

## Work Motivation As A Mediator of The Influence of Employee Competence and Democratic Leadership Style on the Performance of Employees of the Mojokerto City Regional Secretariat Office

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p><b>Keywords:</b> competence, democratic leadership style, motivation, performance.</p>	<p>This study aims to analyze the influence of: (1) employee competence on work motivation, 2) democratic leadership style on work motivation , (3) employee competence on employee performance, (4) democratic leadership style on employee performance, (5) work motivation on employee performance, (6) employee competence on employee performance through work motivation, (7) democratic leadership style to employee performance through work motivation. Using an explanatory research approach, this research was conducted at the Mojokerto City Regional Secretariat Office in April-August 2023. The population is 108 civil servants in the Office. The sample was determined by saturated/census sampling technique of 108 people (excluding the author). Primary data related to research variables were obtained by giving questionnaires directly to respondents. Once the data is collected, it is analyzed using Warp PLS 8. However, validity and reliability tests were previously carried out. The results of this study prove that: (1) employee competence has a significant positive effect on work motivation, (2) democratic leadership style has a significant positive effect on work motivation, (3) employee competence has a significant positive effect on employee performance, (4) democratic leadership style has a significant positive effect on employee performance, (5) work motivation has a significant positive effect on employee performance, (6) work motivation Unable to increase the influence of employee competence on employee performance, (7) Work motivation is unable to increase the influence of democratic leadership style on employee performance.</p>

### INTRODUCTION

Good human resources are related to performance to achieve the work results of an employee, both at the individual level and work groups in an agency. A person or employee who has expertise and skills in accordance with job requirements in any application of organizational activities will definitely achieve the desired performance. On the other hand, the low quality of human resources also poses fundamental difficulties that can affect organizational performance. Low-quality human resources will be an obstacle in the era of globalization. Therefore, the quality of human resources is closely related to performance. So that discussing employee performance cannot be separated from the role of competence.

In accordance with national guidance and global challenges, to realize good governance, apparatus resources that have competence in governance are needed. Jobs began to change from knowledge-based work and human resource needs also changed towards knowledgeable workers. Therefore, simple and routine work tasks began to be replaced with jobs that emphasize innovation and attention. Single skills and skills began to be abandoned, replaced by professionalization with multiple skills, while individual assignments began to turn into team work.

The tangible manifestation of the competency principle can be seen from the efforts to assess the needs and evaluate the level of ability and professionalism of existing human resources as well as efforts to improve or

improve the quality of human resources. Without the application of the principles of professionalism and competence will cause waste in organizing the government. In improving the competence of the apparatus, competency improvement strategies need to be formulated in an effort to carry out the new paradigm of governance, namely clean government and good governance. Clean government is a demand of the current government and to implement this professionalism of the apparatus characterized by increased competence, is a prerequisite that must be possessed by Civil Servants.

In addition to the competency aspect, there is also the role of the leader which is no less important in an effort to improve employee performance. Every human being has limitations where it needs someone to complement it, so in an organization leading and being led is a necessity. Leadership is characterized as a way or individual attitude, habit, and way of influencing an individual to another individual through an interaction. A leader has his own ways and characteristics in their leadership process in an organization, therefore leadership style greatly affects the process of activities, goals, and outputs in the organization.

Furthermore, leadership style is a way used by a leader to influence the behavior of his subordinates where this leadership style aims to guide and motivate employees so that it is expected to produce high performance. Leadership style is a behavioral norm used by a person when the person tries to influence the behavior of others or subordinates (Thoha, 2020). Leaders must be able to choose a leadership style according to the existing situation, if the leadership style applied is correct and appropriate it will be able to direct the achievement of organizational and individual goals. Conversely, if the leadership style chosen is wrong and not in accordance with the existing situation, it will result in difficulty in achieving organizational goals. One form of leadership style is a democratic leadership style, the characteristics of democratic leaders are the ability of leaders to integrate organizations in the right roles and portions, more broadly explained these abilities are closely related to one's ingenuity in placing themselves in the middle, not leaning left or right and not bringing personal things into work matters that demand high professionalism, And in policy making, always prioritize discussion and deliberation that focuses on increasing active participation from subordinates.

Competence and democratic leadership style cannot be optimal if it is not associated with employee motivation at work. Motivation has an important role in changing behavior. Psychologically, motivation is a drive that can lead individuals to perform useful and useful activities. In other words, individuals get the drive to start and perform an activity in order to achieve the desired goal. There are various motivations or drives that make individuals carry out an activity, these motivations or drives vary greatly according to the needs and desires of each individual. The motive referred to here is the desire and drive or motion that exists in each individual to achieve a goal. A person who is highly motivated, he will work hard, maintain a hard work pace, and have self-controlled behavior towards important goals. Thus the high motivation that an employee has at work will result in high performance as well.

Many variables affect employee performance, including competence, democratic leadership style and motivation. This has been proven by her research, Lilacita (2022) concluded that employee competence has a significant positive effect on employee performance. Furthermore, his research Khafid (2017) concluded that democratic leadership style has a significant positive effect on work motivation.

The two researchers above, the analysis used multiple linear regression and did not pay attention to the motivation variable as a mediating variable that is thought to be able to increase the influence of bureaucratic competence and leadership style on employee performance. The inclusion of motivation variables as mediating variables with the consideration that motivation is an influential condition that generates, directs and maintains behaviors related to the work environment. Motivation is something that causes enthusiasm or work drive, so that strong or weak employee work motivation also determines performance because a person's performance depends on the strength of his motive (Rivai, 2018). Their research by Putra and Rosita (2023) proves that work motivation has a significant positive effect on employee performance. Thus, the novelty of this study is the existence of a mediating variable in the form of a motivational variable and an analysis tool in the form of Warp PLS 8.

Based on the explanation above, the novelty of this study is the existence of work motivation variables as mediating the influence of employee competence and democratic leadership style on employee performance with the data analysis tool is Warp PLS 8. Thus, the purpose of this study is to analyze the influence of: (1) employee competence on work motivation, (2) democratic leadership style on work motivation, (3) employee competence on employee performance, (4) democratic leadership style on employee performance, (5) work motivation on employee performance, (6) employee competence on employee performance through work motivation, (7) democratic leadership style on employee performance through work motivation.

## **Competence**

Competence is the ability of individuals to carry out a job correctly and have excellence based on matters concerning knowledge, expertise and attitudes (Edison, et al., 2017). There are 5 aspects of competency according to Sutrisno (2019), namely: (1) motives are something where a person consistently thinks so that he takes action. For example, people who are motivated to achieve consistently develop goals that challenge themselves and take full responsibility for achieving those goals and expect feedback to improve themselves. (b) Traits, are traits that make people behave or how a person responds to something in a certain way. For example, self-confidence, self-control, stress or fortitude. (c) self-concept, is the attitude and values that a person has. Attitudes and values are measured through tests to respondents to find out how values a person has, what attracts someone to do something. For example, someone who is considered to be a leader should have leadership behavior so there needs to be a test about leadership ability. (d) Knowledge, is information that a person has for a particular field. Knowledge is a complex competency. Scores on knowledge tests often fail to predict human resource performance because they do not measure what kind of knowledge and skills should be done on the job. Knowledge tests measure a test taker's ability to choose the most correct answer, but cannot see if a person can do the job based on their knowledge. (e) Skill is the ability to carry out a certain task either physically or mentally. For example, a desk relationship officer must have the ability to communicate and think analytically.

## **Democratic Leadership Style**

According to Fahmi (2016) Leadership is a science that comprehensively examines how to direct, influence, and supervise others to do tasks in accordance with planned orders. Rivai (2018) states that there are several characteristics that a person has in democratic leadership, including: (1). Always trying to synchronize the interests and goals of the organization with the personal interests and goals of his subordinates; happy to receive suggestions, opinions and even criticism from subordinates. (2). Always try to prioritize cooperation and teamwork in an effort to achieve goals. (3) . Sincerity gives the widest freedom to his subordinates to make mistakes which are then corrected so that subordinates no longer make the same mistakes but are more courageous to make other mistakes. (4). Always strive to make his subordinates more successful than him, (5). Trying to develop his personal capacity as a leader. In addition, democratic leaders always strive to foster a sense of kinship, unity and solidarity, and always provide encouragement and motivation to all members of the organization in carrying out and developing their workforce. (6). In order for every member of the organization to have leadership skills, a democratic leader always gives opportunities to all members of the organization by delegation of some of his power and part of his responsibilities.

## **Motivation**

Hasibuan (2019) states that motivation is the provision of driving force that creates a person's work excitement, so that they want to work together, work effectively and are integrated in all their efforts to achieve satisfaction. goals so as to create satisfaction. According to Robbin (2019) McClelland's needs theory focuses on three needs, namely achievement needs), power needs, and affinity needs. In more detail, the three needs according to McClelland will be explained as follows: (1) Need for achievement = n.Ach. The need for achievement is the driving force that motivates one's morale. The need for achievement will encourage a person to develop creativity and direct all the abilities and energy he has in order to achieve optimal work performance. Employees will be enthusiastic about high achievement, as long as the possibility for it is given the opportunity. Employees realize that only by achieving high work performance will they be able to earn a large income. With a large income, employees can finally have and meet their needs. (2) Power requirement = n.Pow. The need for power is a driving force that can motivate a person's passion for work and exert all abilities to achieve power or the best position in the organization. (c) Need for affiliation = n.Af. The need for affiliation is also a driving force that will also motivate one's enthusiasm for work. The need for affiliation will stimulate the passion of an employee, because everyone wants the need for a feeling of acceptance, a feeling of respect, a feeling of wanting to move forward and the need for a feeling of participation in the work environment. A person due to this n.Af need will motivate and develop himself and utilize all his energy to complete his tasks.

## **Performance**

Wibowo (2017), stated that Performance is an activity of managing organizational resources to achieve organizational goals. given to him. In the Government Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 46 of 2011 concerning the Assessment of Work Performance of Civil Servants, performance is "The work results achieved by each civil servant in the organizational unit are in accordance with employee work targets and work behavior. Evaluation of employee performance carried out with procedures or stages of evaluation. The general evaluation stages according to Umar (2019) are as follows: (1) Determine what will be evaluated. In business, anything that

can be evaluated, can refer to the company's work program. There are many aspects that can and need to be evaluated. However, usually the priority for evaluation is the things that are the key succes factors. (2) Design (design) evaluation activities. Before the evaluation is carried out, first determine the evaluation design so that what data is passed, who is needed, what stages of work are passed, who will be involved, and what will be produced becomes clear. (3) Data collection. Based on the design that has been prepared, data collection can be carried out effectively and efficiently, namely in accordance with applicable scientific rules and in accordance with needs and abilities. (4) Data processing and analysis. After the data is collected, the data is processed to be grouped to make it easier to analyze using appropriate analytical tools, so as to produce reliable facts. Next, compare between facts and expectations/plans to produce gaps. The size of the gap will be adjusted to certain benchmarks as the results of the evaluation are concerned, should the results of the evaluation be documented in writing and informed both orally and in writing. (5) Follow-up evaluation. Evaluation is one part of the management function. Therefore, the results of the evaluation should be used by management to make decisions in order to overcome problems

Hypothesis 1: employee competence has a significant positive effect on work motivation. This hypothesis is built from his research Wardana (2022), (Basori et al., 2017), Khafid (2017) Employee competence has a significant positive effect on work motivation, so it can be described as follows:  $X1 = > Z$

Hypothesis 2: democratic leadership style has a significant positive effect on work motivation. This hypothesis is built from their research Putra and Rosita (2023), Khafid (2017) concluded that democratic leadership style has a significant positive effect on work motivation, so it can be described as follows:  $X2 = > Z$

Hypothesis 3: employee competence has a significant positive effect on employee performance. This hypothesis is built from the research of Lilacita et al (2022), Wardana (2022), (Basori et al., 2017), Khafid (2017) concludes that employee competence has a significant positive effect on employee performance, so it can be described as follows:  $X1 = > Y$

Hypothesis 4: democratic leadership style has a significant positive effect on employee performance. This hypothesis is built from the research of Lilacita et al. (2022), Laliasa et al (2018), Ferils and Utami (2022), Dude et al (2022), Putra and Rosita (2023), Khafid (2017) concluded that democratic leadership style has a significant positive effect on employee performance, so it can be described as follows:  $X2 = > Y$

Hypothesis 5: work motivation has a significant positive effect on employee performance. This hypothesis is built from the research of Laliasa et al (2018), Ferils and Utami (2022), Wardana (2022), Dude et al (2022), (Basori et al., 2017), Putra dan Rosita (2023), Khafid (2017) concluded that work motivation has a significant positive effect on employee performance, so it can be described as follows:  $Z = > Y$

Hypothesis 6: employee competence has a significant positive effect on employee performance through work motivation. This hypothesis is built from the results of his research This hypothesis is built from his research Wardana (2022), Basori et al (2017), Khafid (2017) employee competence has a significant positive effect on work motivation, so it can be described as follows:  $X1 = > Z$ . Furthermore, the research of Laliasa et al (2018), Ferils and Utami (2022), Wardana (2022), Dude et al (2022), Basori et al (2017), Putra and Rosita (2023), Khafid (2017) concluded that work motivation has a significant positive effect to employee performance, so it can be described as follows:  $Z = > Y$ . From this explanation it can be stated that employee competence has a significant positive effect on employee performance through work motivation, So, it can be described as follows:  $X1 => Z = > Y$

Hypothesis 7: Democratic leadership style has a significant positive effect on employee performance through work motivation. This hypothesis is built from his research This hypothesis is built from his research Ariwibowo, et al (2022), Lianasari & Ahmadi (2022), Dermawan (2022), Putra and Rosita (2023), Khafid (2017) concluded that democratic leadership style has a significant positive effect on work motivation, so it can be described as follows:  $X2 = > Z$ . Furthermore, the research of Laliasa et al (2018), Ferils and Utami (2022), Wardana (2022), Dude et al (2022), Basori et al (2017), Putra and Rosita (2023), Khafid (2017) concluded that work motivation has a significant positive effect on employee performance, so it can be described as follows:  $Z = > Y$ . From this explanation, it can be stated that democratic leadership style has a significant positive effect on employee performance through work motivation, So, it can be described as follows:  $X2 => Z => Y$ .

## METHOD

This research uses an explanatory research approach, conducted at the Mojokerto City Regional Secretariat Office in April-August 2023. The population is 108 civil servants in the Office. The sample was determined by saturated/census sampling technique obtained by 108 people (excluding the author). Primary data related to

research variables were obtained by giving questionnaires directly to respondents. After the data is collected, it is analyzed using Warp PLS 8. To test the hypothesis used t-test. Further, the indicators are described as follows.  
 Employee competency indicators are measured referring to Becker and Gordon (2017)  
 Indicators of democratic leadership style measured refer to Robbins (2019)  
 Employee motivation indicators are measured referring to Mangkunegara (2016)  
 Employee performance indicators are measured referring to Sinaga (2017)

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

A summary of the results of Warp PLS 8 in Table 1 follows:

Table 1. PLS 8 Warp Results Summary

Information	koefs. standardized path	p-value (Sig value)	Knot Hipotesis
H1: X1 => Z (direct influence)	0.36	0.01	Accepted
H2: X2 => Z (direct influence)	0.45	0.01	Accepted
H3: X1 => Y (direct influence)	0.40	0.01	Accepted
H4: X2 => Y ((direct influence)	0.27	0.01	Accepted
H5: Z = > Y (direct influence)	0.23	0.01	Accepted
H6: X1 => Z => Y (indirect influence)	0.36*0.23 = 0.083 < 0.40		rejected
H7: X2 => Z => Y (indirect influence)	0.45*0.23 = 0.10 < 0.27		rejected

Source: primary data processed by researchers in 2023

Based on Table 1 above, the following can be drawn.

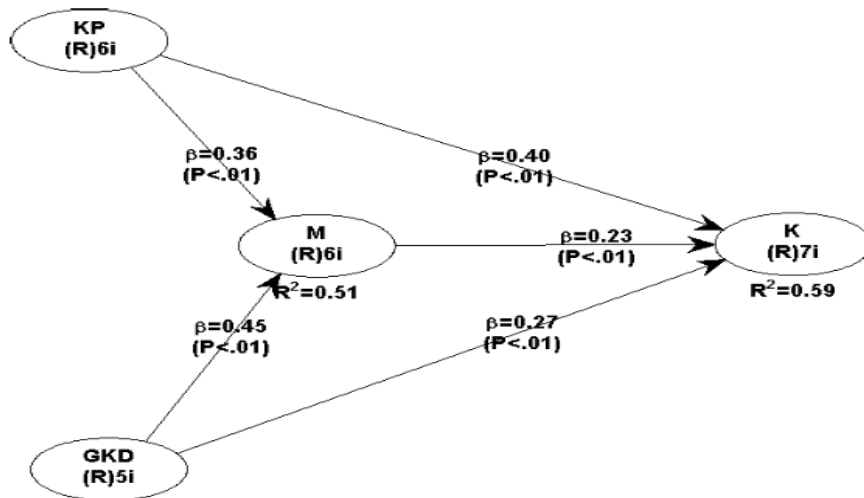


Figure 1: Research Results Model

Information:

KP : Employee Competence

GKD : Democratic Leadership Style

M : Motivation

K : Performance

Based on table 2 above, to determine whether work motivation as a mediator is determined as follows: the indirect influence coefficient  $X1 \Rightarrow Z \Rightarrow Y$  is 0.083, while the direct influence coefficient  $X1 \Rightarrow Y$  of 0.40 indicates greater than indirect influence. So, work motivation is not able to mediate/increase the influence of employee competence on employee performance. Furthermore, the indirect influence coefficient  $X2 \Rightarrow Z \Rightarrow Y$  is 0.10, while the direct influence coefficient  $X2 \Rightarrow Y$  of 0.27 indicates greater than indirect influence. Thus, work motivation is unable to mediate/increase the influence of democratic leadership styles on employee performance.

## Discussion

The results of his research prove that employee competence has a significant positive effect on work motivation, supporting his research Wardana (2022), Basori et al (2017), Khafid (2017) that employee competence has a significant positive effect on work motivation, Therefore, the existence of employee competence needs to be improved so that employee motivation also increases by carrying out things as stated by (ANANTA, 2020) as a bedrikut: (1). Training. Training is a general program to improve the competence of the workforce. The form can be in the form of training inside the company ( internal training) or outside the company ( external training). Internal training, which is also commonly called in-house training, can use trainers or instructions from the company itself or outside the company. While external training is carried out by sending employees to certain institutions or training institutions, both government and private. (2). Carry out job rotation. Job rotation is the transfer of employees to other places that have uniform tasks but have some differences that can make employees more challenged in doing their jobs. This activity needs to be tried because monotonous work has the potential to make employees bored and over time will reduce company productivity. (3). Education. Employee career development through education is generally specialized. This is intended for the best employees who are considered to need to develop their education because previous learning is not enough. For example, an employee who graduated from D3 gets an S1 course assignment so that his knowledge and skills increase. Where is the lecture? Depending on company policy. (4). Job enrichment. There is job enrichment, which is the provision of job desks and greater responsibility to employees. Companies generally provide an accumulation of system complexity as well as the quantity of the job desk itself. Thus, employees who are given new tasks and responsibilities will feel the challenge to carry them out so that their level of competence increases. (5). Promotion (promotion). A promotion can boost employee morale substantially. Of course, by getting a promotion, employees will get more jobs and responsibilities than before. However, instead of being a burden, because employee morale increases, so usually he will continue to be motivated to work better. (6). Build teamwork. By building teamwork will facilitate and accelerate the realization of industry goals. Of course, a company has employees with different people and backgrounds. From this, a team consisting of various thoughts but with good cooperation will give birth to new and creative solutions in implementing company problem solving so that individual competence can also increase. (7). Create a comfortable work area. There are several things that companies can try to make employees comfortable in their work area. One of them is to distribute sufficient facilities so that employees have the infrastructure they need to do their duties well. Not only that, a comfortable and peaceful work atmosphere can make employees last longer in a company. A supportive work atmosphere can increase a sense of belonging to the company if indeed he feels valued and has a close bond with other employees. (8). Carry out activities outside the routine. Activities such as lunch or dinner, to outings such as outbound can actually urge the creation of a willingness to improve work competence. Because with these activities, it can strengthen the bond between employees and employee bonds with superiors to be closer. So that these activities can produce good bonds and encourage employees to be more passionate at work.

The results of this study prove that democratic leadership style has a significant positive effect on work motivation, supporting his research Lianasari & Ahmadi (2022), Dermawan (2022), Putra and Rosita (2023), Khafid (2017) that democratic leadership style has a significant positive effect on work motivation, Therefore, the existence of democratic leadership style needs to be improved so that employee motivation also increases by referring to Carissa (2023) stating that To maximize the effectiveness of the democratic leadership style, it is advisable to take the following steps: (1) Invest in training. A democratic organization is only as good as its members. In other words, if your members don't know how to think critically and make good decisions, you most likely won't see positive results. It's unfair to expect everyone to magically acquire these skills, which is why training is such an important component of democratic leadership. Allow your members to take courses, receive training or mentorship, and find learning opportunities to help them grow. Most importantly, give them the time and space to practice these new skills without fear of failure. Being a democratic leader requires you to practice many skills, such as communicating, facilitating, speaking, and building relationships, among others. If you find yourself struggling in any of these areas, seek additional support. (2). Maintain neutrality. It can be tempting to guide decisions in a certain direction, especially if you feel that one option is better than the other. However, this would defeat the purpose of democratic leadership. Remember: your role is not to influence the decisions made. Your goal is to share responsibility, empower your members, then facilitate the decision-making process. Although challenging, you should establish yourself as a neutral third party. (3). Find opportunities for growth. One of the downsides of a democratic leadership style is that some people are inevitably unhappy with the final decision. Although we empathize with the desire to make everyone happy, it is not realistic. So, don't beat yourself

up when members complain about the results. Instead, use this as an opportunity to improve yourself. In addition to being dissatisfied with the results, do its members have constructive feedback to share about its leadership process or methods? It may be hard to hear, but these observations can be invaluable and helpful in perfecting his leadership style.

The results of this study prove that employee competence has a significant positive effect on employee performance. This hypothesis is built from his research Lilacita et al (2022), Wardana (2022), Basori et al (2017), Khafid (2017) concluded that employee competence has a significant positive effect on employee performance. Therefore, the existence of employee competence needs to be improved so that employee performance also increases by carrying out things as stated by Cube, (2023) as follows: (1). Identify and plan. Identify what employees need in terms of knowledge, skills, and attitudes to match the demands of the current and future job. After identifying the need, create a personal development plan for each employee. This plan should include training, self-directed learning, mentorship, and relevant work experience. (2). Create a training program. Provide formal training, seminars, workshops, or courses relevant to the demands of the job. Ensure that the training material is in accordance with the purpose of improving employee competence. In addition, encourage employees to learn independently by providing access to resources such as books, articles, video tutorials, and online learning platforms such as LMS. (3). Provide mentorship and coaching. Provide opportunities for employees to learn from individuals who have more experience in a particular field. In mentorship, mentors provide guidance, advice, and personal experience to assist employees in career development and a deeper understanding of the work environment. On the other hand, coaching involves a more process-focused approach, where coaches help employees identify goals, overcome challenges, and develop skills through directed dialogue, constructive feedback, and planning actions aimed at achieving desired outcomes. (4). Job rotation. Give employees the opportunity to undergo job rotation. This helps them understand different aspects of business and develop broader skills. Job rotation for employees has important significance in improving employees' competencies and their perspectives. By providing opportunities to work on a variety of tasks and departments, job rotations can broaden employees' understanding of the company's overall operations, enhance cross-functional skills, and promote flexibility and adaptability in the face of change. In addition, job rotation can encourage team collaboration, stimulate innovation through diverse views, and increase employee motivation and satisfaction due to new challenges and continuous learning opportunities. (5). Provide appreciation and promotion. Give appreciation and promotion to employees who have succeeded in improving their competence. This can increase their motivation to continue learning and improving. Promotions provide recognition for employees' achievements and commitment, encouraging them to continue to innovate and contribute to the maximum. Promotion not only improves the social and financial status of employees, but also expands responsibilities and opportunities to participate in strategic decision making. This creates a positive work environment, where employees feel valued and have opportunities to grow, which in turn will have a positive impact on the productivity and long-term growth of the company. (6). Build solid teamwork. Building solid teamwork has a crucial role in improving employee competence. Close collaboration and mutual support between team members encourages the exchange of valuable knowledge, experience and skills. Through effective cooperation, employees can learn from each other, overcome shared challenges, and develop innovative solutions. Collective competency improvement occurs when teams create an environment that encourages open discussion, makes room for creative ideas, and provides constructive feedback. By building strong cooperation, employees not only enrich their knowledge, but also gain deeper insights, accelerate learning, and jointly enhance capabilities that benefit the company's sustainable growth. (7). Setting up a comfortable workplace. A comfortable workplace has a significant influence on improving employee competence. A work environment that provides physical and mental comfort will increase employee productivity and motivation to learn and grow. Adequate facilities, ergonomic layout, and good technology support will help employees focus on their tasks without distractions. In addition, an inclusive and supportive work climate, where ideas and innovations are positively received, will encourage employees to actively participate in training, share knowledge, and seek opportunities to hone skills. As a result, a comfortable workplace not only creates a favorable atmosphere for individual growth, but also contributes to efforts to improve the overall competence of employees within the organization. (8). Take advantage of technology. Leverage technology to provide easy access to online learning resources, zoom webinars, e-learning platforms, and productivity tools that can help employees develop their competencies. (9). Conduct evaluations and improvements, conduct periodic evaluations of employee progress. If needed, adjust their development plan to achieve better results. Provide regular feedback to employees regarding their performance. Focus on areas that need improvement, and provide concrete guidance for improvement. (10). Measurement of Results. Determine

the metrics or indicators that will be used to measure the results of employee development efforts. This helps you see the extent to which competency improvement has occurred. Remember that every employee has different needs and learning styles, so it's important to craft an approach that suits the individual. The process of developing and improving employee competence is an ongoing journey, and needs to be done with patience and commitment.

The results of this study prove that democratic leadership style has a significant positive effect on employee performance, supporting his research Lilacita et al. (2022), Laliasa et al (2018), Ferils and Utami (2022), Dude et al (2022), Putra and Rosita (2023), Khafid (2017) concluded that democratic leadership style has a significant positive effect on employee performance, Therefore, the existence of democratic leadership style needs to be improved so that employee performance also increases by Paying attention to the factors that influence it refers to Bams (2023): (1) Characteristics of leaders. These factors include the leader's personality, beliefs, values, and outlook on democratic leadership styles. Personalities that correspond to democratic leadership, such as empathy, openness, and honesty, will help facilitate a democratic leadership style. (2) Characteristics of subordinates. These factors include the level of ability, motivation, and involvement of subordinates in the organization. Subordinates who have a high level of ability and motivation will be more accepting and able to participate in a democratic leadership style. (3) Organizational environment. These factors include organizational culture, structure, and systems. An inclusive and open environment will facilitate a democratic leadership style, while an overly formal and hierarchical environment will limit democratic leadership. (4) The purpose and mission of the organization. These factors include the vision, mission, and goals of the organization. Organizations that have clear goals and missions and focus on collaboration and subordinate participation are more receptive to democratic leadership. (5) Level of trust and communication. These factors include the level of trust between leaders and subordinates, and the quality of communication within the organization. Trust and good communication will help facilitate a democratic leadership style.

The results of this study prove that work motivation has a significant positive effect on employee performance, supporting their research Laliasa et al (2018), Ferils and Utami (2022), Wardana (2022), Dude et al (2022), Basori et al (2017), Putra and Rosita (2023), Khafid (2017) concluded that work motivation has a significant positive effect on employee performance. Therefore, the existence of work motivation needs to be improved so that the performance of the company also increases by referring to Feriani (2022) by carrying out the following: (1). Appreciate good work. The first way to increase employee motivation is the price of good work. Recognition becomes an important factor here. According to Bonusly, 70% of employees will massively increase motivation and morale with increased recognition from superiors. Recognition of employee achievements should not only be a year-end bonus. You have to say it directly, too. (2) Set small, measurable targets. Getting stuck in a routine can be demoralizing. Therefore, you need to make small goals to make work progress feel very enjoyable. Setting clear and achievable goals, provides a real motivational boost every time employees conquer them. You can magnify this effect by taking the next step and celebrating the achievement. (3). Celebrate good results. The next way to increase employee motivation is to celebrate every good work. This is important, especially if your team is successfully working on a project. This doesn't mean you have to give a standing ovation to every employee who manages to work on time. But it's important to let everyone know how much they contribute to moving the business forward. (4) Encourage teamwork. Teamwork is one way to increase employee motivation. Knowing that there are colleagues who support each other, is a great feeling. When an employee's motivation decreases, there are teammates encouraging him to complete the next project. (5). Be transparent. Employment relationships should be built on the principle of trust. As a good leader, you must cultivate a culture of transparency. Show that there is no other purpose in every business action than achieving the targets that have been set together. Transparency also helps ensure that everyone is working with the same information. (6). Communicate effectively. You need to set aside time to actually talk to employees, both in person and through phone calls. Let them know that you see them as a person. In addition, encourage them to express their thoughts, ask about the conditions and what you can do to support their work. Of course, good communication should go both ways. Employees are also encouraged to be actively involved in shaping company decisions and culture. (7). Put employee welfare first. Prioritizing welfare is a way to increase the best employee motivation. Happy and healthy employees are certainly more motivated. This is a basic thing that is often overlooked. Make sure employees have enough time to take a break from the work routine. In addition, give a salary that suits their abilities, not just a little higher than the UMR. (8). Lead with trust and respect. Employees want to have independence at work. They are certainly happy if they can master their area of expertise and are rewarded for making their own work plans. So, the most important thing you can do as a good leader is to truly trust your employees and never micromanage. (9). Do not micromanage. Speaking of micromanage, avoiding it is the

simplest way to increase employee motivation. According to Sling, if you don't interfere too much with small things, employees are more motivated because they have freedom in doing their jobs. For some people, weekday mornings may be the most productive time. However, for others it may be closer to night. When you allow employees to decide when and how they will work, you build a framework to increase efficiency. (10). Create a modern work environment. Improving the work environment is one way to increase employee motivation. Modern offices foster more success than old buildings with peeling paint and poor decoration. The office should be pleasant to work in, full of natural light, and a comfortable temperature. Employees will be more comfortable if there is space to relax, lunch, play games, and chat. (11). Encourage innovation and creativity. Boredom can destroy motivation. Allow employees to express their creative side and bring fresh ideas to the project. Just because someone works in finance or general doesn't mean they don't have an innovative idea. Encourage employee engagement motivation by inviting them to contribute ideas for new products, brands, or logos. Offer prizes to winners as well. (12). Offer flexible working options. According to Semos Cloud, most employees want to work remotely, at least for some time. Allowing employees to work remotely is a way to increase good employee motivation. This offers them the possibility to travel less and achieve a better work-life balance. Also, having remote work options is a great employee retention tactic.

The results of this study prove that work motivation is not able to mediate/increase the influence of employee competence on employee performance. Because in order for motivation to be able to mediate/increase the influence of employee competence on employee performance, the existence of this motivation needs to be increased by paying attention to the factors that influence it as expressed by Nusa (2023) as follows: (1). Job satisfaction. Job satisfaction is a factor that greatly influences employee motivation. Employees who feel satisfied with their jobs tend to be more motivated to work hard and achieve organizational goals. Job satisfaction can be affected by a variety of factors, such as the salary received, a pleasant work environment, and good career development opportunities. (2). Communication. Effective communication between employees and managers is also a factor affecting work motivation. Employees who feel heard and valued by managers tend to be more motivated to work hard and achieve organizational goals. Poor communication, or even no communication at all, will only make employees feel unappreciated and make them lose work motivation. (3). Work environment. An employee's work motivation can be greatly affected by his work environment. Employees who work in a comfortable, clean, and organized environment tend to be more motivated to work hard and achieve organizational goals. Conversely, a poor, dirty, and disorganized work environment can make employees feel uncomfortable to work. (4). Recognition and appreciation. Recognition and appreciation of employees who work hard is one of the factors that can affect work motivation. Employees who feel recognized and appreciated by managers and coworkers tend to be more motivated to work hard and achieve organizational goals. Without recognition and appreciation, employees will feel unappreciated and lose motivation to work. (5). Justice and equality. Fairness and equality are one of the most important factors that can affect work motivation. Employees who feel treated fairly and equally by managers and coworkers tend to be more motivated to work hard and achieve organizational goals. A lack of fairness or equality can make an employee feel unappreciated and demotivate him.

The results of this study prove that work motivation is not able to mediate/increase the influence of democratic leadership style on employee performance. Because in order for motivation to be able to mediate/increase the influence of employee competence on employee performance, the existence of this motivation needs to be increased by carrying out things as stated by Nusa (2023) as follows: (1). Provide training and career development. Providing training and career development opportunities to employees is one of the most effective ways to increase work motivation. By providing training and career development, employees will feel more valued and have the opportunity to improve their skills and knowledge in the work they do. (2). Provide positive feedback. Providing positive feedback to employees can increase their work motivation. Positive feedback can give employees confidence and make them feel more valued and recognized for their contributions to the company. (3). Provide a comfortable working environment. Providing a comfortable and organized work environment is one way to increase employee motivation. A good work environment can help employees feel comfortable and calm while working so as to increase productivity and work motivation. (4). Give awards. Rewarding employees who work hard and achieve targets can increase their work motivation. Awards can be in the form of bonuses, certificates of appreciation, or other prizes that can increase employee motivation and can show that the company cares about them. (5). Provide flexible work opportunities. Providing flexible work opportunities such as working from home or arranging more flexible work schedules can also increase employee motivation. With a more flexible work schedule, employees tend to be more motivated and productive in achieving

organizational goals. In addition, this can also encourage employees to be able to have better time management. (6). Make clear goals and vision. Creating clear goals and vision for the organization and sharing them with employees can increase work motivation. Employees who have a clear understanding of the organization's goals and vision will be more motivated to achieve those goals. (7). Give greater responsibility. Giving greater responsibility to employees can increase their work motivation. By giving them more responsibility, employees will feel more trusted by the company, which can encourage them to develop themselves. In addition, employees will also have the opportunity to demonstrate their abilities in work. (8). Make a solid team. Creating a solid team is also one of the best ways to increase employee motivation. A solid team of talented and competent people can improve collaboration and communication between employees, thereby increasing productivity and motivation to work with each other.

## CONCLUSION

The results of this study concluded that: first, employee competence has a significant positive effect on work motivation, meaning that the better the employee's competence, the better the work motivation; second, democratic leadership style has a significant positive effect on work motivation, meaning that the better the democratic leadership style, the better the work motivation; third, employee competence has a significant effect on employee performance, meaning that the better the employee's competence, the better their performance; fourth, that democratic leadership style has a significant effect on employee performance, meaning that the better the democratic leadership style, the better the performance; fifth, that work motivation has a significant positive effect on employee performance, meaning that the better the work motivation, the better the performance; sixth that work motivation is not able to mediate/increase the influence of employee competence on employee performance; Seventh, work motivation is unable to mediate/increase the influence of democratic leadership styles on employee performance

For the Mojokerto City Regional Secretariat Office, in an effort to improve employee performance, it is recommended to focus on influencing variables, namely work motivation, employee competence and democratic leadership style, by increasing the existence of indicators. For further researchers, it is recommended to replace or add variables that affect employee performance, so that the results can broaden scientific horizons, especially related to variables that affect employee performance.

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