The Effect of Servant Leadership on Performance Mediated by Cognitive and Affective Trust and Moderated by Personality in Employees of PT Bank Southeast Sulawesi

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Abstract:

The purpose of this study was to examine and assess the Effect of Servant Leadership on Performance, Mediated by Cognitive and Affective Trust and Moderated by Personality, among Employees of PT Bank Sultra. The population in this study was all 843 permanent employees of Bank Sultra, and the sample size was 89 respondents based on the Slovin formula. The analytical tool used was SmartPLS 4. The results of this study indicate a significant positive effect of servant leadership on the cognitive trust of Bank Sultra employees. Servant leadership also has a significant positive effect on the affective trust of Bank Sultra employees. Servant leadership also has a significant positive effect on the performance of Bank Sultra employees. Cognitive trust also has a significant positive effect on the performance of Bank Sultra employees. Affective trust also has a positive and significant effect on the performance of Bank Sultra employees. Servant leadership has a positive and significant effect on the performance of Bank Sultra employees, mediated by cognitive trust. Servant leadership also has a positive and significant effect on the performance of Bank Sultra employees, mediated by affective trust. Personality plays a moderating role between servant leadership and Bank Sultra employee performance.

Keywords: Servant Leadership, Performance, Cognitive, Affective Trust, and Personality.

Introduction

Globalization and rapid technological developments drive organizations to continuously adapt to remain relevant and competitive. The business world,

including the banking sector, is required not only to develop products and services but also to improve the quality of human resources (HR) as an organization's strategic asset. HR is a key factor in mobilizing all other resources, so its management must be carried out professionally and sustainably. Employee potential needs to be properly directed to optimally contribute to achieving organizational goals (Irawati Nur, 2021; Firman Alimuddin, 2021). In this context, leadership is a crucial aspect determining organizational success. Leaders not only function as decision-makers but also play a role in motivating, directing, and creating a conducive work environment so that employees can perform at their best (Andi Alfianto Anugrah Ilahi, 2021; Arfandy Dinsar, 2021).

One leadership approach that is currently receiving considerable attention is servant leadership. Unlike traditional authority-oriented leadership styles, servant leadership emphasizes service to subordinates, empowerment, and the development of individual potential (Greenleaf, 1970). Servant leaders prioritize employee needs over personal interests, strive to build integrity, and foster a work environment based on trust and collaboration (Eva et al., 2019). In the banking industry, which relies heavily on service quality and customer relationships, this leadership style is relevant for increasing employee motivation and loyalty. However, previous research has yielded mixed results: some found a positive effect of servant leadership on performance (Ling et al., 2016; Sendjaya et al., 2019), while others found insignificant results (Iqbal et al., 2022; Sahem et al., 2020). This inconsistency suggests that other variables may play a role in strengthening or weakening this relationship.

One variable considered crucial is trust. In trust theory (Mayer, Davis & Schoorman, 1995), trust is divided into cognitive trust and affective trust. Cognitive trust is based on rational belief in the leader's ability, integrity, and reliability (Park & Kim, 2018), while affective trust arises from emotional bonds, caring, and warm interpersonal relationships between leaders and subordinates (McAllister, 1995). In the stressful and demanding banking world, cognitive trust helps employees believe their leaders are capable of making the right decisions, while affective trust creates an emotional closeness that motivates employees to be more loyal and committed to the organization (Reed et al., 2011; Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006). Previous research has also shown that trust is often a crucial mediator in the influence of servant leadership on employee performance (Adnan & Shiva Ilkhanizadeh, 2022; Kadarusman & Bunyamin, 2021).

In addition to trust, individual factors such as employee personality also need to be considered. Personality is defined as a relatively stable individual characteristic that influences thought patterns, attitudes, and behaviors in interacting with the environment (Robbins & Judge, 2017). In organizations, personality can be a determining factor in how employees respond to certain leadership styles. Research by Miftakul Huda et al. (2024) shows that personality not only positively influences performance but can also moderate the relationship between servant leadership and employee performance. This means that servant leadership may be more effective for employees with certain personality types, such as those who are open to new experiences or have a high level of responsibility (conscientiousness).

Employee performance is the primary outcome an organization seeks to achieve. According to Armstrong (2020), Dessler (2019), and Santis et al. (2018), employee performance is a measure of the extent to which an individual successfully carries out assigned tasks and responsibilities, both in terms of quantity, quality, and effectiveness. For Bank Sultra, high employee performance is crucial for maintaining competitiveness amidst the dynamics of the banking industry, enhancing public trust, and expanding market share. Therefore, improving employee performance is determined not only by technical competence but also by leadership styles, the level of trust established, and the employee's personality.

Based on empirical phenomena, HR management theory (Armstrong, 2020; Decenzo & Robbins, 2013), path-goal leadership theory (House & Mitchell, 1974), and servant leadership theory (Greenleaf, 1970), this study focuses on investigating the influence of servant leadership on employee performance at Bank Sultra, with cognitive trust and affective trust as mediators, and personality as a moderating variable. Therefore, this study is expected to provide theoretical contributions in enriching HR management studies and practical assistance for Bank Sultra in formulating more effective leadership and HR development strategies.

Literature Review Servant Leadership

Servant leadership is an ethical leadership concept introduced by Robert K. Greenleaf (1904-1990) in his 1970 book, The Servant as Leader. Greenleaf believed that the first thing a great leader does is serve others. True leadership arises from those whose primary motivation is the desire to help others. Throughout his work, Greenleaf spoke of the need for a new type of leadership model, one that prioritizes service to others, including employees, customers, and the community. Servant leadership emphasizes increased service to others, a holistic approach to work, a sense of community, and shared decision-

making power. Spears (2002:255) defines a servant leader as one who prioritizes service, starting with a person's natural desire to serve and to prioritize service. This conscious choice then leads to aspiration and drive in leading others. The primary goal of a servant leader is to serve and fulfill the needs of others, which should optimally be the primary motivation of leadership (Russell & Stone, 2002:11). Spears' (1996) theory of servant leadership outlines ten characteristics of servant leaders by analyzing Greenleaf's writings. These ten characteristics are listening, empathy, correction, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of others, and building community. Thus, the most essential principle of servant leadership that has received much recognition from scientists, practitioners, and researchers is the development of subordinates as the primary goal of servant leaders, transcending the leader's self-interest. Ehrhart (2004) states that servant leadership refers to a strong character in leaders who emphasize integrity and dedicate themselves to promoting the development of others. Consistent with Spears' (2005) opinion, servant leaders are defined as people who actively listen, try to understand, and strive to help their followers achieve their personal, professional, and spiritual goals. According to DePree (2002:94), values provide a leader's "determining thought" with a clear moral purpose. This means that without moral purpose, competence has no measure, and trust has no purpose. A determining thought provides a way to think about leadership and moral purpose. Therefore, the intended service is carried out synergistically with subordinates and among followers, thus creating a climate of mutual respect and sharing, especially in decision-making. Patterson (2003:5) shares the same opinion, defining servant leaders as "leaders who lead an organization by focusing on their followers, so that followers are the primary concern and the organization's concern."

Cognitive Trust

Lewis and Weigert (1985) explain that cognitive trust arises from tangible evidence and cognitive understanding of the characteristics of the trusted party. McAllister (1995) adds that this trust develops through experience and objective assessment of a person's skills and work capacity. Meanwhile, Mayer, Davis, and Schoorman (1995) emphasize that cognitive trust is based on three main elements: ability, benevolence, and integrity. Rousseau et al. (1998) also argue that cognitive trust is formed through a learning process, in which individuals evaluate the reliability of others based on previous interactions. Johnson and Grayson (2005) emphasize that cognitive trust is rational, based on available information, and allows one to predict the behavior of others.

Lewis and Weigert (1985) explain cognitive trust as something based on cognitive processes, meaning that an individual cognitively chooses whom to trust based on a rational assessment of how trustworthy the person or institution is. Cognitive trust reflects a customer's belief or willingness to rely on the competence and reliability of another party (Moorman et al., 1992; Chen et al., 2021). This form of trust is performance-based, with rationality used as the basis for trusting the other party (Chen et al., 2021). Because cognitive trust is objective, it is based on a rational process that determines whether the other party in the relationship is trustworthy (McAllister, 1995). Mayer et al. (1995) found that employees are more likely to trust their supervisors who possess high ability, benevolence, and integrity. Employees are more likely to trust supervisors who have the ability to carry out important projects, demonstrate benevolence, and have demonstrated integrity. It can be noted that the conditions leading to cognitive trust, such as an individual's competence and reliability, are similar to the ability and integrity components of trustworthiness as given by Mayer et al. (1995). According to Zhang (2014), cognitive trust is trust based on the trustee's assessment of competence and dependability. Beliefs based on performance-relevant cognitions, such as competence, responsibility, reliability, and dependability, are referred to as cognitive trust. This occurs when a basic level of cognitive trust is met, people are more likely to form the type of emotional attachment with coworkers that represents trust that influences (Erdem & Ozen, 2003). Meanwhile, according to Pravitasari & Raharso (2018), cognitive trust is the tendency to believe in the abilities and competencies of coworkers.

Affective Trust

Lewis and Weigert (1985) explain that affective trust develops through shared experiences, empathy, and emotional involvement in a relationship. McAllister (1995) adds that this trust arises when a person feels valued, understood, and supported by another party, thus creating a deep emotional attachment. Meanwhile, Mayer, Davis, and Schoorman (1995) emphasize that affective trust is rooted in the belief that the other party has good intentions (benevolence) and cares about the individual's well-being. Johnson and Grayson (2005) argue that affective trust is formed through social interactions that build feelings of warmth and caring, not just rational judgment. Rousseau et al. (1998) also explain that affective trust arises when individuals feel safe and comfortable in social interactions, because they believe that the other party is sincere in their relationship. Based on the perspective of the sociology of trust, affective trust is seen as an emotional attachment to all people involved in the relationship (Lewis & Weigert, 1985). Affective trust reflects the

confidence a person places in their partner based on feelings generated by the level of care and concern their partner demonstrates (McAllister, 1995). The essence of affective trust is a reliance on a partner based on emotion. As the emotional connection deepens, trust in a partner can extend beyond what is justified by accumulated knowledge (Chen et al., 2014). Affective trust refers to trust in a bond that arises from one's own emotions and a sense of the other's feelings and motives. With affective trust, a supervisor expresses concern and concern for the employee's career and well-being. It feels good to experience the reassurance and comfort that comes from trusting someone (Lewicki et al., 1998). When supervisors need to perform actions related to the collective good but contrary to employee intentions, such as unethical pro-organizational behavior (Ebrahimi, 2017; Shaw & Liao, 2021), the affective bond between employees and supervisors will reflect less defensiveness toward such actions (Chen et al., 2014; Tacke et al., 2022; Xu & Wang, 2020).

Employee Performance

Viswesvaran and Ones (2000) explain that employee performance refers to how intelligent individuals take action and contribute with behaviors that align with organizational goals. Therefore, an employee's work performance is a positive contribution to organizational performance that can be measured by management through various mechanisms. In general, performance is assumed to be related to an individual's ability to realize work goals, meet expectations, and achieve work targets or standards set by the organization (Mathis and Jackson, 2011:78). According to Mathis and Jackson (2011:89), employee performance is related to quantity, quality, punctuality, attendance at work, work efficiency, and the effectiveness of work completed. According to Price (2001), employee performance is an employee's effective orientation regarding their work. Furthermore, Sempane et al. (2002) state that employee performance is the overall perception and evaluation of an individual's work Mastrangelo et al. (2014) emphasize that organizational environment. effectiveness consists of the efficiency of each employee. Employee performance, according to Kehoe and Wright (2013), is a fundamental factor in acquiring competencies that, in turn, significantly improve organizational function. Employee performance is defined as the extent to which a person can successfully complete work tasks under normal work conditions with the utilization of available resources, identified as both task or role performance and contextual or extra-role performance. Furthermore, Armstrong (2020:500) defines performance appraisal as a formal assessment of an individual by a leader regarding the achievement of employee work results in a certain time period. Employee performance appraisal is the process of setting performance

standards and assessing employee performance in order to arrive at objective HR decisions and provide supporting documentation for those decisions by Decenzo and Robbins (2013:136). Conceptually, employee performance is defined as a comparison of the value generated by employees in the organization with the work plans or targets expected to be accepted by the organization (Henri, 2004).

Personality

Personality is a term that describes a distinctive trait referring to the way an individual faces life. Personality is a broad and integrated concept, therefore psychologists try to identify individual uniqueness and to measure and understand the differences between individuals based on the concept of personality. Vecchio Robert (2006:26) personality can be defined as relatively enduring individual traits and dispositions that form patterns that distinguish one person from another. Personality is a unique and relatively stable pattern of behavior, thoughts, and emotions shown by an individual by Greenberg & Baron (2008:135). The same opinion by Campbell et al. (2013:83) that personality is a set of relatively stable characters that influence individual behavior. Furthermore, Robbins and Judge (2018:139) state that personality is the whole way a person reacts and interacts with others. The same opinion by Hellriegel and Slocum (2011:70) that personality combines a set of physical and mental characteristics that reflect how a person looks, thinks, acts and feels. Consistent with the opinion of Schermerhorn et al. (2011:31) personality is a unique and relatively stable pattern of behavior, thoughts, and emotions, shown by an individual and about how a person differs from others. The concept of personality is a combination of overall characteristics that capture the unique nature of a person as a person who reacts to and interacts with others. Therefore, personality describes relatively stable characteristics, tendencies, and temperaments formed by heredity and social, cultural, and environmental factors by Suzanne Janasz et al. (2012:8). The same opinion by Gibson et al. (2013:102) explains that personality is a set of characteristics and tendencies that determine the similarities and differences in people's behavior. Consistent with the opinion of McShane Steven et al. (2013:43), personality is a relatively enduring pattern of thoughts, emotions, and behaviors that characterize a person, along with the psychological processes behind the characteristics.

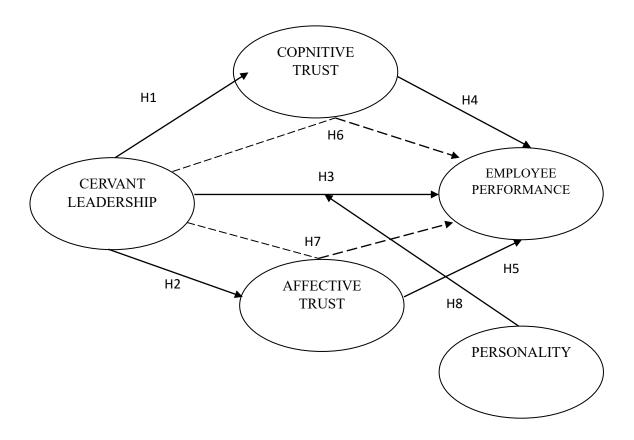


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

Research Hypothesis

- H1: Servant leadership has a positive and significant influence on the cognitive trust of Bank Sultra employees.
- H2: Servant leadership has a positive and significant influence on the affective trust of Bank Sultra employees.
- H3: Servant leadership has a positive and significant influence on the performance of Bank Sultra employees.
- H4: Cognitive trust has a positive and significant effect on the performance of Bank Sultra employees.
- H5: Affective trust has a positive and significant effect on the performance of Bank Sultra employees.
- H6: Servant leadership has a positive and significant effect on the performance of Bank Sultra employees, mediated by cognitive trust.
- H7: Servant leadership has a positive and significant effect on the performance of Bank Sultra employees, mediated by affective trust.

H8: Servant Leadership has a positive and significant influence on the performance of Bank Sultra employees who are moderated by Personality

Research Methods

The purpose of this study was to determine the effect of Servant Leadership on employee performance, mediated by cognitive and affective trust, and moderated by personality traits, among employees of PT. Bank Sultra. This research was conducted at Bank Sultra. The population in this study was all 843 permanent employees of Bank Sultra, and the sample size was 89 respondents based on the Slovin formula. The analytical tool used was SmartPLS 4.

Research Result

Q-Square Value

The goodness of fit model is used to determine the extent to which endogenous variables can explain the diversity of exogenous variables, or in other words, to determine the extent of the exogenous variable's contribution to the endogenous variable. The goodness of fit model in PLS analysis is measured using Q-Square predictive relevance (Q2). The results of the goodness of fit model are summarized in Table 1 below:

Table 1 Q-Square

	R-square	R-square adjusted
Affective Trust	0.386	0.379
Cognitive Trust	0.451	0.444
Employee Performance	0.641	0.619

Source: Data processing results using Smart PLS 4.0, 2025.

$$Q2 = 1 - (1 - R12) * (1 - R22) * (1 - R33)$$

The Q-square calculation using the R-square data from the three models above can be done as follows:

$$Q2 = 1 - (1 - 0.386) * (1 - 0.451) * (1 - 0.641)$$

 $Q2 = 0.879$ or 87.90%

The result of the predictive-relevance (Q2) calculation is 0.879, meaning that the accuracy of this study model can explain the diversity of servant leadership variables on affective trust and cognitive trust on employee performance by 87.9%. The remaining 12.1% is explained by other variables not included in this research model. Therefore, the model designed in this study can be considered good or the model is said to have a very good or accurate estimation value because it is above 75%. Ultimately, the model can be used for hypothesis testing.

Testing the Direct Effect Hypothesis

Based on the bootstrapping process, the direct effect coefficient value for this research model was obtained. A summary of the path analysis results in this study is presented in the table below:

Table 2 Summary of Results of Direct Influence Path Analysis

Influence Between	Path	Т -	P-Value	Info
Variables	Coefficient	Count	P-value	inio
Affective Trust -> Employee	0.265	2.456	0.014	significant
Performance				
Cognitive Trust -> Employee	0.297	2.994	0.003	significant
Performance	0.291	4.99 4	0.003	
Personality -> Employee	0.083	0.988	0.323	significant
Performance	0.083	0.900	0.323	
Servant Leadership ->	0.621	7.066	0.000	significant
Affective Trust	0.021	7.000	0.000	
Servant Leadership ->	0.671	7.804	0.000	significant
Cognitive Trust	0.071	1.00+	0.000	
Servant Leadership ->	0.372	3.114	0.002	significant
Employee Performance	0.372	J.11 T	0.002	
Personality X Servant				significant
Leadership -> Employee	0.213	2.630	0.009	
Performance				

Source: Data processing results using Smart PLS 4.0, 2025

The results of the structural model testing using SmartPLS 4 indicate that all research hypotheses are accepted. First, servant leadership is proven to have a positive and significant effect on cognitive trust with a coefficient value of 0.671 (p = 0.000), which means that the better the servant leadership, the higher the employee's cognitive trust. Second, servant leadership also has a positive and significant effect on affective trust with a coefficient of 0.621 (p =

0.000), indicating that a servant leadership style can strengthen employees' emotional bonds with the leader. Furthermore, servant leadership has a significant positive effect on employee performance with a coefficient of 0.372 (p = 0.002), which indicates that servant leadership can encourage increased performance. In addition, cognitive trust has a significant positive effect on employee performance with a coefficient of 0.297 (p = 0.003), and affective trust also has a significant positive effect on employee performance with a coefficient of 0.265 (p = 0.014). Thus, the results of this study confirm that servant leadership, directly or through cognitive trust and affective trust, can improve the performance of Bank Sultra employees.

Indirect Effect Hypothesis Testing

This study, in addition to analyzing the direct influence of exogenous variables on endogenous variables, also analyzes the indirect influence through the role of mediation. Table 3 below will describe the indirect influence between research variables, to prove whether the indirect influence or mediation has a role or not. The results of the analysis of the mediation role path can be presented in the following table:

Table 3 Results of Indirect Influence Analysis (Mediation)

Independent Variables	Dependent Variable	Intervening Variables	Path Coefficien t	P- Value	Info
Servant Leadership (X1)	Employee performance (Y3)	Cognitive Trust (Y1)	0.199	0.008	significan t
Servant Leadership (X1	Employee performance (Y3)	Affektive Trust (Y2)	0.165	0.025	significan t

Source: Data processing results using Smart PLS 4.0, 2025

Moderation Effect Analysis

The following table will illustrate the moderating effect between research variables, to prove that the moderating effect has a strong or weak influence from the moderating effect according to Kenny (2018) in Hair, et al 2021) interpretation of the moderating effect (0.0005) Low, (0.010) Medium and (0.025) High, then the analysis results can be seen in the SmartPLS 4 output results in the following Indirect Effects table:

Table 4 Moderation Influence between Research Variables

Moderati ng Variables	Independe nt Variables	Dependen t Variable	Path Coefficie nt	P- Valu e	Moderati on Effect (f-square)	Info
Personalit y (Z)	Servant Leadership (X1)	Employee Performan ce (Y3)	0.213	0.00	0.144	High Moderati on

Source: Data processing results using Smart PLS 4.0, 2025

Personality plays a moderating role in the relationship between servant leadership and Bank Sultra employee performance. This is evidenced by a path coefficient of 0.144 with a significance level of 0.000.

Discussion

The Influence of Servant Leadership on Cognitive Trust

The results of the first hypothesis test indicate that servant leadership has a significant positive effect on the cognitive trust of Bank Sultra employees. This finding indicates that the better the implementation of servant leadership, the higher the level of employee cognitive trust. Servant leadership at Bank Sultra is reflected in the behavior of leaders who prioritize subordinates, act ethically, empower, help subordinates develop, and are able to be role models in their attitudes and speech. This is in line with Greenleaf's concept (1970; 2008), which emphasizes that the essence of servant leadership is to serve first, foster self-efficacy, and develop the potential of subordinates to support organizational success. Empirical facts in the field support this result, where the majority of respondents assessed the implementation of servant leadership as good, especially in the indicator of ethical behavior which received the highest score. This indicates that leaders at Bank Sultra consistently maintain integrity, honesty, and moral principles in their work, which in turn increases subordinate trust. Conversely, the indicator of creating value for society received the lowest score, indicating that this aspect still needs improvement. Demographic factors also play a role, as most respondents are of productive age, making them better able to understand the values of servant leadership and support improved organizational performance (Robbins & Timothy, 2018). Theoretically, the results of this study reinforce the Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) Theory, which states that the quality of the relationship between leaders and subordinates can increase team members' trust and self-efficacy (Gilley et al., 2011). In the context of this study, servant leadership, which emphasizes empowerment, transparency, and open communication, subordinates' cognitive trust because employees believe their leaders have

integrity, competence, and reliability in decision-making (McAllister, 1995; Park & Kim, 2018). These results are consistent with several previous studies. Saleem et al. (2020) found that servant leadership influences performance through the mediation of trust, both cognitive and affective. Putri & Santoso (2021), in a study on state-owned banking companies, also confirmed that servant leadership significantly influences cognitive trust, which in turn increases organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). Sari & Wibowo (2020) added that ethical behavior, transparency, and commitment from leaders in a servant leadership style have been shown to increase employees' cognitive trust. In the banking context, this is crucial because cognitive trust is related to credibility, regulatory compliance, the leader's reliability in managing risk, and maintaining the institution's integrity (Russell, 2001).

The Influence of Servant Leadership on Affective Trust

The test results show that servant leadership has a positive and significant effect on the affective trust of Bank Sultra employees. Servant leadership as a leadership that serves is demonstrated through leader behavior that prioritizes caring, empathy, empowerment, ethical behavior, and helping subordinates grow and succeed (Greenleaf, 1977; Spears, 2004). In the context of Bank Sultra which requires employees to work under high pressure, servant leadership is able to create warm interpersonal relationships, a sense of psychological security, and a feeling of being appreciated, thereby strengthening subordinates' emotional trust (affective trust) in the leader. This is in line with Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964), Leader-Member Exchange Theory (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995), and servant leadership theory (Greenleaf, 1977) which explain that caring interactions will foster emotional trust, loyalty, and employee commitment. Affective trust itself is a form of emotionally based trust that develops through empathy, emotional involvement, and warm interpersonal relationships (Lewis & Weigert, 1985; McAllister, 1995; Mayer et al., 1995; Johnson & Grayson, 2005; Rousseau et al., 1998). Thus, the higher the servant leadership demonstrated by the leader, the greater the employee's affective trust, which ultimately increases loyalty and job satisfaction. These results are consistent with previous research that found a positive effect of servant leadership on trust (Farida Saleem et al., 2020; Herson Keradjaan et al., 2020; Pujiono et al., 2020; Kadarusman & Bunyamin, 2021; Adnan & Shiva, 2022; Rezza Affandi, 2023), although there are different results from Indra & Ekhsan (2021) who found an insignificant effect. These differences in findings are likely due to variations in measurement indicators, research objects, analysis methods, and the number of samples used, thus opening up opportunities for this study to re-examine this relationship.

The Influence of Servant Leadership on Employee Performance

The results of the third hypothesis test prove that servant leadership has a positive and significant effect on the performance of Bank Sultra employees. The outer loading analysis shows that the indicator of helping subordinates grow and succeed is the strongest reflection of servant leadership. This confirms that leadership behavior that prioritizes employee career development has a significant contribution to improving performance, particularly in the aspect of work quantity which reflects employees' ability to complete work according to targets. The high level of education of respondents, the majority of whom have bachelor's and master's degrees, also supports this result because employees find it easier to understand the concept of servant leadership and implement it in improving performance. The results of this study support the servant leadership theory proposed by Gilley et al. (2011) that leaders position employees as equal partners to promote individual and organizational success. This study is also consistent with the view of Williams et al. (2017) that servant leaders have a responsibility not only to the organization but also morally to stakeholders. Similarly, these findings confirm the opinions of Barbuto & Wheeler (2006) and Panaccio et al. (2015) that servant leadership focuses on service, career guidance, and the development of follower potential, thus positively impacting work attitudes, behavior, and performance. In addition, these results are in line with the leadership theory according to Kreitner & Kinicki (2014) which emphasizes the transformation of subordinates to achieve organizational goals, as well as Colquitt et al. (2015) who emphasize the importance of leader inspiration in encouraging follower commitment to a shared vision. This finding is also consistent with various empirical studies (Hendik et al., 2020; Farida et al., 2020; Herson et al., 2020; Tripathi et al., 2021; Edi & Lenny, 2021; Kadarusman & Bunyamin, 2021; Donalan et al., 2022; Yulyanti, 2022; Abdul Syahid et al., 2022; Rizka & Sri Padmantyo, 2022; Dicka et al., 2022; Audia et al., 2022; Adjeng & Eka Triana, 2022; Adnan & Shiva, 2022; Ludwikowska, 2022; Dyta & Zulfina, 2023; Muji Rahayu et al., 2023; Wayan & Purwaningrat, 2023; Brian, 2023; Ade Onny et al., 2023; Ade Syahputra, 2023; Rezza, 2023; Mishra & Hassen, 2023). However, other research findings are inconsistent, such as those by Iqbal et al. (2022), who found servant leadership to be negatively and insignificantly related to employee service performance. Similarly, Nancy & Anatan (2023), Sahem et al. (2020), and Sihombing et al. (2018) stated that servant leadership had no significant effect on employee performance. This difference is likely due to the foundations, diversity of theoretical measurement instruments, characteristics of the research subjects. Most previous studies were conducted in non-profit public organizations, while this study focuses on the for-profit public sector with varying degrees of independence, coupled with differences in sample characteristics, study scope, and analytical methods used.

The Influence of Cognitive Trust on Employee Performance

The results of the fourth hypothesis test prove that cognitive trust has a positive and significant effect on the performance of Bank Sultra employees. Cognitive trust is a rational belief based on employees' belief that their leaders and coworkers possess competence, honesty, consistency, and reliability (McAllister, 1995). In an organizational context, cognitive trust fosters the belief that the company's systems operate fairly, honestly, and professionally, thus impacting employee performance improvements, including work quality, quantity, timeliness, effectiveness, independence, and cooperation (Robbins, 2013; Mangkunegara, 2017). Cognitive trust has been shown to increase employee motivation and confidence because belief in the reliability of leaders and the organization encourages them to perform optimally. In addition, this trust also reduces uncertainty and potential conflict by providing clarity regarding organizational rules and decisions, allowing employees to focus on their tasks. Furthermore, cognitive trust also encourages teamwork, as competency-based trust strengthens coordination, communication, and collaboration in achieving performance targets. This is particularly important in the banking sector, including Bank Sultra, which demands compliance, integrity, data security, and excellent customer service. These findings are supported by several theories. Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964) explains that trust in an organization's integrity creates a reciprocal relationship, where employees deliver high performance as a form of contribution. Trust Theory (Mayer, Davis & Schoorman, 1995) asserts that trust, including cognitive trust, increases the willingness to be vulnerable, making employees more open to collaboration, accepting direction, and being productive. Furthermore, Goal-Setting Theory (Locke & Latham, 1990) suggests that if employees believe in the ability and honesty of their leaders, they are more motivated to achieve organizational goals. These research findings are also supported by several empirical studies. Aslam et al. (2024) found that cognitive trust plays a positive and significant role as a mediator between leadership and task performance. Similar findings were also demonstrated by research by David Dowell, Mark Morrison & Troy Heffernan (2015), Farida Saleem et al. (2020), and Rezza Affandi (2023), which demonstrated that cognitive trust contributes significantly to strengthening the relationship between leadership, work behavior, and employee performance. Thus, it can be concluded that the higher the level of employee trust in the competence, honesty, and integrity of the

leadership and organization, the more optimal the performance they achieve, especially in supporting excellent service and achieving Bank Sultra's business targets.

The Influence of Affective Trust on Employee Performance

Hypothesis 5 testing proves that affective trust has a positive and significant effect on the performance of Bank Sultra employees. Affective trust is a form of trust based on emotional bonds, interpersonal closeness, and the belief that superiors or organizations care about employee welfare (Mayer et al., 1995; Lewis & Weigert, 1985; McAllister, 1995). This trust is formed through social interactions full of empathy, support, and emotional involvement, thus creating a sense of security, comfort, and strong attachment (Johnson & Grayson, 2005; Rousseau et al., 1998). Theoretically, this relationship is explained through several theoretical frameworks. Trust Theory states that affective trust is an important element in building effective work relationships (Mayer et al., 1995). Social Exchange Theory asserts that employees with high levels of affective trust will contribute better performance as a form of reciprocity for organizational concern (Blau, 1964). Meanwhile, Determination Theory explains that emotional attachment strengthens intrinsic motivation, which directly impacts performance employees' improvement (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Previous research also supports this finding. Dirks and Ferrin (2002) found that affective trust in superiors is directly related to employee performance. Colquitt et al. (2007) demonstrated through a meta-analysis that affective trust increases both job satisfaction and individual performance. In the banking context, Ng and Chua (2021) demonstrated that affective trust strengthens employee commitment and productivity. Ling et al. (2016) even emphasized that affective trust can mediate the relationship between leadership and performance in the service sector, including banking. Therefore, the stronger the emotional bond and mutual trust between leaders and employees, the higher the motivation, loyalty, and performance of Bank Sultra employees. Affective trust plays an important role in building a harmonious work climate, reducing conflict, and encouraging the achievement of organizational targets (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002; Yang et al., 2009; Wang et al., 2010).

The Influence of Servant Leadership on the Performance of Bank Sultra Employees Mediated by Cognitive Trust

The results of the study indicate that cognitive trust acts as a partial mediator in the relationship between servant leadership and employee performance at Bank Sultra. This is evidenced by a path coefficient of 0.199

and a p-value of 0.008 < 0.05, indicating that servant leadership can improve performance both directly and through cognitive trust. In other words, good servant leadership will build employee cognitive trust, and ultimately contribute significantly to improved performance (Donaldson, 2001; Grant, 2002). This finding is in line with empirical facts from respondents' answers who assessed the implementation of employee performance at Bank Sultra as good, especially in the cooperation indicator which received the highest average score, followed by quantity, quality, work time, service orientation, initiative, and work efficiency. However, based on the results of the construct test, work quantity is the most dominant indicator in reflecting performance, because it has the largest outer loading value compared to other indicators. This means that employees' ability to complete work targets is the main determinant of performance at Bank Sultra. From a contingency theory perspective, these results confirm that there is no single best way to design an organization; rather, it can be applied according to existing conditions (Donaldson, 2001). Furthermore, from a Knowledge-Based View (KBV) perspective, this study confirms that building trust is a crucial factor linking servant leadership to high performance (Grant, 2002). These findings are also supported by previous studies that suggest servant leadership does not always directly influence performance, but rather through mediating variables such as trust (Sihombing et al., 2018; Azim & Muafi, 2019; Wanta & Augustine, 2021). Furthermore, other studies confirm that cognitive trust plays a mediating role in the relationship between servant leadership and performance (Saleem et al., 2020; Indra & Ekhsan, 2021; Adnan & Shiva, 2022; Rezza Affandi, 2023). Thus, this study reinforces previous findings that improved employee performance can be achieved through strengthening servant leadership, which encourages the formation of trust in the workplace.

The Influence of Servant Leadership on the Performance of Bank Sultra Employees Mediated by Affective Trust

The results of the study prove that affective trust acts as a partial mediator between servant leadership and employee performance at Bank Sultra. This is indicated by a path coefficient of 0.165 with a p-value of 0.025 <0.05, thus accepting the seventh hypothesis. This means that servant leadership can improve employee performance both directly and through affective trust. This finding aligns with Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985), which emphasizes that emotional attachment strengthens motivation and performance, as well as research by Dirks & Ferrin (2002), Colquitt et al. (2007), Ng & Chua (2021), and Ling et al. (2016), which shows that affective trust contributes positively to job satisfaction, commitment, and

productivity in various sectors, including banking. Affective trust itself is a form of trust born from emotional bonds, empathy, and shared experiences in interpersonal relationships (Lewis & Weigert, 1985; McAllister, 1995). Trust grows when individuals feel valued, supported, and confident that the other party has good intentions (Mayer et al., 1995; Johnson & Grayson, 2005; Rousseau et al., 1998). In the context of Bank Sultra, empirical evidence indicates that the majority of employees assess the implementation of affective trust as good, with honesty being the most prioritized aspect in building trust. However, the model measurement results actually show that consistency is the most dominant indicator reflecting affective trust, through compliance with rules and timely completion of work. This finding aligns with organizational trust theory (Boies et al., 2015; Kreitner & Kinicki, 2014; Robbins & Judge, 2017) and previous empirical measurements (Farida Saleem et al., 2020; Edi Mulyono & Lenny, 2021; Mubarak et al., 2022; Puspita et al., 2022; Rezza Affandi, 2023). Furthermore, this study confirms the validity of the interpersonal trust theory (Lyu & Ferrin, 2018), which emphasizes that trust between coworkers is a crucial factor in organizational interactions. This is also consistent with the views of Pinjani & Palvia (2013) and Boies et al. (2015), who emphasized that affective trust encourages team collaboration and work effectiveness, and supports Khan et al. (2018) that trust is key to organizational effectiveness, improved performance, and employee well-being. Several previous studies also strengthen the mediating role of affective trust in the relationship between servant leadership and performance, including those by Kadarusman & Bunyamin (2021), Indra & Ekhsan (2021), Farida Saleem et al. (2020), and Herson Keradjaan et al. (2020). Thus, this study confirms that affective trust, which emphasizes mutual care and attention, plays an important role in bridging the influence of servant leadership on improving the performance of Bank Sultra employees (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002; Yang et al., 2009; Wang et al., 2010; Yang & Mossholder, 2010).

The Influence of Servant Leadership on the Performance of Bank Sultra Employees Moderated by Personality (Z)

The results of the hypothesis testing indicate that personality plays a significant role as a moderating variable in the relationship between servant leadership and employee performance at Bank Sultra (path coefficient = 0.144; sig. 0.000). This finding reinforces the view that personality is a relatively stable pattern of behavior, thoughts, and emotions that distinguishes individuals from one another in achieving work performance (Schermerhorn et al., 2011; Kreitner & Kinicki, 2014; Robbins & Timothy, 2018). Personality is formed from the interaction of genetic and environmental factors, which

ultimately influence how individuals respond to leadership styles. Within the framework of the Big Five Personality Theory (Costa & McCrae, 1992), dimensions such as conscientiousness, agreeableness, openness, emotional stability strengthen the influence of servant leadership on performance. Employees with high conscientiousness tend to be disciplined and responsive to leader direction, while high openness makes them more open to innovation. Conversely, individuals with high levels of neuroticism tend to be emotional and difficult to trust, thus weakening the influence of servant leadership. This aligns with the dispositional approach, which emphasizes that personality characteristics influence how individuals respond to the work environment (Judge et al., 1997). Servant leadership essentially improves employee performance through empowerment, support, and concern for wellbeing (Hunter et al., 2013; Ling et al., 2016). When combined with positive personality traits such as conscientiousness and agreeableness, its influence is even stronger (Sari & Wibowo, 2020; Putra & Nugroho, 2021). Theoretically, this phenomenon can be explained through Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964), where servant leadership fosters a sense of appreciation, which employees then reciprocate with improved performance. Furthermore, Trait Activation Theory (Tett & Burnett, 2003) asserts that leadership style can activate certain personality traits, thereby influencing work behavior. Previous research findings also support these findings. For example, Rahman et al. (2020) found that agreeableness and emotional stability were positively related to job satisfaction in the public sector. Kim et al. (2020) demonstrated that conscientiousness increases job satisfaction through intrinsic motivation, while Shin et al. (2021) emphasized the role of agreeableness and conscientiousness in improving performance in security institutions. Conversely, Igbal et al. (2021) demonstrated that neuroticism negatively impacts performance because it increases sensitivity to stress. Therefore, it can be concluded that the effectiveness of servant leadership in improving employee performance at Bank Sultra will be more optimal if supported by positive employee personalities.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the analysis, discussion of the research results, there are several conclusions of this study which are described as follows: that there is a significant positive influence of Servant leadership on the cognitive trust of Bank Sultra employees is accepted which means that the better Servant leadership will be able to increase the cognitive trust of Bank Sultra employees. There is a significant positive influence of servant leadership on the affective trust of Bank Sultra employees is accepted, the better the implementation of servant leadership will be able to increase the affective trust

of Bank Sultra employees. There is a significant positive influence of servant leadership on the performance of Bank Sultra employees is accepted, the better servant leadership will be able to improve the performance of Bank Sultra employees. There is a significant positive influence of cognitive trust on the performance of Bank Sultra employees is accepted, the better cognitive trust will be able to improve the performance of Bank Sultra employees. There is a positive and significant influence of affective trust on the performance of Bank Sultra employees is accepted, the better affective trust will be able to improve the performance of Bank Sultra employees. Servant Leadership has a positive and significant influence on the performance of Bank Sultra employees mediated by cognitive trust, so it can be said that increasing Servant Leadership has an impact on improving the performance of Bank Sultra employees through Cognitive trust. Servant leadership has a positive and significant influence on employee performance mediated by affective trust. Based on these results, it can be said that increasing servant leadership has an impact on improving employee performance through affective trust. Personality plays a moderating role between servant leadership and employee performance at Bank Sultra.

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