Employee Well-Being:
A Conceptual Framework for Notable Explorations

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Abstract

Employee well-being is recognized as a critical for organizational success especially in Malaysia. Key elements significantly impacting employee well-being include positive leadership styles which are authentic leadership and servant leadership, do affect employee well-being. Thus, this studies highlight the interconnectedness of positive leadership, social capital, and psychological capital, as well as their influence on the well-being of public sector employees in Malaysia. By recognizing these key elements and implementing strategies to enhance employee well-being, public organization can create a working environment that increase employee performance. The proposed research design will be quantitative studies, utilizing validated survey instruments for data collection from a sample size of 450 public sector employees. Thus, data analysis will employ partial least square structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) to test the research hypotheses. The finding of this study will be developing a conceptual framework that illustrates the interconnectedness of these variables, with research hypotheses are outlines in this paper for committed scholars on employee well-being involving as valuable contributors.

Keywords: Public sector, positive leadership, psychological capital, social capital and employee well-being

1. Introduction

Malaysia's 34th position in the 2024 World Competitiveness Ranking is its worst performance in recent years. Singapore took first place, with Thailand and Indonesia both ranked higher than Malaysia. The leading causes for the drop in rank from 27th place in 2023 declining in corporate and governmental efficiencies. Four aspects define the ranking given by the Switzerland-based International Institute for Management Development (IMD), namely infrastructure, government efficiency, business efficiency, and economic performance. Malaysia ranked 33rd in the government efficiency category, scoring 50.4 points, compared to 29th in 2023 (Kana, 2024).

Hence, it is anticipated that the advanced effort of public sector employees at all levels of position will be reinforced in the ensuing years. Since taxpayers provide the funding for the

government's operational budget, hence, it is usual for stakeholders, particularly taxpayers, to anticipate that public sector employees will accelerate and progress in cultivating sustainable levels of efficiency and efficacy in the public sector. The capability to quickly adjust may be a hindrance to these public sector employees due to exceptional economic constraints, and it may be difficult for them to deal with this situation promptly at first glance. Public sector employees are aware, to a certain extent, that they need to prepare themselves or find innovative ways to fulfil the nation's demands. The Malaysian public sector's productive and performance agendas are constantly within the purview of the leaders and require close attention to the 'delivery of trust' concept mandated by the "MADANI Government".

The government has been constantly pressured to increase its capacity and capability in offering top-notch public services of strategic importance due to the insufficient quality of the current services provided. Malaysia's civil service is at a critical junction where restructuring the public services system must be initiated boldly and extensively. Nevertheless, 1.6 million Malaysians find employment in the governmental sector and this results in an excessive public sector. Those complaining about the overworked civil service in Malaysia and wishing for better public service must realize that not all countries share the same concept of a civil service. The phrase "civil service" only refers to government administrative officials in many countries (Goh, 2024), but in the Malaysian context, all public sector employees fall within the civil service framework, which inevitably reveals an increasing total number.

Johari et al. (2019) evaluated Malaysian public sector workers' well-being, performance, and employment characteristics. Human resources management excites Malaysian public sector workers (Zumrah, 2022) because exhibiting organizational support boosts and enables better well-being. According to Almazrouei et al. (2023), job design heightens public sector workers' inventiveness and well-being. Strong evidence suggests that public sector stress needs organizational support to mitigate its adverse consequences on the well-being and health of employees (Bao & Zhong, 2019). In conclusion, job aspects, leadership styles, HR regulations, religion, and stress management affect Malaysian public sector employee well-being. Next, this study highlights an analysis of Malaysia's public sector, scientific inquiry, research premise and framework of this study.

This study aims to explore the intricate relationship that exist between authentic leadership, servant leadership, psychological capital and social capital and their influence on public employee will-being in the Malaysia context. The specific research objectives of this study is about identifying how authentic leadership, servant leadership, psychological capital, and social capital contribute to employee well-being and developing an integrated framework for understanding their relationship. The significance of this study for Malaysian public sector management lies in providing a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing employee well-being, enabling organizations to adopt effective strategies that foster a supportive work environment and enhance overall performance. This study concentrated on the multifaceted relationships shown in Figure 1, which illustrates the multi-facets of positive leadership styles, psychological capital, and social capital pertaining to employee well-being in the Malaysian public sector.

2. Theoretical Framework

This study employs Authentic Leadership Theory (ALT), Self-Determination Theory (SDT), Positive Psychology Theory (PPT), and Social Capital Theory (SCT) to analyse the correlation between authentic leadership, servant leadership, psychological capital, social capital and employee well-being to develop the framework of this study.

2.1   Authentic Leadership Theory (ALT)

Authentic Leadership Theory (ALT) has developed as a significant foundation in leadership studies, explain the important of leader being transparent and ethical in their interactions with members (Maximo et al., 2019). This theory explain that authentic leaders encourage trust and loyalty among their members, which encourage a positive work environment (Fallatah & Laschinger, 2016). This nature of authentic leadership lies in its capacity to create a relational dynamic where leaders and members engage in mutual trust and respect, thereby enhancing overall organizational effectiveness (Abd-Erhaman et al., 2022). This study chooses ALT because this theory highlights the characteristic and behaviour of effective leaders that positively influence their members. By focusing on authentic leadership, this study can explore how leader behaviour directly impact employee psychological well-being (Chen & Sriphon, 2022). ALT support the hypothesis 3, which examine the relationship between authentic leadership and employee well-being, as well as hypothesis 7a and 7b which investigate the mediating role of psychological capital in these relationships.

2.2   Self-Determinaton Theory (SDT)

Self-Determination Theory (SDT) is a well-established framework in psychology that explain the importance of psychological need which are competence, autonomy and relatedness (Ghahremani et al., 2024). These needs are important for enhance motivations well-being among individuals. The relevance of SDT extends into various domains including organizational behaviour and leadership studies, specifically in comprehending leadership styles such as servant leadership can influence employee motivation and well-being (Su et al., 2020). Servant leadership, characterized by a focus on serving others, prioritizing the needs of employees (Wayan et al., 2019), align closely with the foundation of SDT as it enhances an working environment where employees feel competent and connected to their leaders and peers (Slack et al., 2020). This theory support hypothesis 6, which examine the relationship between servant leadership and employee well-being.

2.3   Positive Psychology Theory (PPT)

Positive Psychology Theory (PPT) is a significant framework that emphasized the importance of individual strengths, positive experiences, and optimal functioning in enhancing overall well-being. This theory posits that fostering positive psychological states such as self-efficacy, optimism, hope, and resilience can significantly contribute to employee well-being. The integration of these constructs into workplace environments is essential for promoting not only individual health but also organizational performance (Behravesh et al., 2021). The concept of hope is essential for improving employee engagement and productivity. Behravesh et al. (2021), assert that hopeful employees utilize their positive personal psychology to effectively carry out organizational functions and pursue work-related goals with enthusiasm, which ultimately strengthens their problem-solving capabilities in challenging environments (Ke et al., 2022). This aligns with the broader understanding of positive psychology, which emphasizes that positive emotions and psychological states can lead to improved work behaviors and outcomes (Zhai et al., 2023). In this study, PPT support on how authentic and servant leadership styles promote psychological capital, thereby enhancing employee well-being (H1, H4 and H3).

2.4   Social Capital Theory (SCT)

Social Capital Theory (SCT) is a complex concept that explain the significance of social network, relationship between cooperation, trust and collaboration among individual (Tsasis et al., 2015). This theory explains that social capital is not only depending an individual asset but

a collective resouces that can lead to various benefits for communities and organizations (Yang & Wang, 2023). The foundation premise of social capital theory is that social network has value, which can enhance the capacity for collective actions and improve outcomes in various context, including organizational efficiency, project management and community development (Amoako-Gyampah et al., 2021). SCT is essential for understanding on how interpersonal relationships and social network contribute to a supportive work environment. In this context, social capital theory supports the hypothesis 2, hypothesis 5 and hypothesis 8, which suggest that both authentic and servant leadership enhance social capital, thus improving employee well-being.

3. Hypotheses Development

3.1   Dynamic Link between Authentic Leadership and Employee Well-Being

There is not much of studies on authentic leadership and public sector employees' health and happiness. Eudemonic well-being, defined and measured differently, has been studied as well as authentic leadership (Ilies et al., 2015), but subjective well-being has been left out. The connection between genuine leaders and their adherents may have an adverse effect on well-being, although research is lacking on this topic. Authentic leadership affects how followers and leaders create and maintain commercial relationships (D. S. Wang & Hsieh, 2013). Self-awareness, internalized moral stance, balanced processing, and relational transparency are signs of honest, trustworthy, and respected leaders (Ilies et al., 2015).

(Avolio & Gardner, 2005) stated that, authentic leadership and employee well-being are connected through trust and psychological safety, emotional support, work-life balance development and growth, as well as positive organizational culture. Authentic leadership fosters trust and psychological safety in an organization, leading to employee well-being. Thus, authentic leadership provides emotional support and creates a supportive work environment, while enhancing employee well-being. Conversely, authentic leaders promote a work-life balance that helps release stress and improve employee well-being. Moreover, authentic leaders support development and growth that increases the value of employee well-being because authentic leadership develops a constructive organizational culture that supports and values employee well-being (Avolio & Gardner, 2005).

According Rahimnia & Sharifirad (2015), relationship between authentic leadership and employee well-being, were found whereby authentic leadership positively impacted job satisfaction and decreased subjective stress and stress symptoms, thus, contributing to overall well-being. Furthermore, the study highlighted that authentic leadership is significant in improving secure relationships between people and instilling a sense of security in well-being of the employee (Rahimnia & Sharifirad, 2015).

Authentic leadership is a prominent factor that influences employee well-being across multiple sectors, including the public sector. Research has demonstrated that behaviours of authentic leadership including genuineness, transparency and ethical conduct, can enhance employee well-being (Brunetto et al., 2024). Increased employee performance, service quality, and job satisfaction are found linked with authentic leadership (A. Ahmad et al., 2020; Rahimnia & Sharifirad, 2015). Studies have shown that it enhances employees' psychological capital, thus, improving well-being and also innovative work behaviour (Brunetto et al., 2024). Moreover, authentic leadership can positively influence employee trust, engagement, creativity, and organizational citizenship behaviour (Anwar et al., 2020; C. C. Hsieh & Wang, 2015; Sri Ramalu & Janadari, 2022; D. S. Wang & Hsieh, 2013).

Considering Malaysia's public sector, where employee well-being is crucial for achieving the country's development goals, the significance of authentic leadership is further underscored (Ahmad et al., 2023). Studies have emphasized the role of authentic leadership in mitigating work stress, improving job performance, and nurturing a conducive working environment in public organizations (Ahmad et al., 2023; Iqbal et al., 2020). Authentic leadership is collaborated with increased degrees of employee trust, job engagement, and organizational citizenship behaviour, which are important for the efficient operation of public sector organizations (Coxen et al., 2016; Shifare et al., 2021).

Research has investigated how attachment insecurity, psychological capital, and corporate social responsibility determine authentic leadership and influence employee well-being (Iqbal et al., 2018; Niswaty et al., 2021; Rahimnia & Sharifirad, 2015). In summary, authentic leadership is crucial for enhancing employee well-being in Malaysia's public sector. Authentic leaders can cultivate a workplace that boosts employee productivity and well-being through trust, positive work connections, and engagement. Therefore, according to the literature, this study hypothesised that authentic leadership positively affects employee well-being.

3.2 Dynamic Connection between Servant Leadership and Employee Well-Being

Servant leadership focuses on supporting staff members and prioritizes their well-being ahead of short-term corporate goals (Greenleaf, 1970; Hoch et al., 2018; Stonef, 1974). Kaltiainen & Hakanen (2022) explored the connection between servant leadership and employee well-being, and explained how this relationship affects task and adaptive productivity. Kaya & Karatepe (2020) discovered a beneficial correlation between work engagement, servant leadership, and interpersonal adaptivity, which clearly indicates that servant leaders engage with their staff. This study linked work engagement to servant leadership and employee well-being. Interestingly, Wang et al. (2022) revealed that servant leaders' emotional healing behaviour can fulfil their employees' related demands by identifying and connecting with their situation and emotional disturbances. Servant leaders can boost an employee's well-being by empowering, supporting, and putting subordinates first. Liden et al. (2006) and Wang et al. (2022) explored servant leadership and identified a consistent beneficial correlation between servant leadership and employee psychological well-being.

Servant leadership has been shown to improve the well-being among public sector employees in Malaysia. One study revealed that servant leadership improved employees' well-being (Parris & Peachey, 2013). Servant leadership is linked to employees' basic psychological requirements, particularly in the public sector, which mediates relationship with the public service initiative (Dash et al., 2022). Thus, it suggests that servant leadership is capable of helping public sector employees meet their psychological needs. It can improve organizational commitment by supporting good sector-employee attitudes (Miao et al., 2014) as well as promote service-oriented public employees and improve service delivery (Bentein et al., 2022).

Furthermore, servant leadership fosters public employees' service-oriented behaviour, which is crucial for enhancing service delivery within public sector (Bentein et al., 2022). The inclusive aspect of servant leadership can enhance a sense of belonging and individuality in the midst of several employees, whereby strengthening their well-being in overall (Gotsis & Grimani, 2016). Research indicates that servant leadership increases self-efficacy and staff engagement (Zeeshan et al., 2021). Therefore, this study hypothesised that servant leadership positively affects employee well-being.

3.3 Mediating Effects of Psychological Social

Psychological capital represents a beneficial psychological condition that enhances personal development and performance improvement, surpassing social capital and human (Luthans et al., 2007; Luthans & Youssef, 2004). Psychological capital involves four component areas, namely self-efficacy, optimism, hope and resiliency. Individuals with high psychological capital can effectively handle challenges, maintain a positive outlook in difficult circumstances, anticipate positive results, and maintain resilience. Studies indicate that psychological capital is linked to improved work performance, overall well-being, and job satisfaction (Luthans et al., 2007; Rahimnia & Sharifirad, 2015).

Psychological capital serves an important role in mediating servant leadership and employee well-being, while servant leadership positively influences employees' psychological capital, leading to a rise in their well-being (Rivkin et al., 2014; Wang et al., 2022). Servant leadership positively impacts psychological capital, and increases resilience, creative work behaviour and employee innovation (Chen et al., 2022; Yue & Thelen, 2023).

Authentic leadership influences well-being of the employee, organizational commitment, job engagement, inventive behaviour, and proactive behaviour through psychological capital, which mediates authentic leadership (Alwan & Andriani, 2023; Rego et al., 2016; Zhang et al., 2024). Rego et al. (2016) discovered that beneficial psychological capital influences to the connection between authentic leadership and organizational commitment.

Literature indicates that the psychological capital both mediates and moderates the correlation between authentic leadership and various outcomes. Jang (2022) demonstrated the moderated mediation role of competing demands on the relationship between authentic leadership with psychological capital (Jang, 2022). This finding underscored the intricate link between authentic leadership, psychological capital, and employee performance.

Evidence suggests that psychological capital mediates the correlation among servant leadership, authentic leaders and positive follower outcomes, including well-being, resilience, innovative work behaviour and engagement. Hence, servant leaders can create a conducive surrounding that enhances employee well-being and foster positive behaviours in the workplace by focusing on meeting employees' psychological needs and promoting psychological empowerment.

3.4 Mediating Effects of Social Capital

Studies have shown that authentic leadership enhances employee creativity, innovation and performance by fostering psychological empowerment, psychological capital, and organizational commitment (Jung et al., 2021; Malodia & Goyal, 2023; Sohail, 2024). Moreover, authentic leadership increases work engagement, employee voice behaviours, and job satisfaction, ultimately transforming employee well-being. It also reduces turnover intentions and employees' resistance to change by enhancing affective commitment and trust in the organization (Oh & Oh, 2017). The mediating role of social capital in such connections emphasizes the significance of developing a positive work ambiance, where authentic leadership practices can thrive, leading to improved employee outcomes and overall well-being.

Social capital is crucial to servant leadership and employee well-being. Servant leadership emphasizes serving and developing others as well as helps employee development. Studies suggest that leader-follower social capital strongly impacts the servant leadership's ability to enhance engagement of the employee (De Clercq et al., 2014). Individual-level intellectual capital, comprising human and relational capital, mediates the connection between servant

leadership (Farid et al., 2022; Kim et al., 2023; Lorenzo & Aurora, 2022; Yadav & Dixit, 2017)and innovative work behaviour (Khan et al., 2024). This emphasizes the role of social interaction and learning theories in efforts to understand employee behaviour and servant leadership.

Furthermore, servant leadership improves follower performance through various mechanisms, for instance rewards, organizational culture, job satisfaction and psychological empowerment (Sihombing et al., 2018). Findings have also emphasized the intermediate function of self-efficacy, psychological empowerment and inspiring language, which forms a connection amongst servant leadership and employee effectiveness, in terms the quality of service, voice behaviour as well as the capability to thrive (Gutierrez-Wirsching et al., 2015; Liu et al., 2023; Yue & Thelen, 2023). Servant leadership also increases self-efficacy, whereby enhancing employee involvement and also performance (Zeeshan et al., 2021). Synthesising relevant sources emphasizes the importance of social capital as a mediator in the relationship between positive leadership styles, namely authentic and servant leadership, and employee well-being. Authentic and servant leadership styles significantly and directly impact employee habits and outcomes.

4. Methodology

This study will adopt a cross-sectional design and collect quantitative data through online survey. This sample will be a public servant in Peninsular Malaysia. The reason for choosing this group of people due to their unique work environment and the specific challenges they face, which make understanding the impact of leadership styles on their well-being crucial for effective public service delivery. Additionally, focusing on this group addresses a theoretical gap in literature regarding the relationship between leadership practices and employee well-being in the public sector context. Thus, following Sekaran & Bougie (2016), the sampling technique employed in this study is the purposive sampling.

4.1   Sample Size

The sample size will be determined by using Krejcie & Morgan (1970). Based on the Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) formula for determining the sample size, a sample size of 450 is needed. Nevertheless, the maximum size of the sample is followed to minimize error in sampling and to take care of nonresponse rete issue (Hair et al., 2010). Hence, to avoid any complications related to data analysis due to from small sample size, this study will collect the data from 450 public sector employees in Peninsular Malaysia.

4.2   Research Instruments

The questionnaire will be constructed using simple phrases to facilitate comprehension among respondents. The questionnaire adapted from previous studies with slight modification. Items for Employee Well-being Scale (Zheng et al., 2015), Authentic Leadership Inventories (Neider & Schriesheim, 2011), Servant Leadership Measure (Liden et al., 2008), Compound Psychological Capital (Lorenz et al., 2016) and Social Capital at Work (Kouvonen et al., 2006). Biographical information included gender, position, highest level of education, years of working experience in the public sector and current reporting ministry/agency. A five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) was utilized to assess all variables in this study.

4.3   Data Collection Procedure

A self- administered questionnaire will be deployed in acquiring the data. Therefore, a web-based sample facilitates the inclusion of more participants who match with the criteria defined in this study. Additionally, the web based-survey facilitates a wider geographical outreach to public service employee in Peninsular Malaysia.

4.4   Data Analysis Method

Partial least squares-structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) is a causal modeling technique that defines the variance of latent constructs (Hair et al., 2011). In PLS, a construct is considered as formative when the relevant items influence the pertinent variable, and the items are not anticipated to be correlated (Chin, 2010). PLS can also estimate a complex model that includes multiple components or constructs. Moreover, if a study's data fails to satisfy normality requirements, PLS can still be effectively employed for a greater number of indicators (Chin, 2010). This exploratory study, characterized by non-normality and the complexity of a model with numerous constructs, utilized variance-based PLS-SEM. The analysis will be reported in accordance with Hair et al. (2013). The analysis encompassed indicator reliability, internal consistency reliability, convergent validity, discriminant validity, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), effect size, path coefficient estimates, and predictive relevance.

5. Discussion

The study of leadership styles and their impact on employee well-being is a critical area of research, particularly in the context of public sector. Despite the increasing literature on this topic, significant theoretical gaps remain, particularly regarding the relationship between authentic leadership, servant leadership, psychological capital, social capital and employee well-being (Arnold, 2017; M. M. Iqbal & Masum Iqbal, 2020; Rahimnia et al., 2013; Wang & Khan, 2024) . Most existing studies have focus on private sector, thereby neglecting the challenges faced by public sector (Wang & Khan, 2024). This study aims to address the gaps by investigating these relationship specifically within the Malaysian public sector, thereby contributing to added understanding of leadership practices that enhance employee well-being in this context.

Moreover, the investigation of psychological capital and social capital as mediating roles in the relationship between leadership styles and employee well-being is a critical area of research that received attention in recent years (Shah et al., 2023; Wang et al., 2021). This study is particularly relevant as it addresses a theoretical gap in the existing literature, developing a complex framework that integrates various dimensions of employee experience. By examining these mediating factors, researcher can better understand the complex relationship between leadership, capital and well-being which important for both theoretical and practical application in organizational settings.

Thus, this study identified a detailed framework that depicts the multifaceted interactions among authentic leadership, servant leadership, psychological capital, social capital, and employee well-being within the Malaysian public sector. Figure 1 illustrates the graphical depiction of the correlation between those positive leadership, relational capital, and employee well-being, and provides a concise summary of the hypotheses stated below.

Figure 1: Framework for Scientific Inquiry
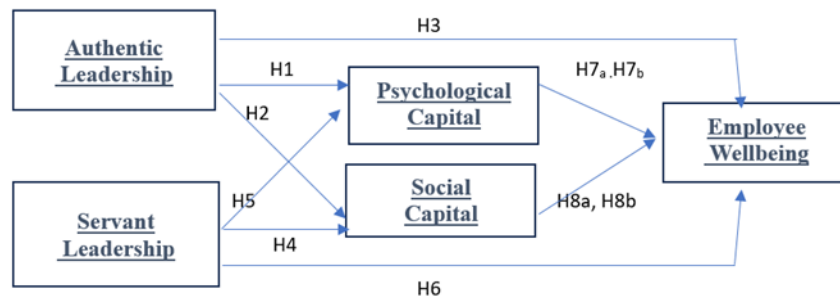
Hypotheses offered for the depicted model in Figure 1 are as follows:

H1   There is a positive relationship between authentic leadership and psychological capital.

H2   There is a positive relationship between authentic leadership and social capital.

H3   Authentic leadership is positively related to employee well-being.

H4   There is a positive relationship between servant leadership and psychological capital.

H5   There is a positive relationship between servant leadership and social capital.

H6   Servant leadership is positively related to employee well-being.

H7$_a$ Psychological capital positively intercedes the relationship between authentic leadership and employee well-being.

H7$_b$ Psychological capital positively intercedes the relationship between servant leadership and employee well-being.

H8$_a$ Social capital mediates the relationship between authentic leadership and employee well-being.

H8$_b$ Social capital mediates the relationship between servant leadership and employee well-being.

The limitations of the study focusing exclusively on public servants in Malaysia are significant, particularly concerning the generalizability of findings to other sectors or countries. The context-specific nature of the research implies that the results may not be applicable to private sector organizations or public sector environments in different cultural settings. For instance, Gelaidan et al. (2022) highlight that psychological empowerment significantly enhances creativity and innovation among public servants in rapidly developing countries, suggesting that cultural and organizational dynamics play a crucial role in these outcomes. This finding underscores the importance of context, as the same psychological empowerment may not yield similar results in private sector environments or in countries with different cultural frameworks. Moreover, the theoretical framework of the study, which relies on established theories such as Authentic Leadership Theory, Positive Psychology Theory, Social Capital Theory, and Self-Determination Theory, may face unique challenges when applied to Malaysian public servants.

The issue of generalizability is further emphasized by Grošelj et al., (2020), who argue that findings from studies on leadership and innovation cannot be universally applied across different sectors or countries without considering the unique characteristics of each context. This aligns with the notion that the Malaysian public sector's unique cultural and organizational dynamics may limit the applicability of findings to other contexts. Additionally, Najam & Mustamil (2022) research on proactive personality and servant leadership illustrates how

individual traits can moderate the relationship between leadership styles and psychological outcomes, further complicating the generalizability of findings. The interplay of personal attributes and leadership styles may yield different results in varying cultural contexts, suggesting that the Malaysian public service environment may produce distinct outcomes that are not easily transferable to other settings.

Furthermore, the study's reliance on established theories does not account for the potential cultural nuances that could influence the application of these theories. For example, Hsieh et al. (2012) note that emotional labour in public service is influenced by various demographic factors, indicating that cultural context significantly shapes employee experiences and behaviors. This highlights the necessity for caution when attempting to generalize findings from one cultural setting to another, particularly when dealing with constructs like psychological empowerment and leadership. In terms of methodological considerations, the research conducted by Mar & Buzeti (2022), on public servants' availability during the COVID-19 pandemic reveals that excessive availability can hinder psychological detachment from work, a phenomenon that may vary significantly across different cultural and organizational contexts. This suggests that the implications of such findings may not hold true in environments where work-life balance is approached differently.

On top of that, the study's limitations are compounded by the distinctive socio-political context of the Malaysian public sector, which may not be reflects of other nations. The investigation of public service motivation across different cultures, as discussed by Danaeefard & Ahmadzahi Torshab (2021), also illustrates how motivational constructs can vary significantly based on cultural context. This variability suggests that the application of theories such as Positive Psychology and Self-Determination Theory may yield different outcomes in Malaysia compared to other cultural settings. In summary, while the theoretical frameworks employed in the study are well-established, their application within the Malaysian public sector context may yield unique challenges that have not been extensively documented. The relationship of cultural dynamics, individual traits, and leadership styles necessitates a cautious approach to generalizing findings beyond the Malaysian context. Future research should aim to explore these constructs across diverse cultural settings to enhance the understanding of their applicability and relevance.

The study's findings regarding the impact of authentic and servant leadership on employee well-being in the Malaysian public sector are anticipated to yield substantial practical implications for public sector management and policymaking. Comprehending the influence of these leadership styles on employee well-being via psychological and social capital can enable public sector managers to implement practices that foster a more supportive and engaged workforce. Studies demonstrate that servant leadership, which prioritizes employee needs, can improve service performance and job satisfaction, resulting in decreased turnover and enhanced organizational performance (Chen et al., 2015). This supports the idea that effective leadership in the public sector is vital for creating an environment in which employees feel appreciated and motivated, which is necessary for improving public service delivery (Orazi et al., 2013).

Furthermore, the findings from this research can guide policymakers in developing training programs that furnish leaders with the essential skills to enhance psychological and social capital among employees. By enacting policies that promote genuine and servant leadership behaviors, public institutions can foster a more constructive organizational culture that improves collaboration and trust among employees. Research indicates that leadership styles prioritizing interpersonal acceptance, authenticity, and humility can profoundly influence employee engagement and organizational citizenship behavior, essential for effective public

service (Shifare et al., 2021). These initiatives are crucial for tackling the distinct challenges encountered by public servants, as they can enhance the responsiveness and efficacy of the public service framework (Khalil & Adelabu, 2012).

Evidence underscores the correlation between leadership practices and employee well-being, emphasizing the significance of supportive leadership in improving job satisfaction in public organizations. Research indicates that supportive leadership behaviors are positively associated with employee satisfaction and organizational commitment, essential for sustaining a motivated workforce (Uman et al., 2024). The incorporation of leadership training aimed at cultivating authentic and servant leadership attributes can enhance organizational performance and service delivery in the public sector (Fernandez et al., 2010). This is especially pertinent in Malaysia, where public sector managers are increasingly required to implement innovative leadership practices that correspond with modern public management theories (Orazi et al., 2013).

Moreover, the enactment of policies that foster authentic and servant leadership can alleviate the difficulties encountered by public servants, including elevated stress levels and burnout. Studies demonstrate that leadership styles emphasizing employee welfare can enhance organizational citizenship behavior, crucial for improving service delivery in public organizations (Shifare et al., 2021). Public sector leaders can cultivate an environment of trust and collaboration, thereby encouraging employees to engage in behaviors that enhance organizational effectiveness and responsiveness (Khalil & Adelabu, 2012). This strategy benefits employees and improves the overall quality of public service, resulting in superior outcomes for the communities served.

In conclusion, this study's implications extend beyond personal leadership practices to include comprehensive organizational strategies that emphasize employee well-being and efficient service delivery. By understanding the interplay between authentic and servant leadership, psychological and social capital, and employee well-being, public sector managers and policymakers can formulate specific interventions that elevate job satisfaction, diminish turnover, and enhance overall organizational performance. This intricate leadership strategy in the public sector is crucial for cultivating a culture of excellence and responsiveness, ultimately benefiting the citizens dependent on public services.

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, this study emphasizes the critical relationship between leadership styles specifically authentic and servant leadership and the well-being of public sector employees in Malaysia. By exploring the relationship roles of psychological and social capital, the research reveals how effective leadership can increase a supportive and engaged workforce, which is essential for enhancing public service delivery. The findings underscore the importance of adopting leadership practices that prioritize employee needs, ultimately leading to improved job satisfaction, reduced turnover, and heightened organizational performance. Moreover, the implications of this study extend beyond individual leadership practices to encompass broader organizational strategies that can significantly impact public sector management and policymaking. By recognizing the significance of psychological and social capital, public sector organizations can implement targeted interventions and training programs that cultivate these attributes among leaders and employees alike. This approach not only addresses the unique challenges faced by public servants but also promotes a collaborative and inclusive work environment that enhances overall service quality.

As the public sector evolves, the need for innovative leadership practices becomes increasingly apparent. This study advocates for a paradigm shift from traditional hierarchical models to more adaptive and participatory approaches, enabling public sector managers to leverage the strengths of their teams effectively. Ultimately, prioritizing employee well-being through supportive leadership is essential for fostering a culture of excellence and responsiveness, benefiting both public employees and the communities they serve. Future research should continue to investigate these relationships across diverse contexts to enhance understanding and applicability, thereby contributing to the broader discourse on leadership and employee well-being in the public sector.

To ensure the integrity of the study, several measures will be implemented during the data collection process. Informed consent will be obtained from all participants, clearly explaining the purpose of the research, the voluntary nature of participation, and their right to withdraw at any time without any consequences. Confidentiality and anonymity will also be prioritized; participants' identities will be protected, and data will be reported in aggregate form to prevent any potential identification. Additionally, the research will adhere to the ethical guidelines set forth by relevant institutions and review boards, ensuring compliance with standards for conducting research in public sector environments. By addressing these ethical considerations, the study aims to conduct a respectful and responsible research process that safeguards the rights and well-being of all participants.

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