



Enhancing Employee Job Performance in a Public Service Organisation: The Influence of Leadership Style

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ABSTRACT

Although the impact of leadership styles on employee performance has been widely studied, there is limited research on how autocratic and democratic leadership styles specifically affect job performance in Malaysia's public service sector, particularly within Sarawak's public organisations. This study investigates the relationship between these leadership styles and job performance in a public organisation in Kuching, Sarawak. Using a quantitative descriptive-correlational design, the study employed a cross-sectional survey with an online questionnaire to assess the influence of autocratic and democratic leadership styles on employee performance. A total of 73 employees participated in the survey, and data were collected using a validated and reliable closed-ended questionnaire. The findings revealed a significant positive correlation between both leadership styles and job performance, with democratic leadership having a stronger impact. These results provide valuable insights for organisational leaders seeking to improve leadership practices and enhance workforce resilience. Future research could explore the dynamics of various leadership styles, integrate mixed methods approaches, and examine their long-term effects.

Keywords: leadership styles, job performance, autocratic leadership, democratic leadership, public sector

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1 INTRODUCTION

The implementation of an effective leadership style, characterised by strong leadership qualities, has the potential to significantly transform an organisation. Leadership behaviour within an organisation is crucial in fostering employees' interest and commitment to job performance (Karunakaran & Temam, 2022; Shukla & Sinha, 2022). The impact of leadership styles on job performance has been extensively examined, with leadership identified as a key factor in enhancing organisational performance (Çakır & Adıgüzel, 2020). Leadership is widely recognised as one of the most investigated organisational variables influencing employee performance. Effective organisations are often the result of effective leadership, and neglecting this factor can negatively affect performance (Madanchian et al., 2017). Numerous studies highlight the pivotal role of leadership styles in job performance, with some findings affirming a positive relationship between leadership and performance, emphasising the role of effective leaders in achieving organisational goals (Li & Wang, 2018; Olaniyan, 2017).

In the dynamic business environment, organisations face challenges related to uncertainty, heightened competition, and the need to adapt (Dastane, 2020). In response, leadership becomes a critical strategy, with managers tasked with guiding others to achieve organisational goals and enhance employee performance (Alkaabi et al., 2022). The adoption of an appropriate leadership style is essential, as employee performance can suffer without clear direction and effective managerial practices (Amare, 2020). Leadership style, as a consistent pattern of behaviour, significantly influences staff morale and performance. Managers who adopt a cooperative approach contribute to a positive work environment, enhancing performance (Chua et al., 2018). Previous studies also underscore the influence of leadership on important organisational outcomes such as reduced turnover, lower absenteeism, increased customer satisfaction, and overall effectiveness (Zirra & Obumneke, 2017).

The quality of leadership is one of the most critical determinants of organisational success, affecting job performance. Leadership behaviour plays a pivotal role in improving employees' job performance, which is intricately linked to the strategic goals of the organisation (Mohamed & Abukar, 2013; Srivastava & Agarwal, 2017). Tamimi and Sopia (2022) highlight the paramount importance of leadership quality in determining organisational success. The direct control exerted by leadership style over interpersonal dynamics, rewards, and punishments influences employee behaviour, motivation, and attitude, collectively impacting job performance (Zirra & Obumneke, 2017). The leadership style adopted can either motivate or demotivate employees, thereby influencing their performance levels (Cobbinah et al., 2020). Additionally, the effectiveness of any group is closely tied to the quality of its leadership, with effective leadership facilitating the achievement of followers' goals, leading to improved performance (Çakır & Adıgüzel, 2020).

The significance of leadership has become even more pronounced in modern organisations, where effective leadership is considered a fundamental strategy for improving job performance (Masresha, 2021). The effectiveness of leaders is closely linked to the leadership style they adopt (Gbarage, 2020). Leadership styles, particularly autocratic and democratic, have a significant impact on employee performance in the public sector. Although various leadership styles are identified by experts, they are generally classified into two broad categories: autocratic and democratic (Nwaigwe, 2015). These leadership styles greatly influence job performance within

the public sector. While previous studies have explored the relationship between leadership styles and employee performance (Dyczkowska & Dyczkowski, 2018), limited research has been conducted on this relationship within Malaysia's public service sector. The existing studies on the topic have produced varied results. Some studies suggest that autocratic leadership has no significant impact on performance, while democratic leadership tends to have a more pronounced effect (Hassnain, 2022; Karunakaran & Temam, 2022; Nwaigwe, 2015). Conversely, some research indicates a positive correlation between autocratic leadership and employee performance (Wang & Guan, 2018). Therefore, this study aims to examine the relationship between leadership styles and job performance in a public service department in Malaysia.

1.1 Autocratic Leadership Style, Democratic Leadership Style, and Job Performance

Autocratic and democratic leadership styles differ in how leaders set directions, develop plans, and interact with subordinates. Autocratic leadership is defined by strong authority, centralised decision-making, and motivation through rewards, threats, and punishments (Vasilescu, 2019). Autocratic leaders make decisions independently and provide detailed instructions to subordinates, often dictating both tasks and execution (Osifo & Lawal, 2018; Pizzolitto et al., 2022). Literature suggests that while autocratic leadership can be effective in certain contexts, it should be used cautiously, as it may lead to discontent and reduced performance over time (Chua et al., 2018).

Autocratic leadership involves minimal trust in subordinates, with motivation primarily driven by rewards. This lack of trust can result in a lack of loyalty from subordinates, leading to anticipated failure and removal of autocratic leaders (Veliu et al., 2017). Employee performance, as highlighted by Karim et al. (2023), depends on efficient task completion, loyalty to the organisation, and adherence to the leader's instructions. However, the autocratic style, characterised by decision-making and intimidation, can have adverse effects on employee performance (Kokebu, 2017). The culture of fear created by autocratic leaders can hinder cognitive potential, leading to a decline in job performance. Negative reactions to intimidation can impair optimal output and organisational outcomes (Zhang & Xie, 2017). Nonetheless, autocratic leaders do provide clear instructions, which can aid in task completion, solving problems, and meeting deadlines, especially when time is critical (Cunningham et al., 2015). In the short term, this may result in improved performance.

In contrast, democratic leadership promotes free expression and open discussion of ideas, encouraging a collective approach to leadership (Vasilescu, 2019). Democratic leaders create an empowering environment where subordinates can express their thoughts and perform effectively (Sinurat et al., 2023). These leaders exhibit trust in their staff's capabilities, encourage initiative, and foster a culture of mutual respect (Costa et al., 2023). Leaders who adopt this style believe individuals are inherently responsible, dependable, enthusiastic, and find joy in their work (Kılıçoğlu, 2018). This approach values interaction, helpfulness, and friendliness, and encourages team members to contribute their input (Choi, 2007). Subordinates under democratic leaders tend to demonstrate respect for orders, accept responsibilities willingly, and exert maximum effort to achieve organisational objectives (Arshad et al., 2023). As a result, employees are more committed to their work and willing to release creativity, as they have confidence in their leaders. The democratic approach also stimulates quality-assurance behaviours (Cunningham et al., 2015).

The relationship between democratic leadership and employee performance is underscored by Sinurat et al. (2023), who highlight the involvement of team members in the decision-making process. Democratic leadership fosters organisational excellence by reducing job stress, clarifying responsibilities, and instilling team spirit, all of which contribute to enhanced employee performance (İnce, 2018). While democratic leadership is beneficial for improving performance and aligning it with organisational goals, there are potential risks associated with granting too much power to employees, particularly in decision-making processes where diverse ideas may lead to delays (Kalambayi et al., 2021).

Studies on the impact of leadership styles on job performance have yielded varied results. Democratic leadership was found to have a more positive impact on employee performance, whereas autocratic leadership had a less favourable effect (Chua et al., 2018). Research in the African context supports the view that democratic leadership positively correlates with employee performance, while authoritarian leadership has a negative impact (Fenta et al., 2023; Kalambayi et al., 2021; Karunakaran & Temam, 2022; Masresha, 2021). These findings suggest that democratic leadership fosters employee productivity, involvement, and decision-making (Ardana et al., 2020; Biaka, 2020; Hassnain, 2022). Some studies recommend promoting democratic leadership to improve performance through effective communication, training, and recognition (Duressa & Kidane, 2024; Uwandu, 2020). However, some research indicates that the impact of democratic leadership is weaker compared to autocratic leadership, which shows stronger correlations with performance in some contexts, such as in Ethiopia (Simegnew, 2020; Zeru, 2023).

Overall, previous research supports the idea that leadership styles significantly influence job performance. In particular, democratic leadership has been found to enhance job performance by promoting teamwork and cultivating a supportive work environment. On the other hand, autocratic leadership, while useful in certain contexts, generally leads to lower job performance due to its hierarchical and controlling nature.

1.2 Research Objective and Hypotheses

While previous research has extensively explored the relationship between leadership styles and job performance in private organisations, the dynamics of leadership in the public sector remain underexplored. This study aims to explore the relationship between leadership styles and job performance among public sector employees. Specifically, the study seeks to assess employees' perceptions of autocratic and democratic leadership styles, evaluate their job performance, and examine the effect of both leadership styles on job performance in the public sector. In line with the study's objectives, the following hypotheses were formulated:

- i) H1: There is a significant relationship between autocratic leadership style and job performance.
- ii) H2: There is a significant relationship between democratic leadership style and job performance.
- iii) H3: There is a significant effect of autocratic leadership style on job performance.
- iv) H4: There is a significant effect of democratic leadership style on job performance.

2 METHODS

2.1 Design

The study adopted a quantitative descriptive-correlational approach to examine the relationship between two leadership styles (autocratic and democratic) and job performance. This approach provides an objective, systematic, and scientific method for defining and evaluating cause-and-effect correlations and variable interactions. A cross-sectional survey design, using an online questionnaire, was employed as the primary data collection method.

2.2 Participants

The study targeted 80 employees from a public broadcasting organisation in Kuching, Sarawak. A simple random sampling method was used due to the manageable size of the population. A total of 73 employees responded to the survey, thus meeting the minimum sample size ($N = 66$) recommended by Krejcie and Morgan (1970). Participants were selected using a random sampling approach, where serial numbers were assigned to the population, and a random number generator determined the individuals included in the study.

2.3 Instrument

Data were collected using a closed-ended survey questionnaire, adapted from Amare (2020) and Karunakaran & Temam (2022). The questionnaire consisted of 24 items, divided into three sections: demographic information, autocratic and democratic leadership styles, and job performance. Leadership styles and job performance were measured using a five-point Likert scale. The validity of the instrument was ensured through face validity testing, with expert reviews confirming the relevance and appropriateness of the items. Each item was approved by at least three experts. Feedback from respondents was also gathered to refine the instrument, resolve any ambiguities, and ensure alignment with the research objectives. Reliability analysis, conducted using SPSS 27.0, revealed Cronbach's alpha values of 0.925 for autocratic leadership, 0.906 for democratic leadership, and 0.898 for job performance, all exceeding the 0.7 threshold, indicating strong reliability (Sharma, 2016).

2.4 Procedure

Ethical considerations were emphasised throughout the research process, ensuring participant rights and confidentiality were protected. Permission was obtained from the organisation, and informed consent was secured from all participants before data collection began. The first step in the data collection process involved constructing a consent letter to gain approval for conducting the study and distributing the questionnaires. Once approval was received, the questionnaires were distributed, and participants were given a two-week period to complete and return them.

2.5 Data Analysis

The normality of the data for autocratic leadership, democratic leadership, and job performance was assessed using a QQ plot, showing that the data points closely aligned with the theoretical normal quantile, with only minor or non-significant deviations. This indicated that parametric tests,

specifically Pearson's correlation, were appropriate for further analysis (Hernandez, 2021). Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, were used to summarise the demographic variables. Inferential analyses, including multiple linear regressions and Pearson's correlation coefficients, were conducted using SPSS version 27.0 to examine the relationships between the independent variables and job performance.

3 RESULTS

The results of study were presented in three main parts as the follows.

3.1 Level of Employee's Perception of Leadership Styles and Performance

This section presents employees' perceptions of the two leadership styles, namely autocratic and democratic, as well as their views on performance. Specifically, it highlights employees' perceptions of the practices of their immediate supervisors in relation to these leadership styles.

Table 1. Level of autocratic leadership style practices.

Leadership style	Mean	Std. Deviation
1. My supervisor leading style is based on control.	3.27	1.083
2. My supervisor gives order and expects immediate response.	3.49	1.156
3. My supervisor gives little opportunity to make suggestion.	3.22	1.205
4. My supervisor discourages participative decision making.	3.38	1.174
5. My supervisor believes that decision is always made by leaders for subordinates.	3.42	1.189
6. My supervisor believes at most employees are idle.	2.92	1.233
7. My supervisor push employee so hard.	3.15	1.266
Overall	3.26	1.187

Table 2. Level of democratic leadership style practices.

Leadership style	Mean	Std. Deviation
1. My supervisor has good relationship with the employee.	3.30	1.009
2. My supervisor leading style is based on participation.	2.90	1.180
3. My supervisor delegate authorities to the other employee and let them to make their own decision.	2.77	1.253
4. My supervisor believe that employee have enough knowledge to complete the task.	3.00	1.236
5. My supervisor allows employee to participate in decision making, determination of policy implementation of system and procedure.	2.32	1.235
6. My supervisor support employee to accomplish the task.	3.08	1.211
7. My supervisor enables employee to make suggesting and recommendation in major issue.	2.66	1.315
8. My supervisor encourage employee to become good leader.	2.81	1.232
Overall	2.86	1.209

The level of perceived leadership styles was examined through descriptive statistics. Table 1 shows the level of autocratic leadership style practices, and Table 2 illustrates the level of democratic leadership style practices. Autocratic leadership, characterised by high control and immediate response expectations (Mean = 3.49, SD = 1.156), was generally seen as exerting significant pressure on employees, with limited opportunities for participative decision-making (Mean = 3.38, SD = 1.174). The mean scores indicated that supervisors tended to discourage employee suggestions and believed that decisions should be made solely by leaders. This leadership style was also associated with a belief that employees are often idle and require substantial supervision. Conversely, the democratic leadership style was perceived more favourably by employees, with supervisors exhibiting behaviours such as fostering good relationships (Mean = 3.30, SD = 1.009), encouraging participation in decision-making (Mean = 2.32, SD = 1.235), and delegating authority (Mean = 2.77, SD = 1.253). Employees reported that democratic leaders supported their participation in policy implementation and believed in their abilities to complete tasks, thereby creating an environment conducive to employee engagement and performance.

Table 3. Level of employee's job performance.

Employee's job performance	Mean	Std. Deviation
1. I complete my work within the time allocated.	3.41	1.065
2. I work overtime to complete my tasks.	3.05	1.177
3. I attend to my work with speed and accuracy.	3.40	1.090
4. My performance has continually improved.	3.18	1.072
5. I do my work effectively without complaining.	3.36	1.085
6. I combine the available resources very well to provide quality services.	3.32	1.104
7. I report on duty early and leave very late.	3.42	1.201
8. I record down a number of activities in my to-do list before starting on the day's work.	3.51	1.203
9. My job is in line with my interests, skills, and attitudes.	3.49	1.144
Overall	3.35	1.127

As for the performance (see Table 3), employees reported a range of positive behaviours, including completing work within allocated timeframes (Mean= 3.41, SD= 1.065), working overtime to meet deadlines (Mean= 3.05, SD= 1.177), and attending to tasks with speed and accuracy (Mean= 3.40, SD= 1.090). Employees also indicated continuous improvement in their performance, effectively utilizing available resources (Mean= 3.32, SD= 1.104), and reporting for duty early (Mean= 3.42, SD= 1.201). These behaviours suggest a high level of job dedication and alignment with organisational goals. Additionally, the data revealed that employees recorded activities in a to-do list and aligned their job roles with their interests and skills, further supporting effective job performance. The positive self-assessment of job performance underscores the potential influence of supportive leadership styles in enhancing employee productivity and job performance. The descriptive statistics provided a foundation for understanding the perceived behaviours of supervisors and their impact on job performance.

3.2 The Relationship Between Leadership Styles and Employee's Job Performance

The Pearson correlation analysis was used to test Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 2 of the study. Hypothesis 1 indicates whether there is a significant relationship between autocratic leadership style and job performance. On the other hand, hypothesis 2 indicates whether there is a significant democratic leadership style and job performance.

As indicated in Table 4, the Pearson correlation analysis reveals a significant positive correlation between autocratic leadership style and job performance. The correlation coefficient (r) of 0.581 suggests a moderately strong positive relationship, where an increase in autocratic leadership score correlates with an increase in job performance. The p -value of 0.001, which is less than the typical significance level of 0.05, indicates that the correlation is statistically significant. Hence, the hypothesis stating a significant relationship between autocratic leadership style and job performance is supported.

The findings align with previous studies (Simegneu, 2020; Uwandu, 2020), which highlight the positive correlation between autocratic leadership and employee performance, suggesting that directive leadership can drive performance outcomes. However, studies by Amare (2020) and Duressa and Kidane (2024). have presented contrasting results, suggesting that the effectiveness of autocratic leadership may depend on factors such as organisational culture, industry norms, and individual employee characteristics. These variations point to the complexity of leadership dynamics and highlight the importance of context when evaluating leadership effectiveness.

Table 4. Pearson correlation analysis for hypothesis 1.

		Autocratic leadership style	Job performance
Autocratic leadership style	Pearson correlation	1	.581*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<.001
	N	73	73
Job performance	Pearson correlation	.581**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	
	N	73	73

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

Table 5. Pearson correlation analysis for Hypothesis 2.

		Democratic leadership style	Job performance
Democratic leadership style	Pearson Correlation	1	.713**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<.001
	N	73	73
Job performance	Pearson Correlation	.713**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	
	N	73	73

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

Similarly, the correlation analysis shown in Table 5 indicates a significant positive correlation between democratic leadership style and job performance. The correlation coefficient of 0.713 falls within the "strong" range, suggesting that as democratic leadership practices increase, job performance tends to increase as well. The p-value associated with this correlation is 0.001, which also confirms statistical significance, leading to the acceptance of Hypothesis 2.

The positive impact of democratic leadership on job performance is supported by a range of studies. Democratic leadership fosters an environment that reduces job stress, clarifies responsibilities, and enhances team cohesion, ultimately driving better employee performance (Agarwal, 2020; İnce, 2018). Research by Arshad et al. (2023) and others (Hassnain, 2022; Osifo & Lawal, 2018) emphasizes the benefits of participative decision-making and employee empowerment within democratic leadership frameworks. Furthermore, studies have highlighted variations in how democratic leadership influences performance across different organisational and cultural contexts (Chua et al., 2018; Karunakaran & Temam, 2022; Zeru, 2023).

Democratic leadership has consistently been linked to higher levels of employee engagement and motivation. It empowers employees to take ownership of their work and fosters inclusivity and transparency in decision-making processes, which in turn leads to higher job satisfaction and performance outcomes (Inderyas et al., 2015; Karunakaran & Temam, 2022; Yasar and Chinelo, 2015).

3.3 The Effect of Leadership Styles on Employee's Job Performance

The multiple regression analysis was employed to test Hypothesis 3 and Hypothesis 4 of this study. Hypothesis 3 examines whether autocratic leadership style has a significant effect on job performance, while Hypothesis 4 investigates the effect of democratic leadership style on job performance. Based on the SPSS output provided in Table 6 and Table 7, the analysis shows a significant effect of both autocratic and democratic leadership styles on job performance. The correlation coefficient (R) between autocratic leadership style and job performance is 0.813, indicating a strong positive relationship between the leadership styles (autocratic and democratic) and employee job performance. Furthermore, the coefficient of determination (R Square) is 0.660, meaning that approximately 66.0% of the variance in job performance can be explained by both autocratic and democratic leadership styles. This suggests that these two leadership styles collectively explain a significant portion of the variation in job performance. The Adjusted R Square value of 0.651 reflects a slight decrease from the R Square value, indicating that approximately 65.1% of the variance in job performance can still be explained when adjusted for the number of predictors. The p-value of < 0.001 further confirms that the regression model is statistically significant, meaning that both autocratic and democratic leadership styles are significant predictors of job performance.

Table 6. Model summary of multiple regression.

Model	R	R square	Adjusted R square	Sig
1.	.813 ^a	.660	.651	.001 ^a

a. Predictors: (constant), autocratic, and democratic leadership styles

b. Dependent variable: job performance

The standardised coefficient (Beta) for the autocratic leadership style is 0.408. This value indicates the strength and direction of the relationship between autocratic leadership style and the dependent variable, job performance. A Beta value of 0.408 suggests a positive effect, meaning that as the level of autocratic leadership increases, job performance tends to increase as well. The magnitude of 0.408 shows a relatively strong effect, implying that autocratic leadership significantly influences job performance. The standard error associated with the Beta coefficient is 0.064. The standard error measures the accuracy of the coefficient estimate, with smaller values indicating greater precision. In this case, a standard error of 0.064 suggests that the estimate of 0.408 is precise and reliable. Additionally, the coefficient for autocratic leadership style is statistically significant (p -value < 0.01), indicating a significant positive effect of autocratic leadership on job performance.

Similarly, the standardised coefficient (Beta) for the democratic leadership style is 0.594. This value indicates the strength and direction of the relationship between democratic leadership style and job performance. A Beta value of 0.594 suggests a strong positive effect, meaning that as the level of democratic leadership increases, job performance tends to increase significantly. The magnitude of 0.594 demonstrates a very strong effect, implying that democratic leadership has a substantial influence on job performance. The standard error associated with this Beta coefficient is 0.065, suggesting a high level of precision in the estimate. As with the autocratic leadership style, this standard error indicates that the estimate of 0.594 is reliable. The coefficient for democratic leadership style is also statistically significant (p -value < 0.01), indicating a significant positive effect on job performance.

Overall, the analysis demonstrates that both autocratic and democratic leadership styles have significant positive effects on job performance. However, it is evident that democratic leadership style has a stronger influence on job performance compared to autocratic leadership. The standardised coefficient (Beta) for democratic leadership (0.594) is higher than the Beta for autocratic leadership (0.408), indicating that increases in democratic leadership are more strongly associated with improvements in job performance.

The relatively low standard errors for both Beta coefficients (0.064 for autocratic leadership and 0.065 for democratic leadership) suggest that these estimates are precise and reliable. The strong positive effects observed (indicated by the high R and R Square values), combined with the precise Beta estimates, confirm that both leadership styles significantly influence job performance in this model. Additionally, both autocratic and democratic leadership styles are significant predictors of job performance, as evidenced by their very low p -values (0.001), which are much lower than the 0.05 threshold, providing strong evidence to support these hypotheses.

Using this model, researchers can predict an employee's job performance based on their levels of autocratic and democratic leadership styles. For example, if an employee exhibits high levels of democratic leadership style (say, 1 unit) and moderate levels of autocratic leadership style (say, 0.5 units), researchers can estimate their job performance using the regression equation:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 A \text{Autocratic Leadership Style} + \beta_2 D \text{Democratic Leadership Style} + \epsilon$$

$$Y = 0.665 + 0.359 \times 0.5 + 0.529 \times 1 + \epsilon$$

Where:

- Y is predicted the dependent variable which is job performance
- Autocratic leadership style and democratic leadership style are the independent variables representing the respective leadership styles
- β_0 is the intercept or constant term
- β_{1A} and β_{2D} are the regression coefficients for autocratic and democratic styles, respectively
- ϵ denotes the error term

Table 7. Multiple regression analysis for Hypothesis 3 and Hypothesis 4.

Model	Coefficients					95.0% confidence interval for B	
	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients		t	Sig.	Lower bound
	B	Std. error	Beta				
(Constant)	.665	.243		2.737	.008	.180	1.149
Autocratic leadership styles	.359	.064	.408	5.594	.001	.231	.488
Democratic leadership styles	.529	.065	.594	8.150	.001	.400	.658

a. Dependent variable: job performance

4 DISCUSSION

This study successfully achieved its research objectives and provided valuable insights into the dynamic relationship between autocratic and democratic leadership styles with performance within the public sector. The overall findings, as discussed, support the notion that both autocratic and democratic leadership styles significantly impact job performance. The successful execution of this study can be attributed to the robust methodological framework employed. The use of a quantitative approach, including correlation and regression analyses, ensured the reliability and validity of the findings. The research design ensured that data were systematically collected and rigorously analysed, thereby enhancing the validity and reliability of the results. The sample, drawn from a public broadcasting organisation in Kuching, Sarawak, provided a representative context for examining leadership in the public sector, thus enhancing the generalisability of the findings.

The findings of this study offer a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between autocratic and democratic leadership styles with performance among employees in the public sector, specifically focusing on a public broadcasting organisation in Kuching, Sarawak. The research confirms significant positive correlations between both leadership styles and job performance, with democratic leadership demonstrating a stronger influence. These results align

with existing literature suggesting that leadership styles play a crucial role in enhancing employee performance and organisational success (Cobbinah et al., 2020; Tamimi & Sopiah, 2022).

Furthermore, the findings revealed a significant positive correlation between democratic leadership and job performance, indicating that inclusive and participatory leadership enhances employee productivity and satisfaction. This is consistent with previous studies emphasising the importance of involving employees in decision-making processes to foster a sense of ownership and commitment (Cherry, 2023). In contrast, the autocratic leadership style, characterised by centralised decision-making and limited employee input, showed a weaker positive relationship with job performance. This underscores the need for a balanced approach that leverages the strengths of both leadership styles, depending on the context and organisational needs (Wang et al., 2022).

Moreover, the findings revealed significant relationships between leadership styles, specifically autocratic and democratic with job performance among employees in the public sector. The evidence compiled supports the theoretical framework, identifying leadership styles as crucial determinants of job performance (Cobbinah et al., 2020; Sørliie et al., 2022; Wang et al., 2019). The study demonstrated that democratic leadership positively influences job performance, fostering a collaborative and motivated work environment. In contrast, autocratic leadership, while effective in certain scenarios, generally showed a less favourable impact on job performance due to its rigid, top-down approach (Burnes, 2019; Chukwusa, 2018).

This study highlights the significant positive correlations between both autocratic and democratic leadership styles and job performance within the context of a public broadcasting organisation in Kuching, Sarawak. These findings also support the notion that each leadership style affects team members, with democratic leadership having a stronger positive impact, while autocratic leadership remains effective in specific contexts (Onesti, 2023). Specifically, democratic leadership was found to have a more positive correlation with job performance compared to autocratic leadership. Furthermore, the results align with the literature, which highlights the benefits of participative leadership practices in enhancing employee performance and organisational outcomes (Amare, 2020; Duressa & Kidane, 2024; Karunakaran & Temam, 2022; Uwandu, 2020). This study underscores the importance of adopting a flexible leadership approach tailored to specific organisational needs and employee dynamics.

One limitation of this research is its focus solely on two distinct leadership styles—autocratic and democratic—and their impact on perceived job performance. There are inherent limitations in exclusively relying on quantitative analyses, though these methods are valuable in studying the relationship between these leadership styles and job performance. Another limitation is the use of a relatively small sample size, consisting of 73 employees, which may limit the generalisability of the results.

The implications of these findings are significant for organisational leaders and HR practitioners. Understanding the effects of different leadership styles on job performance can guide leaders in adopting the most effective strategies to enhance employee engagement and productivity. This study highlights the importance of democratic leadership in fostering a positive organisational culture and improving job performance. Additionally, this research provides a foundation for

future studies. The insights gained here can be used to explore other variables that might interact with leadership styles, such as organisational culture, employee motivation, and external environmental factors.

Future research could explore alternative leadership styles beyond the traditional autocratic and democratic paradigms. There is growing recognition of the need for adaptive leadership approaches that can effectively navigate complex and dynamic organisational environments. Furthermore, future studies could benefit from integrating qualitative methods to capture the lived experiences and perceptions of both leaders and employees, while quantitative approaches offer valuable insights into statistical relationships between leadership styles and employee performance. Lastly, longitudinal research designs offer an opportunity to examine the temporal dynamics of leadership and its impact on employee performance over time. By tracking leadership behaviours and performance outcomes longitudinally, researchers can identify patterns of change, stability, or adaptation in leadership practices and their consequences.

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