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Examining Public Service Motivation (PSM) and Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) Theory: Insights from the Sabah Department of Labour, Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

Past studies have shown that employee motivation is closely related to their performance; hence, Public Service Motivation (PSM) is an important factor that influences employee commitment and effectiveness. According to the Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) Theory, the quality of the relationship between leaders and members is important for employee motivation and performance. The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between PSM and LMX among civil servants. It also examined how high-quality leader exchange, characterised by respect, trust, and obligation, could enhance civil servants' desire to work for the public good and contribute to organisational performance. This study adopted a quantitative approach to analyse the questionnaire data collected from 80 civil servants from the Sabah Department of Labour. The result of this study revealed that six dimensions of Public Service Motivation namely 1) Attraction to Policy Making, 2) Commitment to the Public Interest, 3) Social Justice, 4) Civic Duty, 5) Compassion, 6) Self-Sacrifice have a significant relationship and impact on the relationship between superiors and subordinates based on the Leader Member Exchange Theory (LMX) aspects such as obligation, respect, and trust.

Keywords: government employees, leader-member exchange theory, motivational factors, leader-member relationship, public service motivation