

The Effect of Democratic Leadership Style on Organizational Productivity by the mediating role of Employee performance in Turkey

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Abstract: Leadership is an integral factor in determining the success of an organization. Indeed, it becomes significant that to attain corporate mission and vision as well as coping with the necessary changes occurring in the business world, the leadership faces the burden of using the right leadership style. When a leader adopts the right leadership style following organization culture, fulfillment of organizational aims and objectives is achieved. The purpose of this minor article seeks to analyze how leadership style may influence employee performance and organizational productivity in the company. Since the main goal of every company is to increase production and to expand in size, it is important for leaders of various organizations to ensure that the most suitable style of leadership is adopted in their companies. This research focuses on the concept of democratic leadership on employee performance in Turkey and how this can influence overall organizational productivity.

This study was conducted using a random sampling technique which composed of over 207 audience members. A quantitative methodology approach was used through which an online questionnaire was distributed to the audience members to collect their responses on the leadership style of their companies and how this has influenced their performance. The data collected was tested using the SPSS analysis software, adopting correlation, regression and difference analysis to examine how leadership styles influence employee performance and organizational productivity.

This study found that democratic leadership style is one of the most preferred leadership as this does not only motivate employees to perform but also increases organizational productivity. Similarly, the study finds that the higher the experience level of the workers, the lower the influence of leadership on their performance. This is due to the fact that experienced workers are already learned in their duties, hence, requiring minimum supervision from superiors. Additionally, the study discusses that in organizations where democratic leadership style is practiced, the employees undergo training and can communicate effectively with their superiors which is also reflected on employee performance.

Keywords: Democratic, leadership, organizational productivity, employee, and performance.

I. INTRODUCTION

As a result of the ever-changing business environment, Lincoln (2015: 23) [1] observed that modern equipment and methods have replaced ancient theories of management practices, making it a necessity for a leader to adopt the most feasible leadership style for organizational continuity and growth. Similarly, due to the constant change in business practices, rivalry and competition in business are always intensified, making it necessary that a leader must adopt exceptional managerial qualities to increase business output. Competition in business is not only peculiar to large companies but rather affects all organizations despite their size or location. Additionally, globalization has increased market interaction and relationships around the world, therefore, an action taken by a company in Asia may have indirect

effects on companies in Africa. For this reason, the style of leadership determines if these companies, whether big or SMEs will be competitive in the marketplace.

This study is concerned with participative or democratic leadership which according to Housoi (2017: 45) [2] is a combination of both liberal and controlled leadership styles to provide a middle ground. The democratic leader actively encourages cooperation and decision-making, where workers ideas and thoughts will be collected, the leader makes the binding decision on behalf of everyone. There are numerous benefits acquired from the democratic leadership style such as innovative plans and new ideas to the table.

To achieve these aims, the following research questions shall be answered;

“Is employee performance a mediator between democratic leadership style and organizational productivity among Turkish companies?”

Companies in the world, are confronted with problems related to poor financial performance, unethical practices and high labour turnover which as mentioned by Rubio (2015: 314) [3] is a result of poor leadership models. Zugu (2016:1062) [4] claimed that leadership is one of the most investigated organizational variables that have a potential impact on employee performance. However, since the primary motive of many organisations is to accomplish their stated objectives, there is a need for effective leadership for coordinating and motivating the employees (Housoi, 2017: 43) [5].

Kibra and Bella (2017: 34) [6] mention that employees perform best when in a happy condition, which most of the time is influenced by the leadership of the organization. For this reason, this study shall answer whether a worker’s performance is influenced by the democratic leadership style. Having answered this question, the importance to analyze to what extent can employee performance be affected by democratic leadership style arises, therefore, leading to the second research question:

“To what extent does democratic leadership style affect the performance of employees in Turkey?”

As highlighted by Basat (2015: 493) [7], when leaders possess certain characteristics, they can see more and also see beyond the present. Therefore, the initiative to provide for both the seen and unseen needs of the workers is present. In a company where a democratic leadership style is present, decision making, although resting on the leader is influenced by the employees based on the reviews, recommendations, and needs expressed by the workers. Therefore, under a democratic leadership style, the extent to which the leader listens and deliberate with the worker will determine the level of performance that the workers will show (Olubo, 2016: 145) [8]. For this reason, the third research question seeks to answer the relationship between employee performance and organizational productivity, this goes thus;

What has been the effect of employee performance on organizational productivity in Turkey?

Having provided a relationship between employee performance and organizational productivity, the study moves to discuss in detail the notion of democratic leadership style on organizational productivity since this is believed to be very important in recording organizational growth, leading to the fourth and final research question :

What has been the effect of a democratic leadership style on organizational productivity?

All in all, the essence of this study is to see in what way democratic leadership in the working place may influence the performance of workers as well as organizational productivity. It is important to note that leadership style influences the overall outcome of the business. For this reason, the study seeks to find out in what way democratic leadership style influences worker’s performance as well as organizational productivity.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

In our study we are going to discuss the meaning of these three variables; Democratic leadership style, Employee performance and, Organizational productivity; while comprehending the relationships between them.

To understand the relationship between these three main variables, it is essential to first understand that employees, according to Peterson, and Ramlall (2004: 57) [9], are the foundation upon which the organization records productivity. Hence, to increase organizational productivity, it is inherent for the leadership to initiate policies that are directed towards employee development and satisfaction. To this aim, Li and his colleagues, (2019: 402) [10] makes a case for employees,

stating that every company seeking to boost sales and record profit must take into consideration a democratic style of leadership.

Plan (2003) [11] expresses four major principles of the democratic leadership style which every leader must possess, these are; the mobilization of the personnel, active staff development policy, delegation of power, and enforcement of control mechanisms. Based on these principles, the literature discusses numerous benefits of the democratic style of leadership to both employees as well as to leaders. As highlighted by Goguelin and Mitrani (1994:57) [12], the democratic or participative style satisfies the new basic needs of the employees, which means the need for security, social ties, self-esteem and self-fulfillment. It makes the company more human, more social and gives employees greater autonomy and a right to speak. As mentioned by Yahaya (2016) [13], the participative style brings recognition to employees.

The delegation of power gives employees responsibility and encourages their personal development which allows for self-realization. In addition, this style of leadership aims to achieve equality and respect for everyone (Henri, 2016) [14].

Filley and House (1971) [15] in their discussion about motivation and performance posits that a democratic leadership structure will provide a highly motivated workforce which as a corollary would mean an increased worker performance. Similarly, this relationship between leadership style and organizational productivity was provided by Ryan and Deci (2000: 72) [16] where it was noticed that extrinsic factors such as work environment and most importantly employer attitude may influence employee behaviour in the workplace. A supporting view was provided by Mol (2012: 35) [17], viewing employee motivation to perform more as being dependent on the leadership style of the organization. Chandrasekar (2011: 10) [18] highlighted factors that increase employee performance, wherein it was discovered that all these factors are elements of democratic leadership. These factors include cordial employee-employer relations, provision of training and other development programs, presence of initiatives to increase team spirit, and most importantly, the opportunity for employees to have their voices heard.

In the analysis of employee performance, it could be revealed that as employee performance increases, organizational productivity also increases. Therefore, a positive relationship is recorded in this relationship. Synonymously, Parisi-Carew and Guthrie (2009) [19] mention that employees would perform better in a democratic environment, hence, a democratic leadership structure is a prerequisite for employee motivation and organizational productivity. A similar submission was made by Karim (2012) [20], positing that a respectable and equitable work environment where every worker is treated in a reputable manner is a stimulant for greater profit.

As mentioned by Tella, et al., (2007: 9) [21], employee job satisfaction increases when they are under a democratic rulership structure. This is due to the elements of a democratic leader that includes the provision of incentive, developing effective communication between employers and workers, listening to the workers, and providing a conducive environment for making general decisions. Additionally, it is believed that when employee job satisfaction increases, the performance also increases which will then reflect on organizational productivity.

Another important relating concept between employee performance and productivity is the concept of training. This is based on the belief that adequate and efficient training increases both employee performance as well as organizational productivity. As highlighted by Raja, Furqan, and Khan (2016) [22], when workers are properly trained, their performance increases which directly reflects on the level of organizational productivity. Similarly, Cook and Hunsaker (2001: 56) [23] posit that in an organization where proper training is conducted, employees are groomed in line with their responsibilities which will affect their overall performance. This explains why Kenny (2019: 8) [24] agrees that training is indeed important in an organization to ensure workers understand their tasks and bring out their best.

For Sundaray (2011: 54) [25] training is important to increase employee engagement, and as employee engagement is built, the organization is sure of an increased level of productivity. This is why Callaghan (2005: 3) [26] relates employee performance with proper training which is, therefore, reflected on overall productivity. The most important factor with regards to training is highlighted in the kind of training provided which best suits the employee. This kind of training is provided under democratic leadership as the leader listens to the employee, understands their needs and provide them with the trainings that best answers for the needs of the workers.

III. METHODOLOGY

This study has adopted a quantitative research design method using a questionnaire. It is designed in a manner to understand how leadership style may influence employee performance and organizational productivity. The study was conducted amongst workers in various offices living in Turkey. Similarly, the survey includes a population size of 207 members with a minimum of 1-year of working experience.

The following hypothesis were tested in the study:

H1: Democratic leadership style positively affects the employee's performance.

H2: Employee's performance positively affects organizational productivity.

H3: Democratic leadership style positively affects organizational productivity.

H4: Democratic leadership style positively affects organizational productivity with the help of employee performance.

From the study, it was seen that employee performance, as well as organizational productivity, is dependent on employee performance. The study was conducted using a simple random sampling technique. The researcher adopted simple random sampling to select members of the population who have a requisite idea about the subject under inquiry and represent the remaining population.

The demographic distribution of the sample is demonstrated in graphics below.

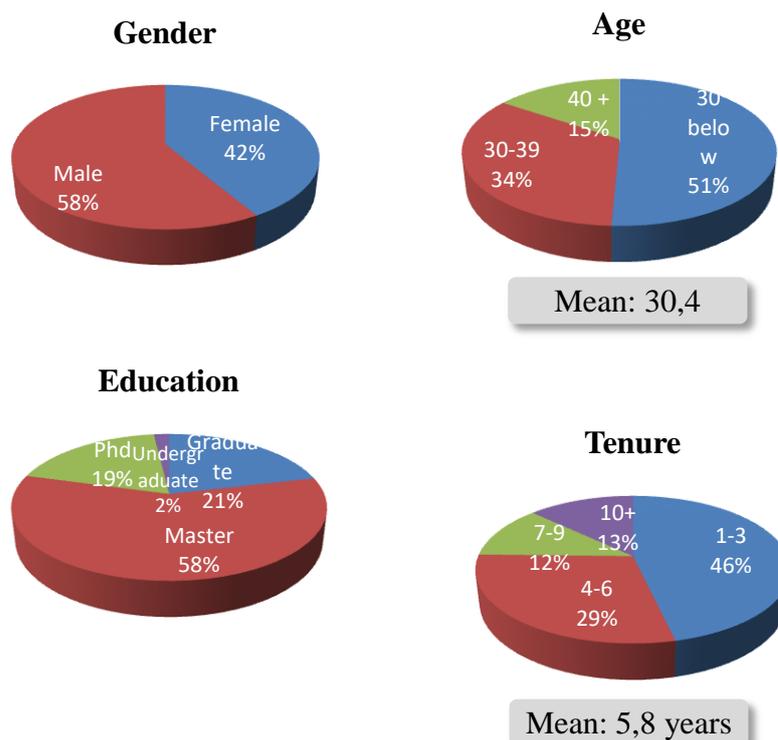


Figure 1: Descriptive Analysis of Demographics

Other than demographics, participants of the study were asked to respond to 28 items in total, under three sections. Except the demographic questions, all the items were responded on a 5-point scale. In previous studies, it seems like the scales had close to high internal consistencies with a Cronbach's alpha value ranging from 0.5 to 0.7

- **Democratic Leadership Style:** This scale is taken from a master thesis completed in 2020 (Taher). In the study this leadership style were imposed to reliability analysis with authoritarian leadership style and the total Cronbach alpha value for the scale was found as 0.874. In the study, the scale was mentioned to be adopted from Iqbal's (2005) [27] study.

- **Employee Performance:** The scale is adopted from Othman's (2019) [28] thesis. The scale has given a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.68. Accordingly the scale was seen to have a relatively moderate internal consistency.
- **Organizational Productivity:** Alves & Gama's (2020) [29] study the Cronbach Alpha value for the variable was found to be 0.9. For descriptive research the Cronbach's should be greater than 0.70 for considering reliable (Zehir, Sahin, & Hakan Kitapci, 2011) [30]

IV. FINDINGS AND DATA ANALYSIS

The main characteristics of the sample were presented using descriptive statistics. Reliability analysis was conducted on the scales to determine their internal consistency, and coefficient alphas were taken into account. Non-parametric Bivariate Correlations were presented for descriptive purposes. Multiple Regression analysis was used to test the hypotheses. Mann-Whitney rank sum test and Kruskal Wallis test were utilized for assessing the demographic differences of the variables. The difference groups lacked the normality condition. Therefore, a non-parametric test was considered to be the most convenient for testing the demographic variables.

• Factor Analyses and Internal Consistencies

To reduce the number of the variables, explanatory factor analysis was conducted with the principal component analysis (PCA) and varimax rotation on the factorial structure of the scales. The study's reliability analysis was then performed by measuring Cronbach's alpha and determining whether or not it was greater than 0.7, to check the internal consistency.

By examining Cronbach's alpha values, the reliabilities of variables were tested. α estimates the proportion of variance that is systematic or consistent in a set of survey responses. As it is seen in the table IV. 1 below, all the variables' internal consistencies were found high to be used in further analyses. It is known that the limit for an acceptable level of self-consistency is 0.70. Thusly the Cronbach's alpha values in this study range between 0.8-0.9. The Cronbach's alpha for democratic leadership style which has 17 items is $\alpha=0.911$; for employee performance with five items, it is $\alpha=0.943$; and for organizational productivity (six items) it is $\alpha=0.937$.

Table IV. 1: Reliability Statistics of Variables

	Cronbach's Alpha	N of items
Democratic leadership	0.911	17
Employee performance	0.943	5
Organizational productivity	0.937	6

• Correlation Analysis

A bivariate correlation analysis has been done among the variables to see whether they are related or not. This analysis presents also the type and strength of the relationships among the variables. The correlation coefficient of Pearson is frequently used in this analysis. Barely the data of this study is not normally distributed. So in this study, Spearman's coefficient was considered in correlation.

The means, standard deviations, and correlations related to all factors are presented in Table IV. 2. All the correlations are significant at the 0.01 level and they imply moderate relationships, ranging from 0.350 to 0.628, and they are all in the anticipated direction.

Table IV. 2: Table of Correlations

Spearman's rho	Mean	SD	1	2	3
1. Democratic leadership	2,6	0,8	1		
2. Employee performance	2,5	1,2	,628**	1	
3. Organizational productivity	3,7	0,8	,350**	,444**	1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

As it is seen in the table, all the variables have a positive significant relationship amongst each other. The strongest correlation is found between Democratic leadership and Employee performance ($r=0.628$, $p < 0.01$), while the weakest is found between Democratic leadership and Organizational productivity ($r=0.350$, $p < 0.01$).

• Regression Analysis

Regression analysis is an analysis method used to examine the relationship between the dependent variable and one or more independent variables. With the different applications of regression analysis, the effect of mediator and conditional variable in the research model can be tested.

The hypotheses 1 to 3 were tested by simple linear regression analysis and the results of the analysis are as follows:

- H1: Democratic leadership style positively affects the employee's performance.
- H2: Employee's performance positively affects organizational productivity.
- H3: Democratic leadership style positively affects organizational productivity.

Simple linear regression analysis was used to test H1 in Table IV.3. Accordingly ($\beta = 0.662$; $p < 0.05$); democratic leadership style significantly predicted employee performance. (Employee performance = $-0.176 + 0.662 \times$ democratic leadership); The power of democratic leadership style to explain employee performance is $R^2=0.438$. So that means; democratic leadership style explains 43% variance of employee performance. Finally, the H1 hypothesis was confirmed.

Table IV. 3: Simple Regression Analysis for H1

Dependent Variable: Employee performance			
Variables	Beta	T	P
Democratic leadership style	0.662	12.558	0.000
R = 0.662; $R^2 = 0.438$; F = 158.356; p = 0.000			

The second simple linear regression analysis was used to test H2 in Table IV.4. The model shows that employee performance could statistically explain organizational productivity ($R^2=0.314$, $p = 0.001 < 0.05$). So, this finding is important in the way of supporting the the 2nd hypothesis of the research. Finally employee performance explains 31% variance of organizational productivity.

Table IV. 4: Simple Regression Analysis for H2

Dependent Variable: Organizational productivity			
Variables	Beta	T	P
Employee performance	0.561	5.823	0.000
R = 0.561; $R^2 = 0.314$; F = 33.911; p = 0.000			

As it is seen in the last simple regression analysis in Table IV. 5 below, democratic leadership style significantly predicted organizational productivity ($\beta = 0.512$; $p < 0.05$); (Organizational productivity = $1.200 + 0.512 \times$ democratic leadership); The power of democratic leadership style to explain organizational productivity is $R^2=0.263$. So that means; democratic leadership style explains 26% variance of organizational productivity. Accordingly the H3 hypothesis was confirmed.

Table IV. 5: Simple Regression Analysis for H3

Dependent Variable: Organizational productivity			
Variables	Beta	T	P
Democratic leadership style	0.512	5.098	0.000
R = 0.512; $R^2 = 0.263$; F = 25.986; p = 0.000			

In the model in H4 (Democratic leadership style affect organizational productivity through employee performance) it is desired to measure the mediator effect. The three-stage method of Baron and Kenny (1986) [31] was used in the multiple regression analysis applied for this purpose.

Hence, in the models in Table IV. 6, when democratic leadership style and employee performance are together regressed to organizational productivity. The effect of leadership style becomes insignificant ($p=0.065<0.05$), so it means that its effect diminishes while employee performance's effect remains significant ($p=0.000<0.05$) on organizational productivity. This result demonstrates a full mediation effect of employee performance on the relationship between democratic leadership style and organizational productivity. So the last hypothesis of the thesis was also supported.

Table IV. 6: Results of Multiple Regression Analysis

Dependent Variable: Organizational productivity				
	Variables	Beta	T	P
Step 3				
	Democratic leadership style	0.231	1.872	0.065
	Employee performance	1.431	3.494	0.001
R= 0.608; R ² = 0.369; F= 21.7092; p= 0,000				

- **Difference Tests**

Researchers can use SPSS difference tests to see how the study variables differ depending on demographic data. Parametric and non-parametric tests are two types of difference tests. Because the normality requirement for the variables was not provided and the sample size of the difference groups was not large enough to conduct a parametric test, non-parametric tests were used in this study. Because the variables being examined were divided into two groups, the Mann-Whitney rank sum test was performed as a nonparametric test. Only the significant results are reported in this section.

In Table IV. 7 it is seen that there is a significant difference ($p = 0.000 < 0.05$) of all variables among tenure groups. It means that as employees become more experienced their performance decreases by time, their organizations become more productive and their democratic leadership perception of their managers get lower.

Table IV. 7: Difference Test in Terms of Tenure

	Years of experience	N	Mean rank	p value	Chi square
Employee performance	1-3 years	96	123.07	0.000	19.164
	4-6 years	60	87.13		
	7-9 years	24	87.71		
	10 or 10+	27	88.15		
Organizational productivity	1-3 years	96	72.42	0.000	50.115
	4-6 years	60	127.22		
	7-9 years	24	137.83		
	10 or 10+	27	131.65		
Democratic leadership style	1-3 years	96	126.73	0.000	31.901
	4-6 years	60	92.35		
	7-9 years	24	69.83		
	10 or 10+	27	72.26		

Lastly in Table IV. 8 it is seen that there is a significant difference (Employee performance_p = 0.009 < 0.05; Organizational productivity_p = 0.000 < 0.05; Democratic leadership style_p = 0.005 < 0.05) of all variables among education groups. It means there is negative correlation between education level and performance. This correlation is positive with organizational productivity, as employees are more educated their performance decreases by time, their organizations become more productive and their democratic leadership perception of their managers get lower. The relationship between education and democratic leadership style perception is negative too.

Table IV. 8: Difference Test in Terms of Education

	Education level	N	Mean rank	p value	Chi square
Employee performance	Bachelor's Degree	44	131.51	0.009	13.644
	Master's Degree	120	98.45		
	Above Master's Degree	39	89.45		
Organizational productivity	Bachelor's Degree	96	56.53	0.000	42.626
	Master's Degree	60	112.42		
	Above Master's Degree	24	132.44		
Democratic leadership style	Bachelor's Degree	96	126.86	0.005	12.751
	Master's Degree	60	102.13		
	Above Master's Degree	24	80.79		

V. CONCLUSION

To meet the research objectives of finding out how the three main variables (employee performance, organizational productivity, and democratic leadership style) relates with each other, the questionnaire used in this research asked specific questions relating to how the research participants conducted their duty, their level of efficiency, the receptiveness of their employers, and the various provisions made by their organization towards increasing overall business production in their office.

By asking these questions to the participants, the survey intended to collect various submissions regarding how democratic leadership style may influence employee performance and organizational productivity. Similarly, from the questions asked, it was expected to infer the various ways through which employees are motivated or how employers/managers may act to increase business productivity.

In relations to other studies, the research finding from this article conforms with the findings of Cakir and Adiguzel (2020) [32] in highlighting that leadership styles influence employee productivity. Therefore, it is understood that the production level of the employees is dependent on the leadership style or method that they are under. Additionally, Altin and his colleagues (2018:1182) [33] in their study of productivity level of tourism industry found that workers with higher education and an increased level of experience did not require much supervision as compared to those with lower levels of education. This goes in line with the findings in this study which showed that a significant increase of productivity was recorded in companies with workers of higher experience level.

Additionally, according to Denison, Hooijberg, & Quinn (1995:532) [34], it is seen that employee performance is significant on organizational productivity. Therefore, it agrees with the findings in this article which analyzes that democratic leadership style influences employee performance which in turn influences productivity. In line with this study, Yukl (2008: 719) [35] highlights the numerous importance of training and communication as important democratic elements which are necessary for employee performance.

The first research objective was to check how employee performance and organizational productivity may be influenced under a democratic leadership style. From the above submission of the audience in the survey, it was determined that workers present in organizations with elements of democratic leadership experienced a greater level of satisfaction, worked in higher proportion, and enjoyed their leadership coordination. Similarly, it was seen based on a correlation analysis that there is indeed a positive relationship between employee performance and democratic leadership. This means that, the higher the level of democratic leadership style in the office, the higher the employee performance.

Additionally, based on the available literature, it is noticed when workers are happy or in a positive work environment, they are motivated to work more, thus, increasing their productivity. By analysing elements of a positive work environment, it is seen that an equitable provision of rewards, training, teamwork, receptiveness to employee suggestion amongst others characterizes a positive work environment. From this study, it is discovered that a majority of the workers agreed to work in places where their opinions and suggestions are respected which has to a great extent increased their overall productivity.

It is a general assertion that everyone is happy to be in places where there are celebrated or where their hard work is rewarded. Similarly, as being part of an organization, people will be elated to work in areas where their submissions are respected and their voices heard. For this reason, there is indeed a strong relationship between democratic leadership style, employee performance, and organizational productivity.

This may therefore mean that to increase employee performance and to ensure an increasing nature of employee-employer relations, the leaders are encouraged to exhibit democratic leadership tendencies and to carry everyone in the company along.

In addition to the available literature, understanding the factors that may influence employee performance may guide the leaders or managers in providing policies to favour these aims. For this reason, this study is important, especially for managers to employ policies that will not only motivate employee performance but lead to an increasing level of overall organizational productivity. It is a fact that all companies venture into business to increase their gains and to make money, for this reason, establishing policies that will motivate employers and lead to an increasing level of income is essential for every business owner.

Similarly, the employees are regarded as an integral part of the organizational composition. They represent a larger number of the labour force in the company who are engaged in all sections of the business. For this reason, satisfying employee needs and providing a democratic leadership style to increase employee engagement in the office will eventually lead to an increase in employee performance and organizational productivity.

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