Empathetic Leadership, Innovative Work Behavior and Health Protocol Culture as Determinants of Employee Performance in Government Organizations

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Abstract: Employee performance is an interesting topic of debate because it determines the success and growth of an organization. This study aimed to analyze the effect of empathic leadership, innovative work behavior, and health protocol culture on employee performance. Respondents in this study were employees of Panggungharjo Village. Samples were taken using a saturated sampling approach with 101 employees. This research proved that empathic leadership strongly influenced employee performance with an original sample coefficient value of 0.194, a t-statistic value of 2.174, and a p-value of 0.0030. This research also discovered that empathetic leadership and innovative work behavior majorly influenced employee performance with an original sample coefficient value of 0.411 with a t-statistic and a p-value of 4.747 and 0.000. Health protocol culture had the strongest effect on employee performance during the pandemic and had an original sample coefficient value of 0.371 with a t-statistic and p-value of 5.122 and 0,000.

Keywords: *Empathetic Leadership; Innovative Work Behavior; Health Protocol Culture; Employee Performance; Government Organizations*

INTRODUCTION

Empathetic leaders often build good relationships with their subordinates. These relationships are thought to help employees and the organization in several ways (Haynie et al., 2019). Substantial data demonstrates that leader traits are crucial to the efficacy of leadership in work groups (Derue et al. 2011). A leader's ability to inspire and motivate today's varied workforce requires one or more of the following attributes: sensitivity to the emotional needs of others, as shown in personality traits (Rajah, Song, and Arvey 2011). Empathetic leadership explains how leaders' understanding and support improve follower behaviors and affective states (Kock et al., 2019). Leaders must also be able to make judgments that set the organization's direction and execute them effectively so that the organization's movement stays relevant to the changing times (Kasali 2021).

Empathetic leaders frequently get along with subordinates. Employees and the company benefit from these partnerships (Haynie et al., 2019). According to research, leader qualities are essential to workgroup leadership (Derue et al. 2011). Today's diverse workforce demands one or more of the following qualities: sensitivity to others' emotional needs, as demonstrated in

personality features (Rajah, Song, and Arvey 2011). Leaders must also be able to create and execute strategic decisions to keep the company current (Kasali 2021). The leadership styles have allowed managers to make decisions, participate with others, or ask their employees to handle the matters (Bhargavi and Yaseen 2016). According to Bhargavi and Yaseen (2016), the government of the policing sector has represented a suggested model for developing leadership styles to enhance the organizational performance of the leaders. Companies succeed when employees go above and beyond (Muttaqin, Taqi, and Arifin, 2020). Muttaqin et al. (2020) found that organizations must survive and have high-quality skills to ensure business continuity in difficult situations. Many Indonesian enterprises struggle with business continuity in this unpredictable environment. It is unclear how COVID-19 affected employee behavior and performance (Aguiar-Quintana et al., 2020).

During August and September 2021, the average number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in Yogyakarta dropped by up to 90% from the beginning of August to the end of level 4 PPKM. The average COVID-19 graph showing recovery was still higher than the average confirmed COVID-19 graph when level 3 PPKM started on September 5, 2021. Since August 8, 2021, the average number of COVID-19 cases found was more than the average number of confirmed COVID-19 cases. At the end of the second week of September 2021, the trend of people moving around could be stopped.
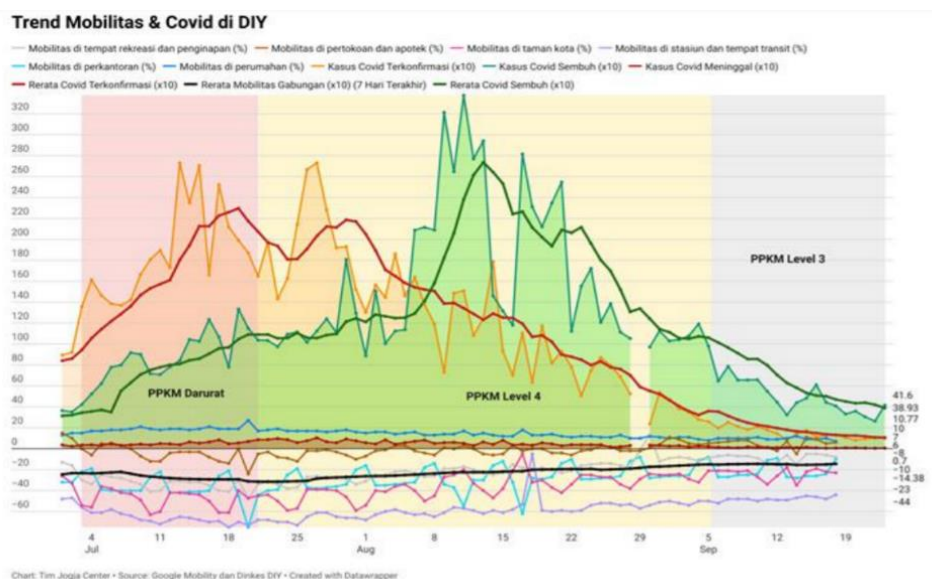

Figure 1. Mobility Trend & COVID-19 in Special Region of Yogyakarta on September 2021
Source: Pemda DIY, 2021

Organizations must find ways to thrive in all forms of rivalry and improve their chances of success (Muttaqin, Taqi, and Arifin, 2020). As a result, to achieve better results, a strategy that is involved in the stated goals must be developed and consistently implemented. Humans need encouragement and sympathy (empathy) in all aspects of life and work (Edmondson and Lei 2014). Performance is the degree to which an organization's strategic goals and plans are realized through its operations.

This research measures employee performance, or how well an employee completes duties. Good job performance requires exceptional and competitive human resource management in any firm. Managers guide the skills, abilities, and efforts of many others to achieve excellent performance. Managers must execute firm actions to meet objectives. However, this reality does not negate subordinates' responsibility in managing performance reviews. As corporate executors, they also evaluate management performance. Empathic leaders help model managers develop staff (Owens and Hekman 2012). Organizational support and transformative leadership affect emotional commitment and employee performance (Izzaty et al., 1967).

Innovation is important to the success of an organization, and individual creativity and innovation are the keys to innovation at the organizational level (Shanker et al. 2017). The climate of an organization can help encourage creativity and new ideas (Nybakk, Crespell, and Hansen, 2011). Management must ensure that the work environment encourages, supports, and helps people be creative (DiLiello and Houghton 2006). When employees with creative and innovative potential get strong organizational support, they are more likely to develop something new (DiLiello and Houghton 2006). Also, if the organization can create a good environment, this situation will lead to more employees being motivated, committed, and involved (Shanker et al. 2017).

COVID-19 and large-scale societal and economic changes have greatly impacted the organization's culture. Screens have replaced well-known signs of office life, like open workspaces full of people in suits. Many organizations' values and assumptions have moved away from exploration and creativity and toward safety and toughness. Managers are having a hard time with this big change. They wonder how to create a company culture if everyone works from home (Howard-Grenville 2020). However, they also give researchers many chances to study how large-scale societal changes affect organizational culture and how that culture can change and adapt.

This study was conducted in a public service office that provides direct services to the community, particularly in Panggungharjo Village. The research topic is administrative, economic, social, and educational programs that do welfare enhancement initiatives, including those initiated by the village government and advised by the supra-village government. Panggungharjo Village was selected as the research object because it won the National Village Competition, and one of its performance tasks was to provide services to all Panggungharjo Village residents during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Based on the above argument, this study must be done since the COVID-19 epidemic has caused changes in work culture in all sectors, particularly the service sector. During the COVID-19 epidemic, the public service sector must continue serving consumers/partners so the economy can continue functioning. In addition, every business's workers encounter a new work culture, particularly when actively involved in the organization. One must get support from an understanding leader to fully comprehend a foreign culture.

Leaders must manage staff performance properly (Muttaqin, Taqi, and Arifin, 2020). Leaders demonstrate. Leadership persuades subordinates to work together to accomplish corporate objectives. During the pandemic, leaders must become mentors who provide greater guidance (Kasali 2021). Help and understanding are needed everywhere, including work (Edmondson and Lei 2014). Thus, leaders build strong ties, encourage, and help followers enhance job performance (Holt and Marques 2012). Every life, including work, requires support and understanding (empathy). Some coworkers help. Leaders must also have empathy for subordinates. Leader empathy boosts workplace happiness and innovation. Thus, compassionate leadership, innovative work behavior, health protocol culture, and performance must be studied.

Aguiar-Quintana, Nguyen, Araujo-Cabrera, and Diaz (2021) found that the COVID-19 epidemic has profoundly affected every business. According to the Yogyakarta Health Office (2022), COVID-19 cases in Yogyakarta at the beginning of 2022 increased significantly in February 2022, with 1341 patients treated, 5277 deaths, and 151,841 recoveries. The API of the Indonesian Ministry of Health indicates that the immunization rate for Yogyakarta citizens has reached 91.28 percent, as reported by the DIY government. However, the government continues to impose mobility limitations and to advocate for the compliance of the health protocol for inhabitants of Yogyakarta, particularly in the public service sector and others.

Chenhall (2003) found that various nations have distinct cultural traits, which encourage people in different cultures to react to management behavior differently to guarantee that resources are utilized effectively and efficiently. Both business and academics have emphasized creativity and invention in recent years, and research on the topic has advanced swiftly, revealing some intriguing discoveries (Anderson, Potočnik, and Zhou 2014). Even though leadership has been consistently addressed in earlier studies of creativity and invention, it is generally described briefly, descriptively, or as a topic for future study (Anderson, Potočnik, and Zhou 2014). Managers must explore innovation to increase operational performance (Hoang and Ngoc 2019).

As a result, this research employs empathetic leadership characteristics to identify the proper antecedents of innovative work behavior and health protocol culture.

Innovative work behavior by employees is a key factor in figuring out a company's competitive edge (Shin, Yuan, and Zhou 2016). Most studies on creativity look at how leaders affect employee creativity rather than how people act at work (Hughes et al., 2018). Therefore, this study looks at innovative work behaviors and how they relate to performance.

To compete in the competitive business environment, a corporation must foster the development of new ideas and creative conduct (Girindra, D.P., Nuryakin, and Qamari, I.N., 2021). Creative employees contribute to achieving competitive advantage and enhanced business success (Kim and Koo 2017). Both academics and practitioners have shown that creative workers contribute to a firm's success (Jafri 2010). Innovative behavior in the workplace is defined as employee recognition via new ideas, products, and processes by people in given jobs, teams, or organizations (Yuan and Woodman 2010)—innovative employees conduct and develop new and inventive technology. In addition, new approaches to attaining objectives, applying new task procedures, and evaluating available resources to launch new concepts are proposed (Yuan and Woodman 2010). Innovative work behavior is an individual's efforts to initiate and intentionally recognize new ideas, processes, products, and procedures, including their execution (Jong and Hartog, 2008).

According to Jong & Hartog (2008), innovative work behavior factors include four dimensions:

a. Opportunity Exploration

In this context, the opportunity is defined as identifying the gap between existing performance and the potential to implement innovation. Exploration and identification of chances is an opportunity to improve, explore solutions, and enhance performance by implementing other feasible options to remedy issues promptly.

b. Generation of ideas

Ideas generate concepts with the intention of betterment and are a solution to recognized difficulties. Combining the restructuring of information and concepts is essential for developing problem-solving ideas.

c. Fighting for ideas

Fighting for ideas is an activity connected with coalition-building and support-seeking. It is necessary to convince and influence colleagues or other departments to foster problem-solving conversations to support the ideas proposed.

d. Implementation of ideas

Implementation of ideas entails workers' efforts to produce concepts that can be put into practical propositions. In this case, proactive action that demonstrates great initiative and the ability to overcome obstacles is required to handle issues and improve.

The Indonesian government has enacted legislation, restrictions, and suggestions to limit the spread of COVID-19. Given the rising spread of the pandemic, the policies and recommendations of the Indonesian government for preventing COVID-19 have undergone several revisions and modifications during their existence (Sari et al., 2020). From the original Decree of the Minister of Health No. HK.01.07/Menkes /382/2020 on Public Health Protocols in Public Places and Facilities concerning CoronaVirus Disease Prevention and Control 2019 (COVID-19). This rule was released on June 19, 2020, per the Minister of Health's Decree No. HK. 01, which tightened previous regulations.

The COVID-19 health protocol debate relates to current norms and standards regarding this condition. The health protocol comprises preventative and control measures for COVID-19 in public spaces and buildings. In addition, it must preserve the health of individuals and communities and include community managers, organizers, and those in charge of public spaces and facilities. Health regimens that might be advised, in general, include the following:

a) Immediately take a rest if you feel ill.
b) Each journey employs a mask.
c) Consume daily vitamins regularly.
d) If the condition is unfit, take medication or see a health care center promptly.
e) Exercise regularly.
f) Sunbathe every morning.

g) Utilize a mask that is often lowered beneath the nose.
h) Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or the back of your arm while coughing or sneezing.
i) If the fever is 38 degrees Celsius or above, seek emergency medical attention.
j) If contaminated, suspect COVID-19 is prepared for hospital treatment.
k) Isolate yourself if the suspect is afflicted with COVID-19.
l) It is suggested not to go outside the city during the pandemic.
m) Immediately after returning home, cleanse your body and take a shower.
n) Change the mask regularly every day.
o) Carry hand sanitizer in a bag with care.

Campbell et al. (1993) found that to understand performance fully, researchers must look at it from two angles: behavior and outcomes. From a behavioral standpoint, job performance is the actions and mannerisms of workers in the workplace. When looking at performance through the lens of outcomes, the focus shifts to the effects that employee actions have. Performance may be thought of as a measure of output. There is a connection between one's conduct and the results of their work.

Performance may also be categorized based on efficiency and output (Pritchard 1992). There is a big difference between output and outcome. Efficiency is the ratio of output to input and measures how well something works. In contrast, productivity measures productive activities' efficiency, particularly in industry. The company aims to improve its performance, service quality, productivity, and profitability by adopting best practices and providing a secure working environment for its workers.

An employee's performance is measured by their dedication to achieving the highest possible outcomes in their position (Vo-Thanh et al. 2020). The introduction of the COVID-19 virus may indirectly affect workers' psyches, necessitating strategies from management to ensure that workers can still provide their best efforts under pressure. Gemünden et al. (2018) showed that empathetic leadership will lead to more innovative daily work behavior through job satisfaction or as a result of it. Then Gemünden et al. (2018) found that empathic leadership positively affected how innovative employees work. M. Mayfield and M. Mayfield's research from 2011 tried to use innovative behavior, especially innovation that goes beyond employees' normal jobs and requires them to take risks. People are more willing to take these risks when their leaders understand and support them (Mayfield and Mayfield 2016). Muttaqin et al. (2020) also showed that empathic leadership was positively linked to job innovation.

Muttaqin, Taqi, and Arifin (2020) proved that employees who are happy at work and do not feel like they have too much to do can do the best job for the company because they are satisfied with their jobs and have a good attitude about their work. There is a strong link between innovation and performance, and there is also a strong link between empathic leadership and performance (Muttaqin, Taqi, and Arifin, 2020). The leader's empathy makes teams more creative and innovative (Dehlin 2013; Byantara, R. A., Qamari, I. N., & Saad, M. S. M.; 2023). Empathic leadership can help people be more creative daily (Muttaqin, Taqi, and Arifin, 2020). Daily innovation differs from high-level innovation because it happens when executives care about their employees and develop technologies and procedures useful for strategy (Mayfield and Mayfield 2011). Based on the explanation above, a hypothesis can be derived.

H1: Empathetic leadership has a positive influence on innovative work behavior.

To achieve greater results, organizations must cultivate an open-minded culture led by compassionate leaders (Muttaqin, Taqi, and Arifin, 2020). According to Muttaqin et al. (2020), to develop a successful company, a culture of control connected to leadership and the correct system is required to improve performance quality. Cultural control, availability of resources, and leadership that empathizes with strategy, performance, and technology are some of the organizational qualities that will have an influence. Senior managers employ cultural control to improve performance, create internal pressure, handle regular issues, and promote new strategic initiatives (Muttaqin, Taqi, and Arifin 2020). Organizational performance suffers when cultural control is not employed as a mechanical framework (Yuan and Woodman, 2010). The causal

relationship between empathetic leadership can increase job performance by increasing job satisfaction and innovation (Kock et al. 2019).

Entrepreneurial businesses will continue to explore new possibilities. In entrepreneurial firms, cultural control will drive performance. Companies can earn and keep market share by developing new products due to innovation while enhancing profitability and performance. Companies must emphasize creativity, innovation, and technology to provide new customer value while maintaining competitiveness to increase performance (Ismail 2016). In the present state of affairs in Indonesia, where the COVID-19 epidemic is rife, many organizations and the public sector require handling health procedures to safeguard all personnel working to serve partners. As a result, the cultural control in this study refers to the health protocol culture at the public service office, which is the subject of this research. Based on the explanation above, a hypothesis can be derived.

H2: Empathic leadership has a positive influence on health protocol culture.

Gemünden et al. (2018) suggested that an empathic leadership model can help people understand how leadership works. Two aspects make this model important. (Gemünden, Lehner, and Kock 2018) said that it is important because it puts the leader's support for the psychological and safety needs of the followers in the spotlight. When managers and academics know this, they can better understand the emotional needs of their employees. Second, it gives a better idea of how a leader helps followers develop new ideas daily, which is becoming increasingly important in the workplace (Gemünden, Lehner, and Kock 2018).

A leader's ability to show empathy greatly impacts how well their followers do their jobs (Gemünden, Lehner, and Kock 2018). Therefore, our work shows how important it is to care for employees' emotional needs. There is a link between empathetic leadership and employee performance, which is mediated by employee job innovation (Muttaqin, Taqi, and Arifin 2020). Gemünden et al. (2018) research findings have been used to explain how this study looks at the direct link between empathic leadership and job performance. Based on the explanation above, a hypothesis can be derived.

H3: Empathetic leadership has a positive influence on employee performance

Kim and Koo (2017) showed that inventive behavior at work is a complicated process that involves many different incentives and plans for getting past problems, setbacks, and disappointments (Carmeli, Meitar, and Weisberg, 2006). So, there are three steps to innovative behavior: coming up with an idea, spreading the word about the idea, and putting the idea into action (Scott and Bruce 1994). The first step in an employee's innovative behavior is recognizing problems and developing new, accepted solutions and ideas.

In this case, job performance in the service industry usually requires employees and customers to talk to each other (Kim and Koo 2017). Due to how the service industry works, service employees have been seen as an important way to find out how customers feel about the quality of service (Auh and Johnson 2005). Other researchers have used multidimensional constructs to predict job performance. Job performance dimensions like product knowledge, closing sales, organizational and time management, and organizational citizenship behavior like organizational citizenship behavior toward individuals and organizational citizenship behavior toward the organization (Rich, Lepine, and Crawford 2010).

Innovative employees collect and use different kinds of data to develop new and original ideas and improve how things are done (Aryee et al., 2012). Innovative employees are usually willing to learn, find, and develop new ideas to solve problems and improve performance (Amabile et al., 2005). Walumbwa and Schaubroeck (2009) found that an employee's willingness to learn is important for job performance because learning makes employees want to learn more about their jobs to do them well. Stress challenges motivate workers and improve their work (LePine, Podsakoff, and LePine 2005). Based on the explanation above, a hypothesis can be derived.

H4: Innovative work behavior has a positive effect on employee performance.

Muttaqin et al. (2020) found that workers who get support from leaders who show empathy will feel less stress and have more confidence in their ability to come up with new ideas, which affects employee performance. Using cultural control affects how well an organization does its job. Research has also shown that a formal and informal control system is needed to get the best performance from an organization (Ismail 2016). Cultural control is a tool that gives decision-makers, planners, and evaluators useful information that affects performance. Cultural control is a management strategy used to get employees to act in a way that helps the company reach its goals, directly affecting performance. Cultural control is used to improve the performance of an organization by controlling the kind of people who work there and how they act (Merchant and Van der Stede, 2007). Based on the explanation above, a hypothesis can be derived.

H5: Health protocol culture has a positive effect on employee performance.

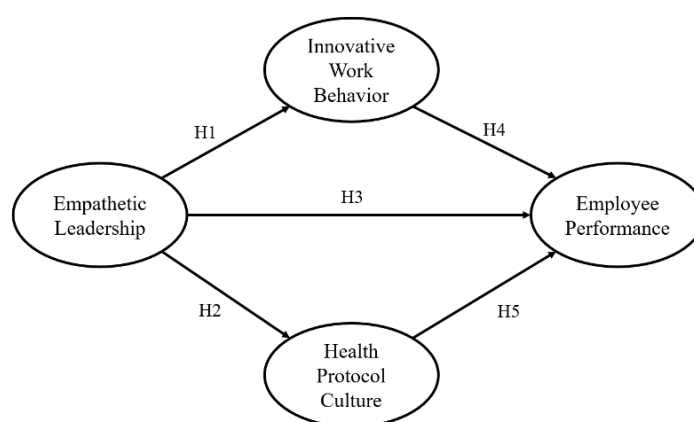Based on the above hypotheses, the research method is shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Research Model

RESEARCH METHOD

This research employed quantitative methodologies and statistical analysis to examine all hypotheses. This research relied on primary data from a multi-part questionnaire. The Panggungharjo Village was the subject of this investigation. The saturation sampling approach was used in this study. The saturated sampling approach is a sampling technique in which the whole population is used as the sample (Sugiyono, 2017). The sample size chosen in this research was 101 samples due to many factors. This study did not conduct interviews, so the data was processed based on survey data using a closed questionnaire.

As independent factors, empathetic leadership, innovative work behavior, and health protocol culture were used in this research to affect employee performance as the dependent variable. All objects are graded on a 5-point scale. The sample components for perceived empathetic leadership use by Kock et al. (2018) were five items, including "My supervisor compliments me for excellent performance" and "My supervisor offers support for my work efforts." According to Jong & Hartog (2008), innovative work behavior was assessed using ten questions, including "I frequently pay attention to issues that are not part of my everyday job" and "I would want to know how to better something or situations." According to Jaya (2021), health protocol culture is assessed using four questions, including "I comply with all health protocol requirements" and "I know the repercussions if I don't follow health protocols." Six questions, according to Vo-Thanh et al. (2020), including "I am entirely accountable for my work" and "I satisfy performance requirements and job expectations," are used to assess employee performance factors.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A validity test determines how effectively an instrument is designed to measure a notion (Sekaran and Bougie 2016). The validity test concerns the truth and correctness of the notion under consideration. The researcher may go on to the next step if the test findings are reliable. The loading factor value or the t-statistic value must be greater than 0.6 in the PLS model evaluation criteria for the test to be valid. If the p-value is less than 0.05, the indicator is judged valid. So, if all construct-forming indications are pronounced valid, they may be utilized to test hypotheses based on structural data (Haryono 2017).

Table 1. Hypothesis Test

Hypothesis	Model	Original Sample (O)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Value	Description
H1	Empathetic leadership -> Innovative Work Behavior	0,546	5,963	0,000	Accepted
H2	Empathetic leadership -> Health Protocol Culture	0,467	5,426	0,000	Accepted
H3	Empathetic Leadership -> Employee Performance	0,194	2,174	0,030	Accepted
H4	Innovative Work Behavior -> Employee Performance	0,411	4,747	0,000	Accepted
H5	Health Protocol Culture -> Employee Performance	0,371	5,122	0,000	Accepted

Source: Primary data, 2022

The reliability test illustrates the degree to which this measurement is error-free and assures that it is always balanced and capable of passing different objects in the instrument (Sekaran and Bougie 2016). An instrument is considered trustworthy if it can be used multiple times to measure the same item and get the same results each time. The reliability test demonstrates the measuring scale's consistency and stability. Reliability indicates the measurement device's dependability. Using the CR (Construct Reliability) value of 0.70 and the VE (Variance Extract) value of 0.5, the degree of dependability may be determined (Ghozali, 2014).

According to hypothesis 1 testing, empathetic leadership has a positive and significant effect on innovative work behavior, as shown by the T-Statistic value being more than 1.96, which equals 5.963, and the p-value is 0.000 < 0.05. According to the findings of this study, empathic leadership in Panggungharjo Village may impact innovative work behavior. According to hypothesis 2 testing, empathetic leadership has a good and substantial impact on the health protocol culture. The T-statistic value for this construct association is 5.426 > 1.96, and the p-value is 0.000 0.05 with an original sample coefficient value of 0.467.

The original sample coefficient for testing the third hypothesis is 0.194. Meanwhile, the T-statistic value is 2.174 > 1.96, and the p-value is 0.030 0.05 for this construct association. As a result, empathetic leadership has a favorable and considerable impact on employee performance. The original sample coefficient for testing hypothesis 4 is 0.411. This construct association has a T-statistic value of 4.747 > 1.96 and a p-value of 0.000 0.05. As a result, it is possible to infer that innovative work behavior has a good and substantial impact on the employee performance of

workers in Panggungharjo Village. The original sample coefficient result for hypothesis 5 testing is 0.371. This construct association has a T-statistic value of 5.122 > 1.96 and a p-value of 0.000 0.05. Health protocol culture conduct has a large and favorable influence on employee performance.

Table 2. VAF Calculation

Construct	Mediation Variable	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Total Effect	VAF %	Description
Empathetic Leadership -> Employee Performance	Health Protocol Culture	0,194	0,173	0,367	47%	Partial Mediation
Empathetic Leadership -> Employee Performance	Innovative Work Behavior	0,194	0,225	0,419	53%	Partial Mediation

Source: Primary data, 2022

The VAF score for testing the mediation effect test in cultural relationships with health protocols as a mediator of the influence of empathetic leadership on employee performance is 47%. This score is between 20% and 80%, indicating a partial mediation. When the influence of the mediating variable on the dependent variable is substantial, and the effect of the independent variable on the mediating variable is also significant, the relationship is said to be partially mediated (Baron and Kenny 1986).

The VAF value for testing the mediation effect in the connection of innovative work behavior as a mediator of the impact of empathetic leadership on employee performance is 53%. This score is between 20% and 80%, indicating a partial mediation. When the influence of the mediating variable on the dependent variable is substantial, and the effect of the independent variable on the mediating variable is also significant, the relationship is said to be partially mediated (Baron and Kenny 1986).

CONCLUSION

From the research and testing done, some conclusions can be drawn:
1. Empathetic leadership greatly and positively affects how innovative people are at work, meaning that a leader who shows empathy will also be good at coming up with new ideas.
2. Empathetic leadership has a big impact on the culture of health protocols in a good way, meaning that the health protocol culture will be used correctly if the leader has empathy.
3. Empathetic leadership greatly and positively affects how well employees do their jobs, meaning that when leaders are empathetic, employees will do well at their jobs.
4. Being innovative at work greatly and positively affects how well employees do their jobs, meaning their performance improves the more they think outside the box.
5. The culture of health protocols has a big and positive effect on how well employees do their jobs, meaning that the employee will do a better job the better the health protocol culture is followed.
6. The health protocol culture could act as a bridge between empathetic leadership and how well employees do their jobs, meaning that leaders who care about their employees have helped create a culture of health protocols so that employees can do their best work.
7. Innovative work behavior could mediate the link between empathetic leadership and employee performance, meaning that empathic leadership could encourage employees to do innovative work and improve how well employees do their jobs.

Based on the findings, the following research objectives and topics, as well as future researchers, are suggested:

1. Village of Panggungharjo
    To build emotional closeness between leaders and workers in a state of turmoil caused by the COVID-19 pandemic so that they may effectively and appropriately adopt a health protocol culture and promote inventive work behavior and employee performance.
2. The future researchers
    a. To increase the size or scope of a more representative study sample
    b. To add study factors or variables that are more important to gauging employee performance

Based on the results, the theoretical and practical implications can be stated as follows:

a. Theoretical Implications
    1. Empathetic leadership influences innovative work behavior. Empathetic leaders who have praise, encouragement, job satisfaction, support, and trust can increase employee innovative work behavior.
    2. Empathetic leadership influences the culture of health protocols. An empathetic leader can properly apply a culture of health protocols during the COVID-19 pandemic to all.
    3. Empathetic leadership affects employee performance. Empathetic leaders can certainly improve employee performance optimally.
    4. Innovative work behavior affects employee performance. Employees who have highly innovative work behavior will improve employee performance. Employee performance will be maximized by exploring opportunities, forming ideas, and then fighting for ideas, as well as implementing new ideas as solutions to their work
    5. The health protocol culture influences employee performance. Employees who can implement a culture of health protocols during the COVID-19 pandemic obediently, know, and are supported by adequate facilities and means will increase employee performance. During a pandemic, it is important to implement a culture of health protocols so that employees' daily performance runs because it can inhibit the transmission of COVID-19.

b. Practical Implications
    The study's findings demonstrated the significance of a health protocol culture in raising employee performance, with real-world applications for the people of Panggungharjo Village in carrying out their duties and responsibilities. As a result, it is critical to focus on innovative work behavior, a culture of health protocols, and the use of empathetic leadership when aiming to improve performance. Future research has to be tested in communities of other governmental organizations. Testing additional factors is also required, such as how well digital transformation and information technology advancements affect performance.

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