

THE INFLUENCE OF LEADERSHIP STYLE ON THE PERFORMANCE AND JOB SATISFACTION OF HEALTHCARE WORKERS IN HOSPITALS: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

The performance and job satisfaction of healthcare workers are crucial factors in ensuring the quality of hospital services. However, various studies show that the performance of healthcare workers is often influenced by suboptimal leadership factors, particularly in terms of communication, motivation, and empowerment. This study aims to analyze the influence of leadership style on the performance and job satisfaction of healthcare workers in hospitals through a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach. The literature search was conducted on the PubMed, ScienceDirect, and Google Scholar databases using the keywords “leadership style,” “healthcare workers,” “job satisfaction,” and “performance.” From the selection results based on inclusion and exclusion criteria, eight final articles were obtained and analyzed descriptively and thematically. The analysis showed that transformational and participatory leadership styles consistently had a positive and significant effect on improving the performance and job satisfaction of healthcare workers. Supportive and communicative leadership styles were proven to be able to create a conducive work environment, increase motivation, and strengthen team collaboration. The implications of this study emphasize the importance of developing leadership competencies in the health sector to support organizational effectiveness and the sustainability of hospital services.

Keywords: leadership style; health worker performance; job satisfaction; hospitals; systematic review.

INTRODUCTION

Healthcare professionals are a central component of hospital services and play a major role in improving patient care quality and safety (Ramdani & Purwoko, 2024). Hospital work environments are highly complex due to heavy workloads, professional demands, and the need for coordination among physicians, nurses, and other healthcare staff (Handayani & Putri, 2022). Therefore, healthcare quality depends not only on medical technology and facilities but also on effective management and leadership within the organization.

Leadership is essential in creating a productive and supportive hospital work environment (Lesmono et al., 2024). Effective leaders can guide, motivate, and inspire healthcare professionals to work responsibly and collaboratively. Leadership style influences communication, teamwork, organizational commitment, and employee motivation (Sari & Fuadati, 2022). Theories such as transformational and situational leadership emphasize that successful leadership depends on the ability to manage interpersonal relationships and encourage optimal employee performance.

Various leadership styles are applied in hospitals, including transformational, transactional, democratic, authoritarian, and situational leadership (Nazara et al., 2025). Transformational leadership focuses on inspiring and empowering employees, while transactional leadership emphasizes rewards and sanctions. Democratic leadership encourages employee participation in decision-making, whereas authoritarian leadership relies on direct control (Ismail et al., 2023). Previous studies indicate that transformational and participative leadership are generally associated with higher employee productivity, creativity, and organizational commitment.

Leadership style also strongly influences healthcare workers' job satisfaction. High job satisfaction helps reduce burnout and turnover while improving service quality (Tajuddin et al., 2020). Supportive and participative leaders can strengthen motivation, emotional support, and employees' sense of belonging within the organization (Napitupulu et al., 2019). Studies show that democratic and transformational leadership styles are positively related to job satisfaction because they encourage trust, communication, and recognition of employee contributions (Melinda et al., 2024).

However, previous research findings remain inconsistent due to differences in organizational culture, hospital settings, and research methods (Lesmono et al., 2024; Nazara et al., 2025). Some studies report strong positive relationships between leadership style, performance, and job satisfaction, while others show limited or insignificant effects (Bandu et al., 2023). Therefore, a systematic review is needed to synthesize existing evidence and identify the most effective leadership styles in hospital settings.

This systematic review aims to analyze the effects of leadership styles on healthcare worker performance and job satisfaction in hospitals. The study seeks to identify leadership approaches that most effectively improve motivation,

productivity, and employee well-being while providing evidence-based recommendations for healthcare management and leadership development.

METHODS

This study used a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach to examine the effects of leadership styles on healthcare worker performance and job satisfaction in hospitals. The review followed PRISMA guidelines to ensure a systematic and transparent process. Literature searches were conducted through PubMed, ScienceDirect, and Google Scholar using keywords such as “leadership style,” “healthcare workers,” “hospital,” “job satisfaction,” “performance,” “gaya kepemimpinan,” and “tenaga kesehatan.” The search focused on studies published between 2020 and 2025. Articles were selected using inclusion and exclusion criteria. Only empirical studies conducted in hospital settings that discussed leadership style in relation to employee performance or job satisfaction were included, while opinion articles, editorials, and non-empirical studies were excluded.

The screening process involved title review, abstract screening, and full-text evaluation. Selected studies were then assessed based on research objectives, methodological quality, validity of findings, and relevance to healthcare leadership. Data from eligible studies were analyzed descriptively and thematically to identify patterns regarding the influence of leadership styles on healthcare worker performance and job satisfaction. This approach provides a comprehensive synthesis of effective leadership styles in hospital settings and offers evidence-based insights for improving healthcare management, employee performance, and worker well-being.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Study Results

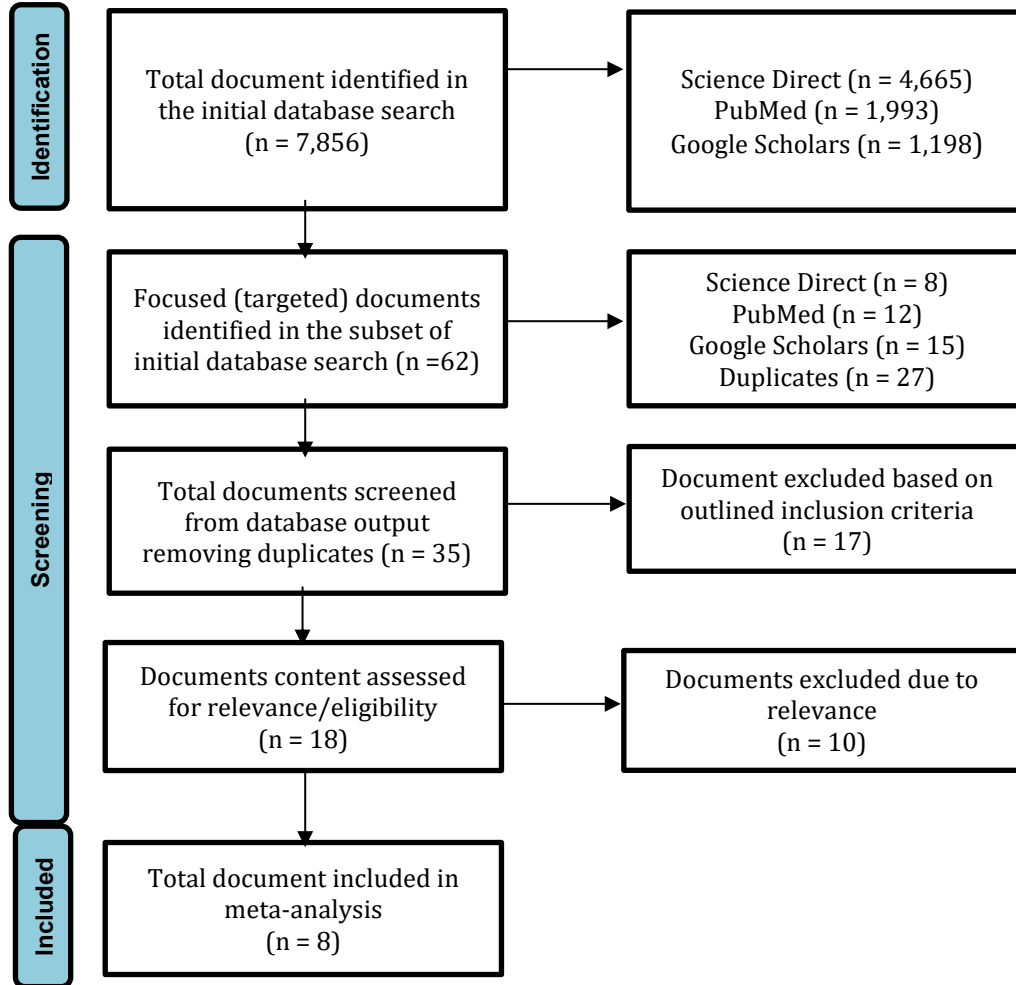


Figure 1. PRISMA Flow Diagram

This systematic review used PubMed, ScienceDirect, and Google Scholar to identify studies related to leadership style, healthcare workers, job satisfaction, and performance in hospital settings. Initial searches using keywords such as “leadership style,” “healthcare workers,” “hospital,” “job satisfaction,” and “performance” identified 7,856 articles. After refining the search with Boolean combinations and applying inclusion criteria, 62 relevant articles were obtained.

The screening process included duplicate removal, title and abstract review, and full-text evaluation. After excluding studies that did not match the criteria—such as non-hospital settings, unrelated populations, or publications outside 2020–2025—eight articles were selected for final analysis. The selection stages are presented in the PRISMA flow diagram.

Summary of Studies

The review included eight empirical studies published between 2021 and 2025 that examined the relationship between leadership style, healthcare worker performance, and job satisfaction. All studies used quantitative approaches with methods such as simple regression, multiple regression, and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The main leadership styles analyzed were transformational, participative, and situational leadership. Overall, the findings consistently showed that effective leadership styles positively and significantly improve healthcare workers' performance, motivation, and job satisfaction in hospital environments.

Table 1. Summary of the Literature

Authors and Year	Research Objective	Method	Key Findings
Napitupulu, Raras & Sofiati (2021)	Analyze the effect of E-Service Quality on patient satisfaction and its impact on the image of RS Immanuel Bandung.	Descriptive and verificative; 200 respondents; Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) using LISREL 8.80.	E-Service Quality has a significant positive effect on patient satisfaction and hospital image. Patient satisfaction mediates the relationship between digital service quality and a positive hospital image.
Suharto & Cahyo (2021)	Examine the relationships among organizational culture, leadership, and motivation on HR performance in health institutions.	Quantitative survey; multiple regression analysis.	Participative and communicative leadership significantly increases motivation and performance among healthcare workers.
Abdul Manap (2022)	Analyze the effects of leadership style and work environment on employee performance at RSUD H. Abdul Manap, Jambi.	Quantitative-descriptive with a causal approach; questionnaire data; multiple linear regression (SPSS).	Leadership style and work environment have significant positive effects on employee performance, both partially and simultaneously.
Sari & Fuadati (2022)	Assess the impact of leadership style on employee performance with job satisfaction as a mediating variable.	Quantitative survey; questionnaire data from 100 respondents; regression analysis and mediation testing.	Leadership style positively affects performance and job satisfaction. Job satisfaction mediates the relationship between them.
Ismail H.A., Kessi, Tajuddin & Abbas (2023)	Examine the effects of leadership style and work environment on employee performance at RS Ibnu Sina Makassar.	Quantitative; census sampling (66 respondents); primary and secondary data; multiple linear regression.	Leadership style significantly and positively affects performance, whereas the work environment is not significant.
Carolina Damayanti Sinaga (2024)	Assess the influence of leadership style on employee performance at RSUD Lakipadada, Tana Toraja.	Quantitative; primary and secondary data; simple random sampling; simple linear regression with validity, reliability, and normality tests.	Leadership style has a significant positive effect on employee performance. Leaders who provide direction and motivation increase healthcare workers' productivity.
Fanny Dewi Melinda, Junengsih & Kaffah Imanuddin (2024)	Examine the effect of transformational leadership style on employee performance at RS Sentra Medika Cikarang.	Quantitative; 80 respondents; questionnaire; simple linear regression (SPSS 26).	Transformational leadership has a significant effect on performance (t-stat 5.77 > t-table 1.66; p < 0.001). Transformational leaders raise employee morale and

Authors and Year	Research Objective	Method	Key Findings
Lestari & Suryani (2025)	Analyze the effects of leadership style and compensation on employee performance with job satisfaction as an intervening variable at RS Esthomihi Medan.	Quantitative; primary data; multiple linear regression with validity, reliability, and significance testing.	productivity. Leadership style and compensation significantly affect performance. Job satisfaction mediates and strengthens this relationship.

Discussion

Overview of the Systematic Review Findings

This systematic review analyzed eight articles published between 2020–2025 that examined the influence of leadership style on healthcare worker performance and job satisfaction in hospitals. Most studies were conducted in Indonesian public and private hospitals using quantitative methods such as regression analysis and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The dominant leadership styles studied were transformational, transactional, participative, democratic, and situational leadership, while the main dependent variables were employee performance and job satisfaction.

Overall, the studies consistently found that leadership style has a positive and significant effect on healthcare worker performance and satisfaction. Transformational and participative leadership were considered the most effective because they improve motivation, communication, teamwork, and organizational commitment, creating a more supportive hospital work environment.

Analysis of the Effects of Leadership Style on Healthcare Worker Performance

The reviewed studies show that effective leadership strongly influences healthcare worker performance by shaping motivation, productivity, discipline, and service quality. Leaders who provide clear direction, inspiration, and support encourage healthcare workers to perform more effectively in the demanding hospital environment (Lesmono et al., 2024; Ramdani & Purwoko, 2024).

Transformational leadership emerged as the most influential style because it promotes innovation, intrinsic motivation, and commitment to organizational goals (Bandu et al., 2023; Melinda et al., 2024). Transactional leadership was effective in structured settings through reward-and-sanction systems, while participative and democratic leadership improved teamwork and employee involvement in decision-making (Ismail et al., 2023).

Leadership also affects communication, coordination, and accountability across hospital units. Studies indicate that transformational leadership significantly improves employee productivity and service quality by strengthening motivation and organizational commitment. However, some findings suggest that factors such as work environment, compensation, and organizational culture may also strongly influence employee performance.

Overall, transformational, participative, and democratic leadership styles positively affect healthcare worker productivity, collaboration, and service quality, whereas authoritarian approaches tend to be less effective in hospital settings that require empathy and teamwork.

Analysis of the Effects of Leadership Style on Job Satisfaction

The reviewed articles consistently show that leadership style positively affects healthcare workers’ job satisfaction. Supportive and participative leadership creates a positive work environment, increases morale, and strengthens employees’ sense of belonging (Sari & Fuadati, 2022; Lestari & Suryani, 2025). Higher job satisfaction also contributes to stronger commitment and lower work stress.

Leadership influences job satisfaction through emotional support, recognition, communication, and career development opportunities. Transformational leadership is particularly effective because it builds trust, motivation, and positive workplace relationships (Melinda et al., 2024). Participative leadership also improves satisfaction by involving employees in decision-making processes.

Several studies identified job satisfaction as a mediating factor between leadership and employee performance. Workers who feel valued and supported tend to demonstrate greater loyalty and productivity. However, leadership effectiveness depends on organizational culture, workload, and hospital structure, meaning leaders must apply adaptive approaches suited to organizational conditions and employee needs.

Synthesis of Findings and Research Gaps

The findings consistently demonstrate that transformational and participative leadership styles improve healthcare worker motivation, productivity, loyalty, and job satisfaction. Leadership that emphasizes communication, emotional support, and employee involvement creates a healthier and more productive hospital environment.

However, several research gaps remain. Most studies used cross-sectional quantitative designs, limiting the ability to observe long-term leadership effects. Many studies also focused on single hospitals or limited regions, reducing generalizability. In addition, the lack of qualitative or mixed-methods approaches limits understanding of the psychological and social experiences of healthcare workers.

Common limitations include small sample sizes, reliance on questionnaire data, and limited control of external factors such as organizational culture, stress, and compensation systems. Future studies should explore longitudinal and mixed-methods approaches and examine leadership effectiveness across different healthcare professions.

Theoretically, these findings strengthen transformational and participative leadership theories in healthcare settings. Practically, hospitals should prioritize leadership development programs focused on communication, motivation, empathy, and conflict management to improve both employee performance and well-being.

CONCLUSION

This systematic review of eight articles concludes that leadership style significantly influences the performance and job satisfaction of healthcare workers in hospitals. Transformational and participative leadership are most effective in elevating motivation, responsibility, and psychological well-being, thereby improving productivity and service quality. Although results vary by organizational context, work culture, and environmental factors, the overall trend indicates that supportive, communicative, and adaptive leadership fosters harmonious, performance-oriented work environments. These findings underscore the importance of leadership competency development in the health sector as a strategy to strengthen human resource management and support sustainable improvements in hospital service quality.

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