

# SERVANT LEADERSHIP IN GOVERNMENT INSTITUTION, IS IT EFFECTIVE?

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## SERVANT LEADERSHIP IN GOVERNMENT INSTITUTION, IS IT EFFECTIVE?

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### Article Information Abstract

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The aim of this study is to examine the effect of servant leadership on job performance directly and indirectly through the mediating effect of job involvement and job satisfaction. Data were collected through questionnaires by Google Forms and analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with AMOS24. A total of 174 civil servant at the one of Indonesian government agencies in audit services participated as research sample. The results of this study reveal that servant leadership has significant positive effect toward job involvement and job satisfaction, but it has a negative effect toward job performance. Furthermore, this study is expected to contribute to the organization to encourage the role of leaders for prioritizing the employees' interests to increase job satisfaction and job involvement so that can improve employees' performance, especially in the public sector.

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### INTRODUCTION

The one of success key of organization to achieve its objective is performance, both leader and employee performance. Mujeeb et al., (2021) and Qorfianalda & Wulandari (2021) state that employee performance is an important thing for an organization or company to claim its objective because it shows the displayed behavior by employee obtain their job result in accordance with their role in organization. Thus, it is important for organizations to manage their employee performance. In the public sector also, managements should manage their employee performance to support organization in contributed for National Development Plan. Ministerial regulations on PAN and RB number 8/2021 have arranged about Performance Management System of Civil Servant (ASN). Starting from planning employee performance targets, assistance and coaching during implementation, until measuring and evaluating performance by direct supervisor. These are contained in the employee performance target (SKP) form.

At another level of work, a person sometimes has a feeling of pleasure when fully

involved in a job. They consider their work very important in their life, think about it all the time, also involve ego and personality in their work. Job involvement is a concept that emphasizes role and contributions employees who are psychologically in favor of their job, participate actively in it, and consider his work important, so the level of job achieved is a self-esteem form for his performance (Ibrahim et al., 2021). Someone who is involved in his job will show good performance.

In planning of SKP form, employees are involved in preparing their own annual work plans. Nevertheless, it still considers in the job description listed in the job information in accordance with the position. Once drafted, it will be approved by direct supervisor. This involvement aims to enable employees to do their jobs well.

Someone will show good performance if they feel treated well by the organization. When employees get a decent salary, good work facilities, and comfortable working conditions, they will get satisfaction at work. When satisfied, employees will work happily and wholeheartedly so they are more productive. This was stated in research by Matagi et al. (2022) that indicated job

performance has positive and significance correlation with job satisfaction.

In the public sector, the merit system was known. This is a civil servants (ASN) policies and management are based on qualifications, competence, and performance, which are applied in a fair and reasonable manner without discrimination. The application of the merit system in the bureaucracy aims to produce ASNs who are professional and have integrity by placing them in positions according to their competence and qualifications and providing fair and proper compensation based on their performance (Kusmana & Abubakar, 2019). This policy can create satisfaction to employees.

In the end, the role of a manager or leader has a very important role in organizing and creating a comfortable and enjoyable work atmosphere but effective, so that job satisfaction and involvement in work can be felt by employees to produce good performance. There are several types of leadership that can be carried out by a leader, one of which is servant leadership. Thao & Kang (2020) state that servant leadership is leadership style that prioritizes the process of empowering competence by recognizing abilities and realizing the growth potential of its followers. The main objective of servant leadership is focus with growth of followers and teamwork development (Widyastuti, 2022).

There were some previous studies had examined the effect of servant leadership on job involvement, job satisfaction, and job performance. However, there are several empirical studies whose results are not in accordance with the theoretical studies. Regarding the relationship between servant leadership and job involvement, a study by Kuluulp et al. (2022) which examine the influences of servant leadership dimension on job involvement shows there is stewardship dimension have no effect on job involvement. Meanwhile, regarding the relationship between the servant leadership and job performance, Riana & Anatan (2023) and Pala'ingan (2021) state that servant leadership has no effect on job performance. Regarding the relationship between job satisfaction and job performance, research conducted by (Matagi et al., 2022) found that job satisfaction has insignificant relation with job performance. However, research between these variables is still very limited by using the public sector as a sample. Thus, the aim of this study is to analyze how effective servant leadership style in civil servant (ASN) that have Ber-AKHLAK (Berorientasi Pelayanan, Akuntabel, Kompeten, Harmonis, Loyal, Adaptif, dan Kolaboratif) work culture which the first value is service oriented. Is it have strong effect with job involvement, job satisfaction, and job performance?

Servant leadership is a leadership style that is oriented towards serve other, knowledge-based, participative, aspects of responsibility in the

process, ethics and social (Surya, 2019). Meanwhile, Grobler & Flotman (2020) and (Franco & Antunes, 2020) define servant leadership as a leadership style that focuses on followers, has an altruistic and holistic mindset, also committed to serving others. Collaboration, trust, empathy, and the ethics of using power are the main focuses that emphasize the servant leadership style, very different from other leadership models that emphasize a top-down hierarchical style approach (Widyastuti, 2022). Servant leadership is a leadership model that serves by prioritizing the growth and development of followers to prepare them to become the next leader. Servant leadership can directly or indirectly affect the success of an organization in achieving its goals.

Franco & Antunes (2020) and Gašková (2020) write that there are at least seven dimensions in the servant leadership leadership model, namely: emotional healing, empowering, helping followers grow and succeed, behaving ethically, putting followers first, creating value for the community, and conceptual skills. Emotional healing shows sensitivity and listens empathetically, trying to understand the emotional needs of organizational members. Empowering gives responsibility, control, incentives, and facilitates followers to do work and solve organizational problems on their own. Helping followers grow and succeed focuses on growing and developing follower careers by providing support and mentoring. Behaving ethically is the ability to interact openly and honestly with members of the organization. Putting followers first means having traits that are manifested in action by prioritizing the needs of their followers as the top priority. Creating value for society is an attitude that shows genuine concern for helping people in the organization grow. Conceptual skills mean having enough knowledge about the organization so that it can support the growth and welfare of the members of the organization effectively.

Chou et al. (2022) wrote that job involvement is related to a person's perception and mental belief in his job identity. Meanwhile, Palumbo (2022) said that job involvement was related to the active participation of employees in problem solving and decision making as well as a willingness to spend time and be committed to carrying out organizational tasks effectively. Thus, someone who has a feeling of being involved in work (job involvement) will prioritize his work over other activities. This can be seen from the behavior of employees who always leave on time, are willing to work overtime to complete their work, prepare everything before starting work, and make them loyal to a job without ever thinking about leaving work.

Sholikha & Izzati (2021) write that work involvement has two dimensions namely: 1)

Performance self-esteem contingency, this dimension reflects how much an individual's ability to be self-aware is influenced by the implementation of work and 2) The importance of work to an individual's total self-image, this dimension refers to the extent to which a person recognizes himself psychologically in his specific job. The extent to which employees are involved in the company's work operations can be seen from several indicators such as prioritizing work, participating in work, actively working, and has work initiatives (Mubin et al., 2022).

Palumbo (2022) defines job satisfaction as individual employee satisfaction with salary, intrinsic and extrinsic rewards, prospects for career advancement, and organizational support. A person will feel satisfied with his job if the work he does is in line with the values he believes in (Pala'langan, 2021), enjoyable work, supervisor support, cooperative co-workers, promotion opportunities, and adequate income (Roswandi, 2021). Someone with a high level of job satisfaction will show a positive attitude towards a job. Employees who are satisfied with their job, both the work itself and other factors in the work environment, will enjoy their work, work with feelings of happiness and wholeheartedness.

Widyastuti (2022) reveals that job satisfaction has two dimensions, namely intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic relates to the satisfaction obtained when doing the work itself. While, extrinsic relates to the satisfaction obtained as a result of doing a job. Christianto (2022) writes down five factors that can lead to job satisfaction, those are: work itself, pay, promotion, supervision, and co-workers.

Someone at work must certainly get results from what he does in work according to his duties and roles in the organization to contribute to achieving organizational goals. The work results achieved, both quality and quantity, during a certain period related to organizational goals are referred to as performance (Amalia et al., 2021). In the public sector, ASN performance will be measured by several predicates such as very good, good, enough, less, and very less. Evaluation of employee performance is very important to determine the steps that must be taken by the organization in developing and empowering its employees, either through coaching, training, position transfer or promotion.

Widyastuti (2022) and Saleem et al. (2020) classify job performance into two dimensions: task performance and contextual performance. Task Performance or also called in-role job performance emphasizes the assessment of a person's performance seen from the results obtained from his work and how a person's attitude or behavior in doing the job. Contextual Performance or also known as extra role job performance is more directed at non-technical

abilities such as the ability to communicate effectively, showing enthusiasm and high motivation at work. Mujeeb et al. (2021) in their research added one dimension of performance, namely adaptive performance which is defined as a person's ability to adapt to a constantly changing work environment by modifying behavior, accepting new situations, and being innovative.

#### HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

Mubin et al. (2022) revealed in their research that servant leadership has a positive effect on work involvement. Kulaalp and Abayati (2022) have also studied 220 workers at Kirkuk University of Iraq, concluded that servant leadership in the service and empowerment dimensions has a significant positive impact on job involvement, while the stewardship dimension has no effect. Thus, the proposed hypotheses is as follows:

H<sub>1</sub>: servant leadership has positive and significant effects on job involvement.

Several studies have revealed that servant leadership has a positive and significant influence on work performance, such as research conducted by Widyastuti (2022), Saleem et al. (2020) and Gašková (2020). Meanwhile, research conducted by Riana & Anatan (2023) and Pala'langan (2021) revealed that servant leadership has no effect on job performance. Therefore, the hypotheses can be formulated as follows:

H<sub>2</sub>: servant leadership has positive and significant effects on job performance.

Pala'langan (2021) and Gil et al (2023) revealed that there is a positive relationship between servant leadership and job satisfaction. The same results were also obtained by Widyastuti (2022) when researching 249 employees in 13 state-owned hotels in Indonesia stated that servant leadership had a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction and also Huning et al. (2020) when researching 150 full-time workers in the Americas Southeast Region concluded that servant leadership has a positive relationship with job satisfaction. Thus, the proposed hypotheses is as follows:

H<sub>3</sub>: servant leadership has positive and significant effects on job satisfaction.

Mubin et al. (2022) conducted a study of 182 employees in the bottled water industry and revealed that servant leadership has a positive and significant effect on job performance through job involvement. The role of servant leadership can influence a person's involvement in work so that it

also influences the results of his performance. Thus, the proposed hypotheses is as follows:

H<sub>4</sub>: servant leadership has a significant effect on job performance through job involvement.

Widyastuti (2022) in her research wrote that servant leadership can increase job satisfaction and at the same time improve job performance. Meanwhile, Fatahuddin and Tanuwijaya (2022) in their research on 300 respondents who were employees of PT. Bank Mandiri's SME & Micro Risk Group Unit also concluded that the leadership style mediated by job satisfaction has a positive impact on employee performance. Based on this research, the hypotheses can be formulated as follows:

H<sub>5</sub>: servant leadership has a significant effect on job performance through job satisfaction.

Matagi et al. (2022) revealed in their research that job involvement has a significant relationship to job satisfaction. The same results were also obtained by Palumbo (2022) and Roswandi (2021) who also concluded that work/work involvement has a direct and significant effect on job satisfaction. However, research conducted by Salinero et al. (2020) on 420 employees in Spain showed the opposite result and wrote that there is no significant relationship between job involvement and job satisfaction. Thus, the proposed hypotheses is as follows:

H<sub>6</sub>: job involvement has positive and significant effects on job satisfaction.

The positive and significant influence of job involvement on job performance was obtained by previous researchers. For example, Matagi et al. (2022), Mubin et al. (2022), and Chou et al. (2022) in his research concluded that job involvement has a positive and significant effect on job performance. Based on the results of these studies, the hypotheses can be formulated as follows:

H<sub>7</sub>: job involvement has positive and significant effects on job performance.

Matagi et al. (2022) revealed that job satisfaction has no significant relationship with work performance. Meanwhile, Widyastuti (2022) in her research wrote that job satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on work performance. The same results were also obtained by Al-Romeedy (2019) and Nasurdin et al. (2020) who concluded that job satisfaction has a strong influence on work performance. Meanwhile, research conducted by Pala'angan (2021)

concluded the opposite, that job satisfaction does not affect work performance. Based on the results of this study, the hypotheses can be formulated as follows:

H<sub>8</sub>: Job satisfaction has positive and significant effects on job performance.

Based on the descriptions above, a research model can be described in Figure 1.

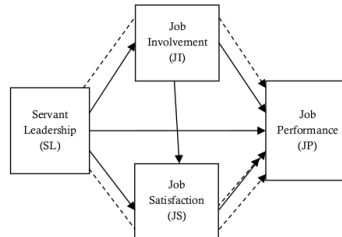


Figure 1. Research Model

**METHOD**

The data collection method uses primary data collection techniques by using a questionnaire at the same time (cross sectional) to employees within the Audit Board of Indonesia whose functional position other than auditor and offices are at the Head Office and Representative Offices on the island of Java as a population. The number of samples was determined using the slovin method with a 5% margin of error. Thus, a sample of 173 respondents was determined from a total population of 303 employees. Respondents who filled out the questionnaire were 174 employees so that it was sufficient for further testing.

Respondents were given a number of statements and asked to choose one of the available answers according to the measurement scale. The measurement scale in this study was using a 5-point Likert scale. Respondents can answer their own statements by choosing between numbers 1 and 5, where the number 1 indicates "strongly disagree" and the number 5 indicates "strongly agree". The servant leadership variable was measured using six indicators adapted from Franco & Antunes (2020) and Gašková (2020). The job involvement variable was measured using 13 indicators adapted from Arjuni et al. (2019). The job satisfaction variable was measured using 19 indicators in Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) which adapted from Uktutias et al. (2022). While job performance

variable was measured using 2 indicators adapted from Widyastuti (2022) and Saleem et al. (2020). The instruments were tested with validity and reliability tests. All indicators were declared valid with standardized loading factor more than 0.45 and all variables were declared reliable with cronbach's alpha more than 0.70. Thus, the hypotheses can be testing and mediating effects testing were carried out.

**RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

The majority respondents in this study were men as much as 60% compared to women as much as 40%. This is because the majority of employees in the organization are men. Based on age, the majority respondents were "Y generation" with aged 29 until 43 years old (Andrea et al., 2016) as much as 74.7%. This shows that organization have many mature aged employees. Based on education level, the majority respondents have bachelor's degree as much as 60.9%. This is because in recent years, organization has recruited a lot of employees with a minimum bachelor's degree. Based on work experience, the majority respondents have 11-20 years work experience as much as 63.2%. This statistic is due to the fact that most of the respondents have just been appointed to their positions with bypass scheme in 2021. Therefore, the characteristics of the respondents are dominated by employees who are Y and Z generations and have sufficient experience.

The mean value of the servant leadership variable is 3.73. This shows that the majority respondents stated they felt servant leadership that had been implemented by the organization and

management. This is because most employees feel that their direct supervisor applied servant leadership as their leadership style. The average value of the job involvement variable is 3.35. This shows that the majority respondents stated that they already had a sense of involvement in their work, prioritized work, and were passionate about every job they did. Involvement in work is manifested in the form of employees' willingness to work overtime to complete their tasks without being paid, enthusiasm to enter the office early, and prepare everything to expedite work. The mean value of the job satisfaction variable is 3.73. This shows that the majority respondents stated that they were satisfied with what was provided by their work and the surrounding environment that supported their work. Of course, this cannot be separated from the very decent salary, regular work without worrying about being fired for no reason, and employees are given the freedom to do their own work and communicate with colleagues. The average value of job performance variables is 3.94. This shows that the majority respondents stated that their work is good and has high productivity to help the organization achieve its goals.

Hypotheses testing was carried out using Structure Equation Model (SEM) approach with AMOS24. Hypotheses testing is done by comparing the p value with a significance level (alpha) of 0.05. The hypotheses are supported if the p-value is ≤ 0.05, there is a significant influence between the variables tested. If p-value is > 0.05 the hypotheses is failed to support, there is no effect between the variables tested. The result of AMOS output on the direct influence analysis can be seen in table 1 as follows:

**Table 1.** Direct Influence Hypotheses Test Results

Path	Estimasi (β)	Sig.	Decision
H1 Servant leadership → job involvement	0.493	.000	Supported
H2 Servant leadership → job performance	-0.372	.005	Not supported
H3 Servant leadership → job satisfaction	0.483	.000	Supported
H6 Job involvement → job satisfaction	0.355	.000	Supported
H7 Job involvement → job performance	0.217	.057	Not supported
H8 Job satisfaction → job performance	0.742	.000	Supported

Based in the result test in table 1, four of six hypotheses are supported because there are positive and significant influences between the observed variables. First, the relationship between servant leadership and job involvement resulted a significance value is .000 ≤ 0.005 with estimated value is 0.493, it can be concluded that there is a positive and significant influence between servant leadership on job involvement. Second, the relationship between servant leadership and job

satisfaction resulted a significance value is .000 ≤ 0.005 with estimated value is 0.483, it can be concluded that there is a positive and significant influence between servant leadership on job satisfaction. Third, the relationship between job involvement and job satisfaction resulted a significance value is .000 ≤ 0.005 with estimated value is 0.355, it can be concluded that there is a positive and significant influence between job involvement on job satisfaction. Fourth, the

relationship between job satisfaction and job performance resulted a significance value is  $.000 \leq 0.005$  with estimated value is 0.742, it can be concluded that there is a positive and significant influence between job satisfaction on job performance.

Furthermore, two hypotheses are not supported because there are insignificant or negative influences between observed variables. First, based on the result, it is found that significant value between servant leadership and job performance is  $.005 = 0.005$  but have a negative estimated value is -0.372, it can be concluded that there is a negative and significant

influence between servant leadership on job performance. Second, based on the result, it is found that significant value between job involvement and job performance is  $.057 \geq 0.005$  and have a positive estimated value is 0.217, it can be concluded that there is a positive and insignificant influence between job involvement on job performance.

The mediation effects test was conducted to determine the indirect effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable through the mediating variables. The mediation effects were tested using the Sobel test and the result can be seen in table 2 as follows:

Table 2. Sobel Test Result

	Path	t-Stat	Sig.	Decision
H4	Servant leadership → job involvement → job performance	1.778	.075	Not supported
H5	Servant leadership → job satisfaction → job performance	3.039	.002	Supported

Based in the result Sobel test in table 2, first, the significance value in the correlation servant leadership and job performance through job involvement is  $0.075 \geq 0.005$  and t-Statistic is  $1.779 \leq 1.96$ , it can be concluded that there is insignificant correlation. Second, the relationship between servant leadership and job performance through job satisfaction resulted a significance value is  $0.002 \leq 0.005$  and t-statistic is  $3.039 \geq 1.96$ , it can be concluded that servant leadership has a significant effect on job performance through job satisfaction.

H<sub>1</sub>: servant leadership has a positive and significant effect on job involvement.

These results indicate that some respondents feel that the servant leadership style adopted by their direct supervisors can increase employee involvement in carrying out work. These results are the same as a study conducted by Mubin et al. (2022) on 182 employees in drinking water industry companies and research by Halime & Seror (2022) on 220 employees at Iraq's Kirkuk University. This is because leaders pay attention to their employees so that they want to be involved in work (Mubin et al., 2022).

H<sub>2</sub>: servant leadership has a negative and significant effect on job performance.

These results indicate that current employees tend to dislike being cared for and served by their direct supervisors. The servant leadership style that prioritizes service for its followers seems less relevant to the current work

culture, especially for generations Y (74.7%) and Z (18.4%) which are the majority respondents in this study. Generation Y tends to be more selfish and short-term thinking, while generation Z tends to find it difficult to commit and enjoy what they have and are currently living (Andrea et al., 2016). The attention given by their direct supervisors actually make them uncomfortable at worked so it decreased their performance. There is no previous research that supported this result. Research by Riana & Anatan (2023) and Pala'langan (2021) only shows that servant leadership has no significant effect on employee performance.

H<sub>3</sub>: servant leadership has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction.

These results indicate that the majority respondents assess the servant leadership style adopted by direct supervisors can increase their job satisfaction. Supervisors tend to prioritize how their employees can grow and develop which facilitates employee job satisfaction (Gil et al., 2023), provides high salaries, and big opportunities to do their own work so it increased their satisfaction at work. This result is supported by the research of Gil et al. (2023) on 256 employees in Brazil and Spain and Widyastuti (2022) who examined 249 employees in state-owned hotels stated that servant leadership had a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction.

H<sub>4</sub>: servant leadership has no significant effect on job performance through job involvement.

This result is different from Mubin et al. (2022) which states that servant leadership has a significant influence on job performance through job involvement. This shows that respondents assess the job involvement they get from the servant leadership style of leader does not have a significant influence on their performance. It could be that employees feel involved because of forced feelings with their supervisors who always pay attention to them. So even though job involvement has increased, it cannot affect performance significantly.

H<sub>3</sub>: servant leadership has significant effect on job performance through job satisfaction.

These results indicate that the majority respondents feel that their supervisors have prioritized the interests of employees so that they are satisfied. Job satisfaction obtained in the end can improve performance quite significantly. The results of this study are in line with Widyastuti (2022) that stated servant leadership has significant effect on job performance through job satisfaction.

H<sub>4</sub>: job involvement has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction.

This study indicates that most respondents agree that when they have high job involvement in a work, the level of satisfaction they get is also higher. This was also revealed in a study conducted by Matagi et al. (2022), Palumbo (2022), Salinero et al. (2020) and Roswandi (2021). The positive and significant relationship between job involvement and job satisfaction means that individuals who are highly involved in work generally appear to be satisfied with their jobs.

H<sub>5</sub>: job involvement has a positive but no significant effect on job performance.

This study indicates that even though employees have high job involvement in a work, it does not have a significant effect on the performance results obtained. This result is different from previous research. Such as, researchs by Matagi et al. (2022), Mubin et al (2022), and Chou et al. (2021) showed that job involvement had significant effect on job performance. This happens because high job involvement is caused by the demands of the work itself, work forces them to be involved, so they are unable to significantly boost employee performance.

H<sub>6</sub>: job satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on job performance.

This research indicates that an increase in employee job satisfaction will be able to improve

their performance. The correlation between job satisfaction and work performance has the highest estimated value, this indicates that job satisfaction has the greatest influence on employee performance. Someone who is satisfied with his job tend to do his job wholeheartedly and in an extraordinary way (Al-Romeedy, 2019). The goal is that they can continue to work and enjoy the satisfaction they get from their work, and even improve it. Because companies tend to provide higher salaries, promotion opportunities, and other rewards to high-performing employees. The results of this study are also supported by previous research conducted by Widyastuti (2022), Al-Romeedy (2019) and Nasurudin et al. (2020).

#### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Based on the results of the research and discussion in the previous chapter, it can be concluded in this study there are 5 supported hypotheses and 3 hypotheses that failed. Servant leadership has a positive and significant effect on job involvement. Servant leadership has a negative and significant effect on job performance. Servant leadership has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction. Servant leadership has no significant effect on job performance through job involvement. Servant leadership has significant effect on job performance through job satisfaction. Job involvement has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction. Job involvement has a positive but no significant effect on job performance. Job satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on job performance.

The results of this study are expected to provide an overview or input on policies that must be taken by organizations, especially the public sector. First, to improve employee performance, organizations need to make policies that prioritize employee job satisfaction, such as providing salary according to performance, clear career paths, and fair development and promotion opportunities as stated in the ASN merit system. Second, it is necessary to review the leadership style that will be applied in the organization by adjusting to the current times. Because based on the results of the analysis, the servant leadership style actually decreases employee performance. If it is not relevant, then other leadership styles can be chosen that can improve employee performance. Third, to increase job involvement, direct supervisors can provide jobs to employees according to their competence and abilities, provide full responsibility, provide freedom in making decisions related to work, and provide sufficient guidance if it needed. It is also intended that job involvement can increase the significance of the influence on performance.

This research was only conducted in one type of position and one public sector

organization, the samples were taken only in the head office and representative offices on the island of Java. Future research is expected to be able to examine other categories of employees and not only examine one public sector agency/institution, but at least two different agencies that have something in common. Future studies are expected to use a larger number of respondents to obtain more accurate data. Future studies are expected to be able to add other dependent variables or compares another leadership style that can affect job performance, job involvement, and job satisfaction so that it can be seen which factors or leadership style are more influential and must be considered.

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