

The Role of Leaders in Determining The Direction of Social Groups (A Case Study in the Marketing unit of a Company)

Bernardus Danny Harsono
Open University, Indonesia



DOI : <https://doi.org/10.61796/ejlhss.v2i8.1380>



Sections Info

Article history:

Submitted: June 7, 2025

Final Revised: June 14, 2025

Accepted: July 4, 2025

Published: July 28, 2025

Keywords:

Leader

Social group

Organizational goals

ABSTRACT

Objective: This study aims to explore the role of leadership within a social group, specifically in the context of a marketing unit in a company, and how that role influences group direction in alignment with organizational goals. **Method:** Employing a qualitative research design, data were collected through direct observation and in-depth interviews with selected individuals within the marketing unit to gain insights into leadership dynamics and group behavior. **Results:** The findings reveal that the leader plays a crucial role in determining the movement and cohesion of the social group, shaping its strategies and behaviors to follow the company's vision and objectives. Leadership influence was evident in task delegation, motivation, and conflict resolution, which collectively contributed to increased group effectiveness. **Novelty:** This study contributes to the sociological understanding of leadership not only as a managerial function but as a central element in the formation and direction of social groups in professional environments, particularly within marketing units – a focus that remains underrepresented in existing literature.

INTRODUCTION

The marketing unit, as a social group, plays a vital role as one of the main spearheads of a company. A company's largest revenue is mostly generated by the marketing unit, which is responsible for selling products to consumers. The more products or services sold, the greater the profit earned, leading to the overall growth of the company [1].

The role of the leader in the marketing unit is crucial. The direction taken by the marketing unit depends heavily on its leader and must align with the company's broader goals and vision. If the leader promotes a positive culture, the social group will move in a positive direction. Conversely, if the leader acts arbitrarily or in self-interest, it will create disharmony within the group. The group will function under pressure and obligation, influenced by the power dynamics between superiors and subordinates. Subordinates may comply due to performance assessments, bonuses, and other pressures, even at the expense of integrity and ethics. If they resist, they may face poor evaluations, hindered career progression, limited bonuses, or even social exclusion from the group. Therefore, the leader's role significantly impacts the movement and dynamics of the social group [2], [3], [4], [5], [6].

Literature Review

The first review is from a study by Muhammad Subni titled *"The Role of Leadership in Building Work Teams and Developing Organizations"* (2023). This qualitative study used literature review methods and concluded that effective leadership is essential in building a solid work team and driving positive organizational development.

The second review is from a study by Rahmi Aulia, Bambang Kurniawan, and Muhammad Subhan titled *"Implementation of Leadership Management in Achieving Organizational Goals"* (2024). This qualitative study found that leadership is crucial in an organization. A leader significantly influences an organization's success, and the organization itself can be seen as a small social group, whether in specific or broader units.

The third review is from a study by Arifin Hidayat titled *"Leadership and Management and Their Implications in Life"* (2021). Using qualitative methods, the study concluded that a leader influences not only themselves but also the group they lead, as the group follows the direction set by the leader.

The fourth review is from a study by Amin Maulani titled *"Leadership and Management in Education"* (2024). This qualitative research was conducted using books, journals, and other sources, and found that the success of an organization or social group in achieving its goals depends on the leader, who acts as the controller and director of the group's direction.

The fifth review is from a study by Enjang Suhaedin, Muhammad Giatman, and Hasan Maksun titled *"Leadership Management in Improving the Quality of Vocational High School (SMK) Education"* (2024). This qualitative study used a systematic literature review and concluded that the school principal, as the highest leader, plays a key role in shaping the learning environment and competition within the institution.

The sixth review is from a study by Haudi titled *"Educational Leadership Management in Schools"* (2022). This qualitative study found that a good leader produces a good social group. The leader's role is essential in guiding members of the group to achieve established targets [7], [8], [9], [10].

RESEARCH METHOD

The research method used in this study is a qualitative approach by conducting observations within the marketing unit and interviews with its members as a social group. This was carried out as a means to gain deeper insights into what is expected from a leader in taking action to achieve predetermined targets.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A social group will not succeed in achieving predetermined targets without the presence of a competent leader. Without leadership, the group tends to operate individually, fragment into smaller subgroups, or even disband entirely. When no guidance is provided, or when the leader exercises poor judgment or inappropriate

leadership styles, members may begin to look for alternative figures to admire or follow [11].

Fragmentation into smaller groups often occurs when members seek out others with similar views, feeling that the larger group no longer offers a sense of belonging. This reflects the leader's inability to unify and direct the group. While members may outwardly appear to follow the leader due to hierarchical constraints, internally the group may have already fractured. In some cases, a complete disbandment occurs due to a loss of mutual trust. In a corporate setting, this often results in resignations or transfers to other units. The marketing unit, in particular, often experiences high turnover – not only due to performance targets but also due to a lack of comfort within the social group.

The role of a leader in the marketing unit is therefore essential – not only in providing clear direction but also in ensuring fairness in implementation. Clear direction enables group members to work toward established targets from the start of a period, knowing what needs to be achieved, how it will be evaluated, and the outcomes expected. Fair implementation means decisions should not be altered arbitrarily; violations of rules must be met with appropriate consequences. Transparency among group members fosters mutual understanding and trust [12].

Leaders who prioritize certain individuals – or themselves – for personal gain, such as receiving bonuses or recognition, tend to lose the trust of the group. However, group members are often unable to express their dissatisfaction openly due to fears of retaliation, such as reduced bonuses or career stagnation, which are controlled by the superior [13], [14].

Leadership is a mandate entrusted by those who appoint the leader. Leaders must safeguard that trust by considering the welfare of their group members and the direction of the organization. By doing so, the social group becomes stronger and more unified, the company's objectives are more likely to be achieved, and justice in the application of rules is upheld [15].

CONCLUSION

Fundamental Finding: This study concludes that the leader's role within the marketing unit – as a social group in a corporate environment – is crucial in steering the group toward the organization's intended direction. Leadership marked by fairness and inclusivity fosters cohesion and positive group movement, while self-centered or unjust leadership can result in long-term fragmentation and hinder the achievement of company objectives. **Implication:** These findings highlight the necessity for organizations to invest in leadership development that emphasizes ethical behavior, transparent communication, and equitable decision-making to strengthen social group dynamics and enhance overall performance. **Limitation:** However, the study is limited to a single unit within one company and does not explore variations across different industries or organizational structures, which may affect the generalizability of the results. **Future Research:** Further studies could investigate comparative leadership roles across various departments and organizational cultures, employing mixed-method approaches to assess

how leadership style directly impacts group cohesion and performance outcomes on a broader scale.

REFERENCES

- [1] T. Seppälä, J. Lipponen, and A.-M. Pirttilä-Backman, "Leader fairness and employees' trust in coworkers: The moderating role of leader group prototypicality.," *Group Dynamics: Theory, Research, and Practice*, vol. 16, no. 1, pp. 35–49, Mar. 2012, doi: 10.1037/a0026970.
- [2] S. C. Edmonds, "BUILDING A PURPOSEFUL, POSITIVE, PRODUCTIVE CULTURE," *Leader to Leader*, vol. 2017, no. 84, pp. 42–47, Mar. 2017, doi: 10.1002/ltl.20290.
- [3] C. Lewis, "THE CRUCIAL ROLE OF TALENT IN ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE," *Leader to Leader*, vol. 2019, no. 91, pp. 32–36, Sep. 2018, doi: 10.1002/ltl.20405.
- [4] D. S. Nataraj and P. Shivanna, "TV Advertisement Plays A Vital Role In Generational Marketing," *IOSR Journal of Business and Management*, vol. 26, no. 12, pp. 61–67, Dec. 2024, doi: 10.9790/487x-2612146167.
- [5] V. Bursal, "Products for Conscious Consumers - A General Introduction," in *Products for Conscious Consumers*, Emerald Publishing Limited, 2022, pp. 3–13. doi: 10.1108/978-1-80262-837-120221001.
- [6] M. Pozzi, "'Create a Better Online You': designing online learning resources to develop undergraduate social media skills," *International Journal of Social Media and Interactive Learning Environments*, vol. 3, no. 4, p. 305, 2015, doi: 10.1504/ijsmile.2015.074011.
- [7] M. Qi, M. Li, and W. Q. Wang, "Faultline distance and group citizenship behaviors: The moderating role of social identity leadership and group-level leader-member exchange," *European Management Review*, Mar. 2025, doi: 10.1111/emre.70007.
- [8] I. T. Maulana, M. Giatman, and H. Maksum, "E-Learning is Effectively Used for Leadership Courses at Metamedia Universities," *Journal International Inspire Education Technology*, vol. 3, no. 1, pp. 31–38, Mar. 2024, doi: 10.55849/jiiet.v3i1.576.
- [9] P. L. Ealy, "Developing Leadership Skills," in *Building an Organizational Coaching Culture*, Routledge, 2023, pp. 193–205. doi: 10.4324/9781003379577-15.
- [10] S. Murugan, "Navigating success: Unveiling the concept framework of 'success-route' and its impact on achieving goals in career," *BOHR International Journal of Social Science and Humanities Research*, vol. 3, no. 1, pp. 1–5, 2024, doi: 10.54646/bijsshr.2024.68.
- [11] R. Sims and F. J. Weinberg, "More than Follow the Leader: Expectations, Behaviors, Stability, and Change in a Co-Created Leadership Process," *Group & Organization Management*, vol. 49, no. 2, pp. 332–364, Apr. 2022, doi: 10.1177/10596011221093456.
- [12] C. G. der Merwe, "Regspraak: Can the body corporate insist that the purchaser of a sectional title unit at a sale in execution pay or secure not only outstanding levies but also other amounts the body corporate claims are due by the unit owner such as interest on arrears, legal costs and interest on non-paid legal costs before the body corporate will issue the levy clearance certificate for transfer required in terms of section 15b3(a)(i)(aa) of the Sectional Titles Act?," *Tydskrif vir die Suid-Afrikaanse Reg*, vol. 2023, no. 1, pp. 125–139, 2023, doi: 10.47348/tsar/2023/i1a8.
- [13] R. Groß and M. Dorigo, "Group Transport of an Object to a Target That Only Some Group Members May Sense," in *Parallel Problem Solving from Nature - PPSN VIII*, Springer Berlin Heidelberg, 2004, pp. 852–861. doi: 10.1007/978-3-540-30217-9_86.
- [14] H. Zürcher, "When Does the Future Actually Begin?," in *Moments of Leadership*, Springer International Publishing, 2023, pp. 237–240. doi: 10.1007/978-3-031-35660-5_9.

- [15] A. Fahrowi, "Values Of Islamic Religious Education In Tarekat Teachings," *MAQOLAT: Journal of Islamic Studies*, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 12-17, Jan. 2023, doi: 10.58355/maqolat.v1i1.3.

***Bernardus Danny Harsono (Corresponding Author)**

Open University, Indonesia

Email: 052405873@ecampus.ut.ac.id
