



**IGNITING PEAK PERFORMANCE IN THE BANKING SECTOR:
THE DYNAMIC SYNERGY OF LEADERSHIP, MOTIVATION,
AND JOB SATISFACTION AT MAYBANK SABAH**

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Abstract:

This study investigates the influence of leadership styles, motivation, and job satisfaction on employee performance at Maybank Sabah. A quantitative approach was used to explore the complex relationships between these factors. Data was collected through self-administered questionnaires, which were distributed to the staff of Maybank, Sabah. A total of 279 employees participated and contributed to the data analysis and conclusion of this study. The data was analysed using SmartPLS 4. The findings reveal that all three variables significantly impact employee performance, with job satisfaction emerging as the strongest predictor. While leadership and motivation play crucial roles, job satisfaction has the most profound effect on enhancing employee outcomes. The study emphasizes the importance of creating a motivating work environment and fostering job satisfaction to optimize productivity. By focusing on the banking sector in East Malaysia, this research addresses a notable gap in the literature. Additionally, this study provides actionable insights for bank managers aiming to enhance employee performance and organizational excellence. The results carry significant implications for management practices, offering guidance on how to refine leadership strategies and improve motivation to drive productivity in the competitive financial industry.

Keywords: leadership styles, motivation, job satisfaction, employee performance, financial sector, banking industry

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1. Introduction

The relationship between leadership style, motivation, and job satisfaction significantly influences employee performance, garnering considerable research interest in organizational behaviour. Understanding this connection within Maybank Sabah is crucial for enhancing operational efficiency and staff engagement at this leading Malaysian financial institution. According to (Megawaty *et al.*, 2022), leadership style, employee commitment, work motivation, and work climate greatly affect job satisfaction, which subsequently influences employee performance. Similarly, (Kanapathipillai *et al.*, 2021; Tamaina & Suharto, 2018) highlighted the significant role of motivation and leadership in shaping employee performance through job satisfaction. Moreover, research conducted by (Firdiyansyah & Dermawan, 2023) has shown the significant stimulus of job satisfaction on worker's performance and productivity. This study aims to explore these dynamics at Maybank Sabah, focusing on how tailored leadership strategies can boost employee motivation and satisfaction, ultimately improving performance metrics. This investigation is particularly relevant in Sabah's diverse and evolving corporate landscape, where cultural and regional factors play a critical role in shaping employee expectations and behaviours. Despite the financial sector's vital role in the global economy, there has been limited research on the impact of leadership style, motivation, and job satisfaction on employee performance at Maybank Sabah. This study seeks to determine the extent to which effective leadership, motivation, and job satisfaction contribute to employee performance in the banking sector.

1.1. Research Problem Statements

The aim of this study is to understand how leadership styles, motivation, and job satisfaction interact to influence employee performance, particularly within the context of the banking sector in Sabah, Malaysia. Although prior studies have explored these factors independently across various sectors and regions, there remains a limited body of research focusing on the Malaysian banking industry, particularly in Sabah. This geographical and sectoral gap raises the question of whether existing findings, such as the positive impact of transformational leadership or the role of motivation in enhancing performance, can be generalized to this unique context. While leadership styles like transformational and participative leadership have been found to foster better performance, studies also reveal that leadership styles like autocratic or laissez-faire leadership can diminish employee outcomes, leading to inconsistent conclusions across the literature (Abimayu *et al.*, 2023; Bolarinwa *et al.*, 2023; Omogero & Okwutu, 2023).

Furthermore, while motivation is widely regarded as a crucial driver of performance, other studies suggest that it does not operate in isolation and may not always lead to improved outcomes without the presence of mediating factors like job satisfaction (Prabowo *et al.*, 2018; Muklis *et al.*, 2022). This underlines the complexity of the motivation-performance relationship, which has not been thoroughly examined in the banking sector, particularly in a region with distinct cultural and operational

challenges like Sabah. The role of job satisfaction is equally contentious, with some studies indicating strong correlations with performance, while others downplay its influence, suggesting that external factors such as organizational culture or workload may play a more critical role (Purwati, 2023; Kayacilar & Alhempfi, 2022).

If this study were not conducted, key insights into the unique dynamics of leadership, motivation, and satisfaction in shaping employee performance in Sabah's banking industry would remain unexplored. This would perpetuate a knowledge gap in the sector, potentially leading to inefficient management strategies and missed opportunities for enhancing employee engagement and productivity. The implications for organizational effectiveness and competitiveness in a rapidly evolving financial sector would be significant, particularly in an era where human capital is a key determinant of success. This study, therefore, seeks to bridge these critical gaps and contribute to a deeper understanding of how tailored leadership and motivation strategies can optimize employee performance in this unique context.

1.2. Research Questions

RQ1: Is there a significant relationship between leadership styles and employee performance in Maybank Sabah?

RQ2: Is there a significant relationship between motivation and employee performance in Maybank Sabah?

RQ3: Is there a significant relationship between job satisfaction and employee performance in Maybank Sabah?

1.3. Research Objectives

RO1: To examine if there is a significant relationship between leadership styles and employee performance in Maybank Sabah.

RO2: To scrutinise if there is a significant relationship between motivation and employee performance in Maybank Sabah.

RO3: To study if there is a significant relationship between job satisfaction and employee performance in Maybank Sabah.

2. Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

The following sub-sections focus on the underpinning theory, literature, and hypothesis developed regarding the relationships between leadership styles, motivational factors, job satisfaction, and employee performance.

2.1 Underpinning Theory

The Path-Goal Theory (House, 1996) and Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (Herzberg *et al.*, 1959; Gardner, 1977) are the foundational frameworks that guide this research. These theories provide insights into how leadership styles, motivational factors, and job satisfaction influence performance in various organizational settings, including the

banking sector and beyond. By examining these relationships, we can better understand the dynamics that drive employee performance. These two theories have been used by numerous researchers to analyse the impact of leadership styles, motivational factors and job satisfaction on employee performance. This study aims to build on these theories by exploring previous studies within the banking sector and other organisations, highlighting how different leadership approaches, motivational factors, and job satisfaction can either enhance or hinder employee performance.

Studies such as those conducted by (Abimayu *et al.*, 2023; AlMontaser *et al.*, 2022; Lasiny *et al.*, 2021; Hossan & Hasan, 2021; Prabowo *et al.*, 2018) are cited to support these assertions. Furthermore, this research will delve into how these elements interact in various contexts, providing a comprehensive overview of best practices that can be adopted to foster a more productive workforce.

2.2 Employee Performance

Employee performance encompasses various dimensions of an employee's work output, behaviour, and overall contribution to an organization (Agus, 2023). Employee performance can be defined as the degree to which an employee effectively fulfils their job responsibilities and contributes to the organization's objectives (Szabó *et al.*, 2017). According to (Kanapathipillai & Azam, 2020), an employee's job performance is defined as both how successfully they apply assignments and how they approach their work with excellence and competence. It encompasses both quantitative measures, such as output and efficiency, and qualitative aspects, such as teamwork, creativity, and adherence to organizational values.

Employee performance is also a critical determinant of organizational success (Sriekaningsih *et al.*, 2018). It is influenced by innumerable factors, including individual characteristics, motivational factors, job satisfaction, organizational culture, leadership styles, and external environmental conditions. Understanding these factors is essential for organizations seeking to enhance productivity and foster a motivated workforce. Studies by (Santoso *et al.*, 2022; Syahidin *et al.*, 2021; Hasibuan & Sopiah, 2021; Elshifa *et al.*, 2020) provide insights into how leadership styles, motivation, and job satisfaction influence employee performance. Additional studies by (Mubarok *et al.*, 2023; Ismail *et al.*, 2021; Li *et al.*, 2019) highlight the role of organizational culture and leadership in shaping performance outcomes.

External factors, including economic conditions, industry standards, and technological advancements, also influence employee performance (Kazan & Gümüş, 2013). Organizations must adapt to these external pressures to maintain competitiveness and ensure that their employees are equipped with the necessary skills and resources to perform effectively.

Employee performance is a complex and dynamic construct influenced by individual, organizational, and external factors (Dukhan *et al.*, 2017). Understanding these influences and implementing effective measurement strategies is crucial for organizations aiming to enhance performance and achieve their strategic objectives.

2.3 Relationship between Leadership Styles and Employee Performance

Leadership styles and their impact on employees' performance is a critical area of study in organisational behaviour. The different leadership styles can significantly influence employee performance, motivation, satisfaction, and productivity (Yusuf & Suwardana, 2023; Rumijati, 2021; Simbolon *et al.*, 2020; Ricablanca & Abocejo, 2020; Bernanthos, 2018). Furthermore, the relationship between leadership style and employee performance is well-documented by various researchers and revealed that various leadership approaches significantly influence how employees perform in their roles. Research by (Abimayu *et al.*, 2023; AlMontaser *et al.*, 2022; Chekol Abebe *et al.*, 2022; Nanjundeswaraswamy & Swamy, 2019; Shafie *et al.*, 2013) indicate that leadership styles such as transformational and transactional styles positively affect employee performance. According to their findings, transformational and transactional styles inspire employees through a shared vision and supportive environment, which is linked to employee performance through a sense of ownership and commitment.

Additionally, (Lin *et al.*, 2022; Duarte *et al.*, 2021) have found that authentic leadership positively correlate with employee's creative performance and influences organizational innovation and effectiveness. This indicates that adopting authentic leadership within organizations can be a strategic approach to heighten employee's creativity, innovation, and performance. In line with this, research by (Yumte *et al.*, 2017), shows that servant leadership style can significantly affect the performance, organizational citizenship behaviour and satisfaction of employees. This shows that, integrating servant leadership and authentic leadership within an organisation can establish a more holistic atmosphere that nurtures employee engagement and emotional intelligence, which drives them to better perform their tasks.

Additionally, a study by (Zhang & Zheng, 2020) on the participative leadership styles, which involve employees in decision-making, has been shown to enhance job satisfaction and performance by making employees feel valued and empowered. This suggest that, employees in organisations that encourage a participative leadership style are more likely to remain loyal to the organisation and continue to perform for the betterment of themselves and the whole company (Putra & Indayani, 2022).

Although the above literature signifies that leadership styles are known to improve employees' performance, there are instances where certain leadership styles can lead to decreased job performance. Inconsistencies in the effects of leadership styles on employee performance were highlighted in research by (Bolarinwa *et al.*, 2023; Megawaty *et al.*, 2022; Wijesinghe, 202; Çetin *et al.*, 2012). Leadership styles that negatively impacted employee performance were found by previous researchers such as (Hassnain, 2023; Lale & (MA), 2022; Raziq & Maulabakhsh, 2018), who stated that autocratic leadership, which is characterized by a high degree of control and reduced employee participation, lowers job satisfaction, performance and increases employee turnover. Although transactional leadership was mentioned to yield positive employee performance, (Breevaart *et al.*, 2019) stated that this leadership style emphasizes rewards and punishments, which can suppress creativity and innovation, leading to reduced employee performance. In line

with this, (Abasilim *et al.*, 2019) assert that the effectiveness of transformational leadership can be reduced if an organisation fails to support their employees, which leads to diminished employee performance. Another study (Omogero & Okwutu, 2023; Amanchukwu *et al.*, 2019) discovered that organisations that embrace a laissez-faire leadership style, which is characterized by a lack of direction and support, can cause distrust and exasperation, which results in diminished employee performance.

Moreover, several research scholars have pointed out the positive impact of democratic leadership style on employee performance (Hassnain, 2023; Bolarinwa *et al.*, 2023). Conversely, (Hilton *et al.*, 2021; Jaafar & Bahiyah, 2021) has mentioned that the effectiveness of democratic leadership is dependent on the employees' needs in an organisation.

Due to the variations in the impact of leadership styles on employee performance, this current research developed the first research hypothesis to test this relationship in the banking industry in East Malaysia:

H1: There is a significant relationship between leadership styles and employee performance in Maybank Sabah.

2.4 Relationship between Motivation and Employee Performance

The impact of motivation on employee performance and job satisfaction has been emphasized in research conducted by (Kanapathipillai *et al.*, 2021; Tamba & Jillsy, 2021; Al Mansoori *et al.*, 2020; Nurdiansyah *et al.*, 2020). These studies highlight the potential of motivation to enhance employee performance. Furthermore, motivated employees are more likely to exhibit higher levels of engagement and commitment to their work, leading to improved job performance (Saad, 2018). Additionally, organizations that foster a motivating environment can expect to see lower turnover rates and increased employee performance, as employees feel valued and recognized for their contributions (Bushiri, 2014). Moreover, the alignment of individual goals with organizational objectives plays a crucial role in sustaining motivation, as it creates a sense of purpose and direction among employees. This alignment not only enhances job performance but also drives innovation, as employees are more inclined to contribute their ideas and efforts towards individual and organisational success (Kanapathipillai *et al.*, 2024; Segarra-Ciprés *et al.*, 2019).

A study conducted by (Festiningtyas & Gilang, 2020) in Indonesia found that motivation positively affects employee performance, which accounts for 39.5% of variance in employee performance. Likewise, (Uka & Prendi, 2021) mentioned that motivation significantly enhances employee performance by fostering job satisfaction, commitment, and productivity, leading to improved organizational success and financial stability. Moreover, (Hussain, 2018) findings in Pakistan indicate that motivation significantly enhances employee performance, with a correlation of 0.882, demonstrating that motivated employees are likely to exhibit higher performance levels.

Studies by (Alalade *et al.*, 2015; Falola, 2014; Owusu, 2012) in various parts of Africa found that motivation significantly enhances employee performance by fostering engagement, increasing productivity, and improving job satisfaction. Similarly, research conducted by (Khan *et al.*, 2018) in Pakistan also discovered that motivation significantly enhances employee performance in the banking sector by fostering job satisfaction, improving moral behaviour, and increasing productivity through factors like benefits, recognition, empowerment, and job environment.

Motivation can be broadly categorized into intrinsic and extrinsic types, each of which plays a crucial role in influencing employee performance. Studies on intrinsic motivation have shown that, when individuals are intrinsically motivated, they engage in activities for the pleasure and satisfaction derived from it than due to outside influences like reward potentials (Makki & Abid, 2017), thereby enhancing performance at work. According to (Mihrez & Thoyib, 2014), leadership behaviour is directly related to cultivating a climate of intrinsic motivation by employees, and in turn, this impacts employee performance positively.

Similarly, extrinsic motivation also has an impact on the performance of employees. A research by (Mihrez & Thoyib, 2014) found a positive relationship between extrinsic motivation and employee performance. They observed that compensation in the form of raises, bonuses and kudos can improve performance. This is supported by another study by (Zameer *et al.*, 2014), who emphasize the importance of extrinsic rewards in motivating employees, especially when job performances are linked with financial reward mechanisms. The positive relationship between pay satisfaction as a form of extrinsic motivation and job performance was also established by (Stringer *et al.*, 2011) among front-line employees.

Recent research asserts that employees can experience both types of motivation simultaneously, leading to positive job performance (Siddiqui & Rida, 2019). Moreover, (Mardanov, 2020) also mentions that the employee's job satisfaction is an important part of performance. They assert that work contentment is not possible without intrinsic or extrinsic motivation. This duality emphasises the fact that, in organizations, a balanced motivational climate has to be put in place, which makes use of both intrinsic and extrinsic factors.

Consequently, motivation is recognized as a critical factor in enhancing employee performance across many sectors, including the banking sector. Studies by (Chekol Abebe *et al.*, 2022) emphasize that motivated employees are more productive and likely to exceed job expectations.

On the other hand, various studies support the assertion that motivation does not impact job performance. A study by (Haryono *et al.*, 2020) found that although motivation significantly affects performance, it does not mediate the direct effect of training and career progression on performance. This implies that other factors, such as the nature of the job and advancement opportunities, may play a more important role in determining performance than motivation alone. Additionally, (Pasaribu *et al.*, 2023) suggested that a discrepancy between personal traits and demands of work would reduce motivation and

performance indicators such as the quality of work and work efficacy. This means that motivation, by itself, does not lead to high performance; it has to be injected into the right job-context. While overall, it still correlates with improved performance, perhaps the impact of job satisfaction is underestimated compared to motivation, which is also shown in the study by (Islam & Purnamasari, 2019).

Moreover, (Swedana, 2023) also points out that motivation does not affect performance, and other factors are likely important. This view was also previously supported by (Dysvik & Kuvaas, 2011). They found that perceived job autonomy increased work effort apart from an employee's personal drive or inner strength to perform well at their tasks. This implies that a variety of other factors aside from motivation, such as the job itself and freedom within it might have a significant effect on job performance.

Furthermore, studies by (Prabowo *et al.*, 2018; Muklis *et al.*, 2022) discovered that job satisfaction often mediates the relationship between motivation and performance. This strongly indicates that motivation might not have a direct effect on performance without the influence of job satisfaction. This is in line with the findings of (Pancasila *et al.*, 2020), which indicate that motivation can affect various factors but does not necessarily lead to performance.

Therefore, there are gaps in the literature, particularly in understanding how motivation affects performance. This gap has also been highlighted by (Akhter, 2020; Janovac *et al.*, 2021) in various banking environments. Hence, this leads to the second hypothesis, which focuses on the impact of motivation on performance:

H2: There is a significant relationship between motivation and employee performance in Maybank Sabah.

2.5 Relationship between Job Satisfaction and Employee Performance

Several studies have indicated that job satisfaction significantly influences employee performance. Studies by (Mubarok *et al.*, 2023; Borboa Álvarez *et al.*, 2020; Bijaang *et al.*, 2018) have found a positive association between job satisfaction and employee performance. When workers are content with their occupations, they are more dedicated, productive, and motivated. A complex emotional response to several aspects of a job, including the work environment, tasks, relationships, and general conditions, is encompassed under the concept of job satisfaction. Moreover, research conducted by (Firdiyansyah & Dermawan, 2023; Lasiny *et al.*, 2021) have shown the significant influence of job satisfaction on workers' performance, commitment, and productivity. Moreover, a study conducted by (Gagandeep *et al.*, 2020) on banking employees in India discovered that employees who are satisfied tend to be more committed, engaged and productive, which leads to better performance. Parallel to this, (Priyadarshi *et al.*, 2022) mention that employee performance within the banking sector in India is dramatically impacted by job satisfaction in that the happier its workers are, the more motivated, devoted and productive they will become. Their research shows that if employees are

satisfied with their jobs on several counts, they do perform better. Satisfied employees are apt to play nice with their jobs, resulting in good quality service and higher volume. Furthermore, a study on the banking sector employees in Bangladesh by (Hossan & Hasan, 2021) found that satisfied employees will feel happier and more motivated at work, therefore heightening performance.

Studies consistently demonstrate a strong correlation between employee performance and job satisfaction. However, there are studies that have shown a bidirectional and complex outcome. A study by (Ibrahim *et al.*, 2022) found a significant impact on job satisfaction, which increases the performance of employees in the banking sector because it improves their commitment to work and produces output. Nevertheless, the study also found a negative insignificant relationship between job satisfaction and employee productivity, implying that the escalation of commitment is more likely to occur than boosting performance levels.

Furthermore, notable research by (Yuwono, 2021; Rurysun *et al.*, 2023) suggest that although job performance and job satisfaction are generally positively correlated, the strength and significance of this relationship may differ. Despite extensive research, there exists a notable gap in literature specifically addressing the impact of different job satisfaction styles on employee performance within the banking sector. Studies such as those by (Rizal & Mustapita, 2023; Rurysun *et al.*, 2023) highlight that while job satisfaction is often linked to employee performance, there are instances where its impact on performance is statistically insignificant or negligible. This suggests that job satisfaction may not be a critical determinant of performance in all banking contexts.

Moreover, studies typically focus on general determinants of job satisfaction, such as salary and coworker relationships, but often fail to explore how the elements of job satisfaction influence employee's performance in the banking sector (Akinbode *et al.*, 2022). Additionally, (Kayacilar & Alhempfi, 2022) have discovered that the impact of job satisfaction on employee performance in the banking industry is insignificant in Indonesia. This implies that, although job satisfaction is important, it does not closely correlate with performance outcomes for bank staff. The study emphasizes that other factors, such as excessive workloads, lead to employee performance, which highlights the complexity of performance determinants in the banking industry. A recent study (Purwati, 2023) also states that while job satisfaction was found to be high among banking employees, it did not mediate the relationship between external locus of control and employee performance, which suggests that other variables may have a stronger effect on job performance. This corroborates previous research by (Tănăsescu & Leon, 2019), who found that the relationship between job satisfaction and job performance is not generally applicable since the result of their study contradicts the widely accepted belief that job satisfaction directly affects employee performance.

Consistent with this line of argument, (Ahmad *et al.*, 2022) found that effort-reward imbalance was directly and positively related to job satisfaction. However, they failed to establish a direct relationship between job satisfaction and performance. As a result, the argument that satisfaction enhances performance specifically is further

complicated. Additionally, (Haikal, 2023) found that although job satisfaction may have a role in mediation the relationship between non-financial compensation and performance, it does not drive the issues involved, while (Putri, 2023) concluded that job satisfaction did not affect performance in the context of work ethics and leadership.

Thus, according to the literature above, there are different views on the relationship between job satisfaction and employee performance in the banking sector. Some of them claim that there is a positive correlation, which means that when employees are satisfied with their jobs, this results in an increased job performance of the employees. Other sources say that the relationship is more complicated and that external factors need to be taken into account. It was this controversy between different researchers that became a foundation for the formulation of the third hypothesis.

H3: There is a significant relationship between job satisfaction and employee performance in Maybank Sabah.

2.6 Proposed Conceptual Framework

Figure 2.1 proposed conceptual framework illustrates the role of leadership styles, motivation strategies, and job satisfaction in predicting employee performance at Maybank Sabah. By considering these factors together, researchers can develop strategies to improve employee engagement and productivity in the banking sector. Therefore, it is crucial to consider these interrelated issues in any organizational setting.

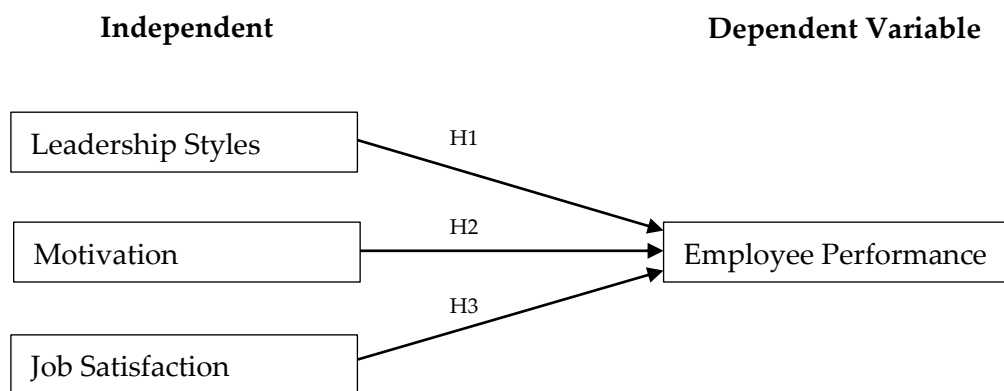


Figure 2.1: Proposed Conceptual Framework

3. Methodology

This research aims to fill a gap in the literature by investigating factors within Maybank Sabah, focusing on job satisfaction, motivation, leadership styles, and employee performance in the banking sector. The study uses a quantitative approach, collecting data on these factors through surveys.

Convenience sampling was chosen for its practicality in gathering data from readily available and willing participants within the bank. The study's population

consists of the staff of Maybank Sabah. According to the staff listing report from Regional Human Capital, Region Sabah/FT Labuan, Maybank Region Sabah employs approximately 870 people as of November 2023. Based on (Krejcie & Morgan's, 1970) tabulation, a sample of 265 will be able to represent the population of this study. To gather the responses, 400 self-administered questionnaires were distributed among the Maybank staff. A total of 283 responses were collected. Four of the responses were not complete. Therefore, a sample size of 279 respondents represented this study. This is approximately a 69.8% response rate. According to (Fincham, 2008), response rates of approximately 60% for most research should be the goal of researchers and certainly the expectation of the journal's editors.

The data analysis plan includes descriptive statistics, reliability tests, correlation analysis, and regression analysis. These methods aim to understand the relationships between variables and provide insights into the impact of leadership styles, motivation, and job satisfaction on employee performance.

4. Findings and Interpretation

The following section provides the findings and the interpretation of this study.

4.1 Reliability Analysis

Table 4.1: Reliability Analysis (N = 279)

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	No of Items
Leadership Style	0.918	5
Motivation	0.886	5
Job Satisfaction	0.888	5
Employee Performance	0.807	5

The reliability analysis in the table provides an assessment of the internal consistency of the scales used to measure the variables: leadership style, motivation, job satisfaction, and employee performance. Cronbach's Alpha values are used to determine how reliably the set of items measures a single latent construct, with values closer to 1 indicating higher reliability.

For Leadership Style, Cronbach's Alpha is 0.918, which indicates excellent reliability, meaning that the five items used to measure leadership style are highly consistent in capturing the construct. Motivation has a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.886, which also reflects high reliability, showing that the items measuring motivation are reliable in capturing the underlying factor. Similarly, Job Satisfaction has a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.888, demonstrating high internal consistency for the items measuring job satisfaction.

Employee Performance has a slightly lower Cronbach's Alpha of 0.807, but it still falls within the acceptable range for reliability. This suggests that the items used to assess employee performance consistently measure the construct, though with slightly less internal consistency compared to the other variables.

Therefore, all variables in this analysis show strong reliability, with Cronbach's Alpha values above 0.8, indicating that the items used to measure leadership style, motivation, job satisfaction, and employee performance are reliable and consistent for the sample of 279 respondents.

4.2 Normality

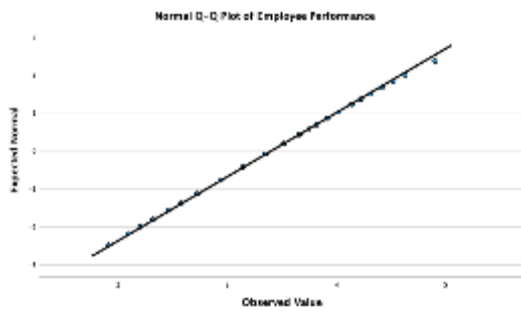


Figure 4.2.1: Employee Performance

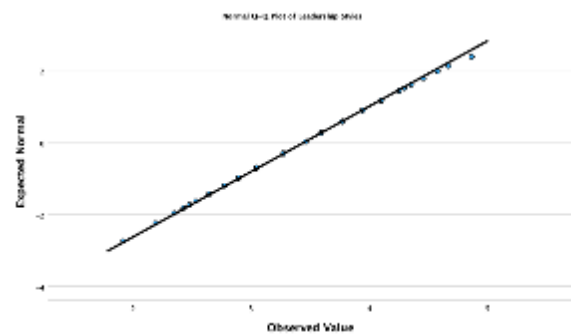


Figure 4.2.2: Leadership Styles

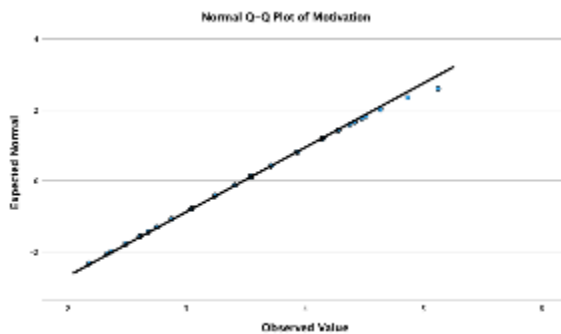


Figure 4.2.3: Motivation

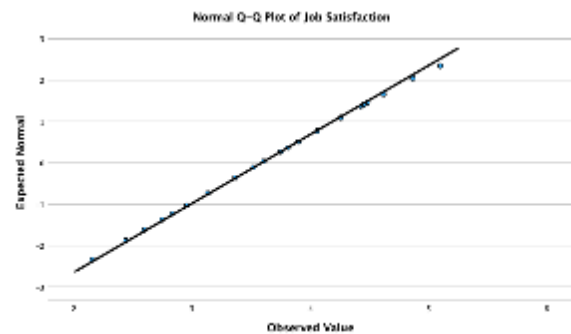


Figure 4.2.4: Job Satisfaction

The Q-Q plots Figures 4.2.1 – 4.2.4 provided for employee performance, leadership styles, motivation, and job satisfaction indicate that the data for these variables follows a normal distribution. In each plot, the observed values closely align with the 45-degree reference line, suggesting that the normality assumption is satisfied. While there are minor deviations at the extremes in some of the plots, such as for employee performance and job satisfaction, these deviations are very minimal and unlikely to impact the analysis significantly. The motivation and leadership styles variables show an almost perfect alignment with the reference line, further supporting the conclusion that the data for these variables is normally distributed. Overall, the Q-Q plots confirm that normality is a reasonable assumption for all four variables.

4.3 Mean and Standard Deviation Analysis

Table 4.2 Descriptive Statistics (N = 279)

Factors	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Leadership Styles	2.438	1.029	1	4.8
Motivation	2.022	0.633	1	3.8
Job Satisfaction	2.124	0.992	1	5.0
Employee Performance	1.985	0.793	1	4.6
Independent Variables: Leadership Styles, Motivation, Job Satisfaction				
Dependent Variable: Employee Performance				

Table 4.2 Descriptive statistics provides insights into the distribution of the variables (leadership styles, motivation, job satisfaction, and employee performance) across 279 observations. The mean values for each variable show the average levels across the sample. Leadership styles have a mean of (2.438 ± 1.029), indicating that, on average, respondents rate leadership styles moderately on a 1 to 4.8 scale with the highest variability. Motivation has a slightly lower mean of (2.022 ± 0.633) with the least variability. This indicates that responses for motivation are more consistent across the sample. At the same time, job satisfaction is slightly higher at (2.124 ± 0.992). Employee performance, the dependent variable, has a mean of (1.985 ± 0.793), suggesting that the average performance level is relatively low on the 1 to 4.6 scale.

Hence, the descriptive statistics highlight moderate levels of leadership styles, motivation, job satisfaction, and employee performance among respondents. Overall, the data reflect varied experiences across the measured factors, with minor deviations.

4.4 Correlation Analysis

Table 4.3: Correlation Matrix (N = 279)

Variables	EP	LS	MO	JS
Employee Performance (EP)	1			
Leadership Styles (LS)	0.570**	1		
Motivation (MO)	0.591**	0.501**	1	
Job Satisfaction (JS)	0.809**	0.583**	0.590**	1
**Correlation is significant at 0.05 level				

Table 4.3 Correlation Matrix reveals the associations between employee performance (EP), leadership styles (LS), motivation (MO), and job satisfaction (JS). Employee performance has a strong positive correlation with job satisfaction ($r = 0.809$; $p < 0.05$), indicating that higher job satisfaction is strongly linked to better employee performance. The correlation between employee performance and motivation is moderately strong at ($r = 0.591$; $p < 0.05$). This suggests that greater motivation is associated with improved performance. Leadership styles also positively influence employee performance, with a moderate correlation ($r = 0.570$; $p < 0.05$). This signifies that better leadership contributes to higher performance, though to a lesser extent than job satisfaction.

Leadership styles have a moderate positive correlation with both job satisfaction ($r = 0.583$; $p < 0.05$) and motivation ($r = 0.501$; $p < 0.05$). This implies that effective leadership is associated with greater satisfaction and motivation among employees in Maybank, Sabah. Motivation has a strong positive relationship with job satisfaction, with ($r = 0.590$; $p < 0.05$). This reveals that more motivated employees tend to experience higher satisfaction. This shows that motivation and satisfaction are mutually reinforcing factors. Job satisfaction stands out as the most significant factor related to employee performance. Job satisfaction exhibits the strongest correlation with employee performance. Additionally, job satisfaction is positively related to both leadership styles and motivation, indicating that these two factors significantly influence satisfaction and lead to performance. In general, the correlation analysis shows that all variables are positively associated. This denotes that improvements in leadership styles, motivation, and job satisfaction are likely to lead to better employee performance. It is evident that job satisfaction is the most critical factor driving performance, followed by motivation and leadership styles.

4.5 Regression Analysis

This section provides the regression analysis of this study to prove the relationships between the independent variables and the dependent variable.

4.5.1 Model Summary

Table 4.4: Model Summary

Quality Criteria	Employee Performance
R-square	0.682
R-square adjusted	0.679
Durbin-Watson test	1.778
Independent Variables: Leadership Styles, Motivation, Job Satisfaction	
Dependent Variable: Employee Performance	

Table 4.4 Regression Analysis presented provides valuable insights into the relationship between leadership styles, motivation, job satisfaction, and employee performance. The ($R^2 = 0.682$) indicates that 68.2% of the variance in employee performance is explained by the independent variables (leadership styles, motivation, and job satisfaction). This high R^2 value suggests a strong fit of the model, meaning that these predictors play a significant role in determining employee performance. The (adjusted $R^2 = 0.679$) is slightly lower, as expected, since it accounts for the number of predictors in the model. This small difference confirms that the model is well-fitted and not overly complex, indicating that the inclusion of these variables is appropriate and meaningful.

Furthermore, the (Durbin-Watson statistic = 1.778) suggests that there is no significant autocorrelation in the residuals, as it is close to the ideal value of 2. This indicates that the assumptions of the regression model are likely satisfied, and the results can be considered reliable. Overall, the analysis suggests that leadership styles,

motivation, and job satisfaction are key drivers of employee performance, and improvements in these areas can lead to better performance outcomes. The model's fit and statistical measures reinforce the robustness of these findings.

4.5.2 ANOVA

Table 4.5: ANOVA

Model	Sum square	df	Mean square	F	P value
Total	175.017	278	0.000	0.000	0.000
Error	55.604	275	0.202	0.000	0.000
Regression	119.413	3	39.804	196.858	0.000
Independent Variables: Leadership Styles, Motivation, Job Satisfaction					
Dependent Variable: Employee Performance					

Table 4.5 ANOVA provides a detailed analysis of the regression model that examines the relationship between leadership styles, motivation, job satisfaction, and employee performance. The (Total Sum of Squares = 175.017) represents the total variation in employee performance. The (Regression Sum of Squares = 119.413) reflects the portion of this variation explained by the independent variables (leadership styles, motivation, and job satisfaction). The (Error Sum of Squares = 55.604) captures the unexplained variation or residuals in the model.

The degrees of freedom show that the model includes 278 total observations, with degrees of freedom (df = 3) attributed to the independent variables and 275 degrees of freedom for the error term, accounting for the residual variance in the model. The (Mean Square for regression = 39.804). This represents the average variance explained by each predictor, while the (Error Mean Square = 0.202) captures the average unexplained variance.

The (F-statistic = 196.858) indicates that the model explains significantly more variance than would be expected by chance. This high F-statistic value shows that the independent variables collectively provide a strong fit in predicting employee performance. Furthermore, the ($p < 0.001$) confirms that the model is statistically significant, indicating that leadership styles, motivation, and job satisfaction have a significant combined impact on employee performance.

Thus, the ANOVA results suggest that the regression model is highly reliable, explaining a substantial portion of the variation in employee performance. The independent variables play a crucial role in predicting performance outcomes, with minimal unexplained variance remaining.

4.5.3 Regression Coefficient, Model, and Equation

Table 4.6: Coefficient

Factors	Unstandardized coefficients	Standardized coefficients	SE	T value	P - value	2.5 %	97.5 %
Leadership Styles	0.089	0.115	0.033	2.673	0.008	0.023	0.154
Motivation	0.183	0.146	0.054	3.362	0.001	0.076	0.290
Job Satisfaction	0.524	0.656	0.037	14.202	0.000	0.452	0.597
Intercept	0.285	0.000	0.093	3.048	0.003	0.101	0.469

Dependent Variable: Employee Performance

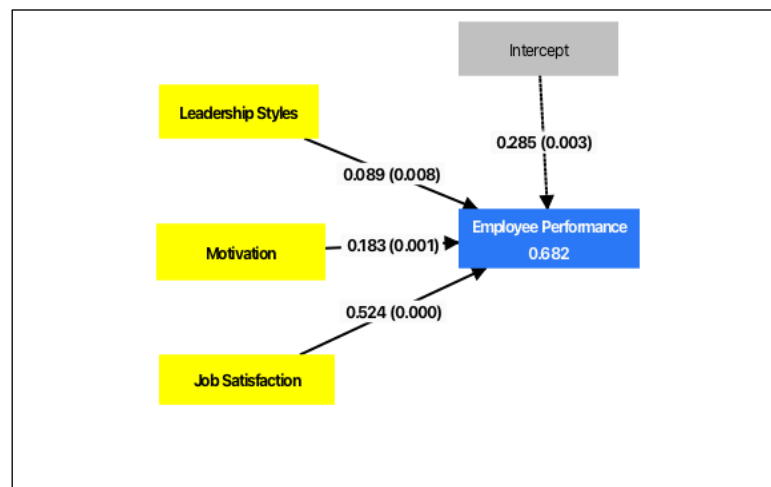


Figure 4.6.1: Regression Model

4.5.4 Regression Equation

The linear regression equation is as follows:

$$EP = 0.285 + 0.089(LS) + 0.183 (MO) + 0.524(JS)$$

Where,

EP = Employee Performance,

LS = Leadership Styles,

MO = Motivation,

JS = Job Satisfaction,

0.285 = Constant or the y-intercept.

The regression analysis, combining the coefficient (Table 4.6), model (Figure 4.6.1) and the regression equation, offers a comprehensive understanding of the impact of leadership styles, motivation, and job satisfaction on employee performance. The intercept, representing the baseline level of employee performance when all predictors

are zero, is significant with a coefficient ($B = 0.285$; $p < 0.05$). This suggests a positive baseline performance even when no impact from leadership styles, motivation, or job satisfaction is present.

Leadership styles, with an unstandardized coefficient ($B = 0.089$; $p < 0.05$), which is statistically significant and a standardized coefficient ($Beta = 0.115$), have a positive and statistically significant effect on employee performance. A one-unit increase in leadership styles leads to a 0.089 unit increase in employee performance. Although leadership styles positively affect employee performance, their impact is relatively smaller compared to the other variables.

Motivation is a stronger predictor, with an unstandardized coefficient ($B = 0.183$; $p < 0.05$), which is statistically significant and a standardized coefficient ($Beta = 0.146$). This means that for every unit increase in motivation, employee performance increases by 0.183 units. The confidence interval (0.076 to 0.290) reinforces the robustness of this result.

Job satisfaction stands out as the most impactful variable in the model. Its unstandardized coefficient ($B = 0.524$; $p < 0.05$), which is a statistically significant and standardized coefficient ($Beta = 0.656$) indicates that for every unit increase in job satisfaction, employee performance increases by 0.524 units. This is by far the largest effect among the predictors. The confidence interval is 0.452 to 0.597. Job satisfaction is clearly the strongest driver of employee performance in this model.

Therefore, it is evident that all three predictors (leadership styles, motivation, and job satisfaction) positively and significantly influence employee performance. Job satisfaction emerges as the most influential factor in this model. Motivation follows, while leadership styles contribute positively but to a lesser degree. The overall findings suggest that improving these factors, particularly job satisfaction, will lead to notable enhancements in employee performance. The low p-values across all variables ensure that the results are statistically robust, affirming the importance of these predictors in influencing performance outcomes.

4.6 Summary of Hypothesis Test

Table 4.7: Hypothesis Test

No	Hypothesis	p-value	Result
H1	There is a significant relationship between leadership styles and employee performance in Maybank Sabah.	0.008	Accepted
H2	There is a significant relationship between motivation and employee performance in Maybank Sabah.	0.001	Accepted
H3	There is a significant relationship between job satisfaction and employee performance in Maybank Sabah.	0.000	Accepted

Table 4.7 shows the results of the hypothesis testing. It reveals significant relationships between leadership styles, motivation, job satisfaction, and employee performance at Maybank Sabah. The first hypothesis (H1) tested the relationship between leadership

styles and employee performance, with a p-value of 0.008, indicating that leadership styles have a statistically significant impact on employee performance. The second hypothesis (H2) focused on the relationship between motivation and employee performance, and with a p-value of 0.001, it was found that motivation significantly enhances employee performance. The third hypothesis (H3) examined the relationship between job satisfaction and employee performance, and with a p-value of 0.000, job satisfaction emerged as the strongest predictor of employee performance.

Hence, all three variables (leadership styles, motivation, and job satisfaction) were found to have significant positive effects on employee performance, with job satisfaction having the most substantial influence. This suggests that organizations seeking to enhance employee performance should focus on improving leadership practices, fostering motivation, and, most importantly, increasing job satisfaction.

5. Discussion

This study sought to investigate the relationships between leadership styles, motivation, and job satisfaction with employee performance in the context of Maybank Sabah. The research findings confirmed significant relationships among these variables, aligning with the hypotheses developed.

The first research question examined whether leadership styles significantly impact employee performance. The regression results support Hypothesis 1, indicating a significant positive relationship between leadership styles and employee performance, with a β value of 0.089 and a p-value of 0.008. Although leadership positively impacts performance, according to (Yusuf & Suwardana, 2023; Rumijati, 2021; Simbolon *et al.*, 2020; Ricablanca & Abocejo, 2020; Bernanthos, 2018), its effect is modest compared to the other variables examined in this study. These findings are consistent with earlier research, such as those by (Abimayu *et al.*, 2023; AlMontaser *et al.*, 2022), who found that transformational and transactional leadership styles significantly enhance employee performance. However, some previous studies, such as those by (Hassnain, 2023; Lale & MA, 2022), highlight the potential negative effects of autocratic leadership styles, which was not the focus of this study. These contrasting findings emphasize the complex dynamics of leadership styles and their varying impacts on performance across different contexts.

The second research question explored the relationship between motivation and employee performance. The regression analysis revealed that motivation significantly influences performance, with a β value of 0.183 and a p-value of 0.001. This finding aligns with previous studies, such as those by (Kanapathipillai *et al.*, 2021; Tamba & Jillys, 2021; Festiningtyas & Gilang, 2020), who identified motivation as a critical factor in enhancing performance. The study's results are particularly consistent with research by (Uka & Prendi, 2021; Kanapathipillai & Azam, 2020), which noted that motivated employees exhibit higher levels of engagement and productivity. However, it should be noted that some researchers, such as (Haryono *et al.*, 2020; Swedana, 2023), suggest that motivation

alone may not directly influence performance in the absence of other mediating factors like job satisfaction. This study did not explore such mediating effects in depth but recognized that motivation plays a direct and significant role in improving employee outcomes.

The third research question focused on the role of job satisfaction in shaping employee performance. The findings strongly supported Hypothesis 3, showing that job satisfaction has the most substantial impact on performance, with a β value of 0.524 and a p-value of 0.000. This result is consistent with multiple previous studies, including those by (Mubarok *et al.*, 2023; Gagandeep *et al.*, 2020), which highlight the positive correlation between job satisfaction and enhanced employee performance. Satisfied employees are more likely to exhibit higher levels of commitment and productivity, as reflected in the strong statistical significance of this variable in the current study. However, some studies, such as those by (Kayacilar & Alhempri, 2022; Ibrahim *et al.*, 2022), offer conflicting perspectives by showing either weak or negative relationships between job satisfaction and performance under specific conditions. These findings point to the potential moderating factors that were not explored in this study but are worth considering for future research.

Thus, the results of this study confirm that leadership styles, motivation, and job satisfaction significantly impact employee performance at Maybank Sabah, with job satisfaction being the most influential factor. These findings provide practical insights for organizational strategies aimed at enhancing staff productivity and performance.

6. Conclusion

This study has successfully bridged important gaps in understanding the interplay between leadership styles, motivation, job satisfaction, and employee performance in Maybank Sabah. Utilizing Path-Goal Theory and Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory as the underpinning frameworks, this research contributes meaningfully to the literature by offering empirical insights into the unique dynamics that influence employee outcomes in the banking sector.

In addressing the first objective, this research confirms that leadership styles significantly impact employee performance, consistent with the principles of Path-Goal Theory, which emphasizes the role of leaders in providing clear guidance and removing obstacles to enhance performance. This study supports the findings from (Chekol Abebe *et al.*, 2022), which highlight the positive effects of leadership on performance, particularly in terms of transformational and transactional styles. Similarly, research by (Duarte *et al.*, 2021) emphasizes how authentic leadership fosters creativity and performance, an insight corroborated by the current study's findings. By confirming these relationships within the banking context of Sabah, this study expands on the work of (Zhang & Zheng, 2020), who demonstrated that participative leadership enhances job satisfaction and performance by empowering employees. Furthermore, this research contributes to the understanding of leadership styles by addressing inconsistencies found

in studies such as (Bolarinwa *et al.*, 2023), who argue that certain styles, such as autocratic leadership, can negatively affect performance. In doing so, the study provides a well-rounded analysis of how leadership operates in Maybank Sabah.

The second objective explored the relationship between motivation and employee performance, drawing on Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, which distinguishes between intrinsic and extrinsic motivators. The research confirms that motivation significantly enhances performance, supporting earlier studies such as those by (Kanapathipillai *et al.*, 2024; Al Mansoori *et al.*, 2020; Nurdiansyah *et al.*, 2020), which showed a strong positive relationship between motivation and job performance in organizational settings. Furthermore, this study builds on the work of (Falola, 2014), who found that motivated employees demonstrate higher levels of engagement and job satisfaction, ultimately contributing to improved performance. Moreover, the study aligns with (Hussain's, 2018) findings that motivation significantly correlates with higher performance levels, particularly in sectors like banking. The study also adds to the conversation started by (Dysvik & Kuvaas, 2011), who argued that job autonomy and the right motivational climate can enhance work effort independently of intrinsic motivation. By situating these findings within the Sabah context, the research offers new perspectives on how motivation drives performance while addressing gaps left by studies like (Haryono *et al.*, 2020), which suggested that motivation might not always directly enhance performance. The third objective of the study examined the impact of job satisfaction on employee performance, with Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory providing the theoretical foundation. The findings of this research echo earlier studies such as those by (Firdiyansyah & Dermawan, 2023), who demonstrated that job satisfaction is a key driver of performance, particularly in banking sectors. Similarly, this study supports the findings from (Priyadarshi *et al.*, 2022), which highlighted that satisfied employees are more motivated and productive, thereby improving overall organizational performance. Moreover, this research aligns with (Hossan & Hasan, 2021), who found that job satisfaction is linked to higher commitment and motivation in the banking industry. This study adds to the ongoing debate about the relationship between job satisfaction and performance by acknowledging contradictory findings, such as those from (Purwati, 2023; Tănăsescu & Leon, 2019), who argued that job satisfaction does not always directly affect performance and that other factors like external locus of control or work environment may moderate this relationship. By providing a focused analysis of the banking sector in Sabah, this research contributes fresh insights into the broader discourse on employee satisfaction and its role in driving performance.

Hence, this study has effectively narrowed the gaps in the literature regarding leadership, motivation, and job satisfaction as predictors of employee performance in the banking sector. By leveraging Path-Goal Theory and Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, the research provides a comprehensive understanding of how these factors interact to shape employee outcomes. The findings offer practical implications for organizational strategies aimed at improving productivity and fostering a motivated workforce, particularly in culturally unique and dynamic environments such as Sabah. This study

not only strengthens the theoretical foundations of leadership and motivation but also offers actionable insights for enhancing employee performance in the financial sector.

7. Limitations and Further Research

The study on leadership, motivation, job satisfaction, and employee performance faced limitations due to time constraints. The survey was conducted over ten days, resulting in rushed responses and remote work environments. To improve future research, recommendations include using alternative data collection methods, a larger sample size, comparing leadership, motivation, and job satisfaction across different industries, exploring cultural influences, investigating the impact of technology, and examining mediating and moderating factors like organizational culture or communication effectiveness. These recommendations aim to provide more insights into the relationships between these variables.

Acknowledgements

The authors express gratitude to everyone who contributed to their master's thesis, highlighting the invaluable guidance and support of their advisor, Dr. Kumaran Kanapathipillai. They also thank faculty members and experts for their wisdom and constructive feedback. The authors also thank their families, friends, peers, institution staff, and participants for their unwavering love and encouragement. They also acknowledge the support of all those who played a role in this academic endeavour.

Statement of Conflict of Interest

The authors assert that they conducted the research without any commercial or financial affiliations that could potentially create a conflict of interest. The authors possess no affiliations with or involvement in any organisation or institution that has a financial or non-financial interest in the subject matter or materials addressed in this manuscript.

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