

# The Influence Of Authoritarian Leadership Style On Employee Innovation: Systematic Literature Review

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## ABSTRACT

In today's dynamic and competitive business landscape, innovation is the cornerstone of success in any industry. It is the employees within an organization who drive this innovation. A successful organization necessitates a leader with a unique leadership approach that cultivates an environment conducive to innovation, allowing teams to exceed past achievements. This study seeks to investigate the relationship between authoritarian leadership and employee innovation through an extensive review of existing literature. Using a literature review methodology, the research gathers data from Google Scholar. Previous studies have established a significant link between authoritarian leadership and employee innovation. The findings of this study could offer valuable insights for business professionals seeking a comprehensive understanding of the impact of authoritarian leadership in practical business settings. Moreover, this study will contribute to the current body of academic literature on leadership and employee innovation.

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## INTRODUCTION

The significance of employees in a leadership role is paramount, as leaders must possess the ability to perceive, observe, and comprehend the organizational dynamics (Yuniantoro Sudrajad, 2022). According to Fiedler, cited by Setiawati (2000: 7), a leader is tasked with directing and coordinating group activities (Hadipranata, 2004). Employees are regarded as valuable assets for a company, and the smooth operation of business activities is contingent upon these assets (Titisari & Ikhwan, 2021). The appropriate leadership style can influence both internal and external organizational change (Evangelista & Vezzani, 2010).

While previous research has predominantly examined the impact of a single leadership style on employee innovative behavior, today's organizational environments are characterized by dynamic and mutable conditions, making it challenging for a single leadership style to adequately address an organization's diverse needs (Meng et al., 2022). Bill Gates provides a notable example by employing two leadership styles based on time and situation: Situational Leadership. In the early stages of Microsoft, only Gates (alongside co-founder Steven Allen) had the authority to make decisions (Prasetyo et al., 2019).

Kahn asserts that employee engagement encompasses harnessing workers' skills in their job responsibilities, as evidenced by their physical, cognitive, and emotional involvement. Employee engagement entails being actively present at work and engaging in various

activities. An organization must thrive in intensifying competition and growing external unpredictability. Nonetheless, employee engagement mitigates organizational challenges amid economic instability and fosters future development (Kahn, 1990). In truth, numerous employees may not consistently exhibit strong work ethics despite receiving good treatment, potentially leading to stagnation within the company. Therefore, effective leadership is one that adeptly fosters interpersonal relationships.

According to previous research by Turmono (2020) One of the three factors that significantly influence employee performance in business is leadership style, which aligns with research on leadership and employee engagement (Haryanto et al., 2023). Additionally, Adinata (2015) emphasizes the crucial role of leadership style in enhancing employee performance, as effective leadership provides direction for achieving organizational goals. Consequently, researchers aim to prioritize research on leadership style.

This article aims to comprehensively examine the impact of authoritarian leadership style on employee innovativeness. The goal is to gain a profound understanding of the characteristics and practices associated with authoritarian leadership, as well as to identify factors that either promote or impede innovativeness within the context of authoritarian leadership (Avolio, B. J., Kahai, S., & Dodge, G. E. (2000).

## Literature Review

### Leadership Styles

The concept of leadership within management is a compelling topic of discussion. Effective leaders offer guidance to their employees, fostering organizational satisfaction and commitment through the development of knowledge, skills, and changes in attitudes and behavior (Julianto & Agnanditiya Carnarez, 2021). According to Kartono (2003), leadership refers to the nature of an individual's influence on others to achieve a goal, while leaders are the individuals who enact this influence (Wolor, 2024). Additionally, Kumala & Agustina (Pusparini, 2018) define leadership style as the combination of a leader's philosophy, skills, traits, and attitudes, which are frequently employed to influence the performance of subordinates (Nurul et al., 2021). Robbins (2006) defines leadership as the capacity to influence a group to achieve a common objective. This definition includes influencing and establishing organizational goals, motivating follower behavior, and improving group dynamics and culture.

Furthermore, Locander et al. (2002) posit that leadership involves the leader influencing those who are led in a mutually beneficial relationship. The style of a leader or manager within an organization reflects the approach used to influence their followers (Miftah Thoha, 2001). House, as cited in Gary Yukl (2009) ), defines leadership as an individual's capacity to influence, motivate, and empower others to contribute to the effectiveness and success of the organization (Sari, 2016). Meanwhile, Terry (2000:13) characterizes leadership as influencing people to work toward achieving goals (Hardian, 2015).

As per Akbar (2017) and previous researchers, six distinct leadership styles exist. These styles include the Autocratic/Authoritarian approach, in which the leader views the organization as personal property, considers subordinates mere tools, and is resistant to criticism and input. The Paternalistic style involves a leader who perceives subordinates as

immature and overly shields them from decision-making and initiative, often assuming an omniscient role. The Charismatic style pertains to a leader with significant appeal and a large following. The Militaristic approach encompasses a leader who demands high discipline, favors excessive formality, and employs a commanding system. The laissez-faire style refers to a leader with a permissive attitude, allowing members to act according to their beliefs while maintaining common interests and organizational goals, often taking a passive role. Lastly, the Democratic style prioritizes cooperation and teamwork, with leaders actively seeking and accepting input, suggestions, and criticism from subordinates, involving them in decision-making.

### **Authoritarian Leadership**

The authoritarian leadership style is often linked with negative performance, complex leader-follower relationships, and a high intention among followers to leave (Schaubroeck et al., 2017). For example, Chiang et al. (2020) demonstrated that the work climate deteriorates when authoritarian leaders suppress the emotions of their subordinates. Schuh et al. (2012) also found that subordinates' efforts can be constrained when their supervisor adopts an authoritarian leadership approach. Furthermore, Schaubroeck et al. (2017) established a direct connection between subordinates' disapproval of power distance and the detrimental effects of directive leadership on performance. Consequently, the authoritarian leadership style appears to conflict with the rapid pace of the modern globalized and hyperconnected market (Pizzolitto et al., 2023).

However, certain studies have identified specific conditions under which authoritarian leadership styles can positively impact workgroup performance. For instance, positive outcomes can be attained in work groups characterized by high levels of traditionality and guided by authoritarian leaders (Shen et al., 2019). Directive leadership can ensure favorable outcomes when rewards are low, group size is large, and failure is not excessively costly (Rahmani et al., 2018). Also, authoritarian leaders can succeed in work groups with low team power struggles (de Hoogh et al., 2015) and high participation (Sagie, 1996). Finally, Karakitapoğlu-Aygün et al. (2021) emphasized that authoritarian leadership styles can positively impact communication if authority is not exaggerated. These divergent results underscore the need to review the ongoing scientific debate comprehensively.

In the study by Herlinda Maya Purnama Sari (2016), it was noted that autocratic leaders typically believe they know what they want and often convey these needs through direct orders to their subordinates. Autocratic leadership involves strict supervision, making it challenging for subordinates to fulfill their egoistic needs (Wahyuni et al., 2022). According to (Ghufron, 2020), leader behavior can enhance group performance by influencing intervening variables such as team effort and work, which ultimately impact group performance.

In the research conducted by Dien Sandra Rosuliana et al. (2022), emphasized that leadership style significantly contributes to a company's success in achieving its goals. A successful company will boost employee motivation, and leaders who can inspire and effectively communicate with employees will align company objectives and elevate employee motivation and performance.

According to Purwanto et al. (2020), an authoritarian leader exerts high dominance in decision-making processes, shaping all policies, regulations, and procedures based solely on their own ideas. This type of leadership consolidates power, constraining its members' initiative and critical thinking. Authoritarian leaders often neglect the needs of their subordinates and typically engage in one-way communication, primarily from the leader to the members (Wicaksana, 2016). According to Feriyanto and Triana, as cited in Fahtras (2017) and quoted from Fanani et al. (2023), an authoritarian leadership style revolves around concentrating all decisions and policies on the leader.

The authoritarian leader holds all divisions of tasks and responsibilities, while subordinates are limited to carrying out tasks assigned to them. Under this leadership style, power and authority largely remain with the leader, and if there is, the leader solely determines a system of centralized authority, decision-making, and policy formulation. Subordinates are excluded from providing suggestions, ideas, and considerations in the decision-making process (Kobat et al., 2018). Schaubroeck et al. (2017) highlighted a direct relationship between subordinates' disapproval of power distance and the detrimental effects of directive leadership on performance.

Therefore, authoritarian leadership styles appear to be at odds with the high dynamism of the new global and hyperconnected markets (Pizzolitto et al., 2023). With an extreme paradigm in understanding authoritarian leadership, the majority of people who value their freedom reject authoritarian leadership, which can be considered the primary reason why authoritarian leadership is avoided in any institution, especially schools or madrasas (Anisa, 2020).

### **Employee Innovation**

According to Jong and Hartog in Hadi (2020), innovative work behavior encompasses exploring new opportunities and ideas and implementing these new ideas to enhance individual and company productivity. When subordinates embrace a well-implemented leadership style, it paves the way for future innovation and positive change, enabling organizations to keep pace with the evolving landscape.

Carmeli and Spreitzer (2009) argue that employees' progress in the workplace is shaped by innovative behavior, a concept reinforced by research from Porath et al. (2012) suggesting that innovative behavior plays a crucial role in promoting employee development. Furthermore, employee innovation and engagement are found to be linked with the cultural context of the respective region, as evidenced in a study by Haryanto and Setiawan on Javanese culture (Haryanto & Setiawan, 2023)

As per Klein and Bhagat (2016), five primary indicators exist for assessing innovation: creativity, passion, expertise, thinking style, and psychographics (Kusuma et al., 2021). The efficacy and longevity of a company hinge on its employees demonstrating innovative behavior, which can significantly enhance overall company performance in the workplace (Korzilius et al., 2017). The innovative contributions of employees are largely a result of high retention and engagement levels, which are influenced by the leadership within the board structure (Haryanto et al., 2024). In conclusion, innovation is integral to staying competitive

in today's business landscape. Companies must focus on creating new products or services and adding value using new technologies to remain at the forefront of industry trends.

## METHOD

This study utilizes the literature review method to gather data by referencing existing books and journals. It aims to incorporate findings from previous studies on authoritarian leadership styles in corporate innovation. The qualitative approach is employed to gain a detailed and comprehensive understanding of the contextual conditions that have transpired within the field of study (Fadli, 2021). The research model comprises data reduction, display, and conclusion or verification. Additionally, the literature review presents various perspectives and ideas, anticipating that the article will benefit its readers. The reference materials for this study were gathered through data collection techniques, including relevant prior studies such as books and scientific journals. Out of the 103,000 identified drivers of authoritarian leadership style, this research has identified 8 new drivers. The flow of the research methodology is illustrated in Figure 1.



**Figure 1:** Methodology of the research flow

## RESULT

This study, which asserts that authoritarian leadership impacts employee performance, holds merit. Its findings align with the research conducted by Kumala and Agustina (Pusparini, 2018) regarding the nature of leadership style as a composite of philosophies, skills, traits, and attitudes that leaders often utilize to influence the performance of their subordinates. The results are consistent with previous research (Susanty & Baskoro, 2012).

Motivation involves encouraging individuals to exert high effort, resulting in increased productivity. In the workplace, leaders use motivation to drive employees to achieve effective and efficient sales. This can be positive motivation through encouragement and incentives for meeting targets and negative motivation through coercion or discipline for lateness or excessive absenteeism. According to Kumala and Agustina (Pusparini, 2018), leadership style encompasses the behaviors and strategies resulting from a combination of philosophies, skills, traits, and attitudes that leaders employ to influence the performance of their subordinates (Nurul et al., 2021).

Similarly, Locander et al. (2002) elucidated that leadership involves the leader exerting influence over the leader, with a mutually beneficial relationship between them. A leader or manager's approach within the organization serves as a model for employees' actions. The style concept encompasses a leader's methods to influence their followers (Miftah Thoha, 2001).

**Table 1:** List of articles used in the literature review.

Author	Article title	Year
Rosuliana et al.	The Effect of Leadership Style and Job Satisfaction on Employee Performance of PT Nutrifood Indonesia in Surabaya	2022
Fanani et al.	The Effect of Leadership Style on Innovative Work Behavior	2023
Hadi et al.	The influence of innovative behavior and work engagement on employee performance	2020
Julianto et al.	Factors affecting professional organizations: leadership, effective communication, performance, and organizational effectiveness (a literature review study of applied management science)	2021
Wahyuni et al.	Authoritarian (Autocratic) Leadership Style in Education Management	2022
Citra Ayu Anisa	The Concept of Authoritarian Leadership in Educational Institutions in Schools or Madrasahs	2020
Olio et al.	E-leadership: Implications for theory, research, and practice	2020
Purwanto et al.	The Effect of Participative and Autocratic Leadership Styles on the Performance of the HAS 23000 Halal Assurance System in the Packaged Food Industry	2020

## Discussion

Prior research indicates a multifaceted relationship influenced by various factors, including authoritarian leadership style, innovative culture, work motivation, and discipline. The authoritarian leadership style can foster positive employee-leader dynamics and cultivate

a sense of loyalty among employees. Conversely, the innovative culture significantly shapes employee performance through the socialization process facilitated by organizational structures, policies, practices, and procedures. Notably, the innovative culture does not directly impact the relationship between authoritarian leadership and innovative employees. Moreover, work motivation and discipline also play pivotal roles in shaping the dynamics between authoritarian leadership and innovative employees. Work motivation can enhance employee loyalty and directly impact employee performance. Consequently, it can be inferred that multiple factors, individually or collectively, influence employee innovativeness within the organization.

### CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the data analysis, it is evident that the authoritarian leadership style significantly impacts employee innovation. An effective leader should possess a diverse range of leadership styles and be equipped to address the various challenges faced by the company, such as financial issues or resource constraints. It is crucial for a leader to adeptly delegate tasks and responsibilities to subordinates, recognizing and leveraging their unique characteristics and abilities. The appropriateness of authoritarian leadership styles may vary depending on the circumstances, particularly in high-pressure situations. While this style can create significant stress for subordinates, a leader must still exhibit elements of authoritarianism (Ony, 2019). To optimize the innovation potential, organizations should consider a more inclusive leadership approach that fosters employee participation, collaboration, and adaptability in the face of change. Addressing existing challenges involves enhancing communication between leaders and employees, providing ample room for creativity, and promoting active employee engagement. Companies must tailor their leadership style to meet the needs and expectations of employees to cultivate innovative capabilities and enhance long-term organizational performance.

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