



UNLOCKING WORKFORCE EXCELLENCE: THE POWER OF LEADERSHIP, SKILLS, AND SATISFACTION

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ABSTRACT

Public sector organizations in Indonesia face persistent challenges related to low employee performance and job satisfaction, often driven by bureaucratic rigidity, lack of leadership innovation, and limited alignment between job competence and role demands. These issues undermine the quality of public service delivery and institutional effectiveness. Addressing this phenomenon, the present study investigates the influence of transformational leadership and job competence on job satisfaction and employee performance. Employing a quantitative approach, data were collected from 327 civil servants working in various local government agencies in Sumenep Regency. The relationships among variables were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The results indicate that transformational leadership significantly enhances both job satisfaction and employee performance. Likewise, job competence emerges as a strong predictor of positive employee outcomes, indicating that competent employees are more engaged and productive. Furthermore, job satisfaction serves as a significant mediator in the relationship between leadership, competence, and performance. These findings are underpinned by Social Exchange Theory (SET), which highlights the role of reciprocal trust and supportive leadership in shaping positive work behaviors.

Keywords: Transformational Leadership, Job Competence, Job Satisfaction, Team Member Performance.

INTRODUCTION

In today's increasingly competitive and dynamic organizational landscape, enhancing employee performance and improving job satisfaction have become strategic imperatives for many institutions. Factors such as globalization, digital transformation, and ever-evolving customer expectations compel organizations to continually elevate the quality of their human resources. Studies by Eliyana et al. (2019) and Muzakki & Pratiwi (2019) emphasize that contemporary organizations have begun to integrate employee performance and satisfaction as core objectives within their strategic frameworks. This is corroborated by Labrague et al. (2020), who found that higher levels of job satisfaction and employee performance are negatively correlated with absenteeism and turnover

intentions. Therefore, performance management and job satisfaction should not be viewed as isolated or personal issues, but as critical strategic concerns directly tied to organizational sustainability.

Employee performance is also significantly influenced by various internal factors. According to Jiang et al. (2024) and Muzakki & Herachwati (2023), organizations must consistently evaluate and develop their human capital to ensure performance aligns with organizational goals. Latifah et al. (2023) define job performance as the result of a process measured over a specific period against predetermined indicators. Several key factors commonly associated with job performance include leadership style, individual competence, and job satisfaction (Muzakki et al., 2024; Purwanto & Sulaiman, 2023; Said & Muzakki, 2024). These elements form integral components in cultivating productive workplace behaviors, underscoring the need for a holistic approach to employee development.

Nevertheless, field realities indicate that the implementation of effective leadership particularly transformational leadership is often suboptimal across various organizations. Transformational leadership, characterized by inspiration, motivation, individualized consideration, and intellectual stimulation, seeks to drive employees to exceed organizational expectations (Gupta, 2025). Although multiple studies have confirmed its positive impact on job performance and creativity (Eliyana et al., 2019; Tharushika et al., 2025), many leaders struggle to apply it consistently. The mismatch between a leader's competencies and the demands of transformational leadership may hinder productivity and team morale (Díaz-Fúnez et al., 2021).

In parallel, job competence remains a critical yet often overlooked issue in human resource management. Competence extends beyond technical expertise, encompassing a combination of skills, knowledge, values, and attitudes observable through daily work behavior (Turner, 2022). Salman et al. (2020) and Litvinenko et al. (2022) highlight that many organizations still lack comprehensive and objective competence measurement systems. Consequently, human resource development initiatives frequently fail to address real on-the-ground needs. This presents a significant challenge, as job competence has a direct influence on motivation, job satisfaction, and ultimately, individual performance in the workplace.

Such conditions raise concerns regarding the effectiveness of organizational approaches to managing human resources strategically. Transformational leadership and job competence should serve as pivotal instruments for enhancing performance and satisfaction; however, if implemented in isolation rather than as a cohesive strategy, their impact is likely to be limited. On the other hand, job satisfaction plays a strategic role in shaping employee behavior, including discipline, loyalty, and enthusiasm in task execution (Fardiansyah et al., 2025). Employees who are dissatisfied with their jobs tend to exhibit lower performance and higher turnover risks, which can ultimately burden the organization financially and operationally (Talukder et al., 2018).

The newness of this study lies in its integrated conceptual model, which simultaneously examines transformational leadership, job competence, job satisfaction, and employee performance in the context of public sector organizations. Unlike prior studies that have largely examined these variables separately or in private sector settings, this research situates them within bureaucratic structures, offering novel empirical insights into how leadership and competence drive satisfaction and performance in government institutions.

The research context is the local government of Sumenep Regency in Indonesia, where civil servants operate under rigid bureaucratic norms but are expected to deliver efficient and innovative services. This setting provides a critical backdrop for testing whether transformational leadership and job competence can meaningfully enhance employee satisfaction and performance, despite structural constraints typical of the public sector.

The hypotheses are grounded in Social Exchange Theory (SET), which posits that reciprocal relationships between leaders and employees foster positive attitudes and behaviors. Specifically, it is hypothesized that transformational leadership and job competence positively influence job satisfaction and employee performance, and that job satisfaction in turn enhances performance. These arguments establish job satisfaction as both an outcome and a mediating factor.

The operational definitions are as follows: transformational leadership refers to leadership behaviors encompassing idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Ladkin & Patrick, 2022); job competence denotes the observable combination of skills, knowledge, and attitudes relevant to work performance (Turner, 2022); job satisfaction represents employees' affective evaluation of their work environment, tasks, and organizational support, and employee performance is defined as the achievement of work results relative to predetermined organizational indicators (Latifah et al., 2023). These definitions ensure conceptual clarity and measurement accuracy within the study.

The theoretical foundation of this research is Social Exchange Theory (Mishra & Mund, 2024), which underpins the relationships among the constructs by explaining how supportive leadership and competence recognition generate a sense of obligation, satisfaction, and improved performance. By applying SET to a public sector context, this study extends its theoretical reach and demonstrates its relevance in explaining employee outcomes in bureaucratic environments.

To navigate the multifaceted nature of organizational behavior, this study employs a quantitative research design that investigates the roles of transformational leadership and job competence in shaping job satisfaction and employee performance. By constructing a comprehensive relational model, the study aims to uncover the distinct and combined effects of these variables on employee outcomes. This modeling framework is crucial for developing strategic, evidence-based human resource (HR) interventions that are responsive to organizational needs. To ensure methodological rigor, the research applies validated measurement scales and leverages advanced statistical techniques, notably Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), to obtain reliable and generalizable results.

On a theoretical level, this study expands the existing body of knowledge by introducing an integrated conceptual framework that links transformational leadership, job competence, job satisfaction, and employee performance. Unlike fragmented studies that treat these constructs in isolation, this research presents a unified perspective that reflects the dynamic interdependencies found in contemporary organizational settings. The model proposed offers fresh theoretical insight into the mechanisms by which leadership and competence influence psychological and behavioral outcomes among employees. From a practical standpoint, the findings are intended to guide HR professionals and policymakers in formulating holistic talent development strategies. The empirical insights can be applied to design more targeted leadership development programs, competency mapping systems, and job satisfaction enhancement initiatives all of which are critical for improving employee performance and ensuring sustainable

workforce productivity. In this regard, the study not only contributes meaningfully to academic scholarship but also provides a robust foundation for evidence-based decision-making in human capital management.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study adopts a quantitative research design with a survey method as the principal means for gathering primary data from respondents. The selection of this method is grounded in its ability to provide objective measurements and to statistically assess causal relationships among constructs, making it highly appropriate for research conducted within public sector institutions. To ensure representativeness and minimize sampling bias, the study employed a probability sampling technique, specifically simple random sampling, which guarantees that every member of the population had an equal probability of being selected (Sugiyono, 2021). The research population consisted of 327 civil servants working across multiple departments in the Sumenep Regency government, including administration, finance, planning, and public services. This wide departmental coverage was deliberately chosen to capture variations in roles, responsibilities, and hierarchical levels, thereby strengthening the generalizability of the findings. By implementing simple random sampling within this defined population, the study ensured that the final sample accurately represented the diversity of civil servants in the Regency, reflecting a strong representation of the target population. The final dataset was drawn from 327 civil servants employed in various departments within the local government of Sumenep Regency, reflecting a robust representation of the targeted population.

The instrument used for data collection was developed based on validated constructs from prior empirical research, ensuring both content validity and reliability. The measurement of transformational leadership was guided by the four principal dimensions identified by Adesti et al. (2023); Hosna et al. (2021): idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Job competence was operationalized using indicators that represent the congruence between employees' knowledge, skills, attitudes, and abilities with their job demands, as outlined by Chen et al. (2025). Meanwhile, job satisfaction was assessed using indicators adapted from Robbins & Judge (2017), which encompass factors such as cognitive load, organizational support, fair compensation, person-job fit, and collegial social support. Lastly, employee performance was measured using the framework by Mangkunegara (2017), which includes dimensions such as quality and quantity of work, sense of responsibility, initiative, and team collaboration capability.

For data analysis, the study utilized Structural Equation Modeling using Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS), implemented through SmartPLS version 3.0. This analytical method was chosen due to its strength in estimating complex models with multiple latent variables, its tolerance for non-normal data distributions, and its ability to accommodate both reflective and formative measurement models (Hair et al., 2022). By applying SEM-PLS, the study was able to test the full structural model simultaneously and derive nuanced empirical insights regarding the direct and indirect relationships among transformational leadership, job competence, job satisfaction, and employee performance within the public sector context. The use of SEM-PLS is particularly urgent in this study because it allows simultaneous estimation of multiple dependent and independent relationships, including mediating and moderating effects, which cannot be fully captured by simple linear regression. While a linear approach may only assess direct relationships,

SEM-PLS enables the researcher to test a full structural framework, incorporating both measurement and structural models, thus providing richer and more valid empirical insights in complex organizational contexts (Gao et al., 2024).

The data analysis procedure using SEM-PLS was conducted systematically in two main stages: the evaluation of the outer model and the inner model. First, the outer model was assessed to ensure construct validity and reliability. This included examining convergent validity (factor loadings and Average Variance Extracted/AVE), discriminant validity, and reliability (Cronbach’s alpha and composite reliability). Only constructs that met the recommended thresholds were retained for further analysis (Hair et al., 2022). Second, the inner model was evaluated to test the hypothesized relationships among constructs. This involved assessing path coefficients, the significance of relationships through bootstrapping, the coefficient of determination (R^2), and predictive relevance (Q^2). These steps ensured both the robustness of the measurement model and the explanatory power of the structural model.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Hypothesis testing in this research was carried out using the Partial Least Squares–Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) technique, utilizing the support of SmartPLS version 3.0. This method was deemed appropriate given its effectiveness in analyzing complex structural models, its robustness in the absence of multivariate normality, and its suitability for both theory development and predictive modeling involving latent constructs (Hair et al., 2022). The PLS-SEM procedure was conducted in two primary stages: evaluation of the measurement model (outer model) and assessment of the structural model (inner model). The first stage, outer model assessment, focused on determining the quality of the measurement indicators and the underlying constructs by examining parameters such as convergent validity, composite reliability, and average variance extracted (AVE). These metrics are essential in confirming that the observed variables accurately and consistently reflect their corresponding latent variables. The results of the outer model assessment, which include indicator loadings, reliability coefficients, and AVE values for each construct, are summarized in Table 1 below.

Table 1.1. Validity and Reliability

Variable	Items	Factor Loading	AVE	Cronbach’s Alpha	Composite Reliability
Transformational Leadership		0.905	0.717	0.871	0.910
	TL1				
	TL2	0.919			
	TL3	0.911			
	TL4	0.897			
	TL5	0.910			
	TL6	0.898			
	TL7	0.910			
	TL8	0.943			
	TL9	0.945			
	TL10	0.929			
	TL11	0.952			
TL12	0.838				

Table 1.2. Validity and Reliability (Continuation)

Variable	Items	Factor Loading	AVE	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability
	TL13	0.948			
	TL14	0.903			
	TL15	0.860			
	TL13	0.948			
	TL17	0.908			
	TL18	0.887			
	TL19	0.906			
	TL20	0.905			
Job Competence	JC1	0.623	0.506	0.632	0.747
	JC2	0.899			
	JC3	0.567			
team member Performance	EP1	0.737	0.622	0.844	0.890
	EP2	0.847			
	EP3	0.811			
	EP4	0.651			
	EP5	0.876			
Job Satisfaction	JS1	0.801	0.563	0.797	0.863
	JS2	0.764			
	JS3	0.871			
	JS4	0.535			
	JS5	0.739			

Source: Data processed, 2024

The assessment of convergent validity, evaluated through factor loading values, indicates that the majority of indicators exhibit loading scores above the minimum threshold of 0.500, as recommended by Hair et al. (2022). These results confirm that each indicator sufficiently reflects its corresponding latent construct, thereby demonstrating acceptable convergent validity. Moreover, the analysis of Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values further supports this conclusion. All constructs in the model namely, transformational leadership (0.717), job competence (0.506), job satisfaction (0.563), and employee performance (0.622) exceeded the recommended AVE cutoff of 0.500, suggesting that more than half of the variance in the indicators is captured by the latent constructs, thereby fulfilling the criteria for construct validity (Sarstedt et al., 2022).

In addition to validity testing, the reliability of each construct was evaluated using both Cronbach's alpha and Composite Reliability (CR). The results show that all constructs obtained Cronbach's alpha values greater than 0.60, and CR values exceeding 0.700, which align with the thresholds set forth by Hair et al. (2022). These findings indicate that the constructs possess strong internal consistency and can be considered statistically reliable. Therefore, the measurement model is deemed appropriate for continued analysis within the structural modeling phase.

The final stage of model evaluation involved examining the hypothesized relationships among latent variables using the bootstrapping technique embedded in the PLS-SEM procedure. This step was undertaken to test the statistical significance and strength of the proposed causal paths. The bootstrapping analysis provides t-statistics, p-values, and path coefficients, which serve as the basis for hypothesis testing and

inference. The detailed results of this analysis are presented in Table 2, summarizing the direct effects and significance levels derived from the empirical data.

Table 2. Hypothesis Testing

No.	Hypothesis	Relationship Path	p-value	Description
H ₁	Transformational Leadership → Job Satisfaction	0.531	0.000	Supported
H ₂	Transformational leadership → Employee Performance	0.462	0.004	Supported
H ₁	Transformational Leadership → Job Satisfaction	0.531	0.000	Supported
H ₂	Transformational leadership → Employee Performance	0.462	0.004	Supported
H ₃	Job Competence → Job Satisfaction	0.550	0.000	Supported
H ₄	Job Competence → Employee Performance	0.486	0.000	Supported
H ₅	Job Satisfaction → Job Performance	0.602	0.000	Supported

Source: Data processed, 2024

Based on the hypothesis testing results, all relationships among variables in the research model were found to be statistically significant (p-value < 0.050). Transformational leadership demonstrated a positive effect on job satisfaction (coefficient = 0.531) and employee performance (coefficient = 0.462), indicating that inspirational leadership styles can enhance both employee satisfaction and performance. Similarly, job competence was shown to have a positive impact on job satisfaction (0.550) and employee performance (0.486), suggesting that higher levels of competence contribute to greater job satisfaction and work productivity. Moreover, job satisfaction played a critical role in boosting employee performance, with the highest path coefficient observed at 0.602. These findings confirm that the integration of transformational leadership and adequate job competence significantly enhances job satisfaction, which in turn positively influences overall employee performance.

The findings of this study reveal that transformational leadership has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction. This result reinforces the notion that transformational leaders those who inspire, provide individualized consideration, intellectually stimulate, and demonstrate charismatic behavior are more likely to foster a supportive work environment that enhances employees' job. Within the framework of Social Exchange Theory (Mishra & Mund, 2024), the relationship between leaders and employees is seen as reciprocal; when leaders offer attention, support, and empowerment, employees respond with positive attitudes, including increased job satisfaction. When employees perceive that their leaders trust them, grant autonomy, and recognize their contributions, they feel valued and fairly treated, which strengthens their sense of satisfaction in the workplace. In the context of the public sector in Sumenep Regency, where structural rigidity and bureaucratic constraints are prevalent, the presence of transformational leadership plays a pivotal role in stimulating intrinsic motivation and reinforcing employee loyalty. This constitutes a key novelty of the study, as it expands the existing empirical evidence largely derived from private sector contexts into the domain of local government in archipelagic regions. These findings are consistent with the studies of Hussain & Khayat (2021), Muzakki & Pratiwi (2019), and are further supported by Choi et al. (2025), who demonstrated the significant influence of

transformational leadership on job satisfaction within government organizations in South Korea. Moreover, Kyambade & Namatovu (2025) found that this leadership style effectively promotes work engagement and satisfaction in nonprofit organizations. Boamah (2022) also highlighted that transformational leadership can reduce burnout and enhance job satisfaction in public service institutions.

The findings also indicate that transformational leadership exerts a positive and significant influence on employee performance. Transformational leaders not only provide direction and motivation but also cultivate relationships grounded in mutual respect and trust. Within the framework of Social Exchange Theory (SET), supportive and inspirational leadership behaviors are perceived by employees as a form of social investment, which they reciprocate through enhanced performance. Employees under transformational leadership tend to exhibit greater loyalty, proactiveness, and adaptability to work-related challenges, driven by a strong emotional attachment to both the organization and its leader. The distinctiveness of this study lies in its focus on the context of local bureaucracy in Sumenep, where the performance of civil servants (ASN) is often assessed based on administrative compliance rather than innovation or individual initiative. The findings suggest that transformational leadership can serve as a catalyst for performance improvement rooted in intrinsic motivation and internal responsibility, rather than merely fulfilling formal obligations. This finding supports the work of Khan (2025), Muzakki & Pratiwi (2019), and Tran & Hoang (2024), all of whom emphasize the strong correlation between transformational leadership and public employee performance. Alamri (2023) underscore the critical role of transformational leadership in enhancing productivity within the public service sector. Similarly, Hameduddin & Engbers (2022), in their study of East Asian local governments, confirm that inspirational leaders significantly improve work effectiveness and public service motivation. Rahman et al. (2023) further assert that transformational leaders foster a workplace climate that boosts employee engagement and overall productivity.

The analysis results demonstrate that job competence has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction. Employees who perceive themselves as having the appropriate knowledge, skills, and abilities aligned with their assigned tasks tend to feel more confident, more capable of executing their duties effectively, and more aware of the meaningfulness of their roles. In line with Social Exchange Theory (SET), organizations that provide employees with opportunities to develop in accordance with their competencies are perceived as “givers,” prompting employees to “reciprocate” through positive attitudes such as enhanced job satisfaction (Muzakki et al., 2025). In the context of civil servants (ASN) in Sumenep, where training opportunities and access to development resources are often limited, this finding holds particular relevance. The study affirms that strengthening employee competence not only enhances operational effectiveness but also fosters sustainable psychological satisfaction. This finding is supported by studies conducted by Mirzaei et al. (2024), and Rachmawati & Suyatno (2021), which examined local governments and found that strong technical competencies are positively correlated with job satisfaction. Udin et al. (2024) further revealed that improved competence leads to greater affective commitment and job satisfaction among public servants. Similarly, Firliana et al. (2023) emphasized that when competencies are acknowledged and optimally utilized, they generate a sense of pride and fulfillment in one’s work.

The study also reveals that job competence has a significant and positive influence on employee performance. Individuals possessing high levels of competence are generally more productive, efficient, and accurate in executing their responsibilities.

Within the framework of Social Exchange Theory (SET), organizations that actively facilitate competence development are perceived as engaging in positive treatment an act that employees reciprocate through enhanced performance and work quality. This research provides a novel insight by highlighting that in remote regions such as Sumenep Regency, the development of civil servant (ASN) competencies is not merely an administrative formality, but a strategic imperative and critical factor that drives meaningful improvements in public service delivery. These findings are supported by prior studies, including Suhardi et al. (2018), Guna et al. (2024), which emphasize the significant role of ASN competence in the success of bureaucratic reform initiatives. Vu et al. (2025) underscore that strong functional competencies directly contribute to the quality of public service outcomes. Likewise, Bunduki & Rutenge (2024) affirm that when competencies are well-aligned with organizational needs, they significantly enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of public sector employees.

The final finding of this study indicates that job satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on employee performance. Employees who are satisfied with their jobs whether due to a supportive work environment, adequate compensation, or positive social relationships tend to exhibit higher levels of performance. From the perspective of Social Exchange Theory (SET), job satisfaction can be viewed as the outcome of fair and reciprocal social interactions between individuals and the organization. In the context of civil servants (ASN) in Sumenep, this result is particularly meaningful, as it demonstrates that job satisfaction is not merely a psychological well-being indicator but also a direct predictor of tangible contributions to public service delivery. This finding reinforces previous studies such as Al-Sada et al. (2017), Said & Muzakki (2024), Nguon (2022), and Pio (2022), which all emphasize the significant role of job satisfaction in enhancing employee performance within the public sector. Wandycz-Mejias et al. (2024) further assert that dimensions of intrinsic satisfaction such as recognition and job meaningfulness are closely linked to task performance. Similarly, Putra & Kudri (2024) conclude that high job satisfaction fosters a more productive and cooperative work environment in local government institutions.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study indicate that transformational leadership and job competence exert a direct, positive, and statistically significant effect on both job satisfaction and employee performance. In addition, job satisfaction is empirically validated as a significant predictor of employee performance. These findings lend strong empirical support to the core premises of Social Exchange Theory (SET), which emphasizes the role of reciprocal, mutually beneficial interactions between employees and their organizations. In this context, inspirational leadership behaviors and recognition of employee competencies contribute to enhanced satisfaction at work, which, in turn, fosters improved individual performance particularly within the bureaucratic structure of public sector institutions. Thus, this study not only confirms the foundational role of SET in public organizations but also provides evidence that intangible resources such as leadership style and competence are key levers for improving performance in governance contexts.

From a theoretical standpoint, this research makes a meaningful contribution to the human resource management literature by reaffirming the relevance and applicability of SET in understanding the complex interplay between leadership, competence,

satisfaction, and performance in public organizations. It highlights the importance of employees' perceptions of being supported, empowered, and appropriately placed according to their competencies, which cultivates a sense of obligation and commitment to the organization. Moreover, the study establishes job satisfaction not merely as a consequential variable, but as a pivotal antecedent of performance, thereby offering a more nuanced understanding of employee motivation within the public sector. Theoretically, these findings encourage scholars to refine models of employee performance by incorporating job satisfaction as a central mechanism, and they open pathways for integrating additional constructs such as organizational justice, psychological empowerment, or digital transformation to broaden the scope of analysis. The integrated conceptual model introduced in this study serves as a robust foundation for future empirical inquiries, especially those aiming to investigate causality among these constructs.

On the practical front, the findings offer actionable insights for public sector leaders, particularly those operating in local government contexts, such as Sumenep Regency. To elevate employee performance, leadership strategies must emphasize transformational practices inspiring visions, individualized support, intellectual stimulation, and role modeling. Public organizations are advised to invest in continuous competence development initiatives, including skills-based training, personalized career coaching, and competence-aligned job placements. In parallel, human resource policies should prioritize the cultivation of job satisfaction by ensuring fair remuneration, creating psychologically safe and supportive work environments, and offering transparent, structured career progression systems. By implementing these strategies holistically, public organizations can foster a performance-driven culture that not only enhances individual outcomes but also strengthens institutional credibility and citizen trust in governance. This underscores the broader societal implication of the findings, as improved employee performance in government directly contributes to better public service delivery.

Despite its contributions, this study acknowledges several limitations that future research should address. Firstly, the use of a quantitative, cross-sectional design restricts the ability to infer dynamic, time-bound relationships among the variables. Longitudinal research designs are recommended in future studies to capture the temporal evolution of transformational leadership practices and their impacts on job-related outcomes. Secondly, the study's geographical limitation focusing solely on a single local government institution in Sumenep may restrict the generalizability of the results to broader public sector settings. Replicating the study in diverse institutional and regional contexts would enhance the external validity of the model. Thirdly, the current study does not account for potential mediators or moderators, such as organizational commitment, perceived organizational support, or psychological empowerment, which could provide deeper insight into the mechanisms shaping the observed relationships. Future research should incorporate these elements into more complex structural models.

Fourth, this study relied exclusively on self-reported survey data, which may be subject to common method bias or social desirability effects. Future research is encouraged to apply methodological triangulation, combining self-assessment with alternative data sources such as supervisor ratings, HR performance records, or qualitative interviews, to enhance data credibility. Lastly, although SmartPLS 3.0 offers flexibility in handling complex models with non-normal data and reflective-formative constructs, its analytical depth is somewhat limited compared to covariance-based SEM approaches. For more comprehensive structural validation, future studies may consider

using Covariance-Based SEM (CB-SEM) to assess model fit and validate more intricate theoretical frameworks. In doing so, future research could further validate and refine the integrated model presented in this study, thereby advancing the discourse on leadership, competence, and employee performance in the public sector.

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