

The Effect of Situational Leadership Style on Employee Performance with Leadership Communication as an Intervening Variable

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ABSTRACT:

This study analyzes the influence of situational leadership style on employee performance, with leadership communication as an intervening variable. The object of the study is the employees of the Sumber Makmur Ngantang Village Unit Cooperative (KUD), located at Jl. Raya No. 1, Ngantang, Malang Regency, Indonesia. The results of the study indicate that situational leadership style has a positive effect on employee performance. Additionally, situational leadership style positively influences leadership communication, and leadership communication, in turn, positively affects employee performance. Furthermore, situational leadership style has an indirect positive effect on employee performance through leadership communication as an intervening variable. The implication of this study is that the implementation of an effective situational leadership style, reinforced by improved communication, can enhance employee performance.

KEYWORDS: Situational leadership style. employee performance. leadership communication.

I. INTRODUCTION

The increasingly sophisticated dynamics of the modern work environment, along with intense competition, require organizations to enhance the efficiency and productivity of their resources in order to survive and grow. This is particularly true for management systems and human resources, which are key factors in executing all company activities (Setiawan, 2017). One of the critical success factors in human resource management is employee performance.

Employee performance plays a vital role, as organizations can only operate effectively when employees demonstrate high levels of performance (Yolanda, Widiana, & Sari, 2022). Performance improvement is influenced not only by individual

competencies but also by other factors, such as leadership style and leadership communication within the organization.

A relevant form of leadership in this context is the situational leadership style. According to Bizany (2024), situational leadership emphasizes the need to adapt leadership approaches based on prevailing conditions, particularly in decision-making and team management. Leaders with this style tend to be flexible and responsive to change.

However, effective leadership alone is not always sufficient to ensure optimal performance. Effective leadership communication—defined as open and clear communication from leaders to team members or the organization—is also essential (Novianti, Potensi, & Bangun, 2018). Firmansyah and Winarto (2024) found that leadership style has a positive and significant influence on communication.

Given the importance of leaders in effectively communicating organizational policies that directly impact employee performance, this study aims to examine the effect of leadership style on employee performance, with leadership communication serving as an intervening variable.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Situational Leadership Style

Situational leadership style refers to a leadership approach in which superiors guide, implement, manage, motivate, and direct efforts toward achieving goals by optimizing available skills and aligning leadership strategies with the circumstances and behavior of subordinates (Hidayat, Hamid, & Ruhana, 2020). Similarly, Rizka, Mahsun, Ridwan, and Ansori (2023) define situational leadership as "a contingency theory of leadership that focuses on followers' readiness." Nuhuya, Podungge, and Pakaya (2024) also emphasize that situational leadership centers on the

followers, adjusting leadership behavior based on their needs and development levels.

Rahmayanti (2018) asserts that situational leadership is an effective approach for achieving organizational goals and improving individual employee performance. In line with this, Prasinta, Jakarwi, and Kase (2023, p. 21) describe situational leadership as a leadership approach that adapts to specific situations to achieve optimal effectiveness.

Indicators of situational leadership style serve as benchmarks for evaluating the effectiveness of a leader's behavior in performing leadership functions. According to Thoha (2013, p. 67), these indicators include four main aspects: instructional style, consultative style, participative style, and delegative style.

Leadership Communication.

According to Ayep, Fikri, Zulkarnain, and Fauzi (2023), leadership communication refers to the ability to convey messages effectively, a skill essential for individuals in leadership roles. Taryana and Sutrismanhulu (2023) emphasize that leadership communication is particularly effective within organizational contexts and can be directly applied in the workplace. Similarly, Sumarsono (2021) defines leadership communication as a combination of language and actions employed by leaders when interacting with subordinates.

Handimanu (2022) highlights leadership communication as a strategic function that enables leaders to guide their teams toward appropriate actions while fostering both internal and external relationships that support organizational growth. Leadership and communication are interdependent—leadership cannot function effectively without communication, and communication is strengthened by strong leadership (Amiroh & Afrianti, 2022).

Kartono (2016, p. 138) identifies several key indicators of leadership communication: effectiveness, openness, the ability to influence, and the ability to persuade followers.

Employee Performance.

Employee performance refers to the work outcomes achieved by an individual in fulfilling their duties and responsibilities in accordance with their area of expertise (Ummah, 2019, p. 53). Widayat and Purwanto (2020) define employee performance as the accomplishment of assigned tasks. Similarly, Putri, Wolor, and Marsofiyati (2023) describe employee performance as a process that reflects work activities from initiation to output,

which should meet both quality and quantity standards.

According to Rahayu and Sutrischastini (2022), employee performance is associated with results that align with the predetermined work requirements or standards. Husna and Prasetya (2024) emphasize that performance is achieved when work targets are completed on time or within deadlines, in accordance with company regulations. Furthermore, Susanti and Rohima (2023) state that employee performance encompasses the ability to meet deadlines while upholding the organization's moral and ethical values, thereby contributing positively to the organization.

III. RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

The Effect of Situational Leadership Style on Employee Performance

Several studies have found that situational leadership style has a positive and significant effect on employee performance, including research conducted by Rahmayanti (2018), Poppy (2018), Erri, Lestari, and Asymar (2021), Wokas, Dotulong, and Saerang (2022), Nabillah (2022), Lating, Murtiningtyas, and Prasetyo (2023), as well as Rezeki, Badrianto, Turmudhi, and Kosasih (2023). However, other studies present contrasting results. Yantony, Jasman, Haribowo, and Rezeki (2024), as well as Purnamasari, Mardiningrum, and Halik (2019), found no significant effect of leadership style on employee performance. Furthermore, Panjaitan (2017) reported a negative and significant influence.

Based on the above findings, the following hypothesis is formulated:

H₁: Situational leadership style has a positive effect on employee performance.

The Effect of Situational Leadership Style on Leadership Communication

Effective leadership communication—defined as open and clear communication from leaders to their team or organization—is essential for fostering trust, supporting decision-making, and effectively conveying the organization's vision (Novianti, Potensi, & Bangun, 2018). Leadership communication is strengthened by leaders who can adapt their style to various situations.

Based on previous studies, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H₂: Situational leadership style has a positive effect on leadership communication.

The Effect of Leadership Communication on Employee Performance

Research by KUSDARIANTO (2022), KADEK, PRATIWI, DEWANTI, and AMANDA (2024), ROSAD (2020), and SIAHAAN and MASRIAH (2022) shows that communication has a positive and significant effect on employee performance. In contrast, GERALT, KOLEANGAN, and SEPANG (2020), as well as SULAEAMAN (2019), found no such effect.

Based on this body of research, the hypothesis is:

H₃: Leadership communication has a positive effect on employee performance.

The Mediating Role of Leadership Communication

Studies by LATING et al. (2023) and FIRMANSYAH et al. (2024) show that leadership

communication mediates the relationship between situational leadership style and employee performance. These findings suggest that communication acts as a bridge that enhances the impact of leadership on performance.

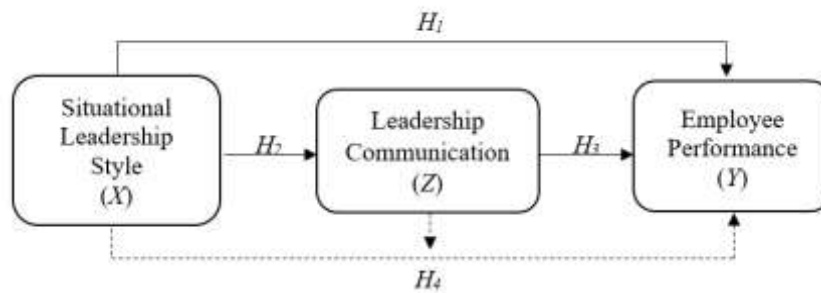
Accordingly, the following mediation hypothesis is formulated:

H₄: Situational leadership style has a positive effect on employee performance through leadership communication as an intervening variable.

Thinking Framework

This study examines the influence of situational leadership style on employee performance, with leadership communication serving as an intervening variable.

Figure 1. Framework Thought



IV. RESEARCH METHOD

This study aims to determine the effect of work motivation and transformational leadership style on employee performance, with job satisfaction as an intervening variable. The object of the study is the employees of the Sumber Makmur Ngantang Village Unit Cooperative (KUD), located at Jl. Raya No. 1, Ngantang, Malang Regency, Indonesia.

Population and Sample

The population in this study consists of all employees of KUD Sumber Makmur Ngantang, totaling 36 individuals. Given the relatively small population size, a census approach was employed,

and the entire population was used as the research sample.

Variables, Operational Definitions, and Measurements

The research variables and their corresponding indicators are presented in Table 1. The measurement of research constructs was conducted using reflective indicators on a Likert scale.

Data Analysis Method

To examine the relationships between variables and test the proposed hypotheses, this study employed Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) using the variance-based approach, specifically the Partial Least Squares (PLS) method.

Table 1. Research Variables and Variable Indicators

Variable	Indicator	
Situational Leadership Style (X)	X _{1.1}	Leaders closely supervise the work.
	X _{1.2}	Leaders provide clear direction about the tasks and goals of the organization.
	X _{1.3}	Leaders provide opportunities for employees to convey ideas and suggestions.

Variable	Indicator	
	X _{1.4}	Leaders provide opportunities for employees to participate in exchanging opinions and ideas and solving problems.
	X _{1.5}	Leaders give employees responsibility and decision-making opportunities.
	X _{1.6}	There is intensive two-way communication between employees and leaders.
	X _{1.7}	Leaders provide broad opportunities for decision-making.
	X _{1.8}	Leaders provide full control to complete tasks.
Employee Performance (Y)	Y _{1.1}	Able to complete tasks with optimal numbers.
	Y _{1.2}	Work results are in accordance with company quality standards.
	Y _{1.3}	Complete tasks on time.
Leadership Communication (Z)	Z _{1.1}	Leaders deliver instructions. information. ideas and suggestions clearly and precisely.
	Z _{1.2}	Leaders are transparent in decision making. ideas and suggestions and criticism
	Z _{1.3}	Leader actions and motivations can influence to do the best
	Z _{1.4}	Leaders have the ability to convince followers about the vision. mission and responsibilities taken

V. ANALYSIS AND RESULT AND DISCUSSION.

This section outlines the results of the quantitative analysis using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The analysis consists of two main parts: the assessment of the measurement model and the evaluation of the structural model. The measurement model is examined through outer loadings, average variance extracted (AVE), composite reliability, and discriminant validity using both cross loading and HTMT criteria. Subsequently, the structural model is analyzed to evaluate the relationships between

latent variables, including the significance of path coefficients, the coefficient of determination (R^2), effect size (f^2), and predictive relevance (Q^2). The findings are then interpreted and discussed in light of the proposed hypotheses and relevant theoretical and empirical literature.

1. Respondent Demographics

The results of the questionnaire and data analysis from 36 respondents provide an overview of the respondents' characteristics, as presented in Table 2 and Table 3.

Table 2. Respondent Demographics

Variable	Frequency	%
Gender		
Male	13	36%
Female	23	64%
Age		
20-35 years	14	39%
35-50 years	17	47%
> 50 years	5	14%
Education		
Junior High School	2	5%
Senior HighSchool/ Vocational High School	19	53%
Diploma	9	25%
S1	6	17%
Year of Work		
2-4 Years	4	11%
5-7 Years	13	36%
> 7 years	19	53%

The responses were analyzed using a Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The findings indicate generally

favorable perceptions across the variables of work motivation, transformational leadership, job satisfaction, and employee performance.

Table 3. Questionnaire Results

Variable	Indicator		Average value
Situational Leadership Style(X)	X _{1.1}	Leaders closely supervise the work.	4.36
	X _{1.2}	Leaders provide clear direction about the tasks and goals of the organization.	4.36
	X _{1.3}	Leaders provide opportunities for employees to convey ideas and suggestions.	4.52
	X _{1.4}	Leaders provide opportunities for employees to participate in exchanging opinions and ideas and solving problems.	4.38
	X _{1.5}	Leaders give employees responsibility and decision-making opportunities.	4.5
	X _{1.6}	There is intensive two-way communication between employees and leaders.	4.52
	X _{1.7}	Leaders provide broad opportunities for decision-making.	4.41
	X _{1.8}	Leaders provide full control to complete tasks.	4.52
Employee Performance (Y)	Y _{1.1}	Able to complete tasks with optimal numbers.	4.5
	Y _{1.2}	Work results are in accordance with company quality standards.	4.4
	Y _{1.3}	Complete tasks on time.	4.5
Leadership Communication (Z)	Z _{1.1}	Leaders deliver instructions. information. ideas and suggestions clearly and precisely.	4.5
	Z _{1.2}	Leaders are transparent in decision making. ideas and suggestions and criticism	4.57
	Z _{1.3}	Leader actions and motivations can influence to do the best	4.5
	Z _{1.4}	Leaders have the ability to convince followers about the vision. mission and responsibilities taken	4.41

2. Measurement Model Evaluation (Outer Model)

Validity testing is conducted to ensure that the instrument accurately measures the intended construct, while reliability testing aims to confirm that the instrument produces consistent results

when administered repeatedly under similar conditions. A loading factor and Cronbach's alpha value of 0.70 or higher are generally considered acceptable indicators of good validity and reliability.

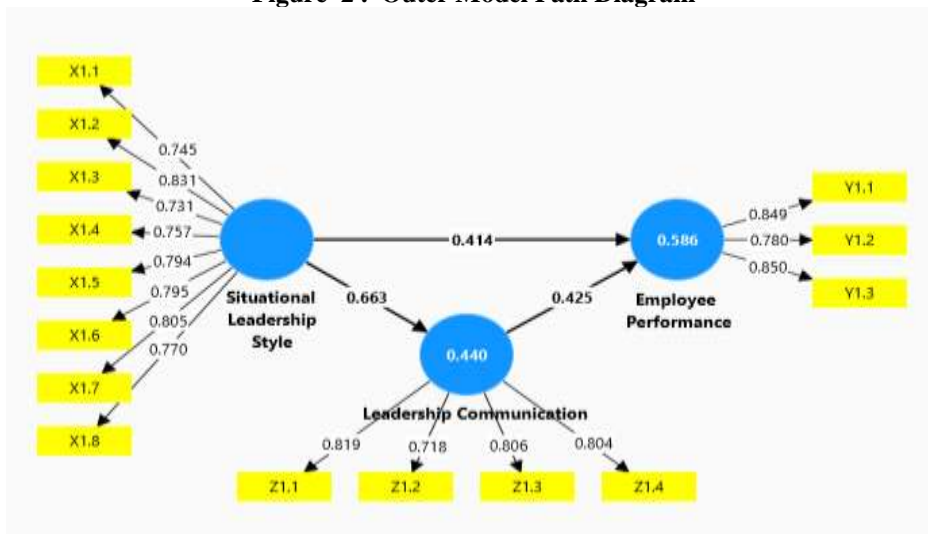
Table 4. Validity and Reliability Test

Variable	Indicator		Convergent Validity		Construct Reliability	
			Outer Loading	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	Composite Reliability (rho c)	Cronbachs Alpha
Situational Leadership Style (X)	X _{1.1}	Leaders closely supervise the work.	0.745	0.607	0.925	0.908
	X _{1.2}	Leaders provide clear direction about the tasks and goals of the	0.831			

Variable	Indicator		Convergent Validity		Construct Reliability	
			Outer Loading	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	Composite Reliability (rho c)	Cronbachs Alpha
		organization.				
	X _{1.3}	Leaders provide opportunities for employees to convey ideas and suggestions.	0.731			
	X _{1.4}	Leaders provide opportunities for employees to participate in exchanging opinions and ideas and solving problems.	0.757			
	X _{1.5}	Leaders give employees responsibility and decision-making opportunities.	0.794			
	X _{1.6}	There is intensive two-way communication between employees and leaders.	0.795			
	X _{1.7}	Leaders provide broad opportunities for decision-making.	0.805			
	X _{1.8}	Leaders provide full control to complete tasks.	0.770			
	Employee Performance (Y)	Y _{1.1}	Able to complete tasks with optimal numbers.	0.849	0.684	0.866
Y _{1.2}		Work results are in accordance with company quality standards.	0.780			
Y _{1.3}		Complete tasks on time.	0.850			
Leadership Communication (Z)	Z _{1.1}	Leaders deliver instructions. information. ideas and suggestions clearly and precisely.	0.819	0.620	0.867	0.795
	Z _{1.2}	Leaders are transparent in decision making. ideas and suggestions and criticism	0.718			
	Z _{1.3}	Leader actions and motivations can influence to do the best	0.806			
	Z _{1.4}	Leaders have the ability to convince followers about the vision. mission and responsibilities taken	0.804			

Source: Smartpls Data Processed Results (2025)

Figure 2 . Outer Model Path Diagram



Source: Smartpls Data Processed Results (2025)

The results of the validity and reliability tests show that all indicator variables have loading factor values greater than 0.70, indicating good validity. Additionally, the values of Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability for all latent variables exceed 0.70, which confirms that the constructs are reliable and consistently measure the intended variables.

Discriminat Validity

Discriminant validity is used to ensure that the constructs are truly distinct from one another. In this study, discriminant validity was assessed using the cross loadings.

General Rule of Cross Loadings: An indicator is considered to have discriminant validity if its loading is highest on the construct it is intended to measure. If an indicator loads higher on another construct, its discriminant validity is called into question.

The interpretation of cross loadings is used to assess discriminant validity in the measurement model of Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). Its primary purpose is to ensure that each indicator loads highest on the construct (latent variable) it is intended to measure, compared to other constructs.

Table 5. Discriminat Validity

Construct Pairs	Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) Value	Discriminat Validity
Situational Leadership Style–Employee Performance	0.757	Valid
Situational Leadership Style–Leadership Communication	0.776	Valid
Leadership Communication–Employee Performance	0.860	Valid

Source: Smartpls Data Processed Results (2025)

Table6. Cross Loadings

Indicator		Situational Leadership Style (X)	Employee Performance (Y)	Leadership Communication (Z)	Interpretation
X _{1.1}	Leaders closely supervise the work.	0.745	0.393	0.552	Valid - Highest loading in X
X _{1.2}	Leaders provide clear direction about the tasks and goals of the organization.	0.831	0.592	0.478	Valid

Indicator		Situational Leadership Style (X)	Employee Performance (Y)	Leadership Communication (Z)	Interpretation
X _{1.3}	Leaders provide opportunities for employees to convey ideas and suggestions.	0.731	0.732	0.508	Valid - Loading in X and Y is almost the same (not ideal)
X _{1.4}	Leaders provide opportunities for employees to participate in exchanging opinions and ideas and solving problems.	0.757	0.438	0.458	Valid
X _{1.5}	Leaders give employees responsibility and decision-making opportunities.	0.794	0.341	0.489	Valid
X _{1.6}	There is intensive two-way communication between employees and leaders.	0.795	0.486	0.466	Valid
X _{1.7}	Leaders provide broad opportunities for decision-making.	0.805	0.509	0.628	Valid, even though the Z loading is quite high
X _{1.8}	Leaders provide full control to complete tasks.	0.770	0.701	0.524	Valid, loading to Y (0.701) is almost close to X (0.770)
Y _{1.1}	Able to complete tasks with optimal numbers.	0.421	0.849	0.566	Valid
Y _{1.2}	Work results are in accordance with company quality standards.	0.766	0.780	0.605	Valid, loading to X is quite high
Y _{1.3}	Complete tasks on time.	0.456	0.850	0.542	Valid
Z _{1.1}	Leaders deliver instructions, information, ideas and suggestions clearly and precisely.	0.512	0.502	0.819	Valid
Z _{1.2}	Leaders are transparent in decision making, ideas and suggestions and	0.456	0.695	0.718	Valid

Indicator		Situational Leadership Style (X)	Employee Performance (Y)	Leadership Communication (Z)	Interpretation
	criticism				
Z _{1.3}	Leader actions and motivations can influence to do the best	0.567	0.405	0.806	Valid
Z _{1.4}	Leaders have the ability to convince followers about the vision. mission and responsibilities taken	0.554	0.565	0.804	Valid, but Y loading is quite high

Source: Smartpls Data Processed Results (2025)

Most indicators demonstrate good discriminant validity. However, certain indicators warrant closer attention, X₃ (0.731 vs. 0.732), the loading values are very close, indicating that this indicator does not distinctly measure a single construct (situational leadership style versus employee performance). X₈ and Y₂, although technically valid, they exhibit relatively high cross loadings on other constructs, which may weaken the overall discriminant validity of the model. Z₄ also shows a relatively high loading on Y (0.565), which could raise concerns about its discriminant specificity.

To confirm discriminant validity, it is also necessary to perform the HTMT (Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio) assessment. Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio. According to Hair et al. (2021), an

HTMT value of less than 0.90 indicates that discriminant validity is established.

3. Structural Model Evaluation (Inner Model)

Inner model used to test the relationship between latent variable.

Multikolinearitas

Multicollinearity is tested prior to evaluating the structural model to ensure that the relationships among exogenous (independent) constructs do not interfere with each other in explaining the endogenous (dependent) construct. It is assessed using inner VIF values. VIF (Variance Inflation Factor): < 5 or < 3,3 (ideal).

Table 7. Variance Inflation Factor (VIF)

Indicator	VIF
X _{1.1} Leaders closely supervise the work.	2.602
X _{1.2} Leaders provide clear direction about the tasks and goals of the organization.	2.875
X _{1.3} Leaders provide opportunities for employees to convey ideas and suggestions.	2.063
X _{1.4} Leaders provide opportunities for employees to participate in exchanging opinions and ideas and solving problems.	2.752
X _{1.5} Leaders give employees responsibility and decision-making opportunities.	2.888
X _{1.6} There is intensive two-way communication between employees and leaders.	3.207
X _{1.7} Leaders provide broad opportunities for decision-making.	2.984
X _{1.8} Leaders provide full control to complete tasks.	2.709
Y _{1.1} Able to complete tasks with optimal numbers.	3.049
Y _{1.2} Work results are in accordance with company quality standards.	1.205
Y _{1.3} Complete tasks on time.	3.049
Z _{1.1} Leaders deliver instructions. information. ideas and suggestions clearly and precisely.	1.929

Indicator		VIF
Z _{1,2}	Leaders are transparent in decision making, ideas and suggestions and criticism	1.392
Z _{1,3}	Leader actions and motivations can influence to do the best	1.802
Z _{1,4}	Leaders have the ability to convince followers about the vision, mission and responsibilities taken	2.014

Source: Smartpls Data Processed Results (2025)

No multicollinearity was detected, as all VIF values are below 5. Thus, structural model evaluation can proceed with confidence that multicollinearity is not a concern.

Path coefficient

This section reports the path coefficients to assess the strength and significance of relationships between constructs, based on the bootstrapping results.

Table 8. Path coefficient Direct Effect

Path	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (ST DEV)	T Statistics	P Values	Interpretation
Situational Leadership Style→Employee Performance	0.414	0.444	0.182	2.279	0.011	Significant
Situational Leadership Style→Leadership Communication	0.663	0.677	0.107	6.206	0.000	Significant
Leadership Communication→Employee Performance	0.425	0.416	0.198	2.142	0.016	Significant

Source: Smartpls Data Processed Results (2025)

R-Square (R²)

After establishing the measurement model's validity and reliability, the next step involves evaluating the structural model. This begins with assessing the coefficient of determination (R²), which indicates the extent to which the independent variables explain the variance of the dependent variable.

R² = 0.75 substantial (strong), R² = 0.50 moderate

An R² value of 0.623 for Employee Performance suggests that the model demonstrates strong explanatory capability. In contrast, the R² value of 0.434 for Leadership Communication indicates a moderate explanatory strength.

The structural model results show that situational leadership style has a significant direct effect on both leadership communication (β = 0.663, p < 0.001) and employee performance (β = 0.414, p < 0.05). Leadership communication also significantly influences employee performance (β = 0.425, p < 0.05). Furthermore, the R² value for leadership communication is 0.434, indicating a moderate explanatory power, while the R² for employee performance is 0.623, which reflects a strong explanatory capacity of the model. These

(medium), and R² = 0.25 weak.

Table 9. R-square

	R-square
Employee Performance (Y)	0.623
Leadership Communication (Z)	0.434

Source: Smartpls Data Processed Results (2025)

results confirm the important role of leadership communication as a mediating variable in enhancing employee performance.

4. Mediation Analysis

Following the evaluation of direct effects in the structural model, the next step is to examine the presence of indirect effects through mediation analysis. This analysis aims to assess whether Leadership Communication acts as a mediating variable in the relationship between Situational Leadership Style and Employee Performance. The mediation effect is tested by evaluating the significance of the indirect path through the mediator.

Table 10. Path coefficient Indirect Effect

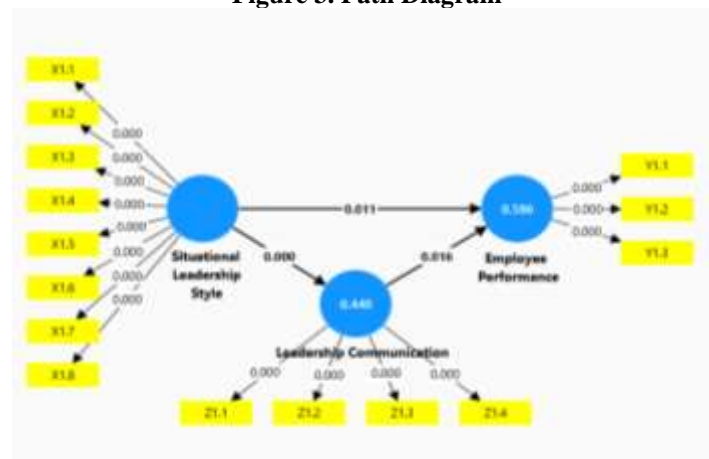
Path	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (ST DEV)	T Statistics	P Values	Interpretation
Situational Leadership Style→Leadership Communication→Employee Performance	0.282	0.278	0.140	2.018	0.022	Significant

Source: Smartpls Data Processed Results (2025)

The indirect effect of situational leadership style on employee performance through leadership communication is statistically significant ($\beta = 0.282$, $p = 0.022$). This finding indicates that leadership communication partially

mediates the relationship, suggesting that situational leadership influences employee performance both directly and indirectly via improved communication.

Figure 3. Path Diagram



Source: Smartpls Data Processed Results (2025)

5. Hypothesis Testing Results

H₁: The Effect of Situational Leadership Style on Employee Performance

The statistical analysis reveals a significant positive effect of situational leadership style on employee performance ($O = 0.479$; $T = 2.819$; $p = 0.002$). This confirms that leaders who can adapt their leadership approach to the readiness and needs of employees are more likely to enhance productivity and motivation. The flexibility embedded in situational leadership enables leaders to offer guidance and support in a way that aligns with employee conditions, thereby improving overall performance outcomes. Thus, H₁ is supported.

H₂: The Effect of Situational Leadership Style on Leadership Communication

The results indicate a very strong and significant relationship between situational leadership style and leadership communication (O

$= 0.659$; $T = 6.183$; $p = 0.000$). Leaders who practice situational leadership tend to communicate more effectively, adjusting their messages based on the context, emotional tone, and team dynamics. This strengthens trust, reduces ambiguity, and ensures team alignment. The findings affirm that communication competence is enhanced when leadership is situationally responsive. Therefore, H₂ is accepted.

H₃: The Effect of Leadership Communication on Employee Performance

Leadership communication is found to have a statistically significant positive influence on employee performance ($O = 0.386$; $T = 2.046$; $p = 0.020$). Even though the significance value is close to the 0.05 threshold, it remains within the acceptable range. This supports the view that effective communication—whether in delivering tasks, clarifying expectations, or providing feedback—is crucial to employee understanding

and performance execution. Good communication contributes to increased work motivation and clarity. Hence, H₃ is supported.

H₄: The Mediating Role of Leadership Communication

The indirect effect of situational leadership style on employee performance through leadership communication is also statistically significant ($O = 0.255$; $T = 1.916$; $p = 0.028$). This suggests that communication acts as a mediating mechanism through which adaptive leadership influences performance outcomes. Even when leaders apply an effective style, the actual impact is amplified through open, consistent, and responsive communication. In the context of KUD Sumber Makmur, strengthening communication practices alongside adaptive leadership will yield better performance improvements. Thus, H₄ is supported.

6. Discussion

The Effect of Situational Leadership Style on Employee Performance (H₁)

The results show that situational leadership style has a significant positive effect on employee performance. This finding supports the theory that adaptive leadership, which aligns leadership behavior with employees' readiness and the situation at hand, can create a more supportive and productive work environment. The high evaluation scores from respondents reflect their perception of the leader's ability to guide and motivate effectively. This is in line with research by Lating et al. (2023), which found that employees are more motivated when they view their leaders as role models. Flexibility in leadership allows leaders to provide appropriate direction and support, ultimately enhancing individual performance.

The Effect of Situational Leadership Style on Leadership Communication (H₂)

The hypothesis testing confirms that situational leadership style has a strong and significant effect on leadership communication. Leaders who are responsive to team needs and capable of adjusting their communication approach are more effective in conveying instructions, building trust, and fostering collaboration. This supports previous findings (Lating et al., 2023) that better situational leadership leads to improved communication. In the context of cooperatives like KUD Sumber Makmur, where informal structures may be more prevalent, communication plays a crucial role in leadership success.

The Effect of Leadership Communication on Employee Performance (H₃)

Leadership communication is found to significantly influence employee performance. Clear, open, and respectful communication enables employees to better understand their tasks, receive meaningful feedback, and feel valued within the organization. These results are consistent with Marceline et al. (2021), who argue that good communication fosters mutual understanding and work comfort. In this study, the high scores on communication quality confirm that respondents appreciate the clarity and effectiveness of leadership messages.

The Mediating Role of Leadership Communication (H₄)

The analysis shows that leadership communication significantly mediates the relationship between situational leadership and employee performance. This indicates that while situational leadership is important, its full impact on performance is achieved when supported by effective communication. The mediating effect suggests that leaders must not only adapt their behavior but also ensure their messages are clearly understood and well-received. This finding reinforces the strategic role of communication in translating leadership into tangible performance outcomes.

VI. CONCLUSION

This study confirms that situational leadership style plays a significant role in enhancing employee performance, both directly and indirectly through leadership communication. Leaders who can adapt their style to situational demands tend to foster more effective communication, which in turn contributes to improved performance outcomes. The findings demonstrate that:

1. Situational leadership style has a direct positive effect on employee performance.
2. Situational leadership style significantly enhances leadership communication.
3. Leadership communication positively influences employee performance.
4. Leadership communication serves as a significant mediating variable between situational leadership and employee performance.

These results underscore the importance of leadership adaptability and communication quality in organizational settings. For organizations such as cooperatives, strengthening situational

leadership practices and ensuring open, clear, and consistent communication can significantly boost

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