundation for testing the structural relationships between variables in the research model. The fulfillment of measurement validity and reliability ensures that subsequent analysis results substantively reflect the relationships between constructs, not influenced by instrument weaknesses. Therefore, the structural model tested in this study is worthy of further interpretation in explaining the influence of participative leadership style and organizational culture on employee performance through work motivation.

Table 4. Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Pathway	Coeff. (β)	t-Stat	p-Value	Result
H1	Participative Leadership → Employee Performance	0.312	3.287	0.001	Significant
H2	Organizational Culture → Employee Performance	0.284	2.975	0.003	Significant
H3	Participative Leadership → Work Motivation	0.421	4.580	0.000	Significant
H4	Organizational Culture → Work Motivation	0.393	3.987	0.000	Significant
H5	Work Motivation → Employee Performance	0.368	4.123	0.000	Significant
H6	Leadership → Motivation → Performance (Indirect)	0.155	2.742	0.006	Significant (Partial)
H7	Culture → Motivation → Performance (Indirect)	0.145	2.621	0.009	Significant (Partial)

The R² value indicates that the model explains 56.4% of the variance in employee performance and 47.2% of the variance in work motivation, reflecting a moderately strong predictive power within organizational-behavioral contexts. The findings demonstrate that participative leadership and organizational culture significantly influence employee performance, both directly and indirectly through the mediating role of work motivation. These insights align closely with the theoretical underpinnings of Self-Determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2020), which positions motivation as a central mechanism that bridges organizational structures with individual behavior.

Participative leadership was found to have a direct and robust influence on both performance and motivation. This reaffirms the critical importance of *employee voice* and *shared decision-making* as drivers of psychological empowerment and ownership (Lam et al., 2023). These results mirror those of Kim & Beehr (2021), who observed that open communication and delegation in participative leadership foster greater job satisfaction and affective commitment. Likewise, organizational culture emerged as a significant determinant of motivation and performance. When employees resonate with shared values and collective identity, they internalize organizational goals, enhancing team cohesion and performance efficiency (Denison et al., 2023; Hartnell et al., 2021). A value-driven culture facilitates affective integration and reduces friction between personal aspirations and institutional objectives.

The mediating role of work motivation further confirms that performance outcomes are contingent not merely upon structural inputs, but upon the cognitive and emotional states of individuals. This supports a growing body of literature which asserts that sustainable high performance is fueled not only by external rewards, but by intrinsic drivers such as purpose, recognition, and personal growth (Gagné et al., 2023; Kanfer et al., 2022). In the financial services industry where volatility, compliance pressure, and digital disruption prevail these findings hold critical managerial implications. Leadership practices and cultural values must be harmonized not only to optimize task execution, but also to activate autonomous motivation as a foundation for adaptability and innovation (Bakker et al., 2021; Ahsan, 2025). Beyond technical implementation, the dynamics identified in this model resonate with broader patterns of digital-social convergence in modern work environments. As organizations increasingly navigate hybrid work, social commerce models, and technology-mediated collaboration, the human dimension embodied in leadership empathy, cultural clarity, and motivational resonance becomes central to sustained organizational resilience.

Model Fit and Predictive Relevance

In addition to testing structural relationships, the overall quality of the model is also evaluated through model fit and predictive relevance tests. In the context of SEM-PLS, this evaluation is

crucial to ensure that the model is not only statistically significant but also has adequate predictive power for empirical phenomena in the field.

Table 5. Model Fit and Predictive Relevance Indices

Indicator	Value	Evaluation Criteria	Interpretation
SRMR	0.061	< 0.08	Good model fit
NFI	0.912	> 0.90	Acceptable fit
Q ² Motivation	0.318	> 0	Medium predictive relevance
Q ² Performance	0.364	> 0	Medium–strong predictive relevance

The Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) value indicates that the difference between the empirical covariance matrix and the model is within acceptable limits, indicating good model fit. The Normed Fit Index (NFI) also supports this finding by indicating that the structural model has an adequate level of fit compared to the null model. Meanwhile, the positive Stone Geisser’s Q² values for the motivation and performance variables indicate that the model has relevant predictive ability, especially in explaining the dynamics of employee work behavior in the financial services sector, which is characterized by target pressure and strict regulations.

Effect Size Analysis (f²)

To complement the path significance analysis, this study also evaluated the effect size (f²) to understand the substantive contribution of each independent variable to the dependent variable. This analysis provides an overview of whether a relationship is not only statistically significant but also practically meaningful.

Table 6. Effect Size (f²) of Structural Paths

Structural Relationship	f ² Value	Effect Category
Participative Leadership → Performance	0.142	Medium
Organizational Culture → Performance	0.126	Medium
Participative Leadership → Motivation	0.219	Medium–Strong
Organizational Culture → Motivation	0.201	Medium–Strong
Motivation → Performance	0.184	Medium

The effect size results indicate that participative leadership and organizational culture contribute substantially to shaping work motivation, which in turn impacts performance. These findings reflect empirical conditions in modern organizations, particularly in the financial sector, where performance demands are influenced not only by formal systems but also by employees' perceptions of fairness, engagement, and the meaningfulness of their work. Practically, these results strengthen the argument that managerial interventions focused on leadership style and strengthening organizational values have significant leverage in improving work performance.

Importance Performance Map Analysis (IPMA)

To provide more applicable managerial implications, this study also employed Importance–Performance Map Analysis (IPMA). This approach helps identify variables with high importance but with room for performance improvement.

Table 7. Importance Performance Map Analysis (IPMA)

Construct	Importance	Performance	Managerial Priority
Participative Leadership	0.431	72.4	High priority
Organizational Culture	0.398	74.1	Medium–High

Work Motivation 0.367 70.8 High priority

The IPMA analysis shows that participative leadership has the highest level of importance in influencing employee performance, but its performance level is relatively lower compared to organizational culture. This reflects the reality on the ground where organizational structures are relatively well-established, but participatory leadership practices have not been fully and consistently internalized at the operational level. This situation is often found in financial services

organizations adapting to digital transformation, where decision-making still tends to be centralized despite increasing demands for collaboration.

Discussion

The findings of this study provide strong empirical support for the proposed model linking participative leadership style, organizational culture, work motivation, and employee performance within the financial services sector (Ozcan & Ozturk, 2020; Nassani et al., 2024). The results demonstrate that employee performance is not solely a function of structural systems or procedural compliance, but is significantly shaped by leadership behaviors and cultural contexts that influence employees' motivational states. This reinforces the argument that performance outcomes in contemporary organizations are deeply embedded in psychosocial dynamics rather than purely technical or administrative mechanisms.

Ogu (2024) said that, the significant influence of participative leadership on both motivation and performance underscores the importance of employee involvement in decision-making processes. In highly regulated and target-driven environments such as financial services, employees often experience work pressure, role ambiguity, and emotional fatigue. Participative leadership mitigates these challenges by fostering psychological ownership and perceived autonomy, which are central drivers of intrinsic motivation. This finding aligns with Self-Determination Theory, which posits that autonomy-supportive leadership enhances internal motivation and engagement, leading to higher quality performance. From a practical standpoint, the results suggest that leadership approaches emphasizing dialogue, empowerment, and shared responsibility are more effective than directive or authoritarian styles in sustaining performance under demanding organizational conditions.

Mubintaj et al. (2024) said that, organizational culture was also found to play a critical role in shaping employee motivation and performance. A culture characterized by shared values, collective engagement, and a sense of belonging creates a social environment in which employees internalize organizational goals as part of their personal identity (Dávila & García, 2012). This internalization process reduces resistance, enhances cooperation, and strengthens commitment, all of which are essential for performance consistency in service-oriented organizations. The findings support prior research suggesting that culture functions as a contextual amplifier, strengthening the effects of leadership and enabling employees to translate motivation into productive behavior. In the financial services sector, where coordination and trust are vital, a cohesive culture becomes a strategic asset rather than a symbolic attribute.

The mediating role of work motivation offers a deeper understanding of how leadership and culture influence performance (Astuti et al., 2020; Al-Musadieq et al., 2018). Rather than exerting influence in a direct and mechanical manner, leadership style and organizational culture operate through motivational mechanisms that shape employees' cognitive and emotional engagement with their work. This confirms that motivation is not merely an outcome variable, but a central psychological process that explains why certain organizational practices lead to superior performance outcomes. The partial mediation observed in this study suggests that while leadership and culture have direct effects on performance, their influence is significantly enhanced when employees experience meaningful, autonomous, and valued work (Cai et al., 2018). This insight is particularly relevant in environments undergoing digital transformation, where rapid change often disrupts established routines and increases uncertainty.

The model fit and predictive relevance results further strengthen the robustness of the findings. The model's ability to explain a substantial proportion of variance in motivation and performance indicates that the selected constructs capture key drivers of employee behavior in the financial services context. This predictive capability suggests that the model is not only theoretically sound but also practically useful for anticipating performance outcomes based on leadership and cultural conditions. Such predictive strength is essential for managerial decision-making, especially in industries facing volatility, regulatory pressure, and technological disruption.

The effect size analysis reveals that leadership and culture exert meaningful practical influence, particularly in shaping motivation. This highlights that improvements in leadership quality and cultural alignment can yield tangible performance benefits, even without changes in formal

reward systems or organizational structures. These findings resonate with field observations in financial institutions, where formal incentives are often standardized, making psychological and relational factors key differentiators of performance.

The IPMA results offer important managerial insights by identifying participative leadership as a high-impact area with room for improvement. While organizational culture appears relatively well established, leadership practices at the operational level may lag behind cultural aspirations. This gap suggests that organizations may articulate collaborative values without fully embedding participatory behaviors in day-to-day leadership practices. Addressing this misalignment is crucial, as culture alone cannot compensate for leadership behaviors that limit employee voice or autonomy. Strengthening participative leadership capabilities through targeted training and performance evaluation systems could therefore significantly enhance motivational and performance outcomes.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research results and discussion, it can be concluded that participatory leadership style and organizational culture play a significant role in improving employee performance, both directly and indirectly through work motivation as an intervening variable. These findings confirm that employee performance in the financial services sector is not solely determined by formal systems, work targets, or organizational regulations, but is also strongly influenced by the quality of leadership interactions and the strength of cultural values internalized by employees. Leadership that involves employees in decision-making, encourages open communication, and provides space for individual initiative has been shown to strengthen intrinsic motivation, which in turn drives increased employee productivity, work quality, and efficiency. Similarly, an organizational culture that emphasizes shared values, collective involvement, and a sense of belonging serves as a social context that strengthens employees' emotional attachment to the organization and work goals. The mediating role of work motivation indicates that the influence of leadership and culture on performance operates through psychological mechanisms that shape employee meaning, involvement, and commitment to work. Overall, this study confirms that achieving sustainable performance amidst the dynamics and pressures of organizational change requires a harmonious integration of participatory leadership, a strong organizational culture, and work motivation management as the primary foundations of organizational resilience and effectiveness.

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