LEADERSHIP STYLE OF THE HEAD OF RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS OFFICE IN FOSTERING EMPLOYEE DISCIPLINE: AN ISLAMIC EDUCATION PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the methods used by the Head of the Office of Religious Affairs in Wawo Subdistrict to foster employee discipline through an Islamic Religious Education perspective. Employing a qualitative, descriptive field study approach, data was collected through interviews, observations, and documentation. The analysis utilized deductive reasoning, moving from general findings to specific conclusions. The results indicate that the head's leadership style is predominantly democratic, tailored to the existing situational and organizational conditions. Discipline is nurtured through a family-oriented approach, with employees actively involved in various training programs aimed at enhancing their skills and service quality. Key factors influencing employee discipline include the provision of appropriate compensation, implementation of warnings, and exemplary leadership behavior. Leadership by example emerges as a vital element in fostering discipline, enabling the creation of a professional, responsible workforce capable of serving the community effectively. This study highlights the significant role of leadership styles and strategies in building a disciplined and competent team within the context of the Office of Religious Affairs, offering practical insights for leadership development in similar institutions.

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1. INTRODUCTION

An organization is a system involving cooperation among a group of individuals working together to achieve a shared goal. One of the crucial factors determining an organization's success is the effective management of human resources (HR). High-quality human resources encompass individuals with strong skills, abilities, and work ethics. Institutions and organizations require personnel with commendable character, decision-making skills, and professional competence. A disciplined workforce can enhance productivity and ensure tasks are executed efficiently and effectively. Leadership plays a significant role in optimizing human resource management. Leaders must possess managerial and strategic competence, positive behavior, the ability to influence and guide others, accountable decision-making skills, effective communication, motivation-building judgment, and the capacity to establish strong personal relationships with their subordinates (Gibson, Ivancevich, & Donnelly, 1996).

Leadership serves as the driving force and coordinator of resources—be they human, natural, financial, or instrumental—mobilized to achieve organizational goals. In Islamic tradition, leadership has been an integral part of governance since the passing of Prophet Muhammad SAW. Allah SWT states in Surah Al-Baqarah (2:30):

"And [mention, O Muhammad], when your Lord said to the angels, 'Indeed, I will make upon the earth a successive authority.' They said, 'Will You place upon it one who causes corruption therein and sheds blood, while we declare Your praise and sanctify You?' Allah said, 'Indeed, I know that which you do not know.'" (Al-Qur'an, 2:30)

This verse underscores that Allah SWT appointed humans as leaders (khalifah) on earth to establish order and righteousness. Leadership in this context not only emphasizes guiding others toward goodness (ma'ruf) but also refraining from and preventing evil (mungkar). Thus, leadership within an organization has profound impacts on employee behavior and performance. A competent leader motivates and drives employees to perform better, while a lack of support or poor leadership could demotivate employees and hamper productivity.

Discipline is one of the key factors in ensuring effective performance within an organization. It reflects an individual's commitment to organizational regulations and responsibilities. According to Handoko (1999), discipline is a set of rules designed to address potential issues or deviations from predetermined standards or objectives. High levels of discipline signify employees' awareness of their duties, which translates into improved productivity. Moreover, Sutrisno and Denok Sunarsi (2014) emphasize that increased motivation and work discipline lead to higher productivity. Leaders must actively foster discipline and motivation among employees to create a productive and cooperative work environment.

The leadership style of a leader greatly influences employee performance, including their discipline, motivation, and responsibility. An effective leadership style is characterized by the ability to inspire employees, oversee their tasks, and align individual goals with organizational objectives. In the context of the Office of Religious Affairs (Kantor Urusan Agama, KUA) in Wawo District, North Kolaka Regency, leadership plays a pivotal role in fostering employee discipline. The head of the KUA employs a family-oriented approach in guiding employees, focusing on maintaining a balance between structured policies and flexible, context-sensitive leadership practices. Discipline indicators include punctuality, accountability, and adherence to institutional rules, all aimed at improving the quality of public service delivery.

Given the critical role of leadership in shaping employee discipline, this study seeks to explore the leadership style of the Head of the Office of Religious Affairs in Wawo District in fostering employee discipline. This exploration is driven by the following study questions: How does the leadership style of the Head of the Office of Religious Affairs in Wawo District foster employee discipline? How is employee discipline cultivated within the framework of Islamic Religious Education at the Office of Religious Affairs in Wawo District? What factors influence the level of discipline among employees at the Office of Religious Affairs in Wawo District? These questions aim to provide insights into the leadership dynamics within the KUA, highlighting its role in enhancing employee performance and fostering a disciplined workforce aligned with the organization's objectives.

2.   METHOD

This study adopts a qualitative approach with a phenomenological design, focusing on understanding the meaning and processes of the leadership style in fostering employee discipline within the Religious Affairs Office (KUA) in Wawo District. Qualitative study, according to Bogdan and Taylor (in Moleong, 2018), produces descriptive data in the form of words, both written and spoken, from individuals or observable behaviors, aiming to explore the deeper meanings behind phenomena. Sugiyono (2015) explains that qualitative study is centered on natural subjects, with the studyer acting as the key instrument, and employs inductive data collection techniques. The data obtained is then analyzed qualitatively (non-statistically) to fulfill the study's educational objectives.

The study is conducted at the KUA in Wawo District, focusing on the leadership style of the Head of the Religious Affairs Office in promoting employee discipline. The informants in this study are the Head of the Religious Affairs Office and employees directly involved in the office's daily operations. The selection of informants is based on their knowledge of the subject and their willingness to provide accurate information regarding the study topic.

Data collection is done through three main techniques: observation, documentation, and interviews. Observation is employed to directly monitor the leadership style and discipline practices within the office. According to Spradley (1980), observation is a method that focuses on understanding the context, participants, and activities involved in the study subject. Documentation involves collecting written records, such as reports, photos, and other relevant materials that complement the observations. Interviews, particularly in-depth interviews, are conducted with key informants to gain a deeper understanding of the leadership style and discipline management practices in the office.

To ensure the credibility and reliability of the data, various techniques are employed, including prolonging observation, increasing persistence, triangulation, and member checking. Triangulation, as explained by Miles and Huberman (1994), involves comparing data from different sources or methods to verify its accuracy and reduce bias. This technique enhances the validity of the study findings, ensuring a comprehensive and reliable interpretation of the data.

The analysis of data follows Miles and Huberman's (1994) interactive model, which involves three stages: data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. Data condensation refers to the process of selecting, simplifying, and abstracting data from field notes and other sources. Data display involves organizing the data in a way that allows for easier interpretation and analysis. Finally, conclusion drawing and verification involve making sense of the data by identifying patterns, relationships, and insights that contribute to understanding the leadership style and discipline practices in the Religious Affairs Office.

3.   RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Results
a. *Leadership Style of the Head of the Religious Affairs Office of Wawo Subdistrict*

The Religious Affairs Office (KUA) of Wawo Subdistrict is a government institution responsible for implementing tasks related to Islamic religious affairs, such as marriage registrations, mosque management, zakat, waqf, and promoting family welfare in accordance with the Ministry of Religious Affairs' regulations. To enhance service quality, leadership is essential, as it significantly influences the achievement of organizational goals. The leader plays a critical role in ensuring smooth operations, acting both as a motivator and supervisor.

This study examines the leadership style of the head of the Wawo KUA, particularly in managing employee discipline. The leadership style reflects how the leader influences and motivates employees to align their behavior with organizational goals, ensuring effective performance. The head of the Wawo KUA has a leadership style based on situational and democratic models.

According to Andi Mutmainah, the head's leadership style is characterized by providing clear guidance and instructions while maintaining patience when addressing employee violations. The leader adopts a democratic approach to decision-making, involving employees in discussions regarding office policies and employee discipline. Aminah, a local resident, also notes that the head does not burden subordinates, yet ensures they adhere to regulations, fostering a family-like atmosphere while maintaining authority.

The head's leadership aligns with Hersey and Blanchard's Situational Leadership Theory, which suggests that leaders should adjust their approach based on employees' readiness and skill levels. The stages of leadership include providing clear instructions at the initial stage, trusting employees as they develop skills, offering support as they gain responsibility, and reducing supervision as employees become more self-sufficient.

The democratic style also involves frequent evaluations, such as weekly meetings, where the leader and employees review performance and discuss tasks. This collaboration strengthens employee motivation and fosters discipline without strict supervision. The head's leadership style successfully combines situational and democratic approaches, enhancing performance and employee satisfaction while achieving organizational goals.

b. Leadership Style in Building Employee Discipline from the Perspective of Islamic Education

The leadership style of the Head of the Wawo Religious Affairs Office is expected to foster a progressive mindset, which will have a positive impact on the development of the resources within the office. If leadership influences the performance of employees in an organization, then the adopted leadership style must be effective and efficient.

Through a democratic and situational leadership style, the Head of the Wawo KUA aims to achieve the tasks set by the Ministry of Religious Affairs, particularly in facilitating religious services for the community according to the standard operational procedures. Leadership in fostering human resources involves both direct and indirect guidance, aimed at enhancing performance, discipline, career development, and ethics.

Effective discipline training contributes to creating skilled professionals who meet the demands of their tasks and responsibilities. With good discipline, human resources can achieve optimal productivity, supporting the success of the strategies in place. The Head of the Wawo KUA applies two approaches in fostering discipline: direct guidance through family-oriented methods and training programs. These approaches focus on time discipline, work discipline, responsibility, and adherence to regulations.

According to one employee, the Wawo KUA plays a vital role in managing religious affairs and has heavy responsibilities. Therefore, employees must work optimally in terms of time, responsibility, and adherence to regulations to achieve the set goals. Additionally, other indicators such as initiative, creativity, behavior, leadership examples, compensation, and supervision are also integral to the leadership's effort to maintain optimal performance among employees.

1) Time Discipline

Efficiency in time management is crucial for completing tasks on time and preventing delays. Employees must demonstrate punctuality, including attending work regularly and on time. The Head of the Wawo KUA directly addresses time discipline by

issuing verbal, written, and even official reprimands from the Ministry of Religious Affairs for repeated violations.

2) Work Discipline and Responsibility

Discipline is also shown through the completion of tasks within deadlines, reflecting high work motivation. Employees who are disciplined in their work exhibit a strong sense of responsibility. If tasks are not completed optimally, the leader gives verbal or written warnings to ensure adherence to responsibilities.

3) Adherence to Regulations

Discipline can also be demonstrated by following established regulations. Employees are expected to comply with rules and contribute positively to the office's goals. The leader consistently reminds employees of the importance of following regulations to ensure the smooth operation of the office.

The leadership style, which integrates these elements of discipline, is aligned with Islamic educational principles, which emphasize discipline through modeling and situational approaches. Islamic education advocates for the freedom to act while maintaining solidarity, ensuring that employees follow guidelines while feeling empowered to perform their roles effectively.

c. Factors Influencing Employee Discipline at the Office of Religious Affairs in Wawo District

The factors affecting employee discipline are quite numerous. They do not only stem from the employees themselves but also from the organizational culture within an institution. In this study, the author will present several factors that influence the level of discipline of employees at the Office of Religious Affairs in Wawo District. Based on theoretical studies, several aspects affect employee discipline, including:

1) Provision of Compensation

Compensation refers to everything that employees receive as a reward for their work. Each office has different systems for applying compensation to its employees, and sometimes the rules are agreed upon before employment, while at other times they are not. Compensation systems are typically aligned with the institution's vision, mission, and goals. Compensation may include base pay, bonuses, employee benefits, and other rewards. Compensation that meets employees' expectations for their work can boost their morale and drive to work better over time, positively influencing their performance and work discipline.

Satisfaction with the amount of compensation is a key element in achieving job satisfaction. In addition, compensation satisfaction also shapes the attitudes of employees toward their work. According to Rabia Rasida Samsam, since joining the Office of Religious Affairs in Wawo District, employees have received compensation for activities that positively impact the services provided to the community. While the compensation may not be large, it greatly motivates employees to maintain high work discipline.

This is supported by Musyawir, who mentioned that improvements in discipline at the Office of Religious Affairs in Wawo District are closely tied to the leadership style of the head of the office. The better the leader rewards their employees, the higher the level of discipline. It is essential for every leader to appreciate the work of their employees to support the implementation of programs within the institution's vision, mission, and goals.

Based on this, it can be understood that discipline-building in the Office of Religious Affairs in Wawo District is supported by compensation provided to employees. The better the leader appreciates their employees' work, the higher the employees' level of discipline will be. Compensation is an implementation of human resource management functions that involve rewarding individuals for fulfilling organizational tasks. Compensation should be

fair and adequate for employees, ensuring their livelihood while being based on the responsibilities and risks of each job, thus improving employee work discipline.

2) Issuance of Warnings

Warnings play an important role in maintaining employee discipline. By issuing warnings, employees are made aware of the importance of adhering to regulations. The severity of the warning affects employees' adherence to the rules, and if the warning system becomes increasingly serious, it will discourage employees from violating office regulations. Disciplinary actions are intended to reduce indiscipline in employee behavior.

At the Office of Religious Affairs in Wawo District, the head sometimes issues firm warnings to employees who frequently engage in indisciplined behavior. The severity of the sanction must be based on logical considerations and communicated clearly to all employees. Based on observations, the system of issuing warnings, especially for tardy arrivals or clocking in outside working hours, significantly influences employee discipline. One positive approach taken by the head of the office is the use of family-like communication when giving sanctions, ensuring that violators feel respected rather than humiliated.

Leaders must be firm and decisive in applying the appropriate sanctions for indiscipline. A leader who applies firm discipline will earn respect and recognition from their employees. On the other hand, if a leader fails to act decisively in disciplining employees, it will be difficult for them to maintain discipline within their team, and employees may become more indisciplined.

3) Leadership Role Model

When determining employee work discipline, the leader serves as a role model and guide for their subordinates. Leaders must set a good example by demonstrating good discipline, honesty, fairness, and consistency between words and actions. A leader cannot expect their subordinates to be disciplined if they themselves are not disciplined. Leaders must be aware that their behavior is being observed and emulated by their employees, which is why they must exhibit good discipline to inspire their team.

Through observations, the author found that the head of the Office of Religious Affairs in Wawo District practices leadership by example. When rules regarding discipline are implemented, the head first models the behavior for their employees. Every day before engaging in activities outside the office, the head ensures that they check in, complete their tasks in the field, and prioritize office duties over personal interests or specific groups.

Discipline within employees is closely tied to the role model set by the leader. A leader's example has a significant impact on improving discipline because it serves as a positive role model. When employees see their leader being disciplined, they are motivated to follow suit. Conversely, if the leader does not exhibit good discipline, employees are unlikely to show discipline themselves.

Effective supervision is also essential for maintaining discipline. With proper oversight, indiscipline can be prevented, performance can be enhanced, and work discipline can be preserved. Supervision is a full responsibility of the leader, and it is crucial that the leader is committed to ensuring the process of supervision is carried out effectively.

These explanations highlight the key factors influencing employee work discipline at the Office of Religious Affairs in Wawo District.

3.2. Discussion

This study provides an in-depth look at the leadership style of the Head of the Religious Affairs Office in Wawo Subdistrict, focusing on its role in fostering employee discipline. As previously noted, leadership plays a pivotal role in determining the level of

discipline and overall performance within an organization. The Head of the Wawo KUA employs a combination of situational and democratic leadership styles to maintain employee discipline and achieve the office's goals. This approach is highly effective in ensuring the smooth operation of the office and the fulfillment of its mission, particularly in managing Islamic religious affairs for the community.

a. *Leadership Style of the Head of the Religious Affairs Office*

The leadership style adopted by the Head of the Wawo Office of Religious Affairs resonates with Hersey and Blanchard's Situational Leadership Theory, which advocates for adapting leadership approaches based on employees' readiness and competence (Hersey & Blanchard, 1982). The Head of the Office of Religious Affairs provides clear guidance at the beginning, gradually allowing employees more autonomy as they develop their skills. This situational approach enables employees to work more independently while still receiving necessary support from leadership. The head's approach is both nurturing and authoritative, providing the structure needed for employees to perform their tasks efficiently while motivating them through democratic decision-making processes.

The democratic aspect of leadership, where employees are involved in decision-making and performance reviews, also aligns with the principles of motivation and empowerment. According to Vroom's Expectancy Theory, employees are more motivated when they believe that their efforts will lead to desirable outcomes, such as recognition or rewards (Vroom, 1964). In the case of the Head of Office of Religious Affairs, regular evaluations and transparent communication of expectations encourage employee accountability and drive them to adhere to organizational standards.

b. *Leadership and Discipline from the Perspective of Islamic Education*

From an Islamic educational perspective, leadership is seen as a moral responsibility, with the leader acting as a role model for their subordinates. The Head of the Wawo Office of Religious Affairs exemplifies this principle by practicing discipline themselves and fostering an atmosphere of mutual respect and accountability. The Prophet Muhammad's leadership was characterized by fairness, patience, and the setting of a personal example for others to follow (al-Ghazali, 2001). Similarly, the Head of the Office of Religious Affairs emphasizes the importance of adhering to work discipline, time management, and responsibility, all while promoting a family-like environment that encourages collaboration and mutual respect among employees.

The integration of Islamic values with leadership practices helps foster an environment where employees feel morally compelled to maintain discipline. As seen in this study, employees who observe their leader's disciplined behavior are more likely to replicate those behaviors themselves, reinforcing the importance of leadership as a model in shaping organizational culture (Bass & Avolio, 1994).

c. *Key Factors Influencing Employee Discipline*

The factors influencing employee discipline at the Office of Religious Affairs in Wawo District—compensation, the issuance of warnings, and the leadership role model—are critical in shaping work behavior. These factors are intertwined with motivation theories such as Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Maslow, 1943) and Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (Herzberg, 1959).

1) Compensation: Employees' satisfaction with compensation directly impacts their motivation and discipline. As Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory suggests, compensation is a hygiene factor that prevents dissatisfaction (Herzberg, 1959). While it may not necessarily increase motivation significantly, its absence can lead to dissatisfaction and decreased performance. The Head of the Office of Religious Affairs ensures that

employees are rewarded for positive contributions, which fosters a sense of value and loyalty, thereby encouraging greater discipline.

2) Issuance of Warnings: The Head of the Office of Religious Affairs also uses warnings effectively to maintain discipline. This approach can be related to Skinner's Operant Conditioning Theory, which emphasizes the role of reinforcement in shaping behavior (Skinner, 1953). When employees are reprimanded for tardiness or misconduct, they are conditioned to avoid such behaviors to escape negative consequences. The gradual escalation of disciplinary measures ensures that employees understand the importance of adhering to organizational norms.

3) Leadership Role Model: The importance of the leader's role in modeling disciplined behavior cannot be overstated. As Bandura's Social Learning Theory suggests, employees learn by observing their leaders (Bandura, 1977). The Head of the Office of Religious Affairs, by adhering to rules and setting an example, creates a model for employees to follow, which reinforces the organizational culture of discipline.

In conclusion, the combination of a democratic and situational leadership style, along with the strategic use of compensation, warnings, and role modeling, contributes significantly to employee discipline at the Wawo Office of Religious Affairs These practices not only align with leadership theories but also reflect the values of Islamic education, which emphasizes discipline, responsibility, and moral conduct. By maintaining a strong leadership presence and fostering a supportive work environment, the Head of the Wawo Office of Religious Affairs successfully ensures that employees adhere to regulations and perform their duties effectively.

4. CONCLUSION

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Based on the research findings regarding the leadership style of the Head of the Religious Affairs Office in fostering employee discipline at the Religious Affairs Office of Wawo Subdistrict, North Kolaka Regency, several important conclusions can be drawn. First, the leadership style of the Head of the Wawo Religious Affairs Office aligns with two primary approaches: one based on behavior (behavioral style) and another based on the situation (situational style). The leader adopts a democratic style, which involves inclusiveness in decision-making, particularly in matters related to employee discipline and office policies. In addition to the democratic and situational approaches, the leader also utilizes a Job-Centered leadership style. This style is task-oriented, where the leader applies strict supervision to ensure employees perform their duties efficiently and on time. The combination of these leadership styles contributes to both the achievement of organizational goals and the development of a supportive work environment.

Second, the discipline-building efforts at the Religious Affairs Office of Wawo Subdistrict have been effective, but there is still room for improvement in meeting the performance standards and integrity required by the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia. The head's leadership, though helpful in maintaining employee discipline, could benefit from further enhancements in fostering a culture of accountability and consistency in enforcing rules and regulations. While the office has made significant

progress in establishing effective discipline strategies, more attention to continuous professional development and monitoring could strengthen employee performance further.

Finally, several factors influence employee discipline at the Religious Affairs Office in Wawo Subdistrict. These include compensation, the issuance of warnings, and leadership by example. The provision of adequate compensation plays a crucial role in maintaining employee morale and discipline, as it serves as an incentive for optimal performance. The leader also issues warnings as necessary to ensure adherence to office regulations, which significantly impacts the discipline of the employees. Additionally, the leader sets an important example for employees, as discipline is often modeled through the behavior of the head. By demonstrating consistent punctuality, responsibility, and adherence to office policies, the leader influences employees to follow suit, creating a disciplined and productive work environment.

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