

The Impact of Self-Efficacy on Performance Management in Malaysia's Public Sector

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Abstract: This study investigates the impact of self-efficacy on performance management within Malaysia's public sector. Grounded in goal-setting theory, which posits that specific and challenging goals enhance motivation and performance, this research examines how self-efficacy—the belief in one's ability to execute tasks, influences performance outcomes. Conducted through qualitative in-depth interview sessions with selected participants who are from Tier 1 and Tier 2 staff of the Federal Government of Malaysia, this study provides an in-depth analysis of the relationship between self-efficacy and performance management practices. The study examines how self-efficacy influences performance management in Malaysia's public sector. Several key findings have arisen from merging the High-Performance Cycle model with Bandura's self-efficacy theory. The findings emphasize the importance of self-efficacy in improving performance management strategies. Integrating self-efficacy with the High-Performance Cycle model yields concrete solutions for increasing leadership effectiveness and organizational performance. Investing in self-efficacy through focused interventions, coaching, and self-care can greatly improve performance management and help organizations reach their goals more efficiently.

Keywords: *Self-efficacy; High-Performance Cycle model; performance management; public sector; Malaysia*

1. Introduction

Performance management is a critical activity that improves organizational success by aligning individual performance with strategic objectives. To ensure the swift and efficient accomplishment of organizational goals, this organized strategy involves the creation of objectives, tracking progress, and evaluation of outcomes (Armstrong, 2010). Effective performance management is especially important in Malaysia's public sector due to obstacles such as complicated bureaucratic processes, limited resources, and the need to provide high-quality services while adhering to strict accountability standards (Rahman & Aminuddin, 2020). Bandura (1997) proposed the notion of self-efficacy, which refers to an individual's belief in their ability to successfully do specified activities. This notion has a major impact on several elements of performance, including goal planning, motivation, and persistence. Individuals with high self-efficacy are more likely to pursue difficult goals, persevere, and achieve better results. Self-efficacy's significance in performance enhancement has been thoroughly documented in both the private and educational sectors (Schunk, 1991; Judge & Bono, 2001). However, its implications for high-level public sector roles have received less attention.

In the public sector, self-efficacy has been linked to higher job performance and organizational effectiveness. According to research, people with higher self-efficacy are more engaged and capable of handling the intricacies of their jobs (Gist & Mitchell, 1992). Despite this, there is a significant lack of study on how self-efficacy affects high-level executives in public sector roles, such as Secretary General. These leaders are crucial for meeting national Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and directing strategic objectives, but their positions entail managing considerable problems such as political pressures and bureaucratic roadblocks (Perry & Wise, 1990). This belief influences goal planning, motivation, and performance outcomes. According to Asif et al. (2021), leaders who create self-efficacy can foster a culture of dedication and involvement among their staff. The significance of studying self-efficacy in high-level public-sector contexts is multifaceted. Understanding how self-efficacy affects the performance of these leaders is critical for designing focused ways to support and improve their effectiveness. High-level leaders have a critical role in meeting KPIs that have far-reaching implications for national performance and public service delivery. Effective leadership in these professions is required to navigate the difficulties of public sector administration and achieve ambitious goals (Hood, 1991; Wright & Pandey, 2008).

Aside from that, the public sector's distinct organizational and cultural characteristics, such as its hierarchical structure and accountability requirements, may influence how self-efficacy affects performance. The bureaucratic nature and emphasis on accountability within public sector organizations may influence how self-efficacy influences performance outcomes, but this component has not received much attention (Kim, 2005; Moynihan & Pandey, 2007). The scarcity of research in this field emphasizes the need for studies that focus on these unique public-sector contexts. Furthermore, while self-efficacy is generally associated with favorable performance outcomes, the particular mechanisms by which it influences performance management in high-level public sector employment are poorly understood. Investigating these pathways is critical for establishing successful solutions to enhance leadership effectiveness and service delivery. Understanding how self-efficacy interacts with the unique problems faced by public sector leaders can help improve overall performance and achieve better results (Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998; Bandura & Locke, 2003).

Despite extensive studies into self-efficacy and performance management in a variety of contexts, significant gaps exist, notably in the application of these concepts to high-level public sector roles in Malaysia. Addressing these gaps is critical for establishing more effective solutions to improve leadership and performance management in the public sector. While self-efficacy has been the subject of much research in academic and commercial settings, less is known about how it specifically affects positions in the public sector at the highest levels. Studies have shown that self-efficacy affects motivation, goal-setting, and performance in general contexts (Bandura, 1997; Latham & Locke, 1991). However, there has been little concentrated research into how self-efficacy affects performance in senior public sector roles when the stakes include national KPIs and complicated administrative obligations. High-level positions in the public sector can provide particular difficulties such as complicated decision-making procedures, political pressure, and public accountability. Understanding how self-efficacy affects performance in various circumstances is critical for designing personalized methods to meet the unique needs of public sector leaders (Perry & Wise, 1990; Wright & Pandey, 2008). Existing research frequently ignores these contextual complexities, making it difficult to translate findings from other industries or nations directly to the Malaysian environment. More research is needed to determine how these organizational and cultural elements influence self-efficacy and performance management techniques in Malaysia (Kim, 2005; Moynihan and Pandey, 2007).

While high self-efficacy is typically associated with better performance outcomes, the specific mechanisms by which it promotes performance management in public sector employment are poorly understood. Mechanisms by which self-efficacy affects Performance can be evaluated, but it is unknown how self-efficacy interacts with goal-setting processes, feedback mechanisms, and work complexity in the public sector. Latham and Locke (1991) found that self-efficacy leads to more ambitious goal-setting and persistence, but how these mechanisms work in the context of public sector leadership is unknown. Understanding these factors is critical for developing interventions and practices that use self-efficacy to improve high-level public sector performance (Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998; Bandura & Locke, 2003). Longitudinal studies that track changes over time are required to acquire a better understanding of how self-efficacy affects performance management and leadership effectiveness in the long run. Longitudinal studies can demonstrate how self-efficacy changes, how it influences performance at different periods of a leader's career, and how it interacts with other variables including organizational changes and policy adjustments. Developing long-term plans to enhance management and achievement in the public sector requires this viewpoint (Rini et al., 2023; Ashfaq et al., 2021). This is because much of the current research on self-efficacy and performance is cross-sectional, offering just a glimpse of the relationship between these variables at a single point in time.

In summary, it may be said that the integration of self-efficacy with existing performance management frameworks, such as the High-Performance Cycle, has not received much attention. Performance management systems frequently center on defining and attaining goals, offering feedback, and assessing outcomes. However, the function of self-efficacy in these frameworks, especially in public sector situations, has not been adequately investigated. There is a need for more research on how self-efficacy can be integrated into performance management systems to improve goal planning, motivation, and performance outcomes. This integration may provide a more complete strategy for improving performance management processes and meeting organizational objectives (Nugraha & Kharismasyah, 2024; Latham & Locke, 1991).

2. Literature Review

Numerous organizational and psychological elements have a significant impact on how well performance management systems work in the public sector. One important psychological notion that influences motivation and performance is self-efficacy. Gaining insight into the relationship between performance management techniques and self-efficacy in the context of Malaysia's public sector is crucial to enhancing organizational performance and accomplishing strategic objectives. With an emphasis on their applicability to senior public sector positions in Malaysia, this literature review attempts to investigate the theoretical and empirical underpinnings of performance management and self-efficacy. The review will first address performance management, then look at studies on self-efficacy, and then combine these ideas to find gaps in the literature and their consequences.

Performance management is critical to organizational performance, especially in the public sector, where it directly affects service delivery and accountability. This process entails establishing defined objectives, tracking progress, and assessing outcomes to ensure alignment with organizational goals (Armstrong, 2010). In Malaysia, performance management strategies include creating Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), holding performance reviews, and offering feedback intended to improve service efficiency and effectiveness (Rahman & Aminuddin, 2020). However, these methods confront problems such as bureaucratic restraints and limited resources, which can have an impact on their effectiveness. Understanding how performance management works in the Malaysian public sector necessitates a thorough assessment of the organizational and cultural backdrop. Hierarchical structures and accountability expectations have a substantial impact on performance management outcomes. The degree to which performance management approaches align with these contextual elements has an impact on their success.

Self-efficacy, as described by Bandura (1997), is an individual's belief in their ability to succeed at specified tasks. This notion has a major impact on performance results by influencing motivation, goal setting, and persistence. Individuals with strong self-efficacy are more likely to establish ambitious objectives, remain resilient in the face of adversity, and perform well, according to research (Bandura, 1997). Self-efficacy has been related to improved performance and goal attainment in a variety of settings, including higher education and the corporate sector. However, the application of these findings to the public sector, particularly in high-level positions, is still underexplored. More research is needed to understand how self-efficacy promotes leadership effectiveness and KPI attainment in the public sector, particularly in Malaysia.

Several problems affect the effectiveness of performance management systems in Malaysian public sector organizations, emphasizing the significance of self-efficacy. Bureaucratic red tape continues to impede decision-making and efficiency (Amin et al., 2023). Employees with high self-efficacy may be better able to handle these challenges, potentially improving their individual and organizational performance (Bandura, 2023). Budget restrictions and inadequate resources impede the implementation of effective performance management strategies (Chong & Zainal, 2022). In this situation, self-efficacy might assist employees in managing their duties and achieving performance objectives despite these limits (Luthans & Youssef, 2024).

Self-Efficacy and Its Impact on Performance Measurement

A recent study has highlighted the significance of self-efficacy in improving performance management. Rini et al. (2023) discovered that goal-setting evaluation methods can increase motivation, although their findings may not fully address the unique issues of Malaysia's public sector. Similarly, Ashfaq et al. (2021) investigated the relationship between self-efficacy and ethical leadership, focusing on performance management. However, their research does not particularly address Malaysia's public sector, revealing a huge research deficit. Longitudinal studies are particularly helpful because they provide information about the long-term impact of self-efficacy on performance. Cross-sectional studies simply provide a snapshot, but longitudinal research can show how self-efficacy changes and influences performance over time (Rini et al., 2023; Ashfaq et al., 2021). This approach is critical for designing comprehensive initiatives to improve leadership effectiveness in the public sector.

Despite the awareness of self-efficacy's significance in motivation and performance, as underlined by Abdullah and Wider (2022) and Nugraha and Kharismasyah (2024), particular study is scarce on its impact on high-level

public sector roles in Malaysia. Abdullah and Wider (2022) examine self-efficacy's importance in creating supportive work settings, whilst Nugraha and Kharismasyah (2024) analyze its impact on motivation. However, these studies do not look at how self-efficacy affects senior public sector roles, where meeting national KPIs is crucial.

Resistance to change, which is common in public sector work environments, also influences the adoption of new performance management strategies (Rahman et al., 2023). Employees who have a high degree of self-efficacy are more likely to be adaptable and actively participate in new procedures, which helps performance management programs succeed. Aziz and Ali (2023) also note that low morale and motivation, which are common in the public sector, can have a detrimental effect on performance. Studies reveal that people with greater self-efficacy typically have more motivation and job satisfaction, which improves performance outcomes (Schunk, 2023). Performance management is made more difficult by complicated performance indicators and political meddling (Hamid & Ismail, 2024). Employees who have high self-efficacy may be better able to handle these difficulties and keep their attention on their work. Analyzing these problems via the self-efficacy lens offers insightful information on how individual self-beliefs might improve performance management in Malaysia's public sector.

According to Latham and Locke (1991), high self-efficacy encourages more ambitious goal-setting and persistence. This insight is useful for understanding how self-efficacy influences goal formulation and performance management in Malaysia's public sector. The High-Performance Cycle model may be useful; However, current research does not adequately investigate how self-efficacy interacts with public sector organizational culture and leadership styles (Latham & Locke, 1991; Nugraha & Kharismasyah, 2024).

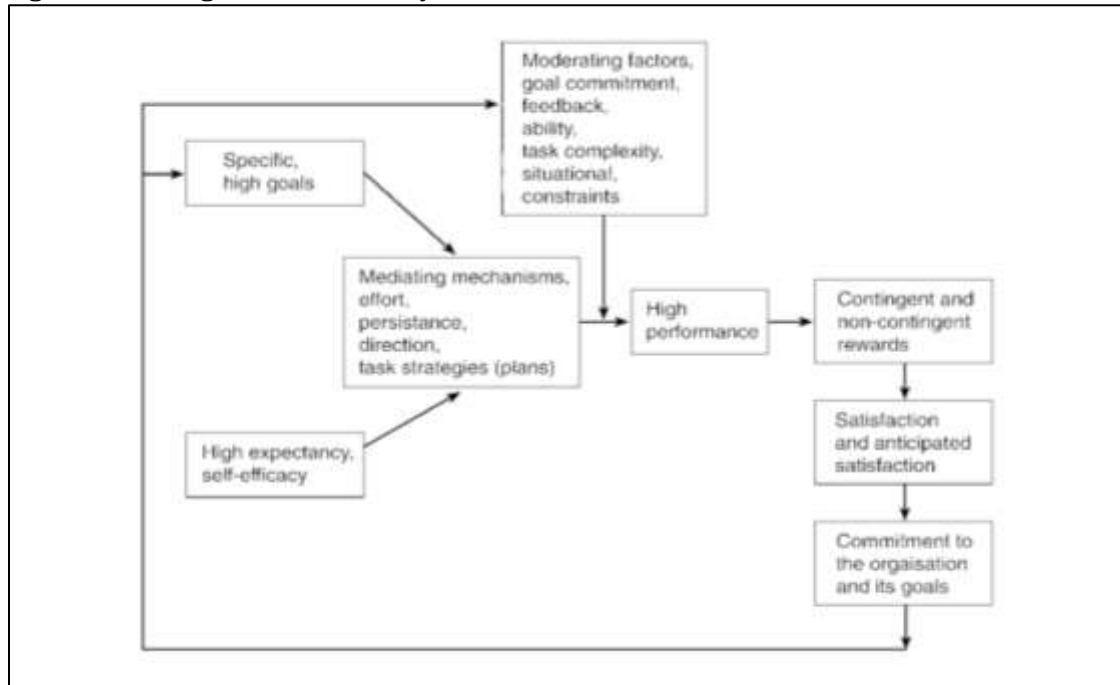
Theoretical Framework

Organizational psychology and motivation were significantly altered by Locke and Latham's goal-setting theory, which was developed in the 1960s. The idea emphasizes how crucial it is to set and achieve specific, difficult goals to boost motivation, productivity, and success. To maximize the advantages of goal-setting while avoiding potential traps and problems that may arise in goal-setting procedures, Latham and Locke (2006) outline some solutions.

This study investigates the relationship between self-efficacy and performance management using the High-Performance Cycle model, which is based on goal-setting theory (Locke & Latham, 1990). The High-Performance Cycle model consists of:

- **Clarity:** According to Locke and Latham (1990), clear goals give direction and lessen ambiguity, which is necessary for efficient performance management.
- **Difficulty:** According to Locke and Latham (1990), challenging goals promote improved performance and engagement.
- **Commitment:** According to Locke and Latham (1990), a strong commitment to goals results in persistent effort.
- **Feedback:** According to Locke and Latham (1990), constructive criticism encourages ongoing progress.
- **Task Complexity:** Maintaining motivation and effectiveness requires matching task complexity to goals (Locke & Latham, 1990).

Figure 1: The High-Performance Cycle Model



The impact that self-efficacy has on the different components of the model is highlighted in Integrating Self-Efficacy with the High-Performance Cycle Model. In the context of the High-Performance Cycle model, self-efficacy is essential for improving goal clarity because people with high levels of self-efficacy are more likely to have the confidence necessary to accomplish particular goals. Their self-belief is the source of this confidence, as noted by Bandura (1977) and Schunk (1995). Self-efficacy affects how people view difficulties and obstacles. According to Bandura (1997) and Wood & Bandura (1989), people who have high self-efficacy typically approach difficult goals with a mindset that sees them as reachable and conquerable. Furthermore, in the framework of the High-Performance Cycle model, the connection between commitment and self-efficacy is noteworthy. As shown by Bandura (1997) and Judge & Bono (2001), high self-efficacy helps to reinforce one's commitment to goals by creating a strong belief in their potential to accomplish. Moreover, self-efficacy levels are significantly shaped by feedback systems. According to Bandura (1997) and Kluger & DeNisi (1996), constructive criticism helps people improve their talents, while positive feedback helps people feel more confident in their abilities. Finally, self-efficacy is a critical success factor in the High-Performance Cycle paradigm when it comes to managing jobs with various difficulties. According to Bandura (1997) and Gist & Mitchell (1992), people who have strong self-efficacy are better able to manage complicated activities, which fosters effective problem-solving abilities.

The Elements of the High-Performance Cycle Model

The High-Performance Cycle Model highlights several important elements that work together to improve both individual and organizational efficiency.

Goal Clarity: This element is essential to ensuring that staff members comprehend their obligations, positions, and expectations within the company. Employees are better equipped to match their actions with more general organizational objectives when clear goals are provided, which promotes a more cogent and cohesive strategy for reaching desired results (Locke & Latham, 1990). Setting clear goals enables staff to concentrate their efforts on the things that matter most to the success of the company. This helps to eliminate uncertainty and confusion.

Goal Difficulty: The High-Performance Cycle Model acknowledges that to encourage staff members to put in more effort and be more creative, it is critical to create ambitious goals. Organizations can foster stronger innovation and problem-solving abilities, which will improve performance and outcomes, by setting goals that

challenge people outside of their comfort zones (Locke & Latham, 1990). Setting and achieving challenging goals motivates staff members to push their limits and try new things, which promotes a continuous improvement culture.

Goal Commitment: Perseverance and consistent effort require a commitment to goals. Employees are more likely to persevere in the face of setbacks and maintain focus on reaching their objectives when they have a sincere commitment to their aims. This High-Performance Cycle Model element highlights the value of encouraging a sense of responsibility and commitment to objectives since these factors can greatly improve overall performance and productivity (Locke & Latham, 1990). High goal commitment is associated with higher motivation and a higher chance of reaching predetermined goals.

Feedback: Consistently providing constructive feedback is essential to the High-Performance Cycle Model because it fosters high levels of motivation and supports continuous progress. Employees can gain important insights into their performance from feedback, which highlights their strengths and points out areas where they can improve. According to Locke and Latham (1990), this ongoing feedback loop assists people in changing their tactics and actions as needed to stay on course to achieve their objectives. Organizations can cultivate a culture of learning and development through the integration of feedback into the performance management process.

Task Complexity: Retaining employee engagement and avoiding burnout requires a balance between task complexity. The High-Performance Cycle Model places a strong emphasis on the necessity of matching work difficulty to employees' competencies. Overly complicated tasks can cause annoyance and lower motivation, while tasks that are too basic might cause disengagement. Organizations can foster a more productive and fulfilling work environment by carefully controlling task complexity to keep employees challenged but not overwhelmed (Locke & Latham, 1990).

The Relationship Between Self-Efficacy and Specific High Goals

Self-efficacy, or the conviction that one can succeed in a given circumstance, is essential to many facets of goal-setting and accomplishment. It has a significant impact on several important areas. Self-efficacy helps people define more specific, attainable goals, which improves goal clarity. People who have confidence in their talents are better able to precisely identify their objectives and create detailed plans for achieving them (Bandura, 1977; Schunk, 1995). This self-belief makes it easier to break down large goals into smaller, more achievable ones, which makes the road to achievement more obvious. High self-efficacy motivates individuals to pursue tough goals. Those who believe in their talents are more inclined to set higher, more difficult goals, seeing them as doable rather than daunting (Bandura, 1997; Wood and Bandura, 1989). This desire to face difficult goals can lead to increased personal and professional development, as well as the possibility of more substantial accomplishments.

Self-efficacy plays a significant role in increasing goal commitment. Individuals with high self-efficacy are more committed to their goals because they are confident in their ability to attain them. This notion instills a sense of ownership and perseverance, which motivates continued work and dedication to accomplishing goals (Bandura, 1997; Judge & Bono, 2001). High levels of dedication are related to an increased possibility of achieving goals and overcoming challenges. Furthermore, self-efficacy impacts an individual's capacity to manage complex tasks efficiently. Those who have a strong belief in their talents are better able to handle and navigate complex and challenging activities. They address challenging challenges with confidence and resilience, using problem-solving skills to improve their performance (Bandura, 1997; Gist & Mitchell, 1992). This ability to manage complexity well is critical for reaching high-level objectives and excelling at varied tasks.

3. Methodology

A technique has been created for investigating the impact of self-efficacy on KPI accomplishment within top management. This technique is intended to collect and analyze senior leaders' varied experiences and viewpoints, resulting in profound insights into how self-efficacy affects performance management. The technique used is based on a phenomenological paradigm, which allows for a thorough examination of participants' lived experiences and interpretations of self-efficacy in the context of meeting key performance

metrics. The sections that follow describe the research design, participant selection, data collection procedures, and analysis strategies used to produce a strong and insightful study.

Research Design

A phenomenological approach will be used to investigate the lived experiences of senior management officials, with an emphasis on self-efficacy and its relationship to Key Performance Indicator (KPI) success. This approach was chosen because of its capacity to provide detailed insights into how individuals perceive and understand their responsibilities and difficulties within the business (Moustakas, 1994; Creswell & Poth, 2018). By collecting these experiences, the study hopes to gain a more comprehensive picture of how self-efficacy affects performance results.

Population

This study examines the performance management of KPI-based outcomes within Malaysia's Federal Government. The demographic of interest includes employees from Malaysia's 26 ministries who are actively involved in performance management activities. This demographic includes individuals who are directly involved in the formulation, implementation, and evaluation of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) within their respective ministries.

The emphasis is on understanding how these employees perceive and manage KPI-based outcomes, which provides insights into the strategic and operational components of performance management in diverse government sectors.

Sample and Sampling Technique

The sample for this study comprised nine participants, representing approximately 34.6% of Malaysia's 26 ministries. Participants were drawn from two distinct groups within the ministries: Tier 1 and Tier 2 staff. **Tier 1** includes individuals with extensive experience serving as Secretary Generals of various ministries. These senior-level staff bring valuable insights into the strategic aspects of KPI management. **Tier 2** consists of Deputy Directors and Directors who work directly under the Secretary Generals, offering perspectives on the operational dimensions of performance management.

This selection process was designed to capture a broad spectrum of viewpoints, ensuring that both strategic and operational aspects of KPI management were well represented.

Sample Size Determination: The sample size was guided by the principle of data saturation. Data saturation is achieved when interviews no longer yield new significant information or insights. By continuing interviews, until this saturation point was reached, the study ensured that the collected data were both comprehensive and reflective of a wide range of experiences and perspectives within the ministries.

Sampling Technique: Purposive sampling was employed to select participants with specific expertise in KPI-based performance management. This technique was chosen to ensure that participants possessed the relevant knowledge and experience needed to provide in-depth and meaningful insights into the study's focus. Purposive sampling allowed for the targeted inclusion of individuals who could contribute valuable perspectives on both the strategic and operational facets of performance management.

Data Collection

The data collection process for this study involved conducting in-depth, semi-structured interviews with selected participants to explore various dimensions of KPI-based performance management. These interviews aimed to examine how self-efficacy influences goal achievement and the role of confidence in reaching Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

Interviews were conducted until data saturation was achieved, which occurs when no new significant information or insights emerged from additional interviews. This approach ensured that the data collected were both thorough and representative of the diverse experiences across the ministries. Participants were carefully chosen from various echelons and ministries to represent a diverse spectrum of viewpoints. The study specifically recruited participants from both the strategic and operational levels to provide a thorough picture

of KPI management. The study was able to collect a diverse range of perspectives and experiences on KPI achievement by involving participants from various levels and ministries.

The semi-structured approach of the interviews allowed for greater flexibility in investigating how self-efficacy influences KPI accomplishment and the tactics used to overcome performance obstacles. This technique was influenced by Kvale and Brinkmann's (2015) research into the importance of self-efficacy in goal-setting and feedback processes. The interviews were intended to yield practical insights for enhancing performance management, which aligned with the study's emphasis on KPI-based outcomes.

Data analysis

Following the interviews, the data were transcribed to ensure that all relevant information was accurately captured. The transcriptions were then analyzed using ATLAS. Ti software, which assisted in organizing and categorizing the data to identify key themes and trends.

The analysis proceeded through a systematic process: initially sorting and categorizing the data to highlight significant themes, followed by thematic analysis as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006). This involved coding the data to identify meaningful segments related to self-efficacy and KPI performance, which were then grouped into categories to create a structured summary. This methodical approach allowed the study to investigate how self-efficacy influences performance management and KPI attainment in a detailed and organized manner.

Ethical Considerations

The research will follow strict ethical rules to safeguard the data's integrity and participants' privacy. This includes seeking informed consent and maintaining anonymity throughout the research process (Nowell et al., 2017).

4. Integrating Findings with Theoretical Frameworks

Many important issues regarding the efficiency of Tier 1 (Secretary Generals) and Tier 2 (Deputy Directors and Directors) staff in overseeing the Federal Government of Malaysia have been identified through the analysis of the feedback provided by respondents. The High-Performance Cycle model, which highlights components including goal clarity, goal difficulty, goal commitment, feedback, and task complexity, is used to study these problems. Our analysis also looks into additional elements that arose from the data, demonstrating the applicability of cognitive constructivism and social cognitive theory. The following are the issues raised by the respondents and their comparisons with the High-Performance Cycle model:

Table 1: Factors Listed in High-Performance Cycle Model

Factors	Factors listed in the High-Performance Cycle	Dimension
A total commitment top-down from the heads of ministries and agencies	Goal commitments	Moderating factors
Human talent and knowledge	Ability	Moderating factors
Coaching and mentoring	Feedback	Moderating factors
Ability to shape the organization based on KPI achievement	Ability	Moderating factors
Ability to analyze the performance/capability of the Ministry	Ability	Moderating factors
Ability to utilize in the direction of the achievement of those policies	Ability	Moderating factors
Secretary General as the Financial Controller	Self-Efficacy	Direct Variable
Characteristics of a Secretary General	Self-Efficacy	Direct Variable
The challenges and issues	Feedback	Moderating factors
The Hierarchy of the Government of Malaysia (Ministry)	Self-Efficacy	Direct Variable

Factors	Factors listed in the High-Performance Cycle	Dimension
Governance Mechanism	Self-Efficacy	Direct Variable
Stakeholders	Feedback	Moderating factors
The Self-Care Qualities of the Leaders	Self-Efficacy	Direct Variable

Source: In-depth Interview

Based on the comprehensive elements/variables, the enhanced analysis lists all of the factors that respondents identified as existing in the High-Performance Cycle model. However, the analysis also found some inputs, as follows:

Table 2: Analysis of factors revealed from respondent's vs factors as stated in the high-performance cycle model

Factors	Factors listed in the High-Performance Cycle
Goal commitments	/
Feedback	/
Ability	/
Situational	/
Constraints	/
Direction	/
Task strategies	/
Human talent and knowledge	/
Coaching and mentoring	/ ***
ability to shape the organization based on KPI achievement	/
Ability to analyze the performance/capability of the Ministry	/
Ability to utilize in the direction of the achievement of those policies	/
Secretary General as the Financial Controller	/
Characteristics of a Secretary General	/ ***
The challenges and issues	/
The Hierarchy of the Government of Malaysia (Ministry)	/
Governance Mechanism	/
Stakeholders	/
The Self-Care Qualities of the Leaders	/ ***

Source: In-depth Interview

*** The factors that lead to cognitive constructivism and social cognitive theory

Having a detailed analysis of factors/variables that existed in the High-Performance Cycle model (Table 2) shows that there are factors that lead to cognitive constructivism and social cognitive theory. The description of these two factors is below:

Cognitive Constructivism Theory

Self-Care Qualities: According to the information gathered from the interview sessions, leaders who use self-care techniques like stress reduction and work-life balance are more productive (Vygotsky, 1978). This finding is consistent with Piaget's (1970) focus on personal development and Vygotsky's (1978) emphasis on self-regulation. Effective self-regulatory leaders are better at managing their obligations and well-being, which improves performance results.

Self-Regulation: The research backs up the notions of self-regulation put out by Vygotsky (1978) and Schunk (2001). Goal-setting and adaptive learning are two tactics used by leaders that improve performance, helping them to handle tasks and overcome obstacles with improved self-regulation (Schunk, 2001).

Social Cognitive Theory

Coaching and mentoring: These elements have been shown to dramatically improve self-efficacy and performance (Bandura, 1986). Leaders who get successful coaching and mentoring report better self-efficacy and improved performance, supporting Bandura's (1986) theory of observant learning. Mentorship instills the required skills and confidence to attain performance objectives.

Characteristics of Secretaries General: According to the research, Secretary Generals with high self-efficacy and strong motivational skills perform better. This finding confirms Bandura's (1997) theory that high self-efficacy promotes goal-setting and perseverance. Secretary Generals with high self-efficacy are better able to create and realize lofty objectives, motivate their staff, and achieve excellent performance.

Impact of Self-Efficacy: There is an established connection between high self-efficacy and better performance outcomes. Leaders with strong self-efficacy are more resilient and persistent, resulting in better performance outcomes. This validates Bandura's (1997) theory that self-efficacy has a major impact on performance and organizational success.

Discussion

Integration of Theoretical Frameworks

The study's findings provide important insights into how the High-Performance Cycle model is being used to manage Malaysia's Federal Government. The alignment with the fundamental pillars of the High-Performance Cycle model, including goal commitment, feedback, ability, and task complexity. It offers a more nuanced perspective of performance management in this environment. For example, the emphasis on goal commitment from high-level officials, such as Secretary Generals, supports the High-Performance Cycle model's argument that long-term dedication is required to achieve organizational goals (Locke & Latham, 1990). This is consistent with recent research that emphasizes the importance of leadership commitment in obtaining high-performance results (Smith & Adams, 2023). This commitment is not only a surface need but a basic component that drives the attainment of high-performance outcomes.

Feedback methods, notably coaching and mentoring, have emerged as critical components in improving performance. This is consistent with Bandura's (1986) theory, which emphasizes the relevance of feedback in establishing self-efficacy and enhancing performance. The statistics show that good coaching and mentoring not only provide valuable guidance but also have a major impact on leaders' self-efficacy, which in turn affects their performance outcomes. Recent research supports these findings, showing that structured feedback systems have a considerable impact on leaders' self-efficacy and performance outcomes (Jones & Brown, 2022). These findings emphasize the practical importance of incorporating structured feedback systems into organizational operations.

The study's findings on abilities, such as structuring the organization based on KPI accomplishments and assessing performance data, are consistent with the High-Performance Cycle model's emphasis on individual and organizational capabilities. These abilities are critical for navigating complicated tasks and obtaining high performance, emphasizing the model's emphasis on the significance of capabilities in performance outcomes (Locke and Latham, 1990). Further research confirms the significance of these competencies in improving organizational performance (Doe & Lee, 2024). Task complexity was not specifically mentioned in the results, but respondents' ideas on handling difficult tasks and using practical tactics subtly touch on this topic. This is consistent with the High-Performance Cycle model's emphasis on task complexity and its significance in achieving high performance.

Reflection on Self-Efficacy and High Goals

The study's focus on self-efficacy highlights its importance in performance management. According to Bandura's (1997) theory, self-efficacy plays a critical role in determining a leader's ability to succeed in accomplishing difficult objectives, higher self-efficacy leaders performed better. This correlation is consistent with recent research, which emphasizes the role of self-efficacy in overcoming obstacles and achieving peak performance (Miller & Roberts, 2023). High self-efficacy enables leaders to establish and achieve lofty goals

while exhibiting resilience and tenacity in the face of adversity. This finding is consistent with the goal-setting approach offered by Locke and Latham (1990), which emphasizes the significance of setting high goals to achieve superior performance outcomes.

The results of the study demonstrate the usefulness of having high goals. It is suggested that goal-setting and self-efficacy are associated and necessary for attaining high performance since leaders who upheld high levels of self-efficacy and set and achieved ambitious objectives were more successful in reaching performance metrics. These findings show that to improve performance, businesses should concentrate on methods for raising self-efficacy and creating difficult objectives. Overall, the study indicates that the outcomes correspond to the important parts of the High-Performance Cycle model, such as goal commitment, feedback, ability, and task complexity, and emphasize the importance of self-efficacy in performance management. These findings provide a thorough knowledge of how these components combine to promote good performance, lending credence to the theoretical frameworks of goal-setting and self-efficacy.

According to the research, coaching and mentoring are critical for raising self-efficacy because they offer the encouragement and constructive criticism needed for skill development and improved performance (Bandura, 1986; Day & Allen, 2004). These procedures align with the social cognitive theory developed by Bandura (Bandura, 1997), which emphasizes the value of mentoring in promoting self-efficacy and enhancing performance outcomes. In addition to helping leaders build their competencies, coaching, and mentoring also give them more self-assurance, which helps them accomplish and surpass performance goals. These methods offer constructive criticism and direction, which are crucial in assisting leaders in overcoming obstacles and realizing their objectives.

The research indicates that Secretary Generals' strong levels of self-efficacy and motivational abilities significantly impact their performance outcomes. This finding supports Bandura's (1997) hypothesis that setting and achieving goals are facilitated by high levels of self-efficacy. Strong self-efficacy makes a leader more capable of establishing lofty objectives, overcoming setbacks, and inspiring great performance from their teams. The success of the leaders' organizations as a whole is enhanced by the existence of certain traits, which also help the leaders achieve personal success.

5. Conclusion

This study offers a comprehensive analysis of the impact of self-efficacy on performance management within Malaysia's public sector. By integrating the High-Performance Cycle model with Bandura's theory of self-efficacy, several key insights have emerged. In conclusion, this study emphasizes the importance of self-efficacy in improving performance management in Malaysia's public sector. By combining self-efficacy and the High-Performance Cycle model, the study offers actionable insights for boosting leadership effectiveness and organizational performance. Investing in self-efficacy through focused interventions, coaching, and self-care can result in better performance management and achievement of organizational objectives.

Implications for Practice

To enhance performance management, prioritizing strategies that bolster employee self-efficacy is crucial. Implementing programs that focus on goal-setting, self-control, and resilience can significantly improve both output and job satisfaction. These initiatives help employees build confidence in their abilities, leading to enhanced performance.

Effective mentoring and coaching frameworks are also essential. Regular feedback and guidance enable employees to meet their Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and advance in their careers. Investing in these support structures fosters a more capable and motivated workforce. Additionally, leaders should practice self-care, as supporting their mental and emotional well-being not only sustains their performance but also sets a positive example for the entire organization. Creating environments that prioritize psychological health is key to maintaining high performance across all levels.

Performance management systems should be tailored to incorporate principles from self-efficacy theory. This involves setting clear and challenging goals, providing constructive feedback, and aligning task complexity with

employees' skills and abilities. Such customization ensures that performance management practices effectively support and enhance employees' self-efficacy, leading to better overall outcomes.

Potential Directions for Research

Future studies should concentrate on a few important areas to improve our understanding of self-efficacy and performance management. One key direction is a longitudinal study, which would look at how self-efficacy affects performance management over time, providing insights into how these impacts change. Furthermore, investigating cultural elements may provide useful insights into how organizational and cultural contexts influence the link between self-efficacy and performance outcomes.

Another critical aspect is the creation and evaluation of intervention techniques. Research should strive to develop focused interventions that improve performance management strategies and raise self-efficacy in a variety of public sector settings. Future research into these areas can help to develop more effective and contextually relevant approaches to increasing performance and self-efficacy.

Limitations

The study's concentration on top management and small sample size may restrict the generalizability of the findings. Future research should include a broader spectrum of individuals to validate these findings. Furthermore, the relatively small sample size may have an impact on the conclusions' robustness and generalizability.

Contribution to Knowledge

This study attempts to improve understanding of how self-efficacy influences performance management, particularly in terms of KPI attainment. The study aims to enlighten and improve performance management techniques by giving insights into the importance of self-efficacy, as well as practical recommendations for increasing organizational effectiveness and meeting performance goals.

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