

## The influence of leadership style on employee performance mediated by work conflict and moderated by job stress

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World Journal of Advanced Research and Reviews, 2022, 14(02), 618–627

Publication history: Received on 21 April 2022; revised on 23 May 2022; accepted on 26 May 2022

Article DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30574/wjarr.2022.14.2.0474>

### Abstract

This research paper aims to examine whether there is a significant effect of overall Leadership on Employee Performance. Furthermore, additional focus could be placed on the question, whether Work Conflict can play a mediating role of Leadership style on Employee Performance or Job Stress can play a moderating role between Work Conflict on Employee Performance and Leadership Style on Employee Performance. After reviewing the literature, there are seven hypotheses proposed in this study. The dependent variable is Employee Performance, while the independent variable is Leadership Style. The study design consisted of a population with a saturated sample of 50 workers from an SME company in Surabaya, East Java, Indonesia. The data is processed using SEM Smart PLS 3 where the bootstrap method is used to test hypotheses and the results of the study show that Job Stress has no significant effect on Employee Performance, Leadership Style and Work Conflict have a significant effect on Employee Performance, Leadership Style has a significant effect on Work Conflict, Job Stress only acts as a potential moderating because it has no a significant direct relationship with Employee Performance and cannot moderate Work Conflict on Employee Performance and Leadership Style on Employee Performance, and Leadership Style has a significant effect on Employee Performance through Work Conflict. This study provides input to enrich the theory of the relationship between leadership and employee performance with mediating and moderating factors.

**Keywords:** Employee Performance; Job Stress; Leadership Style; Work Conflict

### 1. Introduction

Leadership can be one of the most important aspects that can guide organizations in the direction they expect. Applying the right leadership style so that it affects the performance of workers, while creating a pleasant environment or even causing stress and even conflict. Concluded by [1] that leadership style and behavior have a facilitating and influencing influence on work-related stress. An extensive review of research on leadership conducted [2], [3], [4] revealed that how leadership as an independent variable makes an impact on attitudes and stress levels of workers. Despite extensive research on leadership styles, leadership development, stress, and personality dimensions, there appears to be a lack of studies to include conflicts that may also arise from leadership. Therefore, it seems clear that more research needs to be done on how leadership style can influence perceived work-related stress and conflict. Furthermore, additional focus could be placed on the question, whether stress can play a mediating role on employee performance or conflict can play a moderating role on employee performance between the relationship of leadership style and its impact on employee performance.

This paper explores the above-mentioned in detail. The purpose of this paper is to increase our understanding of the mediating or moderating effect of the dimensions of stress and conflict on the connection among leadership and employee performance.

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This study was conducted in SME companies in the city of Surabaya, East Java, Indonesia which can represent the general condition of SMEs in this area.

## 2. Literature Review

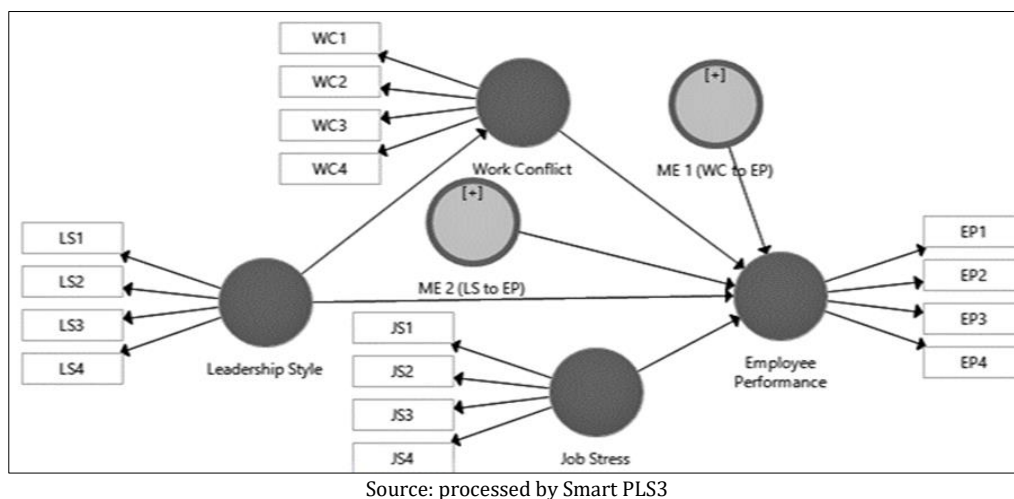
Leadership is described as a specific trait, position, and other cause someone has [5]. Leadership is crucial because the traits of leadership styles are acknowledged able to have an effect on performance at work [6], [7] in [8]. Bad leadership can create stress among employees. Studies have shown that different leadership styles have different impacts on the organizational and individual levels [9].

Employee overall performance problems are more often than not encouraged through conflicts that arise among personnel. This dispute is as a result of differences in opinions, attitudes, and goals in carrying out obligations. Essentially, struggle begins whilst one of the parties is made displeased with the aid of the opposite approximately about something that is considered important by the first individual or group. The existence of different views among employees has the potential to cause friction, disturbance and others. According to [10] in "Organizational Behavior", Dispute is an interaction technique that takes place because of a discrepancy among critiques (perspectives) that have an effect on the events concerned both undoubtedly and negatively. Dispute inside the work itself may be traumatic for the events concerned.

Job stress is described as a physiological and psychological reaction to a given state of affairs or occasion, the outcomes of which may be perceived by using people as threatening and tired [11]. Job stress refers to the demanding conditions they come across inside the surroundings. The difference between expected and achieved performance in working life is considered to be one of the main causes of stress. Many stressors affect individuals in their general and work life. All of this challenges an individual's physical and emotional performance [12]. Failure to cope with stress can have many implications for work conflicts and employee performance. Job stress is a situation of anxiety that creates physical and psychological imbalances, affects the feelings, concept methods, and situations of an employee. Strain has the potential to inspire or intrude with surroundings performance, relying on how a great deal stress it is. If there may be no pressure, work challenges also can be absent and work overall performance also tends to growth, however if strain has reached its height then employee performance will decrease, because strain interferes with the implementation of work, personnel lose the capability to control pressure so they're not able to make decisions and correct behavior [13].

The success of a person's performance is decided by the level of competence, professionalism, and additionally his deep dedication to his surroundings. Businesses want to realize the numerous weaknesses and strengths of employees as a basis for retaining organizational dedication and enhancing performance within the face of changing environments. Corporations have to have performance signs wherein personnel and executives work collectively without any struggle to plot the obligations to be performed later and identify and find ways to solve organization problems.

The conceptual framework of this research as below figure



Source: processed by Smart PLS3

Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

## 2.1. Hypothesis of Research

Primarily based at the problem statement and conceptual framework, there are hypotheses proposed:

- H1: Job Stress (JS) affects employee performance (EP).
- H2: Leadership Style (LS) affects employee performance (EP).
- H3: Leadership style (LS) affects work conflict (WC).
- H4: Work Conflict (WC) affects employee performance (EP).
- H5: Job stress (JS) acts as a moderator of work conflict (WC) on employee performance (EP).
- H6: Job stress (JS) acts as a moderator of leadership style (LS) on employee performance (EP).
- H7: Leadership style (LS) affects employee performance (EP) through work conflict (WC).

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## 3. Method

The studies technique is a systematic approach to attain data this is used for a selected reason. The scientific direction way that study activities are primarily based on scientific characteristics: rational, empirical, and systematic [14].

The type of research used in this study is quantitative research. Quantitative studies are a positivism philosophy that is used to observe a specific population or sample, collect data the usage of research equipment, and quantitative/statistical records that objectives to check the given speculation. This research is an analysis-based research [14].

The population is a generalization area along with objects or topics with certain features and traits that researchers decide to study and draw conclusions [14]. The population was taken from the employees of the SME Company CV. KJE SURABAYA totaling 50 employees.

The sample is part of a set of traits owned by the population and must be representative. The method of determining the number of samples is done by using saturated sampling. According to [15], saturated sampling is that all members of the population are sampled. The sample was taken from the SME Company CV. KJE SURABAYA totaling 50 respondents.

The Likert scale is used for measuring responses to surveys presented to respondents. Likert scale is used for measuring opinions and perceptions of individuals or groups about social phenomena. These indicators of variables serve as a starting point for assembling equipment elements that may be in the form of statements or questions. For the purposes of quantitative analysis, responses were specifically evaluated as follows: I fully agreed and received a score of 5. I agree with a score of 4. The suspicion was rated on a 3-point scale. I disagree, it was evaluated on 2 points. If I completely disagree, it was given 1 score. Then the answers from the questionnaires were processed using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) PLS Smart3.

With respect to the indicators underlying the data collection:

- Indicators of Leadership Style (LS) according to [16] are: 1) Decision-making ability; 2) Motivational ability. 3) Skill of communication; 4) Ability in control subordinates.
- Indicators of Work Conflict (WC) according to [17] in [18] are: 1) Work pressure; 2) Lots of job demands; 3) Deviant working relationship; 4) Busy with work.
- Indicators of Job Stress (JS) According to [19] are: 1) Demands or pressure from superiors; 2) Tensions and mistakes; 3) Differences in the concept of work with superiors; 4) Disproportionate availability of time to complete work.

Indicators of Employee Performance (EP) according to [20] in [21] are: 1) Stability and Consistency; 2) Performance Evaluation of Organizational Members; 3) Effectiveness of Individual Members of the Organization; 4) Can be measured.

## 4. Results and discussion

### 4.1. Outer Model of Evaluation of Measurement

#### 4.1.1. Test of Validity

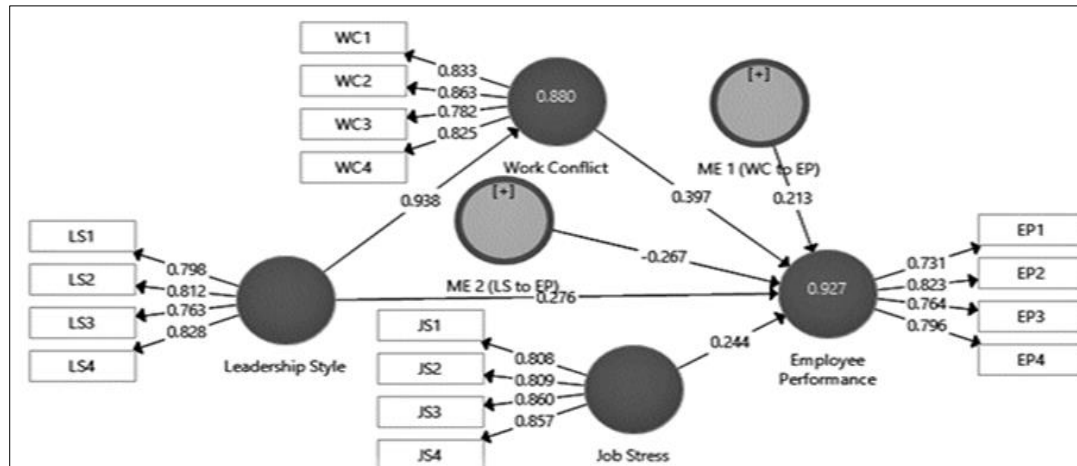
An indicator that is validated when the load factor value of the variable of interest is greater than 0.7. The output from SmartPLS3 is:

**Table 1** Result of Outer Loading

No.	Indicators	EP	JS	LS	ME 1	ME 2	WC
1	EP1	0.731					
2	EP2	0.823					
3	EP3	0.764					
4	EP4	0.796					
5	JS1		0.808				
6	JS2		0.809				
7	JS3		0.860				
8	JS4		0.857				
9	LS1			0.798			
10	LS2			0.812			
11	LS3			0.763			
12	LS4			0.828			
13	LS + JS					2.281	
14	WC1						0.833
15	WC2						0.863
16	WC3						0.782
17	WC4						0.825
18	WC + JS				2.247		

Source: processed field data

Check the effectiveness of the reflex indicator primarily based at the correlation between object rank and variable score. Measurements using the reflection indicator indicate that one indicator in the variable has changed when the alternative indicators within the identical variable have changed (or eliminated from the model). This research uses the reflex index because it is beneficial for measuring belief. The desk above suggests that the load element offers a score above the recommend score of 0.7. The minimum score for the EP1 indicator is 0.731. Because of this the signs used in this examine are valid or meet convergent validity. Underneath is a figure of the burden component for every indicator within the survey version:



Source: processed by Smart PLS3

**Figure 2** Loading Factor Value

Further, the reflection indicator has to additionally be examined for identification validity the usage of cross-loading values:

**Table 2** Result of Cross Loading

No.	Indicators	EP	JS	LS	ME 1	ME 2	WC
1	EP1	0.731	0.526	0.753	-0.516	-0.507	0.805
2	EP2	0.823	0.719	0.721	-0.644	-0.652	0.703
3	EP3	0.764	0.564	0.666	-0.484	-0.529	0.616
4	EP4	0.796	0.847	0.738	-0.560	-0.521	0.767
5	JS1	0.689	0.808	0.666	-0.483	-0.456	0.635
6	JS2	0.711	0.809	0.654	-0.602	-0.565	0.725
7	JS3	0.793	0.860	0.769	-0.607	-0.556	0.743
8	JS4	0.665	0.857	0.655	-0.567	-0.523	0.661
9	LS1	0.756	0.559	0.798	-0.511	-0.486	0.801
10	LS2	0.752	0.720	0.812	-0.502	-0.505	0.691
11	LS3	0.704	0.717	0.763	-0.466	-0.486	0.676
12	LS4	0.752	0.663	0.828	-0.533	-0.510	0.825
13	LS + JS	-0.709	-0.631	-0.620	0.984	1.000	-0.620
14	WC1	0.778	0.556	0.750	-0.496	-0.501	0.833
15	WC2	0.828	0.745	0.819	-0.536	-0.540	0.863
16	WC3	0.723	0.789	0.696	-0.522	-0.496	0.782
17	WC4	0.752	0.663	0.828	-0.533	-0.510	0.825
18	WC + JS	-0.710	-0.679	-0.629	1.000	0.984	-0.631

Source: processed field data

If the weight aspect of the target variable is higher than 0.7, the indicator is said legitimate. The desk above shows that the burden factor of the Employee Performance (EP) indicators (EP1 to EP4) is higher than 0.7. The same applies to other indicators.

Therefore, the potential contract predicts the indicators inside the block higher than the indicators in different blocks. Another way to validate the determination is to have a look at the square root of the extracted imply variance (AVE). The encouraged value is over 0.5. the subsequent is the AVE of this survey:

**Table 3** Average Variance Extracted

No.	Variables	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
1	Employee Performance (EP)	0.607
2	Job Stress (JS)	0.695
3	Leadership Style (LS)	0.641
4	ME 1 (WC to EP)	1.000
5	ME 2 (LS to EP)	1.000
6	Work Conflict (WC)	0.682

Source: processed field data

The table above shows AVE values greater than 0.5 for all included in the model of research. The minimum value of AVE for the Employee Performance (EP) variable is 0.607.

#### 4.1.2. Test of Reliability

Reliability trying out is carried out by using inspecting the reliability fee of the composition from a hallmark block that measures variables. Composite reliability effects display pleasant values above 0.7. Below are the values of composite reliability:

**Table 4** Composite Reliability

No.	Variables	Composite Reliability
1	Employee Performance (EP)	0.861
2	Job Stress (JS)	0.901
3	Leadership Style (LS)	0.877
4	ME 1 (WC to EP)	1.000
5	ME 2 (LS to EP)	1.000
6	Work Conflict (WC)	0.896

Source: processed field data

The table above indicates that the composite reliability score of all variables is greater than 0.7. This indicates all variables in the inferred model meet the criteria for the validity of the discriminant. The lowest composite reliability score is 0,861 for the Employee Performance (EP) variable.

The reliability takes a look at can also be better with Cronbach's Alpha, with the following results in SmartPLS -3 output:

**Table 5** Cronbach's Alpha

No.	Variables	Cronbach's Alpha
1	Employee Performance (EP)	0.784
2	Job Stress (JS)	0.854
3	Leadership Style (LS)	0.813
4	ME 1 (WC to EP)	1.000
5	ME 2 (LS to EP)	1.000
6	Work Conflict (WC)	0.844

Source: processed field data

The recommended score is above 0.6, and the desk above shows that Cronbach's alpha score is greater than 0,6 for all variables. The minimum value for the variable Employee Performance (EP) is 0,784.

**4.2. Inner Model of Testing the Structural Model**

After the inferred version meets the criteria for the external version, the subsequent step is to test the structural version (internal model). The R-square values for the variables are:

**Table 6** R-Square

No.	Variables	R-Square
1	Employee Performance (EP)	0.927
2	Work Conflict (WC)	0.880

Source: processed field data

The table above shows value of R in EP variable that is 0.927. This means that WC, LS and JS can explain the EP variance of 92.7%. Also, in WC and is affected by LS. That is 0.880.

The test of hypothesis is as follows:

**Table 7** Path Coefficients

No.	Variables	Original Sample	Sample Mean	Standard Deviation	T Statistics	P Value
1	Job Stress (JS) → Employee Performance (EP)	0.244	0.252	0.132	1.855	0.064
2	Leadership Style (LS) → Employee Performance (EP)	0.276	0.276	0.140	1.971	0.049
3	Leadership Style (LS) → Work Conflict (WC)	0.938	0.934	0.029	31.972	0.000
4	Work Conflict (WC) → Employee Performance (EP)	0.397	0.403	0.137	2.896	0.004
5	ME 1 by JS (WC to EP) → Employee Performance (EP)	0.213	0.212	0.147	1.451	0.147
6	ME 2 by JS (LS to EP) → Employee Performance (EP)	-0.267	-0.255	0.145	1.836	0.067
7	Leadership Style (LS) → Work Conflict (WC) → Employee Performance (EP)	0.372	0.376	0.126	2.943	0.003

Source: processed field data

From above table shows that:

- The connection between job stress (JS) and employee performance (EP) isn't significant with P values 0.064 ( $>0.05$ ). Consequently, hypothesis 1 on this take a look at which states that job stress has an impact on employee performance is rejected.
- The connection between leadership style (LS) and employee performance (EP) is significant with P values 0.049 ( $<0.05$ ). The authentic sample estimate value is positive which is 0.276 which suggests that the route of the connection between LS and EP is positive. Consequently, hypothesis 2 on this examine which states that the leadership style has an impact on employee performance is accepted.
- The connection between leadership style (LS) and work conflict (WC) is significant with P values 0.000 ( $< 0.05$ ). The authentic sample estimate value is higher that is 0.938 which indicates that the path of the connection between LS and WC is positive. For that reason, hypothesis 3 on this take a look at which states that the leadership style has an impact on work conflict is accepted.
- The connection between work conflict (WC) and employee performance (EP) is significant with P values 0.004 ( $<0.05$ ). The authentic sample estimate price is positive, that's 0.397 which suggests that the route of the relationship among WC and EP is positive. Consequently, hypothesis 4 on this study which states that the work conflict has an impact on employee performance is accepted.
- Job Stress (JS) cannot moderate the connection between Work Conflict (WC) and Employee Performance (EP) because it's not significant with P value of 0.147 ( $> 0.05$ ). Consequently, hypothesis 5 on this study which states that the JS can moderate the connection between WC and EP is rejected. While JS only acts as a potential moderating because it has no a direct connection to EP.
- Job Stress (JS) cannot moderate the connection between Leadership Style (LS) and Employee Performance (EP) because it's not significant with P value of 0.067 ( $> 0.05$ ). Consequently, hypothesis 6 on this study which states that the JS can moderate the connection between LS and EP is rejected. While JS only acts as a potential moderating because it has no a direct connection to EP.
- The connection among leadership style (LS) and employee performance (EP) through work conflict (WC) is significant with P values 0.003 ( $<0.05$ ). The original pattern estimate value is positive, that is 0.372 which suggests that the path of the connection among LS and EP through WC is positive. As a result, hypothesis 7 in this study which states that leadership style has an impact on employee performance via work conflict is accepted.

In this study, work conflict is a factor that has the most significant influence on employee performance. work conflict can make employees contradict each other and cause a lack of focus on their duties so that it will have an impact on their performance. Even this work conflict is far more impactful than job stress. Employees under certain conditions can ignore job stress, even when recruiting new employees, it is often emphasized that candidates must be able to withstand pressure in their work so that they can get employees who are able to adapt to these pressures. According to [22] in [23] there are three forms of conflict, namely relationship conflict caused by interpersonal incompatibility; task conflict is the result of different thoughts and opinions about a particular task; and process conflicts are caused by differences in the group's approach of dealing with tasks, techniques, and process. Despite the fact that relationship and process conflict are both negative, engaging in conflict has been shown to be beneficial because it stimulates multiple perspectives; however, care must be taken to ensure that task conflicts do not develop into process or relationship conflicts [24] in [25]. Work conflicts are often exacerbated by the leadership style of a leader who is less accommodating. Understanding how to handle conflict is essential to being a good leader. Without an understanding of conflict management styles and their proper implementation in different situations, a manager is forced to face conflict without guidance. When trying to find a quick solution to a problem, the problem is often resolved incorrectly and reappears at a later date. In particular, conflicts between employees can be minimized with organizational/company programs that demand togetherness. A structured management control reporting system (MCRS) can improve relations between employees and superiors and subordinates. Business leader with organizational, project skills, management techniques and performance review habits & Gemba walk has emerged along with the MCRS method. In fact, it is they who plant the seeds of reform and increase organizational competitiveness to build a strong organization, tradition requires a technique because of the unique perceptions, desires, attitudes, and behaviors of the personnel in the organization. The congruence between organizational characteristics and workers' desires needs to be worked out to lead to a high degree of cohesion [26].

#### 4.3. Managerial Implication

In addition to providing input for the organization/company, this study also provides input to enrich the theory of the relationship between leadership and employee performance with mediating and moderating factors in relation to work conflict and job stress.



## 5. Conclusion

From the results of the analysis performed. we can conclude that:

- Job Stress (JS) has no significant effect on Employee Performance (EP)
- Leadership Style (LS) has a significant effect on Employee Performance (EP)
- Leadership Style (LS) has a significant effect on Work Conflict (WC)
- Work Conflict (WC) has a significant effect on Employee Performance (EP)
- Job Stress (JS) only acts as a potential moderating because it has no a significant direct relationship with Employee Performance (EP) and cannot moderate Work Conflict (WC) on Employee Performance (EP)
- Job Stress (JS) only acts as a potential moderating because it has no a significant direct relationship with Employee Performance (EP) and cannot moderate Leadership Style (LS) on Employee Performance (EP)
- Leadership Style (LS) has a significant effect on Employee Performance (EP) through Work Conflict (WC).

In this study. work conflict is a factor that has the most significant influence on employee performance. work conflict can make employees contradict each other and cause a lack of focus on their duties so that it will have an impact on their performance. Even this work conflict is far more impactful than job stress. Work conflict is often exacerbated by the leadership style of the leader who is less accommodating. Without an understanding of conflict management styles and their proper application in different situations. a manager is forced to face conflict without guidance. When trying to find a quick solution to a problem. the problem is often mis resolved and reappears at a later date. In particular. conflicts between employees can be minimized with organizational/company programs that demand togetherness.

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## Compliance with ethical standards

### *Acknowledgments*

The author would like to thank the management of CV. KJE SURABAYA, Indonesia. This research was supported in part by a grant from the Mahardhika School of Economics.

### *Disclosure of conflict of interest*

The Authors wish to declare that none has any interest to disclose.

### *Statement of informed consent*

Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

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