

## Situational Leadership in Motivating Subordinates

Ani Susanti

Department of Public Administration, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Tadulako University, Indonesia

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**Abstract:** This study aims to examine the situational leadership of the head of Uemalingku village, Ratolindo Sub-district, Tojo Una-Una District, Indonesia. The population of this study was the Uemalingku staff. It involved 7 respondents determined purposively. Data were collected by field observations, in-depth and structured interviews, and documentation. It used both primary data and secondary data. The data were analyzed interactively covering data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The results of the study show that one of the four indicators does not work well, namely telling, which is related to directing or explaining work to subordinates. It means that the head of village has not been able to explain and direct his subordinates their duties in detail. Overall, it can be concluded that the situational leadership of the head of Uemalingku village, Ratolindo Sub-district, Tojo Una-Una District is quite effective and he affects the subordinates' level of motivation in carrying out public services to the community.

**Keywords:** leader, leadership, situational leadership, government, village.

### INTRODUCTION

Leadership has varied styles and it attracts more researchers and practitioners to discuss and explore deeper (Butler & Reese, 1991). Leadership is mysterious and attractive, but it can be confusing (By, 2021). Indeed, leaders are needed to lead organizations, including government institutions. The existence of a leader becomes important to develop the vision and mission of the future organization. To achieve common goals, people in organizations need to follow the leader's directions which can unite the differences in desires, wills, feelings, needs, and others. Thus, a leader is an individual who directs group activities to achieve common goals.

Currently, leadership focuses more on a large scope like big institutions, not on a small scope like village. Leadership in village level is the lowest level of leadership of all regional apparatus but has a vital role in serving the community. Village is the scope of micro-government which is directly related to the community and it is under the supervision of the sub-district in implementing its governance. To realize and carry out their role, leaders are required to have basic attitudes and leadership traits, leadership techniques, and styles in accordance with the conditions of the organization, followers, and surrounding environment which is supported by the appropriate power.

This study focuses on situational leadership or Hersey and Blanchard's Situational Leadership Theory (SLT) (Meirovich & Gu, 2015) with four different styles (S1 Telling, S2 Selling, S3 Participating, and S4 Delegating) (Hersey et al., 1979). The application of situational leadership aims to assist the administration of government in village. The administration of government in village requires a competent leader to realize good governance in village.

Village is a micro-government scope that is directly related to the community and it is under the supervision of the sub-district in implementing its governance. According to Government Regulation No. 18 of 2016 article 52, village is a sub-district apparatus established to assist or carry out some of the tasks of the sub-district head (Peraturan Pemerintah Nomor 18 Tahun 2016). Village is led by the head of village called 'Lurah' as a sub-district apparatus and is responsible to the sub-district head.

The regional autonomy era demands village to be directly involved in the process of planning and controlling development, as well as providing services to the community. As village directly deals with the community, it becomes a place for the community to convey their aspirations and has to be able to share them with the related parties. Leadership is an activity to influence or direct others to achieve certain goals. In this context, leadership is a social problem in which there is an interaction between the leader and the follower, either by influencing, persuading, motivating, or coordinating.

Government Regulation No. 73 of 2005 concerning village states that the performance of government officials will be better if they have high skills and expectations that motivate them to carry out work well (Peraturan Pemerintah Nomor 73 Tahun 2005). The leadership style of a leader greatly affects working conditions concerning whether the employees accept a leadership style and whether they like it or not. Certain leadership styles can both lead to an increase in performance and a decrease in performance. Therefore, this study aims to examine the situational leadership of the head of Uemalingkuvillage, Ratolindo Sub-district, Tojo Una-Una District, Indonesia.

### LITERATURE REVIEW

Leadership can be a field of study, practice, and general interest (By, 2021). However, the current condition shows that the knowledge of leadership is still limited (Raelin, 2016a, 2016b). The concept of leadership is a fundamental component in analyzing processes and dynamics within the organization (Wibowo, 2011). Leaders have a vital role in an organization (Hussain et al., 2017). All organizations emphasize the development of effective leadership skills and behaviors (Day et al., 2014).

Leadership is an activity to influence or direct others to achieve certain goals (Thoha, 2004). A previous study shows that various leadership styles and behaviors can motivate subordinates (Rothacker & Hauer, 2014). Leadership plays a role in changing the behavior, performance, and well-being of subordinates (Inceoglu et al., 2018). The changes can overcome the crisis in the organization (Elgayeva, 2021). Hersey and Blanchard developed a leadership style that focuses on a combination of task-based and relationship-based behaviors (Golmoradi & Ardabili, 2016). The task-based behavior covers responsibility, organizational patterns, communication channels, and ways of success, while relationship-based behavior includes open lines of communication, emotional and mental encouragement, active listening, and facilitation ability (Swansburg & Swansburg, 1999).

Hersey and Blanchard state that effective leadership can be seen from the four methods which consist of telling leadership, selling leadership, participating leadership, and delegating leadership (Hersey et al., 1979; Meirovich & Gu, 2015; Swansburg & Swansburg, 1999). Telling describes the leader's role explicitly and issues orders when needed. Selling describes a leader as having a responsibility. Participating describes a leader as being able to cooperate with subordinates, having many ideas, and providing decision-making or facilitation. While delegating describes that the leader provides opportunities for subordinates in making decisions and supports them to take responsibility as far as possible.

The leader has great roles which can be done by motivating subordinates to initiate seeing new opportunities and product development and carrying out work operational standards for the benefit of the organization (Afsar et al., 2017). It is because leadership can be an important factor in influencing the implementation of work standards in organizations (Machado et al., 2021). In this way, the leader can empower subordinates in the organization. Empowerment is carried out with involvement in organizations covering quality, service, cost-effectiveness, and quantity of output (Bass, 1999).

### METHODS

This study is a qualitative study focusing on situational leadership. Qualitative studies aim to determine the problems or social phenomena that occur in the organization (in this case, it is village). The population of this study is the staff of Uemalingkuvillage, Ratolindo Sub-district, Tojo Una-Una District, Indonesia. It involved 7 respondents of the subordinate of the head of village determined purposively. It means that the sample of this study was determined intentionally namely the subordinates who understand the problem of leadership of the head of village.

Data were collected from field observations, in-depth and structured interviews, and documentation. This study used both primary data and secondary data. Primary data covered data directly obtained from respondents through in-depth interviews, while secondary data were data that have been processed such as from documents and photos, articles, reports, and others. Then, the data were analyzed interactively which included data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study cover the results of the interviews as presented in Table 1. Table 1 covers the conclusion of the interview based on the key questions and research indicators.

Table 1. Conclusion of the result of the interview

Indicator	Key question	Conclusion of the result
Telling	Explaining the task of each subordinate	Explanations are not detailed and only explain the main topic to subordinates.
	Ways to communicate with subordinates	Communicate by conducting deliberations with subordinates so that the directions can be understood properly.
Selling	Motivating subordinates to work	Motivating subordinates to carry out tasks and duties or public services to the community well, especially during the morning meeting.
	Creating a comfortable working atmosphere in the work environment	Always reminding to maintain cleanliness for the sake of mutual comfort.
Participating	Assisting subordinates in carrying out tasks	Frequently conduct evaluations concerning obstacles in working and providing direction to complete the work properly.
	Taking into account the opinion of subordinates	The leader takes into account the opinions of subordinates, if it is good it will be accepted and vice versa.
Delegating	Discussing problems with subordinates	Always discussing and solving problems in work meetings, either problem in the office or in village areas.
	Delegating authority or tasks to subordinates	The leader gives authority according to the ability of staff or subordinates.

Source: Elaborated interview results.

Leadership is considered vital due to two reasons. First, the replacement of leaders often changes the performance of a unit, agency, or organization. Second, the results of the study indicate that one of the internal factors influencing the success of the organization is leadership, including the leadership process at every level of the organization, the competencies, and the actions of the leaders. Leadership emphasizes everything that leaders do to make organizational goals achievable and improve the welfare of the members. A good leader has to know about works, duties, and human nature, as well as what to be done. One of the toughest challenges that leaders often face is to motivate their subordinates to give out their best for the benefit of their group or organization. In an effort to achieve organizational goals, the role of leadership is crucial.

The results of this study indicate that the situational leadership style has been carried out by the head of village in the administration of government in village. Situational leadership indicators have been applied, including telling, selling, participating, and delegating. Based on the results of the interviews, the situational leadership applied is quite good but there is still one indicator that has not worked well, namely the telling indicator, which is related to directing or explaining work to subordinates in detail. The results showed that the head of village only directed his subordinates, not in detail or only explained the main topic. This makes subordinates feel confused in carrying out the work.

Overall, indicators of situational leadership have been implemented well. It shows that in the implementation of government, both in a large and small scope, the existence of leadership is important. Leadership is a complex phenomenon so it is always interesting to study (Wibowo, 2011). Leadership is closely related to members who can be positively distinguished from one another in terms of behavior, personal characteristics, thinking, or group structure. Leadership can be a necessity to solve organizational problems (Wijono, 2018).

The discussion about leadership theory starts with the fact that one person is more prominent than others and someone is more effective in leading than others. Indeed, a leader who has successfully led might be not so successful in leading in different places and situations. The leadership situation is a positive interaction between the leader and the subordinates. There are many factors influencing the effectiveness of leadership including the leadership style applied by the leader and the readiness and maturity of subordinates in carrying out the direction and instructions of the leader (Wahjono, 2010). This study reveals that leadership raises awareness to interact positively between leaders and subordinates.

## CONCLUSION

Leadership has many styles and one of them is situational style. Situational leadership has indicators of telling, selling, participating, and delegating. Based on the results of the study, one of the four indicators does not work well, namely the telling indicator, which is related to directing or explaining work to subordinates in detail. It means that the head of village has not been able to explain and direct his subordinates each of their duties in detail. Overall, it can be concluded that the situational leadership of the head of Uemalingkuvillage, Ratolindo Sub-district, Tojo Una-Una District is quite effective and it can affect the subordinate's level of motivation in carrying out public services to the community.

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