

THE ROLE AND IMPACT OF FOLLOWERSHIP IN LEADERSHIP

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ABSTRACT

Introduction/Main Objective: Effective leadership not only depends on the quality of the leader, but also on the role and contribution of followers who support and strengthen that leadership. **Problem Background:** The concept of followership, which refers to the behavior, attitudes, and contributions of followers in supporting and criticizing the leader, plays an important role in the success or failure of leadership; however, it is often overlooked in management and organization studies. **Research Method:** Through a qualitative research approach and data collection from various library sources, this article presents an in-depth analysis of the role and impact of followership in leadership. **Results:** Followership has a very important role in supporting and increasing leadership effectiveness. The positive impacts of followership include increasing leadership effectiveness, encouraging innovation and creativity, increasing communication and transparency, developing a positive organizational culture, as well as increasing team performance and organizational adaptability. **Conclusion:** Thus, followership is an essential key component in effective leadership dynamics, which contributes significantly to the overall success and performance of an organization.

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1. Introduction

Leadership has long been a central focus in management and organizational studies, with much research highlighting the qualities and characteristics of effective leaders. However, the concept of followership is often overlooked, even though followers play an important role in the success or failure of leadership.

Followership refers to the behavior, attitudes, and contributions of someone who follows a leader (Mary Uhl-Bien, 2014). Followers not only act as recipients of orders, but also as active contributors who support, criticize, and even influence the leader. In many organizations, effective followers can strengthen leadership through their support, providing constructive feedback, and assisting in strategic decision making (Duryat, 2021).

In recent decades, attention to followership has increased along with the recognition that successful leadership requires close collaboration between leaders and followers (Budiarto, 2005).

Traditional leader-centered leadership models have been criticized for not leaving enough room for follower contributions. Research shows that successful leaders are those who are able to build relationships of mutual trust and respect with their followers (Rini, 2006).

The dynamics of the relationship between leaders and followers are becoming increasingly complex in a rapidly changing and highly competitive business environment. Globalization, technology and demographic changes have changed the way organizations operate. In this context, followers' ability to adapt, innovate and work collaboratively with leaders becomes increasingly important. Therefore, understanding the role and impact of followership in leadership can provide valuable insights for improving organizational effectiveness.

The literature on followership shows that there are various types of followers with different characteristics, ranging from passive followers to proactive followers. Passive followers tend to wait for direction from the leader and do not take much initiative, while proactive followers are more involved in the decision-making process and contribute actively (Timotus, 2016). Variations in these follower types can influence leadership dynamics and organizational outcomes.

In many cases, leaders' success is often linked to their ability to recognize and harness the potential of their followers. Leaders who are able to inspire and motivate followers to achieve common goals can create a productive and harmonious work environment. Conversely, a leader's inability to understand followers' needs and expectations can lead to conflict, dissatisfaction, and reduced performance (Wahjoedi, 2021).

Studies on followership also highlight the importance of developing follower skills. Many organizations now recognize that leadership training must include the development of followership skills. By providing appropriate training, organizations can create more competent followers, which in turn can support more effective leadership.

Apart from that, followership has important implications in the context of ethics and responsibility. Followers who have the integrity and courage to challenge a leader's unethical decisions can play a key role in maintaining the integrity of the organization (Tuhumury, 2022). Therefore, understanding the dynamics of followership can help organizations build a strong ethical culture.

Research on followership also provides insight into how followers can influence innovation and change in organizations. Followers who dare to put forward new ideas and challenge the status quo can encourage leaders to explore new opportunities and take the risks necessary for innovation (Burak OC & Michael R Bashshur, 2013).

However, although more and more research recognizes the importance of followership, there are still many aspects that are not fully understood. For example, how cultural context influences followership dynamics and what role technology plays in facilitating or hindering followers' contributions. These questions show that there is still much that needs to be researched to get a more complete picture of followership in leadership.

Additionally, gaps in the literature also point to the need for an interdisciplinary approach in followership studies. Combining perspectives from psychology, sociology, management, and communication science can provide a more holistic understanding of the role and impact of followership.

By understanding the role and impact of followership in leadership, organizations can develop more effective strategies to facilitate productive collaboration between leaders and followers. This

will not only improve organizational performance but also create a more inclusive and empowering work environment.

In conclusion, research on followership is an important aspect that is often overlooked in leadership studies. Followers are not passive actors in leadership dynamics, but are active contributors who can influence the success or failure of leadership. Therefore, in-depth research on the role and impact of followership is essential to enrich one's understanding of leadership and to increase organizational effectiveness.

Based on the background of the problem, the problem formulation for this research is 1) How does the role of followership influence leadership effectiveness in the organization?; 2) What is the impact of different types of followership on leader-follower relationships and organizational performance?

2. Literature Review

2.1 Previous Research

In research conducted by Christine Winstinindah Sandroto (2018) entitled Followers' Ability to Influence Leaders. In this research, the results show that followership style is categorized into 2 dimensions, namely: 1. Independent, critical thinking and dependent, uncritical thinking (independent, critical thinking and dependent, not critical thinking) 2. Active and passive (active and passive behavior of follower). Based on these 2 dimensions, 5 styles of followership are obtained, namely: Alienated follower, Passive follower, Conformist, Effective follower, and Pragmatic survivor. Followers can influence leaders with tactics that can be used ranging from the most popular to the least popular as follows: reason, coalition, bargaining, assertiveness, and higher authority. The follower's status determines his ability to influence the leader. The sources of follower power are personal sources and position sources (Sandroto, 2018).

In research by Sajjad Nawaz Khan, Siti Mariam Abdullah and Abdul Halim Busari (2019) entitled "The Role Of Followership Dimensions In Shaping Transformational Leadership Behavior; Mediating Role Of Trust In Leadership". The results of this research show that the followership dimensions (active involvement and independent critical thinking) have a positive effect on the four transformational leadership constructs (ideal influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration). In addition, trust in leadership partially mediates the direct relationship between followership dimensions and transformational leadership constructs (Sajjad Nawaz Khan, Siti Mariam Abdullah & Abdul Halim Busari, 2020).

2.2 Landasan Teori

1. Leadership

Leadership is the process of influencing and motivating other people to achieve common goals (Duryat, 2021). Leadership involves the ability to direct, inspire, and manage a team or organization in an effective manner. Leaders use a variety of styles and approaches to achieve the organization's vision and mission, and ensure that team members feel supported and motivated to provide their best performance.

At its core, leadership involves effective communication. Leaders must be able to convey vision, goals and expectations clearly to team members (Syahril, 2019). This communication is not just one-way, but also involves listening to feedback from team members and adjusting the approach based on changing needs and situations. Good leadership creates an environment

where team members feel valued and heard, which in turn improves performance and job satisfaction (Duryat, 2021).

Apart from that, leadership also involves making wise decisions. Leaders are often faced with complex situations and must make decisions that will affect the direction of the organization. Effective decision making requires careful analysis, consideration of alternatives, and the ability to take calculated risks (Potu, 2013). Good leaders are able to manage uncertainty and provide clear direction even in difficult situations.

Leadership also includes developing others. Leaders are responsible for identifying and nurturing talent within their teams (Duryat, 2021). This can include providing training, mentoring, and career development opportunities. Effective leaders understand that the long-term success of an organization depends on the ability to develop future leaders and ensure that team members have the skills and knowledge necessary to thrive.

Finally, leadership involves integrity and ethics. Leaders must be good examples for team members, demonstrating values such as honesty, transparency, and responsibility. Integrity in leadership builds trust and credibility, which is critical to long-term success. Leaders who adhere to ethical principles will create a positive organizational culture, where all members feel motivated to work well and achieve common goals (Hidayat, 2019).

2. Followership

Followership is a concept that refers to the roles, behaviors, and attitudes played by followers in their relationship with a leader (Tarigan, 2019). In leadership studies, followership is often considered as important as leadership itself, because followers have a significant influence on the dynamics and effectiveness of leadership. Followers are not just recipients of orders, but also active contributors who can support, criticize, and even influence the leader.

Followers can be classified into various types based on their behavior and attitudes. For example, passive followers tend to wait for directions without taking much initiative, while proactive followers are more involved in the decision-making process and contribute initiative (Thendra, 2014). Other types of followers include conformist followers who tend to follow directions without much question, alienated followers who are critical of the leader but do not engage actively, and pragmatic followers who adjust to the situation.

Followership involves dynamic interactions between leaders and followers. This relationship is based on trust, effective communication, and mutual understanding. Effective followers can influence the leader's leadership style and decisions, creating a constructive, reciprocal relationship (Budiarto, 2005). In this context, followership skills include the ability to support leaders, provide constructive feedback, work collaboratively, and show initiative.

The impact of followership on team and organizational performance is very significant. Committed and motivated followers can increase organizational productivity and effectiveness. Conversely, unmotivated or unsupportive followers can become a barrier to successful leadership and achievement of organizational goals (Tuhumury, 2022). Therefore, many organizations now recognize the importance of developing followership skills through training and professional development programs.

Followership also involves ethical responsibilities. Followers who have the integrity and courage to challenge a leader's unethical decisions can play a key role in maintaining the integrity and reputation of the organization (Burak OC & Michael R Bashshur, 2013). They must have the courage to speak up and take action when necessary. In an ever-changing and

evolving work environment, adaptive and innovative followers can help organizations face the challenges of globalization, technological change, and competitive market dynamics. (Mary Uhl-Bien, 2014). Thus, understanding and developing followership is a key aspect to achieving effective leadership and long-term success.

3. Method, Data, and Analysis

This research is a type of library research, namely research whose object of study uses library data in the form of books as the data source. (Hadi, 2002). This research was carried out by reading, studying and analyzing various existing literature, in the form of hadith, books and the results of previous research.

In this research, the author uses a qualitative research approach, namely systematic research used to study or research an object in a natural setting without any manipulation and without testing hypotheses.

In this research, researchers used two types of data, namely primary data and secondary data. Primary data is data obtained directly from research subjects using measurement tools or data return tools directly on the subjects as the source of the information sought. The primary data used is the results of previous research on the psychology of teamwork.

Secondary data is data obtained from other parties, not obtained by researchers from their research subjects (Anwar, 2001). To obtain secondary data, this is done through literature study which contains information about primary, especially library materials, through literature from library books, scientific works. Secondary data used are books, journals and the internet which contain the influence of psychology on teamwork and matters that are relevant to the problems that are the object of research study.

Data collection techniques are methods used to collect information or facts in the field (Prastowo, 2016). The data collection technique used by researchers is the library research method, namely library study. The library method is research carried out by reading books or magazines with other data sources in the library.

Data analysis is the process of arranging the sequence of data, organizing it into patterns, categories and basic sequential units. The data analysis technique used in this research is a descriptive method, namely research that seeks to describe and interpret what exists, opinions that are growing, ongoing processes, consequences or effects that occur or trends that develop. (Sumanto, 2014).

4. Result and Discussion

In the world of leadership and organizations, the focus is often on leaders and their leadership qualities. However, behind every successful leader, there are followers who play an important role in achieving common goals. Followership, or the active role of followers in supporting the leader and achieving common goals, is an important aspect that is often overlooked in leadership dynamics.

However, leadership roles have more glamor and attention, although the reality is that most of us are more often followers than leaders. Even when we have subordinates, we still have superiors. For every committee we chair, we sit as members on several other committees.

The role of followership in leadership is very important and has various dimensions that contribute to leadership effectiveness and success. The following are some of the main roles of followership in leadership:

1) Support the leader

Followers play a crucial role in supporting the leader's vision and mission. They help execute established strategies, ensuring that organizational goals are achieved. Effective followers will provide logistical, moral, and operational support to the leader (Duryat, 2021), allows leaders to focus on strategic decision making and development of long-term direction.

2) Provide Constructive Feedback

Effective followership involves providing honest and constructive feedback to leaders (Tarigan, 2019). Active followers provide perspectives and insights that may not be visible to the leader. This helps leaders make better and more informed decisions. This feedback is critical in preventing errors and improving the quality of decisions and policies.

3) Show Initiative

Proactive followers not only wait for orders, but also show initiative by identifying problems, proposing solutions, and taking necessary actions to improve the situation (Muis, 2021). These initiatives are especially important in dynamic and rapidly changing situations, where leaders may not always be able to oversee all operational details.

4) Creating a Collaborative Culture

Followers play a role in creating a collaborative and inclusive organizational culture (Dheawati, 2006). They work together with their peers and with leaders to achieve common goals. This collaboration creates a positive work environment where ideas can flourish and all team members feel valued and heard. Followers who collaborate well help minimize conflict and increase team productivity.

5) Strengthen Trust and Communication

Good followership involves building and strengthening trust between followers and leaders. Effective and open communication is the foundation of a relationship (Saleh, 2016). Transparent and communicative followers help create an environment where information can flow freely, and leaders can make decisions based on accurate and complete data. This trust also ensures that followers feel safe to express their ideas and concerns.

6) Uphold Ethics and Integrity

Followers have an ethical responsibility to uphold moral standards and integrity within the organization. They must have the courage to challenge leaders' decisions or actions that are unethical or violate organizational values. By doing this, retainers help maintain the reputation and integrity of the organization, as well as ensuring that all actions taken are aligned with ethical principles (Muis, 2021).

7) Support Leader Development

Followers also play a role in supporting leader development. By providing constructive feedback and consistent support, followers help leaders grow and develop in their roles (Budiarto, 2005). Followers who are actively involved in the organizational learning process help create a culture of continuous learning, where both leaders and followers can continue to develop.

Overall, followership is a very important element in leadership. Effective followers not only support the leader, but also actively contribute to the success of the organization through the

various roles they play (Hidayat, 2019). By understanding and developing followership, organizations can create a more harmonious, productive and ethical environment.

The impact of followership on leadership is significant and varied, influencing various aspects from leadership effectiveness to overall organizational performance. The following are some of the main impacts of followership in leadership:

1) Increase Leadership Effectiveness

Good followership can increase leadership effectiveness by providing the necessary support, both operationally and strategically (Burak OC & Michael R Bashshur, 2013). Competent and dedicated followers help leaders focus on strategic decision making and developing a long-term vision, while they handle implementation and operational details. This support allows leaders to operate more efficiently and effectively.

2) Encourage Innovation and Creativity

Followers who are proactive and dare to provide feedback and propose new ideas can encourage innovation and creativity in the organization (Potu, 2013). An environment where followers feel valued and listened to tends to be more innovative, because team members feel free to put forward their ideas without fear of rejection or unconstructive criticism. This innovation is very important for organizational adaptation and growth amidst ever-changing market dynamics.

3) Improve Communication and Transparency

Effective followership strengthens communication and transparency in the organization. Followers who communicate openly and honestly with leaders help ensure that the necessary information is available for informed decision making (Wahjoedi, 2021). This transparency also helps build trust between leaders and followers, which in turn improves team collaboration and coordination.

4) Developing a Positive Organizational Culture

Followers who take an active role in supporting leaders and their coworkers help build a positive organizational culture (Duryat, 2021). This culture is characterized by cooperation, mutual respect, and commitment to common goals. A positive culture not only improves employee morale and motivation, but also contributes to employee retention and the organization's appeal as a great place to work.

5) Guarantee Ethics and Integrity Compliance

Followers who have a high ethical awareness can act as moral watchdogs in the organization, ensuring that the leader's actions and decisions conform to the organization's ethical standards and values. (Duryat, 2021). Followers' courage to challenge unethical decisions helps maintain the integrity of the organization and prevents scandals or unethical behavior that could damage the organization's reputation.

6) Improve Team Performance

Committed and actively engaged followers can improve overall team performance. Followers who work well together, share information, and support each other help teams achieve goals more effectively and efficiently. This high team performance has a positive impact on overall organizational performance, helping to achieve strategic targets and objectives (Dheawati, 2006).

7) Increase Organizational Adaptability

Flexible and adaptive retainers can help organizations navigate change and challenges (Dheawati, 2006). In a dynamic and rapidly changing business environment, the ability to adapt quickly is critical. Followers who are ready to embrace change and support leaders in the adaptation process help organizations stay competitive and relevant.

8) Increase Welfare and Job Satisfaction

Followers who feel valued and recognized for their contributions tend to have higher levels of job satisfaction. High job satisfaction contributes to employee well-being, reduces stress levels, and increases loyalty. Employees who are satisfied with their jobs are more likely to provide good performance and support organizational goals (Thendra, 2014).

9) Strengthen Leader-Follower Relationships

Good followership strengthens the relationship between leaders and followers (Rini, 2006). These strong, trusting relationships create a harmonious work environment where leaders and followers can work together effectively to achieve common goals. This positive relationship also reduces conflict and increases cooperation within the team.

Thus, followership plays a key role in determining leadership success and organizational performance. The positive impact of followership can be felt in various aspects, from leadership effectiveness to employee well-being, making it an essential component in effective leadership dynamics.

5. Conclusion and Suggestion

Followership has a very important role in supporting and increasing leadership effectiveness. Effective followers not only support the leader by executing strategy and providing logistical, moral, and operational support, but also contribute through constructive feedback, initiative, and the creation of a collaborative culture. Additionally, followers strengthen trust and communication, enforce ethics and integrity, and support leader development.

The positive impacts of followership include increasing leadership effectiveness, encouraging innovation and creativity, increasing communication and transparency, developing a positive organizational culture, as well as increasing team performance and organizational adaptability. Followers who feel valued and recognized also contribute to higher well-being and job satisfaction, strengthen the relationship between leaders and followers, and ensure compliance with ethical and integrity standards.

Thus, followership is an essential key component in effective leadership dynamics, which contributes significantly to the overall success and performance of an organization.

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