

THE INFLUENCE OF LEADERSHIP STYLE AND WORK MOTIVATION ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE THROUGH JOB SATISFACTION AS AN INTERVENING VARIABLE AT THE CATHOLIC GENERAL SECONDARY SCHOOL [ENSINO SECUNDÁRIO GERAL CATÓLICA] SEMINÁRIO DE NOSSA SENHORA DE FÁTIMA BALIDE-DILI

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ABSTRACT

Employee performance or work achievement is the result of individual efforts, abilities, and actions within a given situation. Several factors influence employee performance, including motivation, proficiency, and role perception. High-quality performance must align with institutional standards. To ensure employees remain motivated to achieve optimal performance, leadership plays a crucial role. A leader with an appropriate leadership style acts as a motivator who inspires subordinates. This study focuses on the leadership style at the Catholic General Secondary School (Ensino Secundário Geral Católica) Seminário de Nossa Senhora de Fátima (SENOFA) Balide, Dili. These findings highlight that while leadership style enhances job satisfaction, it does not directly improve work performance. In contrast, work motivation plays a pivotal role, both directly and indirectly (through job satisfaction), in enhancing employee performance.

KEYWORDS: leadership style, work motivation, job satisfaction, work performance

I. INTRODUCTION

Timor-Leste, a nation that regained its independence on May 20, 2002, entered the new millennium with the challenge of rebuilding its institutions and systems from the ground up. As a young country, one of its foremost priorities is the development of education and training to cultivate human resources (HR) capable of competing across diverse fields in line with technological advancement and the demands of modern society.

The preparation of qualified human resources requires not only technical expertise but also strong motivation and commitment. In this regard, leadership plays a pivotal role. A leader with an effective and inspiring leadership style can encourage team members to consistently pursue high levels of work performance, driven by job satisfaction. Such leadership is essential to ensure that human resources are developed both in terms of quantity and quality, thereby contributing to the nation's progress and competitiveness.

Human resource development within an organization is a continuous process aimed at improving the quality and capabilities of individuals to achieve organizational goals. These goals can only be realized

if supported by strong employee performance. Structured and effective guidance is therefore necessary to motivate employees to work productively in accordance with organizational objectives (Mahardhika, Rangga, Hamid, Djamhur, & Ruhana, 2021).

Performance, or work achievement, is the outcome of an individual's efforts, abilities, and actions within a given situation. It reflects the functions of a person's or group's activities in an organization and is influenced by multiple factors, including motivation, skills, and role perception. Good performance must comply with institutional standards, which vary across organizations. The implementation of employee performance policies within organizations enhances competitiveness. On a micro scale, such policies encourage skill improvement and foster outstanding employees, thereby strengthening organizational capacity. On a macro scale, comprehensive performance policies across private and government institutions contribute to the continuous development of human resources, ensuring expertise and skills are consistently upgraded.

In today's increasingly competitive job market, work experience and motivation play a critical role in enhancing employee performance. Motivation not only increases enthusiasm but also improves work quality, particularly when employees' educational backgrounds align with their professional responsibilities.

Based on this understanding, it is evident that producing quality output requires high levels of employee motivation. To ensure employees remain motivated, a leader who can inspire and influence subordinates is essential. At the Catholic General Secondary School (Ensino Secundário Geral Católica) Seminário de Nossa Senhora de Fátima (SENOFA) Balide, Dili, leadership has proven to be a decisive factor. Phenomena observed within the institution reveal that employee performance and job satisfaction are highly dependent on the leader. Employees demonstrate willingness to work and achieve only when the leadership is perceived as suitable and appropriate.

This study aims to examine the influence of leadership style and work motivation on job satisfaction and performance at SENOFA Balide")? That would make the introduction more complete for a thesis or journal article.

A. Problem Formulation

To facilitate understanding of the material to be discussed in this study, the following research problems are formulated:

1. Does leadership style influence employee performance at the Catholic General Secondary School (Ensino Secundário Geral Católica) Seminário de Nossa Senhora de Fátima Balide?
2. Does motivation influence employee performance at the Catholic General Secondary School (Ensino Secundário Geral Católica) Seminário de Nossa Senhora de Fátima Balide?

3. Does leadership style influence employee job satisfaction at the Catholic General Secondary School (Ensino Secundário Geral Católica) Seminário de Nossa Senhora de Fátima Balide?
4. Does motivation influence employee job satisfaction at the Catholic General Secondary School (Ensino Secundário Geral Católica) Seminário de Nossa Senhora de Fátima Balide?
5. Does job satisfaction influence employee performance at the Catholic General Secondary School (Ensino Secundário Geral Católica) Seminário de Nossa Senhora de Fátima Balide?
6. Does leadership style influence employee performance when mediated by employee job satisfaction?
7. Does motivation influence employee performance when mediated by employee job satisfaction?

B. Research Objectives

In general, the purpose of this study is to examine the influence of leadership style and employee motivation on employee performance, with job satisfaction serving as the intervening variable, conducted at the Catholic General Secondary School (Ensino Secundário Geral Católica) Seminário de Nossa Senhora de Fátima Balide.

The specific objectives of this study are as follows:

1. To determine the influence of leadership style on employee performance at the Catholic General Secondary School (Ensino Secundário Geral Católica) Seminário de Nossa Senhora de Fátima Balide.
2. To determine the influence of motivation on employee performance at the Catholic General Secondary School (Ensino Secundário Geral Católica) Seminário de Nossa Senhora de Fátima Balide.
3. To determine the influence of leadership style on employee job satisfaction at the Catholic General Secondary School (Ensino Secundário Geral Católica) Seminário de Nossa Senhora de Fátima Balide.
4. To determine the influence of motivation on employee job satisfaction at the Catholic General Secondary School (Ensino Secundário Geral Católica) Seminário de Nossa Senhora de Fátima Balide.
5. To determine the influence of job satisfaction on employee performance at the Catholic General Secondary School (Ensino Secundário Geral Católica) Seminário de Nossa Senhora de Fátima Balide.

6. To determine the influence of leadership style on employee performance when mediated by employee job satisfaction.
7. To determine the influence of motivation on employee performance when mediated by employee job satisfaction.

C. Research Benefits

1) Theoretical Benefits

Theoretically, the benefit of this study is to provide a scientific reference in the field of leadership and work motivation within an institution or organization, particularly in relation to employee performance. In addition, it serves as a reference material and benchmark for evaluating employee job satisfaction and performance.

2) Practical Benefits

Practically, the benefit of this study is to serve as a resource for enhancing knowledge and understanding, both for the researcher specifically and for society in general. Furthermore, this research can be utilized as supporting material to assess and evaluate the work outcomes of all employees involved.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

D. Definition of Leadership Style

A leader is an individual who exercises authority and leadership to direct others and assumes responsibility for their work in achieving organizational goals. Leadership refers to the style employed by a leader to influence subordinates so that they are willing to cooperate and work effectively in accordance with instructions (Hasibuan, 2016:13, cited in Pinto, Luis, 2023:10).

Leadership is the most influential factor within an organizational environment. Therefore, leadership is important to discuss for two main reasons: first, theoretically, leadership is positioned as a central factor that mobilizes, directs, and coordinates other organizational elements. Leaders are essential because their role determines the continuity and development of the organization, particularly in situations of uncertainty that may threaten organizational stability. Second, previous studies indicate that leadership significantly affects employee performance and job satisfaction within an organization.

Leaders can influence their followers or subordinates because they possess at least five bases of power: reward power, coercive power, legitimate power, referent power, and expert power.

Several definitions of leadership have been proposed. Leadership is a process of influencing individuals and mobilizing various resources to collaborate in achieving goals. The essential elements

of leadership include influence, the relationship between leaders and followers, cooperation, and objectives. As a process, leadership can be categorized into several aspects:

1. Involves influence, role modeling, and persuasion.
2. Entails interaction among actors, both leaders and followers.
3. Is shaped by the situational context in which the interaction occurs.
4. Produces outcomes such as goal achievement, group cohesion, motivation, or organizational cultural change.

Leadership style refers to the manner in which a leader interacts with subordinates. A leader influences subordinate behavior to encourage cooperation and productive work toward organizational goals. According to Nikmat, Katarina (2022:42), leadership style is the behavioral pattern of a leader in influencing followers. Leadership style is dynamic and may change depending on the followers and the situation.

Zaharuddin (2021:50) explains that leadership style is the behavior or method chosen and employed by a leader to influence the thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors of organizational members. Hasibuan (2017:170) further states that leadership style is the way a leader influences subordinates with the aim of stimulating work enthusiasm, job satisfaction, and high employee productivity to achieve optimal organizational goals.

E. Definition of Work Motivation

Motivation is a set of attitudes and values that influence individuals to achieve specific objectives in accordance with their personal goals. These attitudes and values serve as a driving force that encourages individuals to behave in ways that lead to goal attainment. This drive consists of two components: the direction of work behavior (working toward goals) and the strength of behavior (the effort exerted by individuals in their work). Motivation encompasses unique feelings, thoughts, and past experiences that form part of the internal and external relationships within an organization (Mahardhika, Rangga, Hamid, Djamhur, & Ruhana, Ika, 2021:3).

Winardi (2002:1, cited in Mahardhika et al., 2021:3) explains that the term motivation originates from the Latin word *movere*, meaning "to move". Motivation is the provision of a driving force that generates enthusiasm for work, encouraging individuals to exert their full effort to achieve satisfaction.

According to Safirah Syihab, Mashur Razak, and Muhammad Hidayat (2020:198), various terms are used to describe motivation or motive, including need, urge, wish, and drive. Motivation plays a crucial role for employees, as its level—high or low—directly impacts organizational development. When employees are motivated, the organization has a greater likelihood of achieving its objectives. In the workplace, motivation is one of the key factors that drive employees to perform.

There are three key elements of motivation: organizational needs, effort, and organizational goals. Effort is the measure of strength; when an individual is motivated, they will exert effort to achieve goals. However, high performance does not always require excessive effort. The strength of motivation is reflected in the extent to which employees work diligently. This effort may result in good performance or otherwise, depending on two conditions: first, employees must possess the necessary skills to perform their tasks effectively; second, employees must perceive how their efforts can be optimally transformed into performance, a perception typically shaped by prior experiences in similar situations. Robbins (2008:222, cited in Pinto, Luis, 2023:16) defines motivation as the process that explains the intensity, direction, and persistence of an individual's efforts toward achieving a goal. Based on this perspective, it can be concluded that:

1. Work motivation is a critical component of an organization, functioning as a tool for achieving desired objectives.
2. Work motivation encompasses two primary aims within individuals: fulfilling personal needs or desires and achieving organizational goals.
3. Work motivation is effective only when individuals possess confidence and belief in their ability to advance and succeed within the organization.

F. Definition of Work Performance

According to Safirah Syihab, Mashur Razak, and Muhammad Hidayat (2020:199), performance is the result of work, both in terms of quality and quantity, achieved by an employee in carrying out tasks in accordance with the responsibilities assigned to them. Employee performance is essential, as it indicates the extent of an employee's ability to fulfill the tasks entrusted to them. Therefore, it requires the establishment of clear and measurable criteria, jointly agreed upon, to serve as a reference.

Hasibuan (2016:94, cited in Pinto, Luis, 2023:19) defines performance, or work achievement, as the combination of three important factors: an individual's ability and interest in working, their ability and acceptance of delegated tasks, and their role and motivation as a worker.

Furthermore, Newawi (2011:234, cited in Pinto, Luis, 2023:19) states that performance refers to the outcomes of work implementation, whether physical/material or non-physical/non-material. Yuniarsih and Suwatno (2016:161, cited in Pinto, Luis, 2023:19) emphasize that performance is the actual achievement demonstrated by an individual after fulfilling their tasks and roles within the organization. Productive performance reflects a level of achievement that demonstrates high utility.

Muchdarsyah Sinungan (2003:3, cited by Yuniarsih and Suwatno, 2016:161-162, in Pinto, Luis, 2023:19) asserts that the attainment of productive performance must be supported by several factors: strong work motivation, work ability aligned with organizational mission, a comfortable work

environment, income sufficient to meet minimum living needs, adequate social security, humane working conditions, and harmonious workplace relationships.

G. Definition of Job Satisfaction

According to Sri Rahayu and Dahlia (2023:5), job satisfaction is the actual behavior demonstrated by individuals as work achievements produced by employees in accordance with their roles within the company. Job satisfaction can also be defined as a pleasant emotional attitude and a sense of affection toward one's work. This attitude influences work morale, discipline, and performance. Job satisfaction affects the level of employee discipline: when satisfaction is derived from work, employee discipline tends to be high; conversely, when job satisfaction is lacking, employee discipline tends to be low. Employees with high levels of satisfaction will automatically exhibit stronger organizational commitment.

Ni Luh (2016:2) defines job satisfaction as the way individuals perceive their work, which results from their attitudes toward various aspects inherent in the job. Job satisfaction can also be understood as a positive feeling about one's work, derived from the evaluation of its characteristics. Thus, job satisfaction reflects an individual's perception of their work.

Job satisfaction is an employee's attitude toward their job, which is related to the work environment, cooperation among colleagues, compensation received, and factors both physical and psychological. Every worker expects to obtain satisfaction from their workplace. Job satisfaction influences productivity, which is highly valued by managers. Therefore, leaders must understand what actions are necessary to foster job satisfaction among their employees.

For organizations, discussions of job satisfaction are closely linked to efforts aimed at enhancing organizational effectiveness by ensuring that employee behavior at work is effective. Employee behavior that supports the achievement of organizational goals is as important as the use of modern machinery resulting from technological advancement. Conversely, employee dissatisfaction leads to unfavorable conditions, both organizationally and individually.

H. Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this study illustrates the relationship between leadership style, work motivation, job satisfaction, and employee performance. Leadership style and motivation are considered independent variables, job satisfaction serves as the mediating (intervening) variable, and employee performance is the dependent variable.

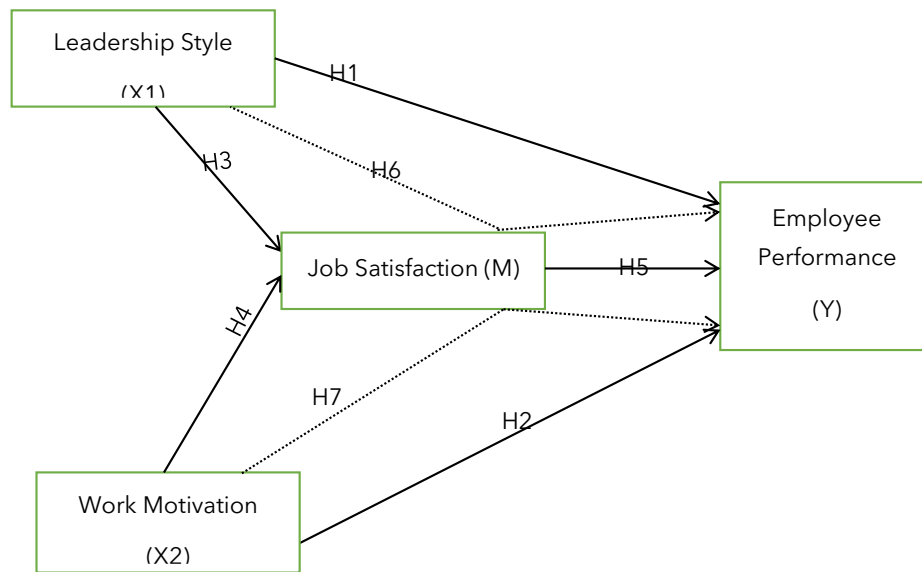


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

(Illustration of the relationships among leadership style, motivation, job satisfaction, and employee performance.)

This framework emphasizes that:

- Leadership style directly influences both job satisfaction and employee performance.
- Motivation directly influences both job satisfaction and employee performance.
- Job satisfaction itself has a direct effect on employee performance.
- Leadership style and motivation also indirectly affect employee performance through the mediating role of job satisfaction.

I. Research Hypotheses

Based on the conceptual framework presented earlier, the following research hypotheses are proposed. These hypotheses are preliminary assumptions that remain tentative and require further empirical testing through data obtained from previous studies.

H1: Leadership style is presumed to influence employee performance.

H2: Motivation is presumed to influence employee performance.

H3: Leadership style is presumed to influence employee job satisfaction.

H4: Motivation is presumed to influence employee job satisfaction.

H5: Job satisfaction is presumed to have a positive and significant effect on employee performance.

H6: Leadership style is presumed to have a positive and significant effect on employee performance through job satisfaction (as an intervening variable).

H7: Motivation is presumed to have a positive and significant effect on employee performance through job satisfaction (as an intervening variable).

III. METHODOLOGY

J. Research Design

This study employs an associative research design. Associative research is conducted to examine causal relationships (cause-effect relationships) between two or more variables, with the aim of explaining specific phenomena (Sugiyono, 2020). The type of research applied here is explanatory research, which seeks to explain causal relationships among variables using a quantitative approach.

The researcher utilizes the survey method for data collection. A survey is a research method that employs questionnaires as the primary instrument for gathering data. A questionnaire is a structured instrument consisting of written questions or statements to be answered or completed by respondents in accordance with the provided instructions (Sanjaya, 2015:255, cited in Pinto, Luis, 2023:41). In this study, questionnaires will be distributed directly to respondents.

This research aims to examine the influence of leadership style and work motivation as independent (exogenous) variables on employee performance as the dependent (endogenous) variable, with job satisfaction serving as the intervening variable.

K. Population and Sample

The population in this study consists of employees and teachers at the Catholic General Secondary School (Ensino Secundário Geral Católica) Seminário de Nossa Senhora de Fátima (SENOFA) Balide, Dili, totaling 50 individuals.

A sample is a group that is relatively smaller in number than the population, selected and used for research purposes. According to Sugiyono (2014:149, cited in Pinto, Luis, 2023:40), a sample is part of the quantity and characteristics possessed by the population. A sample is considered a representative subset, which must reflect the attributes or characteristics of the population.

In this study, the sample was determined using a sampling technique involving respondents. The sampling technique applied is probability sampling, which provides equal opportunities for each member of the population to be selected. More specifically, the study employs random sampling, a method that ensures every element of a homogeneous population has the same chance of being included (Yudiono, Udik & Marvia, Farida, 2021:3).

However, this research specifically adopts a saturated sampling technique, in which the entire population is used as the sample. Since the population consists of approximately fifty (50) individuals, the entire population was included, resulting in a sample of fifty (50) employees working at the Catholic General Secondary School (Ensino Secundário Geral Católica) Seminário de Nossa Senhora de Fátima (SENOFA) Balide, Dili.

L. Measurement Scale

The data analysis in this study employs the *Likert scale*, derived from responses to questionnaires completed by participants. The *Likert scale* is used to measure attitudes, opinions, and perceptions of individuals regarding a specific object or phenomenon (Siregar, 2016:138). The phenomenon under investigation is clearly defined by the researcher and operationalized as research variables.

The following table presents the Likert scale established by the researcher for questionnaire responses:

Table 1 Likert Scale of Respondent Responses

Response Category	Score
Strong agree	5
Agree	4
Neutral (N)	3
Disagree (TS)	2
Strongly Disagree (SD)	1

M.Types and Sources of Data

In this study, the type of data used is *quantitative data*. According to Kuncoro (2021), quantitative data refers to data that can be directly measured and calculated, providing information or explanations in the form of numbers or statistics.

Sources of Data: the sources of data employed in this study consist of primary data and secondary data.

Primary data refers to data collected or obtained directly by the researcher. According to Nazir in Analisis Data Penelitian (2019), primary data is obtained directly from the field or research object, whether through measurement, observation, or interviews. In this study, primary data was gathered from questionnaire responses, direct observations, interviews, and information extracted from

documents related to the Catholic General Secondary School (Escola Secundário Geral Católica) Seminário de Nossa Senhora de Fátima Balide, Dili.

Secondary data refers to data sources used to complement existing primary data or findings from previous research (Sugiyono, 2019:149). In this study, secondary data was obtained from prior research, such as... *(the text seems to be incomplete here, and you may want to specify examples like journals, books, institutional reports, or statistical records).

N. Data Collection Methods

The research method employed is descriptive, utilizing a case study and correlational approach within a descriptive design. This type of research applies to a descriptive method with a qualitative orientation. According to Sugiyono (2020:9), such research provides an accurate depiction and explanation of the conditions or phenomena under investigation.

The data collection instrument in this study is a Likert-scale questionnaire. Through the Likert scale, variables are measured and further elaborated into variable indicators. These indicators then serve as the basis for constructing instrument items, which may take the form of statements.

The data analysis technique applied is **path analysis**, a method used to examine the magnitude of contributions indicated by path coefficients in each path diagram, representing causal relationships among variables X1, X2, and X3 toward Y through variable M (Riduwan & Kuncoro, 2012:115, as cited in Kasidjo, 2022:25).

O. Data Analysis Methods and Techniques

This study employs a descriptive method with a qualitative approach. According to Sugiyono (2020:9), such research provides an accurate description and explanation of the conditions or phenomena under investigation.

Quantitative research, by contrast, requires extensive use of numerical data, beginning with data collection, continuing with interpretation, and culminating in the presentation of results. The quantitative method emphasizes objective measurement of social phenomena. This study adopts a quantitative approach because it seeks to determine the magnitude of relationships among variables in an objective manner.

The methods applied include surveys, interviews through the distribution of questionnaires, and documentation. The unit of analysis is the individual, specifically employees working at the Catholic General Secondary School (Escola Secundário Geral Católica Seminário de Nossa Senhora de Fátima, Balide, Dili). The research was conducted once within a defined period, thereby reflecting a snapshot of conditions at a particular point in time.

Data analysis was performed using SPSS 22.0, with the model employing path analysis. According to Fraenkel and Wallen (as cited in Kasidjo, 2022:25), path analysis is used to examine the likelihood of causal relationships among three or more variables. Thus, path analysis serves as a tool for analyzing causal relationships among variables, enabling the identification of both direct and indirect effects of independent (exogenous) variables on dependent (endogenous) variables.

Path analysis is a technique designed to test the magnitude of contributions indicated by path coefficients in each diagram, representing causal relationships among variables X1, X2, and X3 toward Y through variable M (Riduwan & Kuncoro, 2012:115, as cited in Kasidjo, 2022:25).

In essence, path analysis explicitly examines causal relationships. The patterns of relationships among variables are depicted in path diagrams, with arrows used to indicate the direction of causal influence. Path analysis is a form of multiple regression analysis applied to evaluate causal models by testing the relationships between a dependent variable and two independent variables. Through this method, researchers can estimate both the magnitude and the statistical significance of causal relationships among variables.

The data analysis technique employed in this study is path analysis, which is used to analyze sample data and generalize the results to the population. In accordance with the hypotheses formulated, this research applies path analysis using *SmartPLS*, with data processing further supported by the *SPSS* program.

1) Measurement Outer Model Analysis

The purpose of the outer measurement model is to indirectly examine the relationship between construct variables (indicators) and latent variables. This model is tested through validity and reliability assessments.

1. Validity Testing

According to Ghozali (2018:51), validity testing is conducted to measure whether questionnaire statements are valid in relation to the variable indicators. The validity test includes:

(1) Convergent Validity

Convergent validity refers to the loading factor values generated by each indicator in measuring a variable. An indicator is considered valid if its correlation value with the construction exceeds 0.70. However, in exploratory research or scale development, loading factor values between 0.50 and 0.60 are still acceptable (Ghozali & Latan, 2015:10).

(2) Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity is assessed through cross-loading values to determine whether discrimination exists within a construct. If the measurement of a construct is higher compared to other constructs, it indicates differentiation between measurement blocks.

2) 2. Reliability Testing

According to Ghazali (2018:45), reliability testing measures the consistency of indicators within a variable or construct. The reliability of questionnaire statements is determined by the stability of respondents' answers. Reliability testing employs two models: **Composite Reliability** and **Cronbach's Alpha**. Both models require reliability values above 0.70 for each construct under study.

P. Structural Inner Model Analysis

The structural inner model identifies the relationships between exogenous (independent) and endogenous (dependent) variables in the study. These relationships provide answers to the hypotheses formulated. The inner model testing includes:

1. Path Coefficients

Path coefficients are values used to determine the strength of relationships or effects among latent constructs. Specifically, they measure the influence of independent variables on dependent variables.

2. Coefficient of Determination (R^2)

R^2 values indicate the proportion of variance in endogenous variables explained by exogenous variables. The criteria for R^2 are:

- 0.67 = strong
- 0.33 = moderate
- 0.19 = weak

3. Model Fit

Model fit is assessed using the **Goodness of Fit (GoF)** index to validate the consistency between the measurement model and the structural model. GoF values range from 0 to 1, with interpretations as follows:

- 0.10 = small
- 0.20 = moderate
- 0.36 = large

The closer the Normed Fit Index (NFI) value is to 1, the better the model fit.

J. Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis testing is conducted to determine whether there are direct and indirect effects (both partial and simultaneous) of exogenous (independent) variables on endogenous (dependent) variables. The level of significance (α) applied is 5% (0.05), which serves as the threshold for accepting or

rejecting a hypothesis statistically. Thus, the probability of making an incorrect decision (error) is 5%, while the probability of making a correct decision is 95%.

Accordingly, the hypothesis testing criteria can be summarized as follows:

- If the significance value of $t < 0.05$, then H_0 is rejected and H_1 is accepted.
- If the significance value of $t > 0.05$, then H_0 is accepted and H_1 is rejected.

IV. RESULTS

Q. Leadership Style and Job Satisfaction

The results of the analysis indicate that the variable leadership style has a positive effect on employee job satisfaction, with a t-statistic value of 3.141. This finding suggests that when leadership style improves, employee job satisfaction also increases; conversely, when leadership style declines, job satisfaction decreases.

When linked to employee characteristics, the majority of respondents in this study had a tenure of less than five years (50%). This implies that they feel satisfied with the working conditions created by leaders whose leadership style aligns with their preferences.

Leadership can be understood as the ability to persuade followers, to guide, motivate, and direct them toward achieving organizational effectiveness, elevating vision, enabling performance, and building character beyond limitations (Mathori et al., 2022). Leadership style and employee job satisfaction are closely interrelated: the better the leadership style applied, the more it supports employees in performing their tasks effectively, which in turn enhances overall job performance.

The findings of this study reinforce theoretical perspectives which argue that without leadership, an organization is merely a disorganized collection of individuals. Leadership transforms potential into reality. Thus, the presence of effective leadership within an organization is crucial for achieving its goals and advancing its progress (Suwanto, 2020).

Empirically, these results are consistent with previous studies conducted by Mathori et al. (2022) and Waluyo et al. (2024), both of which found that leadership style has a positive impact on job satisfaction.

R. Work Motivation and Job Satisfaction

The analysis results show that the variable work motivation has a t-statistic value of 6.161, which is greater than the critical value of 1.96 at a significant level of 0.05. This indicates that work motivation has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction. In other words, when work motivation increases, job satisfaction also rises; conversely, when work motivation decreases, job satisfaction declines. The significance value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$) further confirms the strength of this relationship.

Supporting evidence from the frequency distribution of respondents' answers reveals that the majority expressed agreement or strong agreement with statements related to the motivation variable. This suggests that work motivation is indeed one of the key factors influencing teacher job satisfaction.

Observations made by the researcher also align with these findings. Employees in the institution studied demonstrate high motivation in educating students. As a result, some students have successfully pursued vocations as priests, while others have achieved career success in different fields. These student achievements provide teachers with a sense of fulfillment and satisfaction, reinforcing the importance of motivation in their work.

Motivation can be defined as an internal state that drives individuals to engage in certain activities to achieve specific goals. Thus, work motivation serves as a driving force that compels individuals to perform tasks and pursue objectives.

Empirically, this study supports previous research. Riana (2019) found that ****intrinsic motivation plays a crucial role in enhancing employee job satisfaction****. Similarly, Nining (2017) concluded that motivation has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction, while Lusri & Siagian (2017) also confirmed that work motivation positively influences employee job satisfaction.

S. Research Discussion

a) Leadership Style and Job Performance

The findings indicate that leadership style does not significantly influence employee job performance. The t-statistic value ($0.913 < 1.96$) confirms that leadership style has no direct effect. Interestingly, the data suggest that an increase in leadership style does not correspond to an increase in performance, and in some cases, the opposite occurs.

Theoretically, leadership behavior is considered an important factor in shaping performance. A close and supportive relationship between leaders and subordinates is expected to enhance comfort and satisfaction at work, which in turn should improve performance. However, in this study, respondents perceived several leadership style indicators negatively. This perception is closely related to respondent characteristics: the majority hold a bachelor's degree, which equips them with broader and more critical perspectives, enabling them to evaluate and critique leadership practices. Additionally, the proportion of educational staff is higher than non-educational staff, meaning they possess greater awareness of leadership concepts and models.

Empirically, these findings align with Mathori et al. (2022), who reported that leadership style does not significantly affect employee performance. Similarly, Saputri (2018) found that leadership has a negative and insignificant effect on performance.

b) Work Motivation and Job Performance

The results demonstrate that work motivation has a positive and significant effect on job performance (t-statistic = 3.091 > 1.96, $p < 0.05$). This implies that higher motivation leads to better performance, while lower motivation reduces performance.

Motivation plays a crucial role in sustaining employee commitment and preventing organizational losses. It represents an individual's attachment to their organization and serves as a driving force for productivity. In the educational context, motivation is essential for teachers, as it fuels their passion to educate students and achieve institutional goals.

Empirical evidence supports this conclusion. Mathori et al. (2022) found that motivation positively influences performance. Similarly, Danthi (2017), Sugiyono & Rahajeng (2020) confirmed that motivation significantly improves employee performance.

c) Job Satisfaction and Job Performance

The analysis shows that job satisfaction positively influences job performance (t-statistic = 2.218 > 1.96, coefficient = 0.503). Employees who feel satisfied with their work environment tend to perform better, while dissatisfaction reduces performance.

Job satisfaction enhances performance because employees feel valued and supported by the organization. This reciprocal relationship benefits both parties: employees experience fulfillment, while organizations gain higher productivity. Robbins (2007) emphasizes that performance is a function of efficiency, effectiveness, and innovation, shaped by the interaction of ability, motivation, and opportunity. Thus, satisfaction is a critical determinant of performance outcomes.

Empirically, these findings are consistent with Mathori et al. (2022), who reported that job satisfaction significantly affects employee performance.

d) Leadership Style → Job Satisfaction → Job Performance (Mediating Effect)

The study reveals that job satisfaction does not mediate the relationship between leadership style and job performance (t-statistic = 1.773 < 1.96, $p > 0.05$). This suggests that teachers in the institution do not fully endorse the leadership style of their superiors, limiting its impact on performance.

Respondent characteristics again play a role: most are bachelor's degree holders with critical perspectives, and the majority are educational staff with broad knowledge of leadership concepts. These factors contribute to their skepticism toward leadership practices, weakening the mediating effect of satisfaction.

e) Work Motivation → Job Satisfaction → Job Performance (Mediating Effect)

The findings confirm that job satisfaction significantly mediates the relationship between work motivation and job performance (t-statistic = 2.060 > 1.96, $p < 0.05$). This means that motivated employees experience higher satisfaction, which in turn enhances their performance.

In the educational setting, motivation provided by leaders plays a decisive role in institutional success. Job satisfaction acts as a general attitude toward work: employees with high satisfaction show positive attitudes, while dissatisfied employees exhibit negative attitudes (Robbins, 2011).

According to Mathis & Jackson (in Murdiyani, 2010), performance is influenced by multiple factors, including workload, quality of work, peer compatibility, attendance, tenure, and flexibility. At the individual level, performance is shaped by ability, motivation, support, job characteristics, and organizational relationships. This study confirms that motivation and satisfaction are key drivers of performance in educational institutions.

Summary of Findings:

- Leadership style influences satisfaction but not performance.
- Work motivation strongly influences both satisfaction and performance.
- Job satisfaction directly improves performance and mediates the effect of motivation on performance.
- Leadership style does not indirectly affect performance through satisfaction.

T. Implications of Research Findings

Implications represent the direct consequences of scientific research results. This study examined the factors influencing employee performance, with job satisfaction acting as an intervening variable to trace the effects of leadership style and work motivation on employee performance at Catholic General Secondary School (Escola Secundario Geral Catolica) Seminario de Nossa Senhora de Fatima, Balide, Dili*.

The findings reveal that leadership style and work motivation significantly affect both employee performance and job satisfaction. However, leadership style does not have a significant direct effect on employee performance, meaning the hypothesis stating that leadership style influences performance was rejected. Since this research was conducted in an educational environment, the conclusions drawn have implications for both the field of education and future research.

1) Practical Implications for Educational Institutions

Leadership and process quality contribute meaningfully to employee performance. Interestingly, the findings suggest that an increase in leadership style does not necessarily improve performance, while a decrease may correspond with improved performance. Therefore, efforts must be made to maintain leadership quality and process effectiveness to ensure that SENOFA remains competitive with other private secondary schools.

Recommended actions include:

- 1) School leaders should design a work plan aligned with SENOFA's vision and mission, followed by the establishment of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to implement the plan.
- 2) Leaders must consistently set positive examples for subordinates and provide managerial knowledge to staff through training programs.
- 3) To sustain performance quality, SENOFA should synergize all quality components, fostering mutual support among leaders, employees, and especially teachers.

2) Theoretical and Empirical Implications

- Empirically, the findings are consistent with Mathori et al. (2022), who reported that leadership style does not significantly affect employee performance. Similarly, Saputri (2018) found that leadership has a negative and insignificant effect on performance.
- Job satisfaction was found unable to mediate the relationship between leadership style and performance. This suggests that teachers and staff have not fully endorsed the leadership style of their superiors. As previously discussed, leadership style can influence motivation and work spirit, but in this case, its impact was limited.

3) Recommendations for Enhancing Job Satisfaction and Performance

To maximize employee satisfaction and performance, SENOFA should undertake the following initiatives:

- 1) External Collaboration: Build partnerships with communities and relevant institutions to support SENOFA's programs. Such collaborations can enhance employee quality through additional training and education.
- 2) Government Engagement: Leaders should actively collaborate with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Youth and Sports to secure funding that supports employee activities and capacity-building initiatives.
- 3) Work Environment Improvement: Leaders must create a ****conducive work environment**** and adopt leadership models that are both acceptable and motivating, thereby fostering higher employee performance.

Summary of Implications:

- Leadership style influences satisfaction but not performance directly.
- Work motivation remains a strong driver of both satisfaction and performance.
- Job satisfaction plays a crucial role in mediating motivation's effect on performance, but not leaderships.

- Practical steps for SENOFA include strengthening leadership practices, enhancing collaboration, and improving work conditions to ensure sustainable employee performance.

V. CONCLUSION

Based on the data analysis and hypothesis testing presented in the previous chapters, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. Leadership Style → Job Satisfaction

Leadership style has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction (t-statistics = 3.141 > 1.96, $p < 0.05$). Thus, the first hypothesis is accepted. Leaders are encouraged to maintain and strengthen their leadership style to further enhance employee satisfaction.

2. Work Motivation → Job Satisfaction

Work motivation positively and significantly influences job satisfaction (t-statistic = 6.116 > 1.96, $p < 0.05$). The second hypothesis is accepted. Leaders should continue to improve motivational indicators that drive employee performance.

3. Leadership Style → Job Performance

Leadership style does not significantly affect job performance (t-statistic = 0.913 < 1.96, $p > 0.05$). The third hypothesis is rejected. Employees are aware of the leadership style applied, and leaders must seek solutions to overcome challenges in improving performance.

4. Work Motivation → Job Performance

Work motivation has a positive and significant effect on job performance (t-statistic = 3.091 > 1.96, $p < 0.05$). The fourth hypothesis is accepted. Leaders should conduct assessments to identify both physical and non-physical needs to enhance employee performance.

5. Job Satisfaction → Job Performance**

Job satisfaction positively and significantly influences job performance (t-statistic = 2.218 > 1.96, $p < 0.05$). The fifth hypothesis is accepted.

6. Leadership Style → Job Satisfaction → Job Performance (Mediation)

Job satisfaction does not mediate the effect of leadership style on job performance (t-statistics = 1.773 < 1.96, $p > 0.05$). The sixth hypothesis is rejected.

7. Work Motivation → Job Satisfaction → Job Performance (Mediation)**

Job satisfaction positively and significantly mediates the effect of work motivation on job performance (t-statistic = 2.060 > 1.96, $p < 0.05$). The seventh hypothesis is accepted.

U. Suggestions

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed for the Director (Rector) and leaders of Catholic General Secondary School (Escola Secundario Geral Catolica) Seminario Nossa Senhora de Fatima, Balide, Dili:

1. Since leadership style significantly affects job satisfaction, leaders should maintain participative and consultative leadership approaches and strengthen collaboration and communication with employees.
2. As work motivation significantly influences job satisfaction, leaders should continue motivating employees through incentives, allowances, and promotion opportunities.
3. Given that leadership style does not directly affect job performance, leaders should improve participative and consultative practices, ensuring employees feel involved in decision-making and responsible for outcomes.
4. Since work motivation significantly impacts job performance, leaders should enhance motivational strategies to sustain employee productivity and positive work outcomes.
5. As job satisfaction significantly affects performance, leaders must monitor workplace conditions and ensure employees feel valued and supported, thereby sustaining high performance.
6. Because job satisfaction does not mediate the effect of leadership style on performance, leaders should blend more closely with employees, fostering trust and shared responsibility to strengthen performance outcomes.
7. Since job satisfaction mediates the effect of work motivation on performance, leaders should preserve and reinforce this relationship, ensuring that motivated employees remain satisfied and perform at their best.

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