



Leadership Style Enhancing Work Motivation of Civil Servant at General Bureau of the Regional Secretariat of South Papua Province

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Abstract

This study examines the role of leadership style in enhancing the work motivation of Civil Servants (Aparatur Sipil Negara/ASN) at the General Bureau of the Regional Secretariat of South Papua Province. The study is theoretically grounded in Amirullah's (2017) leadership framework, which emphasizes leader-member relations, task structure, and position power, and Sariani's (2020) motivation theory, focusing on educational background, personal expectations, and job satisfaction. A qualitative descriptive approach was employed to capture in-depth perspectives on leadership practices and motivational dynamics within a newly established provincial government organization. Data were collected through observations, in-depth interviews, and document analysis. A total of 22 informants, comprising senior officials, section heads, and staff members, were purposively selected based on their institutional roles and direct involvement in organizational processes. The findings indicate that leadership style significantly influences employees' work motivation. Effective leadership is reflected in open and transparent communication, participatory decision-making, clear task delegation, consistent supervision, and fair recognition of employee performance. Moreover, job satisfaction, clarity of work roles, coordination across organizational units, availability of work facilities, and opportunities for capacity building emerged as critical supporting factors in sustaining motivation. The study concludes that a communicative, participative, and supportive leadership style is essential for strengthening work motivation and improving organizational effectiveness in public sector institutions, particularly within developing regional government contexts.

Keywords: *Leadership Style, Employee Motivation, Civil Service, Public Administration, Regional Government*

INTRODUCTION

Leadership plays a pivotal role in shaping organizational effectiveness, particularly in public sector institutions where bureaucratic structures, regulatory demands, and service accountability intersect. In government organizations, leadership is not merely associated with authority and formal positions but also with the ability to influence employee behavior, foster motivation, and align individual performance with institutional goals. Civil Servants (Aparatur Sipil

Negara/ASN) serve as the backbone of public administration, and their work motivation significantly determines the quality of public services, organizational efficiency, and governance outcomes. Consequently, understanding how leadership styles influence employee motivation remains a critical issue in public administration studies.

In recent years, public sector organizations have faced increasing challenges arising from administrative reforms, decentralization, digital transformation, and rising public expectations for transparency and service quality. These dynamics require leaders who are not only capable of enforcing regulations but also able to motivate employees to perform effectively in complex and evolving environments. Motivation among civil servants is particularly important in newly established administrative regions, where organizational systems are still undergoing adjustment and consolidation. Without effective leadership, such conditions may lead to declining motivation, weak coordination, and suboptimal organizational performance.

Leadership style has been widely recognized as a determining factor in influencing employee motivation. Previous studies suggest that leadership characterized by clear direction, participatory decision-making, effective communication, and fair recognition tends to enhance employees' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Conversely, rigid, authoritarian, or poorly coordinated leadership practices may reduce employees' enthusiasm, commitment, and sense of responsibility. In the context of public organizations, leadership effectiveness is closely related to the leader-member relationship, clarity of task structures, and the extent of authority exercised in a balanced and accountable manner.

This study adopts Amirullah's (2017) leadership framework, which emphasizes three core dimensions: leader-member relations, task structure, and position power. Leader-member relations highlight the quality of interaction, trust, and communication between leaders and subordinates. Task structure refers to the clarity, organization, and standardization of work assignments, while position power relates to the leader's formal authority in directing and evaluating performance. These dimensions are particularly relevant in bureaucratic settings, where formal roles coexist with interpersonal dynamics that shape daily work practices.

In addition to leadership factors, work motivation is influenced by individual and organizational conditions. Sariyani's (2020) motivation framework underscores the importance of educational background, personal expectations, and job satisfaction in shaping employee motivation. Employees with higher educational attainment often demonstrate stronger task comprehension and work autonomy, yet disparities in educational background may also create gaps in performance and motivation if not managed properly. Personal expectations, including career advancement and recognition, further influence employees' willingness to exert effort. Job satisfaction, encompassing fairness, work environment, and clarity of roles, serves as a crucial mediator between leadership practices and motivational

outcomes.

Empirical evidence from public sector research consistently indicates that leadership and motivation are strongly interconnected. Studies conducted in various government institutions reveal that leadership styles emphasizing communication, participation, and appreciation positively affect job satisfaction and employee motivation, ultimately improving performance. However, much of the existing literature relies on quantitative approaches and focuses on established institutions in urban or developed administrative contexts. There remains a limited number of qualitative studies that explore leadership and motivation dynamics in newly formed provincial governments, particularly in peripheral or developing regions.

South Papua Province represents a unique administrative context. Established as a result of regional expansion, the provincial government is still in the process of institutional development, organizational structuring, and human resource adjustment. The General Bureau of the Regional Secretariat plays a strategic role in supporting administrative functions, including household affairs, financial administration, asset management, and executive support services. The effectiveness of this bureau depends heavily on the motivation and performance of its civil servants, who operate within evolving organizational arrangements and work demands.

Preliminary observations indicate that despite generally high levels of discipline and attendance, variations in performance and motivation persist among civil servants within the General Bureau. Differences in educational background, workload distribution, access to facilities, and leadership approaches across units contribute to these variations. While some leaders demonstrate strong discipline and managerial capacity, others face challenges in fostering motivation and engagement among their subordinates. These conditions raise important questions regarding the appropriateness of existing leadership styles and their effectiveness in motivating employees.

Against this backdrop, this study seeks to analyze leadership style in enhancing the work motivation of civil servants at the General Bureau of the Regional Secretariat of South Papua Province. By employing a qualitative descriptive approach, this research aims to capture in-depth perspectives from both leaders and subordinates, providing a balanced understanding of leadership practices and motivational experiences. The qualitative design allows for a nuanced exploration of how leadership behaviors are perceived, interpreted, and translated into motivational outcomes within the organizational context.

This study contributes to the literature in several ways. First, it enriches public administration scholarship by providing empirical evidence from a newly established provincial government in Indonesia, a context that remains underrepresented in international research. Second, it integrates leadership and motivation theories within a qualitative framework, offering insights into how formal authority and interpersonal relations jointly shape employee motivation. Third, the

findings provide practical implications for policymakers and public sector leaders in designing leadership strategies that foster motivation, job satisfaction, and organizational effectiveness.

In conclusion, understanding leadership style as a driver of work motivation is essential for strengthening public sector performance, particularly in developing regional government contexts. By examining leadership practices and motivational dynamics within the General Bureau of the Regional Secretariat of South Papua Province, this study aims to offer both theoretical and practical contributions to the ongoing discourse on leadership and human resource management in public administration.

RESEARCH METHOD

The research method describes the research design, population, and sample (object of research), data collection techniques, and data analysis techniques. Qualitative research with case studies, phenomenology, and others, at least presents the research location, the presence of researchers, research subjects, informants, and research data collection techniques, as well as technical descriptions of research data analysis. Meanwhile, in quantitative research, it is necessary to present the population, sample, and data analysis techniques. Written in Bookman Old Style 12pt font.

This study employed a qualitative descriptive research design to explore leadership style in enhancing the work motivation of Civil Servants (Aparatur Sipil Negara/ASN) at the General Bureau of the Regional Secretariat of South Papua Province. A qualitative approach was selected to obtain an in-depth understanding of leadership practices, perceptions, and experiences from both leaders and subordinates within their natural organizational context. This design enables a comprehensive exploration of social phenomena that cannot be adequately captured through quantitative measurement alone.

The research was conducted at the General Bureau of the Regional Secretariat of South Papua Province, located in Merauke, South Papua, Indonesia. This bureau was selected due to its strategic role in supporting administrative governance functions and its relevance to leadership and human resource management practices in a newly established provincial government. Data collection was carried out over a three-month period, from October to December 2025.

Informants were selected using a purposive sampling technique, based on their positions, responsibilities, and direct involvement in leadership and organizational processes. This technique ensured that participants possessed sufficient knowledge and experience relevant to the research objectives. A total of 22 informants participated in the study, consisting of structural officials and staff members of the General Bureau. These included the Head of the General Bureau, heads of divisions, heads of sub-divisions, and supporting staff members (civil servants). The inclusion of both leaders and subordinates allowed for a

balanced perspective on leadership practices and motivational dynamics within the organization.

Data were collected using three primary techniques: observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation review. Observation was conducted to understand daily work interactions, leadership behaviors, and organizational dynamics in their natural setting. In-depth interviews served as the main data source, enabling participants to express their views on leadership style, motivation, work satisfaction, and organizational conditions. Interviews were semi-structured to allow flexibility while maintaining focus on key research themes. Documentation included organizational reports, performance evaluation records, attendance data, and official regulations relevant to leadership and employee performance.

Data analysis was conducted through an interactive qualitative process involving data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Interview transcripts, observation notes, and documents were systematically coded and categorized based on themes derived from the research framework, including leadership style indicators (leader-member relations, task structure, and position power) and motivation factors (educational background, personal expectations, and job satisfaction). This thematic analysis enabled the identification of patterns and relationships between leadership practices and employee motivation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Overview of Leadership Practices at the General Bureau

This study reveals that leadership practices at the General Bureau of the Regional Secretariat of South Papua Province demonstrate a combination of formal bureaucratic authority and interpersonal leadership dynamics. As a public organization operating within a newly established provincial government, the General Bureau is still undergoing institutional adjustment, which influences leadership patterns and employee motivation. Findings from interviews, observations, and document analysis indicate that leadership effectiveness varies across organizational units, depending on communication practices, clarity of task delegation, and the level of supervisory support provided to subordinates.

Informants consistently emphasized that leadership plays a central role in shaping work motivation, particularly in an environment characterized by organizational restructuring, uneven distribution of workload, and differences in educational background among civil servants. Although attendance rates and formal discipline were generally high, variations in enthusiasm, initiative, and job satisfaction were observed among employees, suggesting that motivation is not solely determined by formal regulations but strongly influenced by leadership behavior.

Leader-Member Relations

The findings show that leader-member relations constitute a critical dimension of leadership style influencing employee motivation. Informants from both managerial and staff levels highlighted the importance of open communication, mutual trust, and approachability of leaders in daily work interactions. Leaders who maintained frequent communication, provided clear explanations, and encouraged dialogue were perceived as more effective in motivating employees.

Several informants noted that transparent and two-way communication reduced misunderstandings, enhanced coordination, and fostered a sense of inclusion among employees. When employees felt that their opinions were heard and their concerns addressed, they demonstrated higher levels of commitment and willingness to complete tasks beyond formal job requirements. Conversely, limited communication and hierarchical distance were associated with reduced motivation, particularly among staff members with lower educational backgrounds who required clearer guidance and mentoring.

These findings indicate that strong leader-member relations contribute to a harmonious work climate, which in turn enhances motivation. Employees who experienced supportive leadership reported feeling more confident, valued, and motivated to perform their duties effectively.

Task Structure and Clarity of Work Roles

Task structure emerged as another key factor influencing work motivation. The results indicate that clarity in task assignment, job descriptions, and workflow significantly affects employee motivation. Informants emphasized that clear delegation of duties, structured workflows, and consistency in task distribution reduced confusion and work overload.

Employees expressed higher motivation when tasks were well-defined and aligned with their competencies. Conversely, unclear task structures and overlapping responsibilities often led to frustration, delays in task completion, and decreased motivation. This issue was particularly evident in units responsible for asset management and administrative support, where coordination across sub-units is essential.

The findings also reveal that differences in educational background influenced employees' ability to understand and execute tasks. Employees with higher educational attainment generally adapted more quickly to new tasks and demonstrated greater initiative. However, without adequate guidance and training, employees with lower educational levels were more likely to experience difficulties, which negatively affected their motivation. Informants agreed that structured task delegation accompanied by mentoring and capacity-building initiatives was essential to ensure equitable motivation across all staff members.

Position Power and Leadership Authority

Position power, defined as the formal authority held by leaders,

was found to play a dual role in influencing motivation. On one hand, firm leadership and clear enforcement of rules contributed to discipline and accountability. On the other hand, excessive reliance on formal authority without supportive interaction tended to reduce motivation.

Informants reported that leaders who exercised authority fairly, consistently, and transparently were more successful in motivating employees. Fair application of rules and sanctions fostered a sense of justice, which enhanced trust in leadership. Conversely, inconsistent decision-making and perceived favoritism undermined employee morale and motivation.

The findings suggest that effective leadership in the General Bureau requires a balance between authority and empathy. Leaders who combined formal power with participative approaches were better able to sustain employee motivation and commitment.

Factors Influencing Work Motivation

Beyond leadership dimensions, the study identified several factors influencing work motivation, including job satisfaction, personal expectations, availability of facilities, coordination among units, and opportunities for career development. Job satisfaction emerged as a central factor mediating the relationship between leadership style and motivation.

Employees reported higher motivation when they felt appreciated, treated fairly, and provided with adequate resources to perform their tasks. Recognition and appreciation—both formal and informal—were repeatedly mentioned as powerful motivators. In contrast, lack of recognition and limited opportunities for development were associated with decreased motivation.

Personal expectations regarding career advancement and professional growth also influenced motivation. Informants expressed a strong desire for training, mentoring, and clear career pathways. The absence of structured capacity-building programs was perceived as a barrier to sustained motivation, particularly among younger employees.

Discussion

Leadership Style and Work Motivation in Public Sector Contexts

The findings of this study confirm that leadership style plays a significant role in enhancing work motivation among civil servants in public sector organizations. Consistent with Amirullah's (2017) leadership framework, the dimensions of leader-member relations, task structure, and position power jointly shape employees' motivational experiences.

Strong leader-member relations foster trust, open communication, and psychological safety, which are essential for motivation in bureaucratic settings. This finding aligns with previous

studies indicating that supportive and communicative leadership enhances employee engagement and job satisfaction. In the context of South Papua Province, where organizational systems are still evolving, interpersonal leadership becomes even more critical in bridging structural gaps and maintaining employee morale.

Task Structure as a Motivational Mechanism

The results highlight the importance of task structure in influencing motivation, supporting Sariani's (2020) assertion that clarity and satisfaction with work roles contribute significantly to motivation. Clear task allocation reduces uncertainty and enables employees to focus on performance rather than role ambiguity. In public organizations, where procedural complexity is common, structured task management is essential for sustaining motivation.

The findings also reveal that differences in educational background require differentiated leadership approaches. Leaders must adapt task delegation and supervision to employees' competencies, ensuring that all staff members receive adequate guidance and opportunities for development. This adaptive leadership approach is particularly relevant in developing regional government contexts.

Balancing Authority and Participation

The study demonstrates that position power must be exercised judiciously to enhance motivation. While authority is necessary to maintain discipline and accountability, excessive reliance on hierarchical power may undermine motivation. This finding reinforces the argument that effective public sector leadership requires a balance between control and participation.

Participative leadership practices, such as involving employees in decision-making and problem-solving, were found to strengthen motivation and commitment. These practices foster a sense of ownership and responsibility, which is crucial for organizational effectiveness in public administration.

Job Satisfaction as a Mediating Factor

Job satisfaction emerged as a key mediating factor linking leadership style and motivation. Employees who experienced fair treatment, recognition, and supportive supervision reported higher motivation levels. This finding corroborates existing literature emphasizing job satisfaction as a determinant of motivation and performance in public organizations.

The results suggest that leadership strategies aimed at enhancing motivation should prioritize not only task and authority management but also emotional and psychological aspects of work, including appreciation, recognition, and support.

Implications for Public Sector Leadership

This study provides important implications for leadership practice

in newly established provincial governments. Leaders must adopt a communicative, participative, and supportive leadership style to foster motivation amid organizational transition. Investment in capacity building, mentoring, and structured career development programs is essential for sustaining motivation and improving performance.

Moreover, the findings underscore the need for leadership development programs that emphasize interpersonal skills, adaptive management, and ethical use of authority. Such programs can enhance leaders' ability to motivate employees and strengthen organizational effectiveness.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the role of leadership style in enhancing the work motivation of Civil Servants (Aparatur Sipil Negara/ASN) at the General Bureau of the Regional Secretariat of South Papua Province. By employing a qualitative descriptive approach, the study captured in-depth perspectives from both leaders and subordinates regarding leadership practices and motivational dynamics within a newly established provincial government organization.

The findings demonstrate that leadership style plays a crucial role in shaping employee motivation. Effective leadership is characterized by strong leader-member relations, clear task structure, and balanced use of position power. Leaders who practice open and two-way communication, provide clear guidance, and foster trust are more successful in motivating employees. Such leadership practices contribute to a positive work climate in which employees feel valued, supported, and willing to perform their duties beyond formal job requirements.

The study also highlights the importance of task clarity and structured delegation in sustaining motivation. Clear job descriptions, equitable distribution of workloads, and consistent supervision reduce ambiguity and frustration, particularly in bureaucratic settings undergoing organizational transition. Differences in educational background among employees further underscore the need for adaptive leadership approaches that combine guidance, mentoring, and capacity development.

Moreover, the findings reveal that position power must be exercised fairly and transparently to enhance motivation. While authority is essential for maintaining discipline and accountability, excessive reliance on hierarchical control without supportive interaction tends to weaken motivation. Job satisfaction emerges as a key mediating factor linking leadership style and work motivation, influenced by recognition, fairness, coordination, and opportunities for professional development.

Overall, the study concludes that a communicative, participative, and supportive leadership style is essential for enhancing work motivation and organizational effectiveness in public sector institutions, particularly within developing regional government contexts such as South Papua Province.

The findings of this study offer several important policy

implications for public sector leadership and human resource management, especially in newly established provincial governments.

First, leadership development should become a strategic priority within regional government institutions. Provincial governments should design and implement leadership training programs that emphasize interpersonal communication, participative decision-making, conflict management, and ethical use of authority. Such programs can strengthen leaders' capacity to motivate employees and manage organizational change effectively.

Second, institutional policies should promote clear task structures and standardized work procedures. Developing comprehensive job descriptions, standard operating procedures, and performance guidelines can reduce role ambiguity and enhance employee motivation. These policies should be accompanied by regular supervision and feedback mechanisms to ensure consistency and fairness in task implementation.

Third, human resource policies should prioritize employee motivation through recognition and career development systems. Transparent performance appraisal mechanisms, fair reward systems, and structured opportunities for training and capacity building are essential for sustaining motivation among civil servants. Special attention should be given to addressing disparities in educational background by providing targeted training and mentoring programs.

Fourth, participative leadership practices should be institutionalized through formal mechanisms, such as regular coordination meetings, internal forums, and feedback channels. These mechanisms enable employees to express ideas, concerns, and expectations, thereby strengthening trust and commitment to organizational goals.

Finally, provincial governments should adopt a holistic approach to public sector leadership that integrates formal authority with supportive and human-centered management practices. By aligning leadership policies with motivational strategies, government institutions can enhance employee performance, improve service delivery, and strengthen public trust.

In conclusion, strengthening leadership style is not merely a managerial concern but a strategic policy issue in public administration. Effective leadership that fosters motivation and job satisfaction among civil servants is a key driver of sustainable organizational performance and good governance in regional government institutions.

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