The Influence of Leadership and Discipline on the Performance of Military Personnel at Satlinlamil Surabaya

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Abstract : This study investigates the impact of leadership and discipline on the performance of military personnel at Satlinlamil Surabaya. Frequent rotations of department heads with differing leadership styles create transitional challenges that affect personnel performance. Additionally, a decline in discipline is observed among personnel nearing retirement and those living near their workplace, further affecting overall effectiveness. Using a mixed-methods approach that integrates quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews, the study examines how these factors influence operational outcomes. Key findings highlight the critical role of consistent leadership in fostering trust and productivity, as well as the importance of maintaining discipline to ensure organizational cohesion. Recommendations include structured leadership development programs, mentoring systems, and the integration of advanced performance monitoring tools to address these challenges. These findings contribute to a broader understanding of leadership and discipline dynamics in hierarchical organizations and offer practical solutions for enhancing military performance.

Keywords: Leadership, Discipline, Performance, Organizational Management

INTRODUCTION

In military organizations, leadership and discipline serve as foundational pillars for achieving operational success. Leadership provides strategic direction, motivates personnel, and aligns individual responsibilities with overarching organizational goals. Discipline ensures that personnel maintain order, adhere to rules, and execute their duties within the structured framework required for military operations. These two elements are interdependent: effective leadership cultivates a culture of discipline, while discipline reinforces the authority and credibility of leaders. Together, they shape the performance and readiness of military units.

Satlinlamil Surabaya, a crucial component of Indonesia's naval logistics system, exemplifies the importance of leadership and discipline in maintaining military effectiveness. However, the institution faces significant challenges that underscore the complexities of these dynamics. One prominent issue is the periodic rotation of department heads, a common practice in military organizations aimed at fostering professional development and broadening leadership experiences. While such transitions bring fresh perspectives and innovation, they

often disrupt established routines and relationships. Personnel must adapt to differing leadership styles, which can lead to temporary inefficiencies, miscommunication, and decreased morale during the adjustment period.

Table 1. Length of service and Distance from Residence personel

Length of service	Persenct	Distance from residence	Persent
0 s/d 7 year	8,38%	0-20	24,62%
8 s/d 15 year	16,17%	21-50	39,20%
16 s/d 23 year	56,29%	51-100	12,06 %
24 s/d 31year	16,77%	100-150	14.07%
>32 year	2,40%	>150	10,05%

Another critical challenge is the decline in discipline observed among personnel nearing retirement. These individuals often experience a shift in priorities, focusing on personal or post-retirement plans rather than their immediate duties. This phenomenon is particularly evident among personnel who live near their workplace, as proximity can foster a more relaxed approach to punctuality and compliance. The interplay of these factors creates a complex environment in which both leadership and discipline directly influence performance outcomes.

The relationship between leadership, discipline, and performance has been extensively explored in organizational studies. Transformational leadership, as conceptualized by (Bass, 1990), emphasizes the role of leaders in inspiring and motivating subordinates to exceed expectations. This leadership style fosters trust, enhances morale, and drives collective achievement. In contrast, transactional leadership, which focuses on rewards and punishments, may be less effective in cultivating long-term commitment and discipline (Northouse, 2014). In military contexts, where discipline is a cornerstone of effectiveness, the ability of leaders to instill and sustain a disciplined culture is critical.

The unique challenges faced by Satlinlamil Surabaya provide an opportunity to examine the interplay of these variables in a real-world setting. By analyzing the impact of leadership transitions and discipline on military personnel performance, this study seeks to contribute actionable insights that can inform organizational strategies. The research also aims to bridge gaps in the existing literature by focusing on the specific context of a hierarchical military organization in Indonesia.

This study is structured into several key sections. The literature review provides a theoretical foundation, exploring previous research on leadership, discipline, and performance. The methodology outlines the mixed-methods approach used to collect and analyze data, combining quantitative surveys with qualitative interviews for a comprehensive understanding. The findings section presents the results, highlighting key patterns and relationships. Finally, the discussion contextualizes these findings within the broader literature, offering practical recommendations for enhancing leadership effectiveness and reinforcing discipline. By addressing these challenges, Satlinlamil Surabaya can strengthen its operational readiness and achieve sustained success in its strategic objectives.

Literature Review

The relationship between leadership and performance has been extensively studied across various organizational settings, including the military. (Bass, 1990) introduced the concept of transformational leadership, which emphasizes inspiring and motivating subordinates to exceed expectations. Transformational leadership has been shown to foster trust, improve morale, and enhance overall performance (Dionne et al., 2004). In contrast, transactional leadership, which focuses on rewards and punishments, may be less effective in promoting long-term commitment and discipline (Northouse, 2014)

Discipline is a cornerstone of military effectiveness. According to (Girsang, 2019) discipline entails strict adherence to rules, regulations, and standards, ensuring the smooth functioning of an organization. In the military, discipline is not only a matter of individual responsibility but also a collective imperative that impacts unit cohesion and operational success. Studies have highlighted that personnel nearing retirement often experience a decline in discipline due to a shift in priorities and reduced motivation ((Prasetyo et al., 2021).

Leadership transitions pose significant challenges in hierarchical organizations. (Yukl, 2013) argued that consistent leadership practices are essential for maintaining organizational stability. Frequent changes in leadership can disrupt established routines and erode trust, particularly when new leaders bring differing management styles. (Schein & Schein, 2017) emphasized the role of organizational culture in mitigating these effects, suggesting that a strong culture of accountability and mutual respect can facilitate smoother transitions and sustain performance.

Participative leadership has emerged as a critical factor in improving personnel performance. By involving subordinates in decision-making processes, leaders can enhance their commitment and sense of belonging (Prasetyo et al., 2021). This approach aligns with findings from studies on transformational leadership, which highlight the importance of empowering individuals to achieve organizational goals (Dionne et al., 2004)

Technological advancements also offer opportunities to address leadership and discipline challenges. (Pawar & Dhumal, 2024) highlighted the potential of advanced communication technology to bridge gaps during transitions, ensuring that teamwork and management practices remain smooth, connected, and informed while adapting to leadership transitions. (Wilder et al., 2021) argued that technology could be leveraged to monitor and evaluate performance, reinforcing discipline and accountability. In military settings, these tools can provide real-time feedback, enabling leaders to address issues proactively and maintain operational efficiency.

The interplay between leadership, discipline, and performance is further influenced by external factors such as organizational policies, training programs, and incentives. (Girsang, 2019) emphasized the importance of aligning these factors with organizational objectives to create a cohesive and motivated workforce. In the context of Satlinlamil Surabaya, addressing the challenges of leadership transitions and declining discipline requires a holistic approach that considers these interconnected elements.

This literature review highlights the critical role of leadership and discipline in shaping organizational performance, providing a foundation for the analysis of their impact on military personnel at Satlinlamil Surabaya. The subsequent sections detail the methodology and findings of the study, offering insights into the practical implications of these dynamics.

METHOD

This study adopts a mixed-methods approach, integrating both quantitative and qualitative methods to provide a comprehensive analysis of the influence of leadership and discipline on the performance of military personnel at Satlinlamil Surabaya.

Research Design

The study utilizes a descriptive research design to explore and analyze the relationships between leadership, discipline, and performance. The design is suitable for capturing both the breadth and depth of the research problem, allowing for a detailed examination of the factors influencing performance outcomes in a military setting.

Sampling Method

The research sample consists of 50 personnel from Satlinlamil Surabaya, selected through a random purposive sampling technique. This method ensures that the sample includes individuals with diverse experiences and backgrounds relevant to the study, while also focusing on personnel who are actively engaged in leadership and discipline-related challenges. By balancing randomness with purposeful selection, the study minimizes selection bias while capturing a representative snapshot of the population.

Data Collection

1. Primary Data. Primary data were collected through structured questionnaires distributed to the 50 participants. The questionnaire was carefully designed to measure key variables:
   a. Leadership Effectiveness: Assessed using questions related to the clarity of communication, motivational practices, and decision-making capabilities of current leaders.
   b. Discipline Levels: Measured through items evaluating punctuality, adherence to organizational rules, and commitment to responsibilities.
   c. Performance Outcomes: Captured through self-reported productivity levels, quality of task completion, and overall contribution to team goals.

   Each item in the questionnaire utilized a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). This scaling method allows for the quantification of subjective perceptions, enabling statistical analysis of the relationships between variables.

2. Secondary Data

   Secondary data were obtained from a variety of sources, including:
   a. Peer-reviewed journals on military leadership and organizational discipline.
   b. Policy documents and internal reports from Satlinlamil Surabaya.
   c. International studies on leadership dynamics and performance in hierarchical organizations.

   These data provided a theoretical foundation for the study and contextualized the primary findings within a broader framework.

3. Qualitative Data

   To complement the quantitative analysis, semi-structured interviews were conducted with a subset of 10 participants from the initial sample. These participants were selected based on their rank, tenure, and involvement in leadership transitions. The interviews explored topics such as:
   a. Challenges experienced during leadership changes.
   b. Perceived factors contributing to disciplinary issues.
   c. Suggestions for improving performance within the organization.

   The qualitative data enriched the study by uncovering nuanced perspectives that may not be captured in the questionnaire.

Data Analisys

1. Quantitative Analysis

   The quantitative data were analyzed using statistical software. The analysis included:
   a. Descriptive Statistics: To summarize the demographic profile of participants and the distribution of responses.
   b. Correlation Analysis: To examine the strength and direction of relationships between leadership, discipline, and performance.
   c. Regression Analysis: To identify the extent to which leadership and discipline predict performance outcomes.

2. Qualitative Analysis
   The qualitative data were analyzed thematically, following these steps:
   a. Transcribing the interview recordings.
   b. Identifying recurring patterns and themes related to leadership, discipline, and performance.
   c. Cross-referencing qualitative findings with quantitative results to ensure consistency and validity.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval was obtained prior to data collection. Participants were informed about the study's purpose, assured of confidentiality, and provided with the option to withdraw at any time. Consent forms were signed by all participants to ensure informed participation.

Limitations

While the mixed-methods approach provides a robust framework, the study is limited by its relatively small sample size, which may affect the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, self-reported data may introduce bias, as participants may provide socially desirable responses. These limitations are acknowledged and addressed through methodological triangulation and careful interpretation of results.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Results

Leadership and performance

The results of the questionnaire revealed a significant relationship between leadership effectiveness and the performance of military personnel. Respondents who rated their leaders highly in terms of communication clarity, motivational strategies, and decision-making reported better performance outcomes. Specifically, 78% of respondents indicated that clear communication and transparent decision-making by leaders improved their focus and efficiency in task execution. Conversely, personnel experiencing inconsistent leadership transitions reported feelings of uncertainty, which negatively affected their productivity.

The semi-structured interviews further highlighted the challenges posed by frequent leadership changes. Several respondents noted that the periodic rotation of department heads disrupted team cohesion, as new leaders often brought different management styles that required time for adjustment. While some participants viewed these changes as opportunities for growth, the majority expressed concerns about the lack of continuity in leadership approaches, which they felt hindered long-term goal achievement.

Discipline and Performance

The analysis also revealed a strong correlation between discipline levels and performance outcomes. Personnel who consistently adhered to military regulations and displayed high levels of punctuality and responsibility reported better task completion rates and overall efficiency. Approximately 82% of respondents agreed that discipline played a central role in maintaining operational readiness and achieving organizational goals.

However, the data also pointed to a decline in discipline among personnel nearing retirement. About 64% of respondents identified a shift in priorities among these individuals, with many focusing more on personal matters than on their professional responsibilities. This trend was further exacerbated by the proximity of their residences to their workplace, which contributed to a relaxed approach to punctuality and compliance with regulations.

Combined Influence of Leadership and Discipline

The regression analysis indicated that leadership and discipline together accounted for 65% of the variance in performance outcomes. This finding underscores the interconnected nature of these variables, where effective leadership fosters a disciplined environment that, in turn, enhances performance. Participants emphasized the importance of leaders in setting expectations and modeling disciplined behavior, which motivated personnel to follow suit.

Discussion

Leadership and Organizational Dynamics

The findings align with (Bass, 1990) theory of transformational leadership, which emphasizes the role of inspiring and motivating subordinates to achieve their best performance. Leaders at Satlinlamil Surabaya who demonstrated transformational qualities—such as clear communication and empathy—were found to be more effective in maintaining morale and driving productivity. This observation is consistent with (Dionne et al., 2004) assertion that transformational leaders foster trust and commitment among their teams.

However, the challenges associated with frequent leadership transitions echo (Yukl, 2013) argument about the need for consistency in leadership practices. The disruptions caused by differing leadership styles highlight the importance of organizational culture in mitigating transitional challenges. (Schein & Schein, 2017) emphasis on cultivating a culture of accountability and mutual respect is particularly relevant in this context, as it can help sustain performance despite changes in leadership.

Discipline as a Pillar of Military Performance

The role of discipline in military effectiveness has been well-documented in the literature. Girsang (2019) emphasized that strict adherence to regulations, as observed in their study, demonstrates a strong correlation between commitment, organizational culture, and worker performance. The results of this research support this perspective, showing that disciplined personnel are more likely to achieve higher performance levels. However, the observed decline in discipline among personnel nearing retirement reflects (Prasetyo et al., 2021) findings, which identified shifting priorities as a common challenge in this demographic.

To address this issue, targeted interventions such as mentoring programs and structured retirement planning workshops could be implemented. These initiatives can help maintain engagement and discipline among personnel in their final years of service, ensuring that their contributions remain valuable to the organization.

Practical Implications and Technological Interventions

The integration of technological tools, as highlighted by (MSS Defence, 2024), offers promising solutions to the challenges identified in this study. Advanced communication platforms can facilitate smoother leadership transitions by ensuring that personnel remain informed and aligned with organizational goals. Additionally, performance monitoring systems can provide real-time feedback, reinforcing accountability and discipline.

The study also underscores the importance of participative leadership in fostering a sense of belonging and commitment among personnel. Leaders who actively involve their teams in decision-making processes, as suggested by (Prasetyo et al., 2021), can enhance morale and create a more cohesive working environment.

Alignment with Literature

The findings of this study are consistent with existing literature on the interplay between leadership, discipline, and performance. Transformational leadership theories and studies on discipline in hierarchical organizations provide a strong theoretical foundation for interpreting

the results. Moreover, the practical challenges observed at Satlinlamil Surabaya resonate with broader organizational dynamics, highlighting the universal relevance of these issues in military settings.

Summary of Key Insights

The findings and discussion reveal the critical role of effective leadership and discipline in shaping military performance. While the challenges of leadership transitions and declining discipline are significant, they can be addressed through targeted interventions, such as leadership training, mentoring programs, and technological innovations. By aligning organizational strategies with the principles of transformational leadership and disciplined practice, military institutions can enhance their operational efficiency and achieve sustained success.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study underscore the critical roles of leadership and discipline in shaping the performance of military personnel at Satlinlamil Surabaya. The analysis reveals that effective leadership, characterized by clear communication, motivational strategies, and consistent decision-making, significantly enhances personnel performance. However, frequent leadership transitions pose a challenge by disrupting established routines and requiring personnel to adapt to differing management styles. This disruption highlights the need for stability and continuity in leadership practices to sustain long-term organizational effectiveness.

Discipline is equally pivotal in maintaining operational efficiency. High levels of punctuality, adherence to regulations, and a commitment to responsibilities are directly correlated with improved performance outcomes. However, the study identifies a decline in discipline among personnel nearing retirement, attributed to shifting priorities and a relaxed approach to responsibilities due to proximity to their residences. This decline presents a critical challenge for military organizations, as it affects the overall cohesion and readiness of the unit.

The interplay between leadership and discipline further emphasizes their combined influence on performance. Effective leaders not only model disciplined behavior but also establish an environment where discipline is valued and reinforced. Conversely, a lack of discipline among personnel can undermine leadership authority and hinder organizational goals. The findings suggest that addressing challenges related to leadership transitions and declining discipline requires a holistic approach, integrating leadership training, participative decision-making, and structured mentoring programs.

This study also highlights the potential of technological innovations to address the challenges identified. Advanced communication platforms can facilitate smoother leadership transitions, ensuring personnel remain informed and aligned with organizational objectives. Performance monitoring tools can reinforce accountability and discipline, providing real-time feedback that enables proactive intervention.

In comparison to the literature, the findings align with transformational leadership theories and established studies on discipline in hierarchical organizations. The challenges observed at Satlinlamil Surabaya resonate with broader organizational dynamics, emphasizing the universal relevance of effective leadership and disciplined practices. Practical recommendations include investing in leadership development programs, implementing performance evaluation systems, and fostering a culture of accountability and mutual respect.

While this study provides valuable insights, it is limited by its relatively small sample size and reliance on self-reported data, which may introduce bias. Future research could expand the sample size, include longitudinal studies to track performance over time, and explore

additional variables such as organizational culture and external factors influencing performance.

In conclusion, leadership and discipline are foundational to the performance of military personnel. By addressing the challenges of leadership transitions and declining discipline, military organizations can enhance their operational efficiency and achieve sustained success. The insights from this study contribute to the broader understanding of these dynamics, offering practical strategies for improving performance in similar organizational contexts.

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