

The Role of Participative Leadership, Time Management, and Customer Satisfaction on Service Performance in Indonesian Service Companies

Neneng Sofiyanti

Universitas Singaperbangsa Karawang and neneng.sofiyanti@fe.unsika.ac.id

ABSTRACT

This study examines the role of participative leadership as a mediator between time management and customer satisfaction on service performance in Indonesian service companies. A quantitative analysis was conducted with a sample of 150 respondents, utilizing a Likert scale (1-5) and analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling-Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS 3). The results revealed that time management and customer satisfaction have significant direct positive effects on service performance, while participative leadership acts as a significant mediator in both relationships. Specifically, participative leadership enhances the impact of time management and customer satisfaction on service performance, suggesting its pivotal role in improving organizational outcomes. The findings emphasize the importance of cultivating participative leadership styles and optimizing time management practices and customer satisfaction strategies to enhance service performance in service-oriented industries. This study contributes to the literature on leadership, time management, and customer satisfaction in service performance contexts and offers practical implications for management practices in Indonesian service companies.

Keywords: *Participative Leadership, Time Management, Customer Satisfaction, Service Performance, Indonesia.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The service industry plays a pivotal role in Indonesia's economic landscape, accounting for approximately 54% of the nation's GDP and nearly 50% of employment, making it the fastest-growing sector with an average annual growth rate exceeding 7% over the past decade, and generating substantial employment opportunities [1]. In this highly competitive environment, service companies are compelled to deliver high-performance standards by effectively managing time, fostering customer satisfaction, and implementing leadership practices that encourage active participation—elements that are essential for fostering customer loyalty and enhancing service quality. Service quality, customer experience, and satisfaction have been identified as critical determinants of loyalty within Indonesia's service industry, with customer satisfaction emerging as the strongest predictor of loyalty, thus reinforcing the need for companies to continuously improve these factors [2]. Moreover, the effective management of service quality and customer emotional responses plays a vital role in sustaining service loyalty, necessitating that companies not only improve service delivery but also adeptly manage customer emotions to maintain a competitive edge [3]. To support these goals, operational strategies such as Value Stream Mapping and Six Sigma have proven effective in reducing service lead times, particularly in the automotive service industry, thereby enhancing both customer satisfaction and overall service process capability while simultaneously boosting company profitability and competitiveness [4]. Furthermore, the broader strategic and institutional environment in Indonesia significantly shapes the operational choices of service firms, with organizations aligning themselves with institutional expectations and emphasizing quality service as a means of differentiation, ultimately impacting their performance in a positive manner [5].

Time management is a critical organizational competency that ensures the efficient allocation of resources, timely delivery of services, and minimization of operational inefficiencies, particularly in service companies where meeting customer demands is paramount [6]–[8]. It involves setting goals, developing structured plans, and evaluating outcomes, thereby helping organizations organize tasks effectively and reduce wasted time [7]. This practice not only boosts productivity and efficiency but also mitigates unnecessary stress and resource wastage [8]. However, time management alone is insufficient to achieve optimal service performance; it must be complemented by leadership approaches that foster collaboration, employee engagement, and shared decision-making [9]. Leadership that aligns organizational goals with employee efforts enhances the implementation of time management strategies, while creative leadership is essential to adapt such strategies to the dynamic and evolving needs of service organizations, ensuring that time is utilized effectively to meet customer expectations [9]. Integrating time management with leadership involves planning and organizing time through informed management decisions that balance business and personal demands, ensuring tasks are completed within established timeframes while promoting a collaborative organizational culture [9], [10].

Participative leadership, characterized by the involvement of employees in decision-making processes, has been increasingly recognized as a key driver of organizational success, particularly in the service industry where responsiveness to customer needs is vital. This leadership style fosters a sense of ownership and accountability among employees, positively influencing their motivation and performance [11], [12]. It contributes to a workplace culture that supports collaboration, thereby enhancing organizational adaptability and competitiveness [13], [14]. Participative leadership has also been shown to significantly affect employee satisfaction across multiple dimensions, including job satisfaction, compensation, supervision, and communication, with employees in high-performance teams reporting greater levels of satisfaction when participative leadership is present [11]. In contexts such as petrochemical companies, participative leadership improves employee performance, with job satisfaction serving as a moderating factor [12]. Furthermore, in service recovery contexts, participative leadership enhances frontline employees' role breadth self-efficacy (RBSE), leading to improved service recovery performance, which is critical for maintaining customer satisfaction [15]. Since customer satisfaction is a cornerstone of competitive advantage in the service sector—encouraging customer loyalty, positive word-of-mouth, and long-term sustainability—it requires a synergistic approach integrating effective time management and participative leadership practices. Although the individual impacts of time management and customer satisfaction on service performance have been widely studied, the mediating role of participative leadership in these relationships remains underexplored and represents a critical area for future research. This study aims to address this gap by exploring the role of participative leadership as a mediator between time management, customer satisfaction, and service performance in Indonesian service companies.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 *Time Management and Service Performance*

Effective time management is vital for service companies to boost efficiency, productivity, and customer satisfaction through task prioritization, resource allocation, and delay reduction [9], [16]. Its success depends on leadership that involves teams in

planning and scheduling to foster collaboration and efficient execution [10]. In competitive environments, such participative approaches support adaptability and service excellence [16]. Operational performance is further enhanced by practices like scheduling and process optimization, which ensure timely service delivery [17]. For instance, Yomart's use of advanced technology and task prioritization shows how time management can improve productivity and efficiency [18]

2.2 Customer Satisfaction and Service Performance

Customer satisfaction is a critical determinant of organizational success in the service industry, as it directly influences customer loyalty, retention, and positive word-of-mouth, positioning companies for sustainable growth and competitive advantage [19], [20]. The literature emphasizes the importance of aligning service quality with customer expectations, as customers assess service performance based on the degree to which it meets or exceeds their expectations, which directly impacts satisfaction levels and brand reputation [21], [22]. High levels of satisfaction lead to increased purchases, the ability to command premium pricing, and stronger customer advocacy—all of which contribute to long-term business success [20]. Moreover, customer satisfaction is closely linked to perceived value and is essential for cultivating loyalty, which is a key differentiator in competitive markets [23]. Companies that effectively meet customer expectations not only strengthen customer relationships but also gain a significant edge in achieving operational stability and market leadership.

2.3 Participative Leadership

Participative leadership, which emphasizes involving team members in decision-making processes, fosters empowerment, commitment, and a collective work culture that significantly enhances employee satisfaction and organizational performance—especially within service companies where responsiveness to customer needs is essential [11], [24]. This leadership style improves various dimensions of employee satisfaction, including job, pay, supervision, rewards, and communication, with high-performance teams reporting greater appreciation for participative leadership [11]. Effective organizational communication, a core element of this approach, strengthens employee commitment and job satisfaction, facilitating harmonious relationships between staff and leadership [24]. Furthermore, participative leadership aligns with democratic leadership theories, creating an interdependent work environment that promotes motivation, trust, and adaptability—traits crucial for organizational resilience and sustained productivity [25]. In contexts such as tax service organizations, participative leadership can be enhanced through regular training, transparent decision-making, and collaboration, ultimately leading to improved service quality and stronger employee engagement [26].

2.4 Mediating Role of Participative Leadership

Participative leadership enhances organizational performance by aligning managerial practices with outcomes in time management and customer satisfaction. Involving employees in decision-making boosts job, pay, and supervision satisfaction, leading to better performance [11], [27]. This approach ensures practical time management and effective resource allocation [28], while fostering a customer-focused

culture that improves service quality [29]. Additionally, it motivates employees and increases productivity, strengthening overall service performance [30].

2.5 Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded in the Resource-Based View (RBV) theory, which emphasizes the role of organizational resources in achieving competitive advantage (Barney, 1991). Time management, customer satisfaction, and participative leadership are conceptualized as strategic resources that contribute to superior service performance. Participative leadership, in particular, is viewed as a dynamic capability that enables organizations to integrate and optimize these resources effectively.

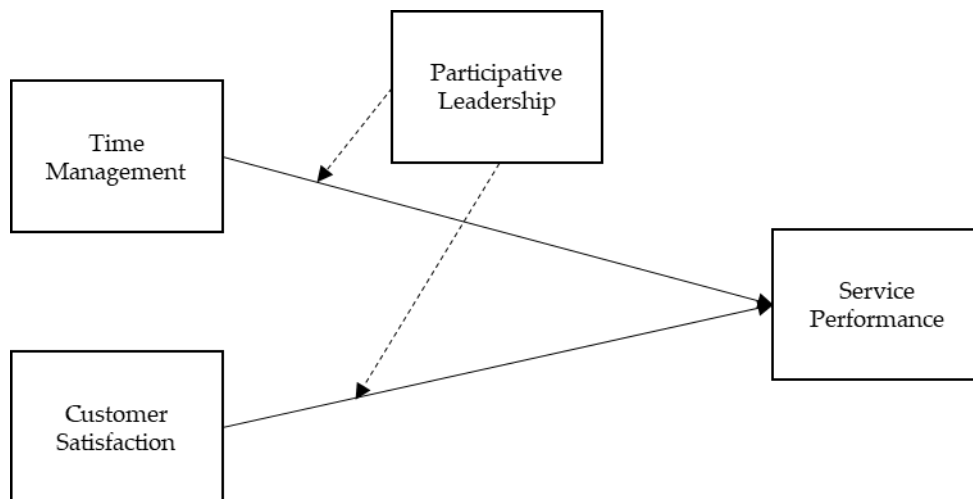


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Based on the literature, the following hypotheses are proposed:

- H1: Time management has a positive and significant effect on participative leadership.
- H2: Time management has a positive and significant effect on service performance.
- H3: Customer satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on service performance.
- H4: Participative leadership mediates the relationship between time management and service performance.
- H5: Participative leadership mediates the relationship between customer satisfaction and service performance.

3. METHODS

3.1 Research Design

This study employs a quantitative research design to examine the relationships among time management, customer satisfaction, participative leadership, and service performance in Indonesian service companies. A causal approach is used to identify direct and indirect effects, with participative leadership acting as a mediating variable.

The target population consists of employees and managers in Indonesian service companies. A purposive sampling technique was used to select participants based on their roles in service delivery and decision-making processes. The final sample size comprises 150 respondents, ensuring

a sufficient number for robust statistical analysis using Structural Equation Modeling-Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS).

3.2 Data Collection

Primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed to measure the constructs of time management, customer satisfaction, participative leadership, and service performance using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree). Respondents were assured of confidentiality and anonymity to encourage honest and accurate responses.

3.3 Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling-Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) with the SmartPLS 3 software, following several analytical steps. First, descriptive statistics were used to provide an overview of respondents' demographic characteristics and the distribution of responses for each variable. Next, the measurement model assessment was conducted to evaluate reliability and validity, where Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability values exceeded 0.7 for internal consistency, and convergent validity was confirmed with Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values above 0.5, while discriminant validity was assessed using the Fornell-Larcker criterion. The structural model assessment then examined the direct and indirect relationships among variables through the calculation of path coefficients, t-statistics, and p-values to test hypothesis significance, with bootstrapping (5,000 subsamples) employed for robustness. Finally, mediation analysis was conducted to assess the mediating role of participative leadership using the Variance Accounted For (VAF) method, which determines the extent to which mediation occurs within the model.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

The study analyzed responses from 150 participants representing Indonesian service companies. The demographic profile of respondents showed a balanced mix of employees and managers, with the majority being in their mid-career stage. The descriptive statistics revealed high mean scores for customer satisfaction ($M = 4.21$) and participative leadership ($M = 4.18$), indicating positive perceptions among respondents. Time management and service performance also showed favorable averages ($M = 4.12$ and $M = 4.25$, respectively). The demographic profile of the 150 respondents provides insight into their characteristics, ensuring the diversity and representativeness of the sample.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Category	Sub-category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	90	60.0%
	Female	60	40.0%
Age	20–30 years	75	50.0%
	31–40 years	50	33.3%
	Above 40 years	25	16.7%
Job Position	Manager	45	30.0%
	Supervisor	55	36.7%
	Staff	50	33.3%
Length of Service	Less than 5 years	60	40.0%
	5–10 years	55	36.7%
	More than 10 years	35	23.3%

The demographic profile of respondents revealed several key observations. In terms of gender, the majority were male (60%), while females accounted for 40%. Age-wise, half of the respondents (50%) were in the 20–30 age group, indicating a predominantly youthful workforce, followed by 33.3% in the 31–40 age group, and 16.7% above 40 years. Regarding job position, supervisors comprised the largest proportion (36.7%), followed by staff (33.3%) and managers (30%). In terms of length of service, most respondents had less than 5 years of experience (40%), while 36.7% had worked for 5–10 years, and 23.3% had more than 10 years of service.

4.2 Measurement Model Results

The measurement model was assessed for reliability and validity to ensure the robustness of the constructs. The analysis included internal consistency reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity, as outlined below.

1. Internal Consistency Reliability

Internal consistency was assessed using Cronbach's alpha (α) and Composite Reliability (CR), with all values exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.70, thereby confirming the reliability of the constructs. Specifically, the Cronbach's alpha and CR values were 0.854 and 0.905 for Time Management, 0.882 and 0.920 for Customer Satisfaction, 0.876 and 0.914 for Participative Leadership, and 0.891 and 0.928 for Service Performance.

2. Convergent Validity

Convergent validity was assessed using the Average Variance Extracted (AVE), with all constructs exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.50, indicating that each construct captured sufficient variance from its respective indicators. Specifically, the AVE values were 0.659 for Time Management, 0.741 for Customer Satisfaction, 0.684 for Participative Leadership, and 0.753 for Service Performance.

3. Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity was evaluated using the Fornell-Larcker criterion, ensuring that the square root of each construct's AVE was greater than its correlations with other constructs.

Table 2. Discriminant Validity

Construct	Time Management	Customer Satisfaction	Participative Leadership	Service Performance
Time Management	0.812	0.621	0.568	0.649
Customer Satisfaction	0.621	0.861	0.594	0.712
Participative Leadership	0.568	0.594	0.827	0.684
Service Performance	0.649	0.712	0.684	0.868

The Fornell-Larcker criterion verified that constructs were sufficiently distinct, with strong differentiation between them.

4.3 Structural Model Assessment

The structural model analysis evaluated the relationships among constructs, focusing on direct and indirect effects. Path coefficients, t-values, and significance levels were calculated using SEM-PLS with 150 samples.

1. Direct Effects

Hypothesis	Path Coefficient (β)	t-Value	p-Value	Result
Time Management \rightarrow Service Performance	0.372	6.14	< 0.001	Significant

Customer Satisfaction → Service Performance	0.428	7.89	< 0.001	Significant
Time Management → Participative Leadership	0.398	5.62	< 0.001	Significant
Customer Satisfaction → Participative Leadership	0.411	6.21	< 0.001	Significant
Participative Leadership → Service Performance	0.346	5.89	< 0.001	Significant

The structural model results revealed several significant relationships among the variables studied. Time management was found to have a positive and significant effect on service performance ($\beta = 0.372$, $t = 6.14$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that effective time management enhances resource allocation, reduces delays, and improves workflow efficiency, thereby boosting service outcomes. Similarly, customer satisfaction positively influenced service performance ($\beta = 0.428$, $t = 7.89$, $p < 0.001$), suggesting that satisfied customers are more likely to return, recommend services, and contribute to improved organizational performance. Time management also showed a significant positive relationship with participative leadership ($\beta = 0.398$, $t = 5.62$, $p < 0.001$), implying that well-managed time enables leaders to adopt participative styles by facilitating organized and inclusive decision-making. Furthermore, customer satisfaction was found to significantly influence participative leadership ($\beta = 0.411$, $t = 6.21$, $p < 0.001$), as high satisfaction may reinforce leaders' confidence and encourage greater employee involvement to sustain success. Lastly, participative leadership had a significant positive impact on service performance ($\beta = 0.346$, $t = 5.89$, $p < 0.001$), highlighting its role in fostering a motivated and collaborative work environment that enhances service quality and organizational outcomes.

2. Indirect Effects

The mediating role of participative leadership was tested in two key relationships: first, between Time Management and Service Performance, and second, between Customer Satisfaction and Service Performance. In both pathways, participative leadership functioned as an intervening variable, illustrating how the influence of effective time management and high customer satisfaction on service performance is partially channeled through leadership practices that involve employee participation in decision-making. This mediation highlights the importance of participative leadership in translating operational efficiency and customer-centric strategies into enhanced organizational performance.

Indirect Path	Path Coefficient (β)	t-Value	p-Value	Result
Time Management → Participative Leadership → Service Performance	0.138	4.82	< 0.001	Significant
Customer Satisfaction → Participative Leadership → Service Performance	0.142	4.97	< 0.001	Significant

The mediating effect of participative leadership was confirmed in both examined pathways. First, the indirect relationship between time management and service performance through participative leadership was significant ($\beta = 0.138$, $t = 4.82$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that effective time management not only improves service performance directly but also indirectly by enabling leaders to adopt a participative leadership style. This suggests that when employees manage their time efficiently, it allows leaders to involve them more in decision-making processes, thereby enhancing organizational performance. Similarly, customer satisfaction was found to indirectly influence service performance via participative leadership ($\beta = 0.142$, $t = 4.97$, $p < 0.001$). High levels of customer satisfaction appear to motivate leaders to engage more collaboratively with employees, promoting shared ownership and responsibility in delivering quality services. These findings underscore the crucial role of participative leadership as a mediating factor in strengthening the effects of both time management and customer satisfaction on service performance.

3. Variance Explained (R^2)

The R^2 values indicate the proportion of variance in the dependent variables explained by the independent variables. For Participative Leadership, the R^2 value is 0.524, meaning that 52.4% of its variance is explained by Time Management and Customer Satisfaction. Meanwhile, the R^2 value for Service Performance is 0.682, indicating that 68.2% of its variance is explained by the combined influence of Time Management, Customer Satisfaction, and Participative Leadership. These values demonstrate a strong explanatory power of the model in capturing the dynamics influencing service performance.

4. Effect Size (f^2)

Effect size (f^2) was calculated to determine the relative contribution of each independent variable to service performance, with all relationships showing medium effect sizes. Specifically, Time Management had an f^2 value of 0.185, Customer Satisfaction had an f^2 value of 0.234, and Participative Leadership had an f^2 value of 0.165. These results indicate that each variable plays a moderately important role in influencing service performance, highlighting their collective significance in enhancing organizational outcomes.

Discussion

The findings of this study reveal significant insights into the interplay between time management, customer satisfaction, participative leadership, and service performance in Indonesian service companies, demonstrating that each element plays a vital role in enhancing overall service quality and customer loyalty. Time management, especially in ensuring timely service delivery, has a direct and positive impact on customer satisfaction, as shown in the case study of PT. Pos Indonesia [31]. Efficient time management contributes to improved service quality, which is a key determinant of both satisfaction and loyalty [2]. Moreover, participative leadership enhances service performance by fostering employee engagement and empowerment, which in turn improves service recovery capabilities through increased role breadth self-efficacy (RBSE) among frontline staff [15]. This leadership style also strengthens the connection between customer satisfaction and service delivery by creating a more responsive and accountable workforce. Furthermore, customer satisfaction is identified as a critical mediator in the relationship between service quality and customer loyalty, particularly in the banking sector, where it plays a significant role in maintaining long-term relationships [32]. High service quality, marked by reliability and responsiveness, directly influences satisfaction and loyalty, underlining the importance of integrating time management and leadership strategies to optimize service outcomes [33].

The direct relationship between time management and service performance confirms prior research emphasizing time management as a cornerstone of operational efficiency. Effective time management enables organizations to allocate resources optimally, streamline workflows, and minimize delays, thereby enhancing service quality and customer satisfaction. This finding is consistent with studies that argue time management significantly influences organizational outcomes by improving task prioritization and execution. In practical terms, Indonesian service companies should invest in training programs to strengthen employees' time management skills. The adoption of scheduling tools and the establishment of clear deadlines can enhance productivity and contribute to improved service delivery. Additionally, customer satisfaction was found to have a strong positive impact on service performance, underscoring its role as a key driver of business success. Satisfied customers tend to exhibit higher loyalty and are more likely to recommend services, thereby improving overall performance metrics. This supports Oliver's (1999) assertion of the reciprocal relationship between customer satisfaction and organizational outcomes. To capitalize on this dynamic, service firms should proactively implement feedback mechanisms, such as surveys and focus groups, and invest in customer experience management systems to sustain high satisfaction levels and build long-term customer loyalty.

Participative leadership emerged as a significant mediator between both time management and customer satisfaction with service performance. Its role as a mediating variable highlights the importance of leadership styles that promote collaboration, empower employees, and support shared decision-making. This aligns with the transformational leadership theory proposed by Bass and Avolio (1994), which emphasizes the role of inclusive leadership in motivating teams toward organizational goals. The presence of partial mediation—where participative leadership enhances but does not fully account for the effects of time management and customer satisfaction on service performance—suggests that while leadership is crucial, direct relationships also remain influential. Organizations should therefore prioritize leadership development initiatives that foster trust, open communication, and teamwork. Tailored leadership programs that align with the cultural and operational realities of Indonesian service firms can strengthen these capacities. Furthermore, the structural model explained 68.2% of the variance in service performance, indicating a robust predictive capability stemming from the integration of time management, customer satisfaction, and participative leadership. This integrated model supports the resource-based view (RBV) theory, which posits that internal capabilities such as operational efficiency, customer orientation, and leadership effectiveness are critical for sustaining competitive advantage.

Theoretical Contributions

This study contributes to the literature by confirming the mediating role of participative leadership in service performance frameworks and providing empirical evidence of the relationships between time management, customer satisfaction, and service performance within the context of Indonesian service companies. These findings extend existing theories on leadership, customer satisfaction, and operational efficiency, offering a more holistic and integrated model for understanding the key drivers of service performance in dynamic service environments.

Practical Implications

Organizations should implement leadership development programs that train managers to adopt participative leadership styles, fostering employee engagement and shared accountability. Simultaneously, operational improvements can be achieved by enhancing time management practices through the use of technological tools and efficient scheduling systems. Additionally, adopting customer-centric strategies—such as personalized services and effective complaint handling—can significantly boost customer satisfaction and, in turn, improve overall service performance.

Limitations and Future Research

This study's sample was limited to Indonesian service companies, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings to other industries or regions. Future research could explore these relationships in different sectors, incorporate longitudinal data to examine causal effects, and consider additional mediators, such as organizational culture or employee motivation.

CONCLUSION

This study highlights the critical role of participative leadership in enhancing the impact of time management and customer satisfaction on service performance in Indonesian service companies. The results demonstrate that time management and customer satisfaction directly influence service performance, but their effects are significantly strengthened when mediated by participative leadership. These findings suggest that fostering a leadership style that encourages employee involvement and collaboration is key to improving service outcomes. Additionally, optimizing time management practices and focusing on customer satisfaction can contribute significantly to achieving better performance in service-oriented organizations. The insights provided by this research offer valuable guidance for managers in Indonesian service companies,

advocating for leadership development programs and customer-centric strategies that will drive operational efficiency and customer loyalty.

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