



Institute of Technology Management and Entrepreneurship

**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WORK ENVIRONMENTS,
LEADERSHIP STYLES AND EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE:
MEDIATING ROLE OF JOB SATISFACTION**

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STYLES AND EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE: MEDIATING ROLE OF JOB
SATISFACTION**

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**A thesis submitted
in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy**



UNIVERSITI TEKNIKAL MALAYSIA MELAKA

2023

DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis entitled “The Relationship between Work Environments, Leadership Styles and Employee Performance: Mediating Role of Job Satisfaction” is the result of my own research except as cited in the references. The thesis has not been accepted for any degree and is not concurrently submitted in candidature of any other degree.



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APPROVAL

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DEDICATION

First and foremost, I praise Allah SWT, the Almighty, for providing me this opportunity and granting me the strength to successfully finish this endeavour. This work is dedicated to two inspiring individuals in my life, my dearest parents, who have always wanted me to have the best. My eternal prayers go out for their love and prayers.

To my beloved mother and father.



ABSTRACT

In the United Arab Emirates (UAE) educational system, it is consequently critical to determine the implications of the workplace environment and styles of leadership on employee performance. Employees in UAE public organizations encounter some challenges, including a lack of workplaces for them to conduct their jobs properly, noise that causes irritation relying on the duty they are assigned, and the atmosphere wherein they operate. Therefore, the study aims to identify the effects of the factors on employee job performance, investigate the relationship between work environment, leadership styles, and employee job performance in UAE. The study also aims to propose a new model for work environment and leadership style on job performance using quantitative approach. A non-probability sampling more specific, purposive sampling was adopted in this study. A total of 368 questionnaires were distributed through *monkey survey* to five schools. Thus, an aggregate of 283 completed questionnaires was obtained. Taking after the gathering of data from employees in public schools, more specifically and the questionnaires will be checked at the Emirates National School in the United Arab Emirates to ensure the data's elimination, finality, and uniformity. Not everyone in the survey answers all of the questions. Responses may well have been ignored entirely because the participant did not understand the question, did not realize the response, was unwilling to complete or was just unconcerned with the need to reply to the entire survey. The analysis of Moment Structures (AMOS) in Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) was used to analyze the data. The result showed a significant relationship between employee job performance and work environment with a P-value .042. Meanwhile, the relationship between employee job performance and leadership style was found to be significant, with a P-value .031. The relationship of work environment, leadership style and employee job performance were also significant and found to be mediated by employee job satisfaction with a P-value .006. Then, the relationship between work environment and job satisfaction was also significant with a p-value .016. Finally, the relationship of leadership style, employee job performance and job satisfaction were also significant with a P-value .037. The outcome of this study showed that in order to improve the performance of employee job performance in UAE, the developed model in this study could be used and will benefit the UAE government agencies. Likewise, a leadership style which encourages fellow employees to take on challenging projects will push employees to give it their all since they believe that the leader is assisting in their professional development. Last but not least, this study contributes to the development of a model which will help to improve risk operational management in enhancing the work environment and leadership style on job performance in UAE. Also, this research is to guide policymakers to improve and opens up a new arena of employee's performance research and helps to improve professional knowledge and helped the academics to understand the nature of aspects distressing employee performance in general, particularly in the context of the UAE.

HUBUNGAN ANTARA PERSEKITARAN KERJA, GAYA KEPIMPINAN DAN PRESTASI PEKERJA: PERANAN PENGANTARA KEPUASAN KERJA

ABSTRAK

Dalam sistem pendidikan Emiriah Arab Bersatu (UAE), adalah penting untuk menentukan implikasi persekitaran tempat kerja dan gaya kepimpinan terhadap prestasi pekerja. Kakitangan di organisasi awam UAE menghadapi beberapa cabaran, termasuk kekurangan tempat kerja untuk mereka menjalankan kerja dengan betul, bunyi bising yang menyebabkan kerengsaan bergantung pada tugas yang diberikan kepada mereka, dan suasana di mana mereka beroperasi. Oleh itu, kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengenal pasti kesan faktor terhadap prestasi kerja pekerja, menyiasat hubungan antara persekitaran kerja, gaya kepimpinan, dan prestasi kerja pekerja di UAE. Kajian ini juga bertujuan untuk mencadangkan model baharu bagi persekitaran kerja dan gaya kepimpinan terhadap prestasi kerja menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif. Persampelan bukan kebarangkalian yang lebih spesifik, persampelan bertujuan telah diterima pakai dalam kajian ini. Sebanyak 368 soal selidik telah diedarkan melalui tinjauan monyet kepada lima buah sekolah. Oleh itu, agregat 283 soal selidik yang lengkap telah diperolehi. Selepas pengumpulan data daripada pekerja di sekolah awam, lebih khusus dan soal selidik akan disemak di Sekolah Kebangsaan Emirates di Emiriah Arab Bersatu untuk memastikan penyingkiran, kemuktamadan dan keseragaman data. Tidak semua orang dalam tinjauan menjawab semua soalan. Maklum balas mungkin telah diabaikan sepenuhnya kerana peserta tidak memahami soalan, tidak menyedari respons, tidak bersedia untuk melengkapkan atau hanya tidak mengambil berat tentang keperluan untuk menjawab keseluruhan tinjauan. Analisis Struktur Momen (AMOS) dalam Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) digunakan untuk menganalisis data. Hasil kajian menunjukkan hubungan yang signifikan antara prestasi kerja pekerja dan persekitaran kerja dengan nilai P .042. Sementara itu, hubungan antara prestasi kerja pekerja dan gaya kepimpinan didapati signifikan, dengan nilai P .031. Hubungan persekitaran kerja, gaya kepimpinan dan prestasi kerja pekerja juga signifikan dan didapati dimediasi oleh kepuasan kerja pekerja dengan nilai P .006. Kemudian, hubungan antara persekitaran kerja dengan kepuasan kerja juga signifikan dengan nilai p .016. Akhir sekali, hubungan gaya kepimpinan, prestasi kerja pekerja dan kepuasan kerja juga signifikan dengan nilai P .037. Hasil kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa untuk meningkatkan prestasi kerja pekerja di UAE, model yang dibangunkan dalam kajian ini boleh digunakan dan akan memberi manfaat kepada agensi kerajaan UAE. Begitu juga, gaya kepimpinan yang menggalakkan rakan sekerja untuk mengambil projek yang mencabar akan mendorong pekerja untuk memberikan segalanya kerana mereka percaya bahawa pemimpin membantu dalam pembangunan profesional mereka. Akhir sekali, kajian ini menyumbang kepada pembangunan model yang akan membantu meningkatkan pengurusan operasi risiko dalam meningkatkan persekitaran kerja dan gaya kepimpinan terhadap prestasi kerja di UAE. Selain itu, penyelidikan ini adalah untuk membimbing penggubal dasar untuk Ia menambah baik dan membuka arena baharu penyelidikan prestasi pekerja dan membantu meningkatkan pengetahuan profesional dan membantu ahli akademik memahami sifat aspek yang menyusahkan prestasi pekerja secara umum, terutamanya dalam konteks UAE.

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Lastly, but certainly not least, I dedicate this thesis to the government of the United Arab Emirates and the people of the emirates. Your continuous support and encouragement have been instrumental in the pursuit of knowledge and research in the UAE.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AMOS	-	Analysis of Moments Structures
AVE	-	Average Variance Extracted
CFA	-	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
CR	-	Construct Reliability
FA	-	Factor Analysis
ILO	-	International Labor Organization's
PLS	-	Partial Least Squares
SEM	-	Structural Equation Modelling



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Alkaabi, M.R.O.S., Kudus, N.B. and Albalushi, M.A., 2021. Job satisfaction mediate the relationship between the effects of work environment, leadership styles on the employee performance in UAE, *Journal of Tianjin University Science and Technology*, 54(12), pp.803-820.

Alkaabi, M., Kudus, N. and Ab Rahman, Z., 2022. A Literature Review on the Impact of Work Environment, Leadership Styles and Resilience on Job Performance in UAE. *Journal of Pharmaceutical Negative Results*, pp.2332-2341.



CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The work environment and leadership styles directly shape how employees fulfill their roles and responsibilities. Exploring the implications of the work environment, including physical conditions, work processes, and systems, allows researchers to gain valuable insights into how these factors contribute to employee performance. Additionally, studying different leadership styles and their impact on employee behavior and motivation provides valuable knowledge for enhancing leadership practices within the UAE's educational system.

Understanding the intricate interplay between the work environment, leadership styles, and employee performance in the UAE's educational system is instrumental in fostering a positive and productive workplace. Identifying areas for improvement and implementing strategies to cultivate a conducive work environment and effective leadership can enhance employee engagement, job satisfaction, and overall organizational success. This research contributes to the continuous improvement and advancement of the UAE's educational system, benefiting students, educators, and society as a whole.

Leadership styles play a crucial role in shaping the work environment and influencing employee behavior and performance. Different leadership approaches, such as transformational, transactional, autocratic, or participate styles, have varying effects on

employee motivation, satisfaction, and overall performance. Understanding the impact of leadership styles on employee outcomes is vital for organizations to foster effective leadership practices aligned with their goals and values.

Employee performance serves as a key indicator of organizational success and productivity. It refers to the quality and quantity of work produced by employees and their ability to meet organizational objectives. High employee performance is associated with increased job satisfaction, motivation, and commitment to the organization. Job satisfaction acts as a mediator in the relationship between work environments, leadership styles, and employee performance. When employees are satisfied with their jobs, they are more likely to be engaged, motivated, and perform at their best.

Job satisfaction is influenced by various factors, including the work environment and the leadership style employed within the organization. Given the significance of these factors, understanding the relationship between work environments, leadership styles, employee performance, and the mediating role of job satisfaction is essential for organizations in the UAE. This study aims to provide valuable insights into the mechanisms through which work environments and leadership styles influence employee performance by identifying the mediating role of job satisfaction. The findings can inform organizational practices and interventions aimed at creating positive work environments, implementing effective leadership styles, and fostering job satisfaction to enhance overall employee performance in the UAE.

1.2 Research background

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) is known for its dynamic and diverse workforce, emphasizing the need to understand the factors that contribute to organizational success and employee well-being. Key elements in this regard include the work environment, leadership styles, and employee performance. The UAE's educational system also holds immense significance as it shapes the nation's future through high-quality education. To ensure the effectiveness of this system, it is crucial to explore the factors influencing employee performance in the educational sector.

The work environment encompasses various aspects such as physical conditions, social interactions, and organizational culture, which significantly impact employee performance, job satisfaction, and overall well-being. Extensive research has demonstrated that a positive work environment fosters higher levels of employee engagement, motivation, and productivity (Nieuwenhuis et al., 2020).

Leadership styles, on the other hand, refer to the behaviors and approaches exhibited by leaders in influencing their subordinates. Different styles, including transformational, transactional, autocratic, and participative styles, have been extensively studied regarding their effects on employee motivation, job satisfaction, and performance. Research has consistently shown that effective leadership styles positively influence employee outcomes and contribute to organizational success (Judge et al., 2002).

Employee performance serves as a critical indicator of organizational success and productivity, encompassing the extent to which employees fulfill their responsibilities and contribute to achieving organizational goals. Factors such as the work environment, leadership styles, job satisfaction, and motivation significantly influence employee performance. High employee performance is associated with increased job satisfaction,

engagement, and commitment to the organization (Riaz et al.,2020). To gain a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between the work environment, leadership styles, and employee performance in the UAE educational sector, it is important to conduct a thorough literature review. This review will provide insights from empirical studies and scholarly articles specifically focused on this context, allowing researchers to gather evidence-based knowledge and identify the factors contributing to employee performance in the UAE educational sector.

The workplace environment plays a crucial role in influencing employee performance, with workplace conditions significantly impacting performance either positively or negatively (Kaisi, 2020). Recognizing that individuals spend a significant portion of their lives indoors, the workplace environment significantly affects their mental health, attitudes, capabilities, and overall effectiveness (Daft and Marcic, 2016). A positive work atmosphere is believed to lead to improved outcomes and higher performance, while factors such as dissatisfaction, congested workspaces, and the surrounding environment have been found to contribute to decreased employee performance (Massoudi et al., 2017).

The workplace environment underwent significant changes in the 1990s due to advancements in various aspects, including the social setting, information technology, and flexible work structures (Read et al., 2015). Physically and emotionally healthy employees are more likely to perform well, and a positive work atmosphere can help reduce absenteeism and improve overall employee performance, leading to increased effectiveness within the organization (Bryson et al., 2017).

Global economic growth faces challenges in generating new employment opportunities that can alleviate poverty, despite considerable economic development in many developing nations. Unemployment rates continue to rise, a significant portion of the

labor force remains below the poverty line, and many non-agricultural jobs are informal in nature. Consequently, there has been a shift in focus from narrow economic growth to a broader emphasis on enhancing labor effectiveness (Bryson et al., 2017).

Leadership is a critical aspect of any organization, widely recognized for its impact on organizational success (Northouse, 2018). However, the causal effects of leadership styles on organizational activities determining efficiency are often overlooked, leading to an overemphasis on dyadic dynamics (Tannenbaum et al., 2017). Leadership has become a significant area of study, particularly in the context of organizational effectiveness, as it plays a vital role in shaping the direction and success of an organization.

Research has provided various definitions and terms for leadership, highlighting its central aspect of influence (Klenke, 2016; Grint et al., 2016; Bolman et al., 2017; Priest, 2017). Leadership studies have been conducted in various organizational contexts, including the public and private sectors, and specific research on school leaders (McCaffery, 2018; Eden, 2018; Hassan et al., 2018).

The UAE's multicultural and multinational setting, heavily reliant on expatriates, has exposed the author of this study to a wide range of managerial techniques and strategies. The UAE's business atmosphere and social system exhibit distinct features, including indigenous value systems and skepticism towards imported values, while recognizing the positive contributions of Western-style education and modern civilization. As a result, there is a need to develop a management approach that combines Islamic management concepts with Western management theories in a complementary manner.

Several recent studies have explored the impact of leadership styles on employee performance. For example, studies in Pakistan and India found that both transformational and transactional leadership styles influenced staff effectiveness positively, with

transformational leadership having a greater impact (Rasool et al., 2015; Raja and Palanichamy, 2015). Despite the significant impact of the workplace environment and leadership styles on employee performance, research findings are not evenly distributed across the global economy, particularly regarding the United Arab Emirates. Furthermore, research in the public sector lags behind. Therefore, this study aims to provide valuable insights into the relationship between work environments, leadership styles, and employee performance specifically within UAE government agencies.

1.3 Problem statement

Employee performance encompasses the achievements and outcomes of individuals or organizations in their work, including meeting goals, following plans, and striving for desired results. While performance evaluation is important in performance management, the effectiveness of individual and organizational performance relies heavily on the organization's policies, practices, and design features.

In today's competitive and unpredictable business environment, enhancing employee performance is crucial for the survival and success of organizations. However, organizations face the challenge of improving employee performance. Employee performance, as defined by Samsuddin (2018), refers to the level of success employees achieve in fulfilling their duties and responsibilities. The performance of employees significantly impacts the overall success and performance of the company. Thus, organizations expect employees to demonstrate optimal performance by meeting workloads and exceeding organizational expectations in terms of work outcomes. Motivation and job satisfaction are key factors contributing to employee performance, as suggested by Maharjan (2012). Performance indicators, including quality, quantity, end results, work effectiveness, independence, and the desire for growth and development, have been identified in previous studies (Bernardin

in Robbins, 2008). Leadership is widely recognized as a critical strategy for enhancing employee performance (Almaskari, Mohamad, Yahaya, and Jalil, 2021).

Research has been conducted across various countries and industries to understand the relationship between leadership styles and employee performance. The findings regarding this relationship are diverse. Most studies suggest a positive association between transformational and transactional leadership styles and employee performance, with the transformational style having a stronger influence (Rasool et al., 2015; Tsigu and Rao, 2015). However, the research on laissez-faire leadership and performance is inconsistent, lacking consensus. Some studies indicate a negative correlation, while others describe a stronger relationship. Furthermore, existing research primarily focuses on specific sectors such as healthcare and local government officials, leaving gaps in our understanding of leadership styles and employee performance across different businesses and countries.

For instance, Ipas (2012) suggests that authoritarian leadership is commonly observed among hotel managers and is believed to yield positive outcomes. Studies conducted in various countries, including India, Nigeria, Ethiopia, and Uganda, found significant positive associations between transformational and transactional leadership styles and employee performance. Some studies also discovered a strong positive relationship between authoritarian, laissez-faire, democratic leadership styles, and performance. However, most existing studies mainly focus on the direct relationship between leadership and employees' job performance.

Apart from leadership, the work environment also significantly influences employee job performance. The work environment includes procedures, methods, attitudes, equipment, and situations in the workplace that positively or negatively influence individual performance. Factors such as regulations, norms, culture, resources, interpersonal relations,