



## Collaborative Leadership: A Solution for High Work Intensity Organizations (A Conceptual Review of Organizational Behavior)

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**Abstract:** Collaborative leadership has become an increasingly relevant approach in modern organizational management, especially in efforts to reduce work-related stress and enhance employee performance. In a high-pressure and complex work environment, this leadership style fosters cooperation, open communication, and active participation from all team members. Through a collaborative approach, leaders can create a more supportive work environment where employees feel heard and valued, thereby minimizing work-related stress. Additionally, by building stronger working relationships and synergy among team members, collaborative leadership has been proven effective in improving both individual and organizational performance overall. This study examines the importance of implementing collaborative leadership as a strategy for managing work-related stress and boosting employee productivity, highlighting various studies and empirical evidence supporting the effectiveness of this approach. The study consists of several parts. First, a literature review focuses on collaborative leadership. Second, the research model and propositions developed in this study are based on a review of previous research literature and discuss in-depth the relationship between work stress and employee performance. The findings of the study indicate that collaborative leadership plays a significant role in reducing work-related stress and enhancing employee performance across various organizations. Collaborative leadership, which emphasizes involvement, participation, and cooperation among team members, has proven effective in creating a more supportive and cooperative work environment, thereby reducing work-related stress and improving employee performance within an organization.

**Keywords:** Collaborative Leadership, Job Stress, & Performance

### INTRODUCTION

Collaborative leadership is a management skill where leaders consistently work together, designing constructive cooperation by involving stakeholders and facilitating as well

as maintaining established interactions. Collaborative leadership emphasizes joint decision-making rather than unilateral decisions; collaborative leaders carry out their work through coalitions, partnerships, and alliances (Siagian, 2019).

Collaborative leadership essentially emphasizes the leader's role within the team to guide and observe the team in achieving success. Effective leadership processes and leadership behavior are crucial factors in determining a team's success within the organization. The leader's task in a team is to enhance the effectiveness of the team's performance. This type of leadership requires communication skills to foster collaboration, monitor the team's effectiveness, and address any issues that arise within the team (Isnawati et al., 2021).

This team leadership model positions leadership as a key factor in the effectiveness of a team that must function well. The role of this leadership involves analyzing issues within the team and addressing problems accurately (Suwatno, 2019). Thus, this leadership acts as a factor in team effectiveness and demonstrates how a leader can identify and resolve issues within their team.

The reason why collaborative leadership is so important is that it constantly seeks new ways to generate solutions. The need for power is driven by the desire to influence and be influential. Individuals with a high need for power enjoy taking responsibility and strive to influence others. Collaborative leadership involves creating impact and influence. They aim to influence others by introducing new approaches to problem-solving. Collaborative leaders prefer work situations that involve personal responsibility, feedback, and moderate levels of risk. They are risk-takers and are not afraid of failure (Stephen, 2007).

According to Newell & Ronyne, collaborative leadership, also known as facilitative leadership, adaptive leadership, integral leadership, and catalytic leadership, focuses on the distribution of power among groups, units, and organizations. Additionally, Rubin argues that in modern times, collaborative leadership is widely accepted as an integral part of achieving the expected performance in the workplace. The lack of a collaborative leadership style hinders motivation and increases employee stress as they compete to achieve optimal performance (Njenga & Maina, 2018). This explains that collaborative leadership enables teamwork to function effectively by reducing work stress and enhancing employee performance.

## **METHOD**

This study uses a descriptive qualitative conceptual approach to assess the extent to which this concept has developed by observing collaborative leadership as a solution for companies with high work intensity. It describes the types, designs, or research frameworks commonly used to analyze natural research objects or real-world situations that are not controlled as experiments. According to Sugiyono (2019), qualitative research methods, which originate from post-positivist philosophy, are used to explore people in natural situations (actual conditions, not predetermined or experimental), with the researcher acting as the primary instrument. To support the existing findings, a literature review is conducted according to methodological assumptions. This indicates that the strategy should be used inductively to avoid questions being directly posed by the researcher. The exploratory component of this research is one of the main reasons for conducting qualitative research (Ali, H., & Limakrisna, 2015).

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Collaborative Leadership Concept**

Collaborative leadership is a management skill where leaders consistently work together by designing constructive cooperation involving stakeholders and facilitating as well as maintaining established interactions. Collaborative leadership emphasizes joint decision-

making rather than unilateral decisions; collaborative leaders carry out their work through coalitions, partnerships, and alliances (Siagian, 2019). According to Hill (as cited in Suwatno, 2019), collaborative leadership or team leadership involves a group that is not just a collection of individuals but is characterized by the interdependence of members in coordinating their activities to achieve predetermined goals.

The theory of collaborative leadership was developed by David Chrislip and Carl Larson through their research on civic leadership and collaboration in the 1980s and early 90s. The theory assumes that by working together and coordinating their efforts, a group of people collaborates when they go beyond personal interests to pursue a common goal (Archief in Njenga & Maina, 2018). Today's leaders operate in a new landscape that requires them to be collaborative. Collaboration involves facilitating and operating in multi-organizational settings to solve problems that cannot be easily addressed by one person, department, or organization. Collaboration means working together to achieve common goals, often across boundaries and within multi-sector and multi-stakeholder relationships (O'Leary, et al., 2009).

Wang et al. and Chrislip & Carl state that collaborative leadership is leadership characterized by collaboration. This definition refers to taking on a leadership role within coalitions, organizations, or companies where everyone is on an equal footing and works together to solve problems, create something new, or manage an organization or initiative. Additionally, Herman notes that collaborative leadership does not control the group but is responsible for guiding and coordinating the process by which the group makes decisions and takes actions to achieve its goals (Shu & Wang, 2021).

According to Maxwell, the collaborative theory advocates the need to encourage organizational employees to be innovative and cooperative. Communication and teamwork are the best ways to generate innovative ideas and achieve the best results for the organization (Njenga & Maina, 2018). Njenga & Maina (2018) suggest that collaborative leadership provides a clear view that this leadership style has a significant aspect in involving all stakeholders in decision-making. It ensures a credible and open collaborative process that assures participants that their views will be heard, avoiding a top-down approach to decision-making. This theory enhances visible support from high-level leadership and secures support from established authority from start to finish. Collaborative leadership brings teams closer together as they agree on the vision and implementation strategy.

According to Nielsen & Smeets (2018), the concept of collaborative leadership functions to refine work implications more systematically. Collaboration involves interaction and/or division of labor among different employees. It can refer to two things: organizations that actively work together (mutual influence) or organizations that coordinate their individual actions (division of labor). Such coordination can be informal and sometimes even implicit.

Maalouf (2019) shares the view that collaborative leadership involves five key focuses from both the leader's and the organization's perspectives: 1) managing and minimizing operational losses; 2) forecasting the future to drive organizational sustainability; 3) building consensus; and 4) managing conflicts. These are the dimensions he describes in his perspective on collaborative leadership. Meanwhile, Goman (2015) identifies five key dimensions that, in his view, enhance the understanding of the collaborative leadership concept: 1) mutual trust; 2) mutual benefit; 3) independence or autonomy; 4) administration; and 5) governance.

Additionally, Archer & Cameron (2013) present their perspective in the form of a three-legged stool, which illustrates the key perspectives and dimensions supporting collaborative leadership: 1) governance, 2) operations, and 3) leader behavior. Furthermore, Ang & Chiroma (2021) propose three dimensions: 1) self-leadership, 2) authentic engagement, and 3) dedication to 'us'.

According to Ang & Kilika (2021), their study proposes three key constructs that encompass dimensions of collaborative leadership as derived from various previous studies:

1) Collaborative context – which requires elements of governance, operations, and administration; 2) Authentic relationships – which require elements of authentic engagement, mutual trust, consensus building, conflict management, and interdependence; and 3) Leader actions – which require self-leadership, leader behavior, autonomy, administration, and mutual benefit.

### **Collaborative Leadership Solution to Reduce Employee Work Stress**

Each leader in an organization essentially has different characteristics or styles of leadership. It is important to pay attention to the leadership style used within an organization to ensure effective communication between managers and subordinates. A good leadership style not only focuses on work productivity but also considers the feelings and well-being of employees. Leadership styles that neglect employees can lead to excessive reactions from them (Yulia & Mukzam, 2017).

Mangkunegara (2017) states that one of the causes of employee work stress is leadership. Leadership style reflects the behavioral patterns of managers in leading employees. The behavior of managers, as expressed through their leadership style, also influences the stress experienced by employees. An increase in work stress among employees can be caused by the behavior of their leaders.

Furthermore, Prasetyo (2018) in his research indicates that leadership is a factor that can trigger work stress among organizational members. This is because if members of an organization feel uncomfortable and perceive unfairness in the leadership style around them, it can lead to work stress. Additionally, Prayatna and Subudi (2016) in their research also reveal that a poor leadership style can cause employees to become unproductive and less creative, which impacts their career aspirations and leads to stress about their work.

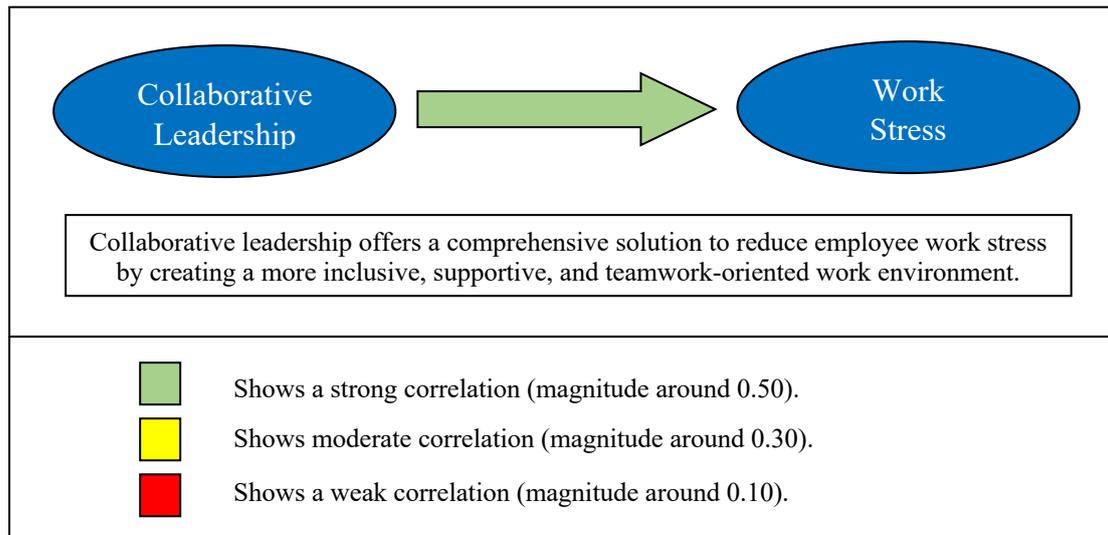
Collaborative leadership has been recognized as an effective approach to addressing work stress among employees. In collaborative leadership, leaders not only direct and supervise but also involve team members in the decision-making and problem-solving processes. This leadership style emphasizes teamwork, open communication, and active participation, all of which contribute to creating a work environment that supports employees' psychological well-being.

Work stress is often caused by excessive pressure, lack of support, and uncertainty in the workplace. Collaborative leadership can address these factors by providing space for employees to voice their concerns and participate in determining the direction of the team's work. According to research conducted by Dinh et al. (2014), collaborative leadership can increase employees' sense of control and job satisfaction, which ultimately reduces their stress levels.

Additionally, collaborative leadership also promotes the creation of stronger and more trusting relationships among team members. When employees feel supported by their colleagues and leaders, their levels of anxiety and pressure in the workplace decrease. Research conducted by Pearce and Sims (2002) shows that a collaborative work environment can reduce conflicts and enhance team cohesion, which ultimately contributes to a reduction in work stress.

Furthermore, collaborative leadership enables leaders to better recognize the individual needs and concerns of employees, allowing them to provide more targeted support. This is consistent with the findings of Morgeson et al. (2010), which state that leaders who adopt a collaborative approach are more likely to be sensitive to signs of stress among team members and more proactive in offering solutions.

Overall, collaborative leadership offers a comprehensive solution for reducing employee work stress by creating a more inclusive, supportive, and cooperative work environment. By implementing this leadership style, organizations can create a workplace that is not only productive but also psychologically healthy for their employees.



**Figure 1. The Relationship Between Collaborative Leadership and Work Stress**

### **Collaborative Leadership Solutions to Improve Employee Performance**

Collaborative leadership fundamentally emphasizes the leader’s role in guiding and observing the team to achieve success. Effective leadership processes and behaviors are crucial factors in determining the success of the team within an organization. The leader’s task is to enhance the effectiveness of the team’s performance. This leadership style requires communication skills to foster cooperation, monitor team effectiveness, and address any issues that arise within the team (Isnawati et al., 2021).

This team leadership model positions leadership as a crucial factor in the effectiveness of a team, ensuring that it functions well. This leadership approach aims to analyze and address issues within the team effectively (Suwatno, 2019). Therefore, leadership is a key factor in team performance, focusing on how a leader can identify and resolve issues within the team.

Collaborative leadership, also referred to as facilitative leadership, adaptive leadership, integral leadership, and catalytic leadership, focuses on the distribution of power among groups, units, and organizations. Additionally, Rubin notes that in the modern era, collaborative leadership is widely accepted as an integral part of achieving the desired performance in the workplace. The lack of a collaborative leadership style hinders motivation and increases conflict when employees compete for work achievements. Collaborative leadership enables effective teamwork by reducing the gap between leadership and workers (Njenga & Maina, 2018).

Several studies conducted by Yulia & Mukzam (2017), Waruwu (2018), Heriyanti & Putri (2021), Harahap et al. (2021), Maalouf (2019), Hsieh & Liou (2018), Jaya et al. (2021), Orabi (2016), Njenga & Maina (2018), and Akparep et al. (2019) have also indicated that collaborative leadership has a positive and significant impact on employee performance. This means that collaborative leadership has been proven to be an effective strategy for enhancing employee performance in various organizations. Collaborative leadership emphasizes active participation, cooperation, and shared responsibility among team members, creating a work environment conducive to achieving optimal performance.

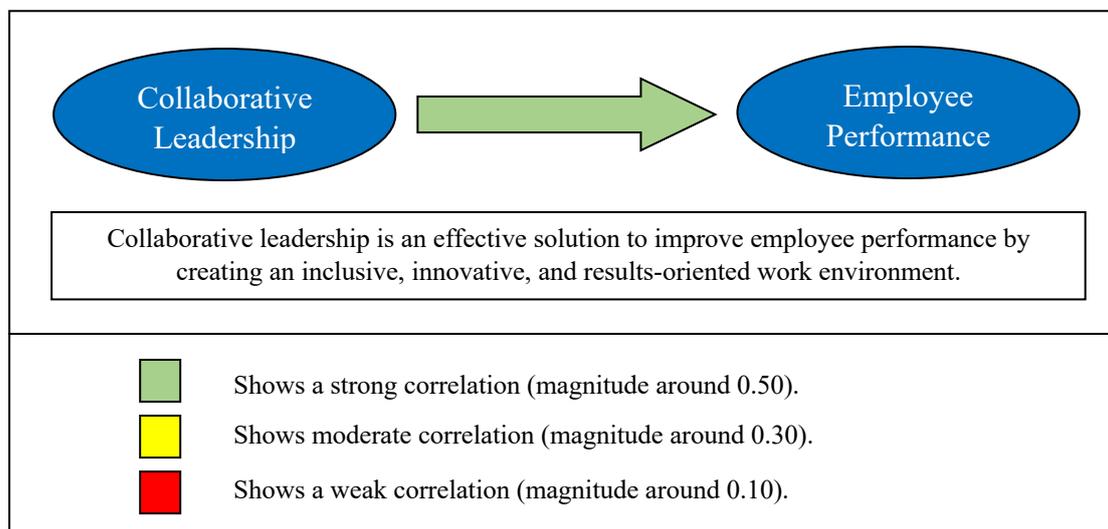
Collaborative leadership encourages the involvement of all team members in decision-making and problem-solving. By emphasizing collaboration, leaders create an environment where employees feel more valued and motivated to contribute their best. According to research conducted by Pearce and Conger (2003), collaborative leadership can enhance

employees' sense of ownership over their tasks and responsibilities, which contributes to increased productivity and work efficiency.

Additionally, collaborative leadership facilitates the exchange of ideas and innovation, which are crucial elements of organizational performance. When employees are encouraged to share their perspectives and work together in teams, the opportunities for discovering creative and innovative solutions increase. This aligns with the findings of Wang, Waldman, and Zhang (2014), which show that collaborative leadership can enhance employee creativity, ultimately having a positive impact on overall organizational performance.

Furthermore, collaborative leadership strengthens relationships among team members, enhancing cohesion and trust between them. In a cohesive and trusting team, employees are more likely to be motivated to cooperate and assist each other in achieving common goals. Research by Carmeli, Brueller, and Dutton (2009) found that a collaborative work environment can improve team performance by increasing emotional engagement and commitment to team goals.

Overall, collaborative leadership is an effective solution for enhancing employee performance by creating an inclusive, innovative, and results-oriented work environment. By implementing this approach, organizations can encourage employees to work more efficiently and productively, ultimately contributing to the long-term success of the organization.



**Figure 2. The Relationship Between Collaborative Leadership and Employee Performance**

## CONCLUSION

Collaborative leadership has proven to be an effective solution for reducing work stress and improving employee performance across various organizations. By emphasizing involvement, open communication, and teamwork, collaborative leadership creates a more supportive and inclusive work environment. Employees who feel heard and valued tend to experience lower levels of stress, contributing to their psychological well-being. Additionally, active employee involvement in decision-making and problem-solving encourages greater responsibility and motivation, ultimately enhancing both individual and team performance.

By implementing collaborative leadership in an organization, not only can work stress be reduced, but it also stimulates higher performance through increased engagement and synergy among team members. Therefore, organizations aiming to create a productive and healthy work environment should consider adopting and developing collaborative leadership at all management levels.

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