

Implementation Of Path Goal Theory In Organizational Communication And Leadership Research

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ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:

Path-Goal Theory,
Organizational
Communication, Leadership
Communication

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ABSTRACT

The ability to create teamwork is determined by one's leadership competence. The application of leadership must be conditionally adjusted to circumstances or conditions that frequently change. Leadership also speaks about the behaviour of the leader in question. Regarding leader behaviour and leadership can be seen through the path goal theory of leadership. The aim of this research is to discuss Path-Goal Theory in communication studies or research, especially in studies of organizational communication and leadership. This theory is considered a path-goal theory because it focuses on how leaders influence followers' perceptions of work goals, self-development goals, and the paths needed to achieve goals. The path goal leadership model states the importance of the leader's influence on subordinates' perceptions of work goals, self-development goals, and paths to goal achievement.

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PENDAHULUAN

The ability to create teamwork is determined by one's leadership competence. Leadership that is able to optimally utilize all the resources owned by an organization. Not just making important decisions but also the ability to involve the available factors. Leading is a continuous activity, managing resources, managing members'/employees' feelings, managing different attitudes and abilities. The application of leadership must be conditionally adjusted to circumstances or conditions that frequently change. Therefore, the application of leadership cannot use the same model given the changing circumstances and conditions. Therefore, a leader is expected to be able to influence all aspects within the organization. Leadership is an activity to influence other people's behavior so that they are directed to achieve certain goals (Thoah, 2012: 123). According to Robbins (2002: 163), leadership is the ability to influence a group to achieve goals.

Leadership is a collection of a series of abilities and personality traits, including authority to be used as a means to convince those who are led so that they are willing and able to carry out the tasks assigned to them willingly, enthusiastically, with inner joy, and feel that they are not forced (Purwanto, 2004: 26). Thus, at least it can be concluded that leadership is the ability of a person or leader to influence the behavior of other people towards their desires in a particular situation or in other words that leadership is the ability to influence the behavior of a person or group of people to achieve certain goals in certain situations.

On the other hand, leadership also speaks about the behavior of the leader in question. Regarding leader behavior and leadership can be seen through the path goal theory of leadership. Path goal theory of leadership is a leadership theory developed by House (Yukl, 2010) which states that there are two contingent variables that link leadership behavior with outcomes in the

form of job satisfaction and performance, namely variables in the environment that are outside the employee's control (task structure, formal authority systems and work groups) as well as variables which are part of the employee's personal characteristics (locus of control, experience and abilities). Therefore, the author is interested in discussing Path-Goal Theory in studies or research in communication science, especially in studies of organizational communication and leadership.

METHOD

The method used is qualitative descriptive, which describes or explains an object of study based on its characteristics. Qualitative descriptive aims to explain phenomena in depth through data collection. If the data collected is in-depth and can explain the phenomenon under study, there is no need to look for other sampling. (Bungin, 2009: 59). The descriptive method tries to convey responses regarding existing communication strategies based on data and observation results, through data presentation, analysis and data interpolation. The author only creates categories of perpetrators, observes the symptoms, and records them in his observation book. (Narbuko and Achmadi, 2007: 44).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The path-goal theory explains the impact of leader behaviour on subordinates' motivation, satisfaction and performance (Luthans, 2006). Robbins and Judge (2002) state that the essence of path goal theory is that it is the leader's job to provide the necessary information and support to followers so that they can achieve various goals. The term path goal originates from the belief that effective leaders should be able to show the way to help their followers get the things needed to achieve work goals and make the journey easier and eliminate various obstacles. In its original form, the path-goal theory described two types of leadership, namely supportive and directive leadership, but in its development the theory outlined four types of leadership, namely: supportive, directive, participative and achievement-oriented leadership. The path-goal model of leading leadership consists of two basic functions: Silverthorne (2001).

- (1) The first function is to provide clarity of flow (directive). This means that a leader must be able to help his subordinates understand how the work is needed to complete it,
- (2) the second function is to increase the number of results (rewards) of subordinates by providing support and attention to their personal needs (supportive).

This theory is based on the idea that employee perceptions of expectations between effort and performance are greatly influenced by the behaviour of a leader. Leaders help subordinates achieve rewards by clarifying goals and removing obstacles to performance. Leaders do this by providing employees with the information, support, and other resources they need to complete tasks. In other words, the satisfaction of their needs depends on effective performance, and the necessary direction, guidance, training, and support. Path-goal theory adheres to a view of leadership as a servant. Leadership is not seen as a position of power. Instead, leaders act as coaches and facilitators to their subordinates. According to path-goal theory, a leader's effectiveness depends on environmental contingency (uncertainty) factors and a particular leadership style. An explanation can be seen in the picture below: (Yukl, 2010: 4).

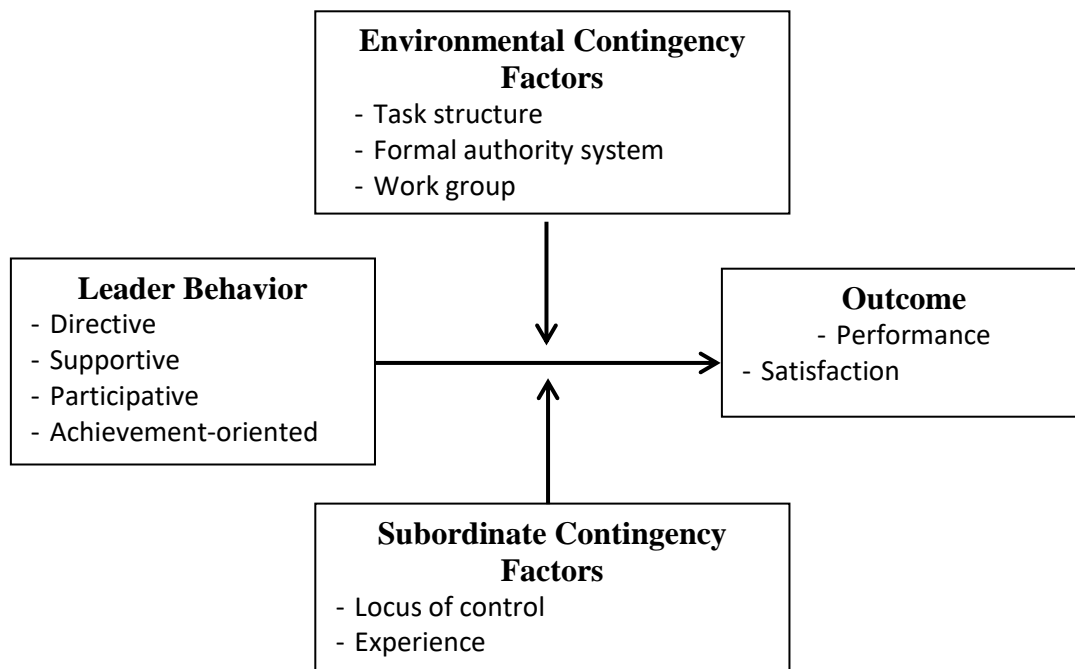


Figure 1. Path-goal theory developed by Robert J. House. (Yukl, 2010: 4)

Study Teori Path-Goal

According to this model, leaders are effective because of the positive effect they have on follower motivation, performance and satisfaction. This theory is considered a path-goal because it focuses on how leaders influence the perceptions of their followers about work goals, self-development goals, and the paths needed to achieve goals (Ivancevich, et al, 2007: 205). The basis of the path goal is the expectancy theory of motivation. The initial theory of path goals stated that an effective leader is a leader who is good at providing rewards to subordinates and makes these rewards contingent on the subordinate's achievement of a specific goal.

The initial development of path goal theory stated four specific behavioural styles of a leader including directive, supportive, participative, and achievement oriented and three subordinate attitudes including job satisfaction, acceptance of leaders, and expectations regarding the relationship between effort-performance-reward.

The four leadership styles include: (House in Robbins, 2006: 448)

- a. Directive leadership: here the leader provides guidelines, allowing subordinates to know what is expected of them, sets performance standards for them, and controls behavior when performance standards are not met. The leader wisely provides rewards and disciplinary sanctions. Subordinates are expected to follow the issued rules and policies.
- b. Supportive leadership: a leader whose nature is nurturing to subordinates and displays personal attention to their needs and welfare.
- c. Participative leadership: a leader who believes in making decisions in groups and sharing information with subordinates. He consults his subordinates regarding important decisions relating to work, task objectives, and ways to accomplish objectives.
- d. Achievement oriented leadership: the leader sets challenging goals and encourages employees to achieve their best performance. Leaders believe that employees are responsible enough to accomplish challenging goals. This style is the same as the goal setting theory view.

The path goal leadership model states the importance of the leader's influence on subordinates' perceptions of work goals, self-development goals, and paths to goal achievement. The basis of this model is the experimental theory of motivation. This leadership model was popularized by Robert House who attempted to predict the effectiveness of leadership in various situations (Wirjana and Supardo, 2005: 49).

According to path-goal theory, the four leadership styles above are not mutually exclusive and leaders are able to choose more than one type of style that is suitable for a particular situation. Different types of leadership behaviours may be practiced by the same person in different situations. Furthermore, this theory states that the relationship between leader style and effectiveness depends on the variables of two marketing factors, namely:

- 1) Employee characteristics: This includes factors such as employee needs, locus of control, experience, perceived abilities, satisfaction, desire to leave the organization, and anxiety. For example, if followers have a high post, then a directive leadership style may not be necessary, unless a supportive approach is more appropriate. So employee characteristics largely determine how employees react to leader behavior as well as the extent to which they see the leader's behavior as a direct and potential source of satisfying their needs.
- 2) Work environment characteristics: These include factors such as task structure and team dynamics that are outside the employee's control. For example, when carrying out simple and routine tasks, a supportive leadership style is much more effective than a directive leadership style. Similarly, the participative style works better for non-routine tasks than routine ones. So the characteristics of the work environment relate to the extent to which the work is routine and structured, or non-routine and unstructured.

When team cohesiveness is low, a supportive leadership style is used whereas in situations where performance-oriented team norms exist, a directive or achievement-oriented style works better. Leaders must adopt a directive style to deal with team norms that challenge the team's official goals. So the more structured a job is, the clearer the objectives are, and the more self-confidence is built up in subordinates, then efforts to continuously explain a job or give direction are leader actions that are not expected by subordinates. However, when the work is not well structured, the goals are unclear, and the subordinates lack experience, then the directive leadership style will be more accepted by the subordinates.

Research With a Path-Goal Approach

Research conducted to test the path goal theory, among others, was carried out by Wofford and Liska (1993) who reviewed 120 survey studies regarding this theory and conducted a meta-analysis which provided results for task and relationship behaviour. Podsakof, et al (1995) also carried out an extensive review of research regarding moderator variables in leadership. (Hendryadi, 2014: 1). Some of the shortcomings of this theory as explained by Yukl (2005: 260) include the use of hope theory as the main basis for explaining leader influence. This rational decision model provides an overview of human behaviour that is too complex and seems unrealistic (Behling & Starke, 1973; Mitchell, 1974; Schriesheim & Kerr, 1977). Expectancy theory does not consider emotional reactions to decision dilemmas, such as rejection or distortion of relevant information about expectancy and valence.

Another limitation is the reliance on broad categories of leader behaviour that do not fit well with the mediating process. It is easier to make a connection between leader behaviour and subordinate motivation by using specific behaviours such as clarifying role expectations, recognizing success, providing related rewards, creating behavioural models that are easy for subordinates to imitate and conveying high expectations about subordinate performance (in Yukl, 2005: 260). Although in its latest revision, House (1996) added several specific behaviours in an attempt to correct this limitation, the theory continues to treat each leadership behaviour separately, without discussing possible interactions between behaviours or interactions with more than one type of situational variable (Osborn, 1974, in Yukl, 2005).

Despite its limitations, pathway theory aims to make an important contribution to leadership studies by providing a context framework to guide researchers in identifying potentially relevant situational variables. From the positive side, this model is an improvement on the theory of traits and behaviour. This model tries to show which factors influence motivation to perform. In addition, this approach introduces situational factors and individual differences in explaining the relationship between leadership style and aspects of attitude (motivation, acceptance and trust).

Examples of Research Using Path-Goal Approach

The following are examples of research using the path-goal approach quoted from various sources:

a. The Relationship Between Supervision and Job Satisfaction Moderated by Locus Of Control (Mitchel et al., 1975)

Mitchel and his friends tested path goal theory, namely. The research involved 900 public facility employees in the metropolitan area using two leadership styles, namely participative and directive leadership styles. The locus of control scale used is the standard version scale developed by Rotter (1996). Job satisfaction is measured with working conditions. The results of the research show that people with an internal and external locus of control have more satisfaction with a participative management style than a directive management style, but people with an internal locus of control have higher satisfaction than people with an external locus of control with a participative management style. The research results also showed that people with an internal locus of control saw a stronger connection between what they did and what happened to their work. They believe that working hard will lead to good performance, good performance will lead to rewards, and they have control over how they spend their time at work.

b. Path Goal Theory Task Structure Has a Moderating Effect on Instrumental (Directive) Behavior, (Silverthorne, 2001)

Silverthorne (2001) tested path goal theory in Taiwan. The research subjects were managers and subordinates from several large companies in Taiwan. The sample consisted of 46 managers, 46 peers and 92 subordinates. Testing was carried out on path goal theory which states that task structure has a moderating effect on instrumental (directive) behavior, so it is hoped that managers will prefer a higher task structure than a low task structure. The results of hypothesis testing show that managers in Taiwan prefer high task structure. These results support the path goal theory. Testing was also carried out on the theory which states "The leader's behavior is important because it has a direct influence on the behavior of his followers". This statement is true in the areas of motivation and performance.

Looking at the two dimensions of motivation, namely effort that leads to performance and effort that leads to reward, researchers link instrumental (directive) leadership style, supportive

leadership style and participative leadership style with these two dimensions of motivation. The results show that leadership style is positively and significantly correlated with subordinate motivation.

c. The Relationship Between Path-Goal Leadership Style And Turnover Intention at PT Bank BNI Syariah Kanto Pusat Jakarta; (Puty Reta Amalia, UI, 2014)

This research discusses the relationship between path-goal leadership style and turnover intentions at PT Bank BNI Syariah Pusat. This research refers to research conducted by Hsu et al (2003), which revealed the relationship between the path-goal leadership style proposed by House (1974) and turnover intentions in the context of banking services companies in Indonesia.

This research is based on 50 respondents who were collected using a survey method distributed to employees of PT Bank BNI Syariah Pusat, with a confidence level of 95%. The acquisition data was on a Likert scale and analyzed using Pearson correlation data analysis techniques to determine the relationship between path-goal leadership styles (supportive leadership, instrumental leadership, and participative leadership) and turnover intentions. The research results again show that there is a significant negative relationship between each path-goal leadership style (instrumental, supportive and participative leadership) and turnover intentions. These results are in line with research conducted by Dixon and Hart (2010) and confirm Hsu, et al (2003).

CONCLUSION

According to the path-goal model, leaders are effective because of the positive effect they have on follower motivation, performance and satisfaction. This theory is considered a path-goal because it focuses on how leaders influence followers' perceptions of work goals, self-development goals, and the path needed to achieve goals. The basis of path goals is the expectancy theory of motivation. The initial theory of path-goal states that an effective leader is a leader who is good at providing imbalances to subordinates and making these imbalances in unity (contingent) with the subordinates' achievement of certain goals. The initial development of path-goal theory stated four specific behavioral styles of a leader including directive, supportive, participative, and achievement-oriented and three subordinate attitudes including job satisfaction, acceptance of leaders, and expectations regarding the relationship between effort-performance-reward. The path goal leadership model states the importance of the leader's influence on subordinates' perceptions of work goals, self-development goals, and paths to goal achievement. The basis of this model is experimental motivation theory. This leadership model was popularized by Robert House who attempted to predict the effectiveness of leadership in various situations.

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