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# Motivation and Job Performance among Government Servants in Johor

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## ABSTRACT

Understanding the factors that drive employee performance in the public sector is critical for enhancing organisational efficiency and improving public service delivery. In the context of government servants, motivation plays a pivotal role in influencing job performance, as it determines employee engagement, productivity, and satisfaction. This study examines the relationship between motivation and job performance among government servants in Johor, focusing on identifying the key motivational factors that influence public sector employee performance. A quantitative research design was employed, using a survey method to collect data from 150 government servants. The data were analysed using SPSS Version 28. The findings indicate that rewards, commuting time, and organisational culture significantly influence job performance. However, no significant relationship was found between promotions and job performance, suggesting that traditional assumptions about promotion as a motivator may only partially apply in this context. These results emphasise the importance of understanding how employee motivation shifts across career stages to design more targeted and effective human resource strategies. Organisations can enhance job satisfaction, engagement, and overall productivity by aligning motivational strategies with employees' unique needs at different career stages. This study provides valuable insights for policymakers and human resource practitioners aiming to optimise job performance and employee engagement within the public sector.

## 1. Introduction

Public employee performance directly affects societal well-being and is essential to running public organisations efficiently (Wiklund, 2019). It is possible to get essential insights to enhance the long-term sustainability of performance in the public sector by looking at how motivational factors influence performance patterns throughout employees' length of service (Haider, 2019). Motivation factors play a

vital role in driving employee engagement and performance. Intrinsic factors relate to internal motivators, such as job satisfaction, achievement, personal growth, and recognition (Deci & Ryan, 2020). Within the framework of this study, those working in government agencies or other public sector jobs are referred to as government servants. These people are essential to the provision of public services, the execution of policies, and the general operation of government organisations. Their performance directly impacts the efficacy and calibre of services given to the community.

This study fills a gap in understanding the relationship between motivation and job performance. Intrinsic features, such as a sense of accomplishment and opportunities for personal growth, originate from the individual (Jain, 2019), while selective elements, including rewards and workplace culture, impact employee motivation and satisfaction (Majali, 2021). Various factors, including rewards, promotions, organisational culture, and commute time, can influence employee motivation. This study, therefore, seeks to address these issues and provide crucial insights into the dynamic relationship between work performance and motivation among government employees, specifically within the government agency in Johor.

The research also offers valuable suggestions for improving staff engagement, retention, and performance management techniques in the public sector. Job performance among government servants encompasses various dimensions that reflect the effectiveness and efficiency of their work. These include adherence to regulations and policies, task performance, teamwork, and overall contribution to organisational goals (Barrick et al., 2019). Analysing how motivation factors influence job performance over time can help identify patterns, trends, and areas for improvement in the performance of government personnel. Johor's dynamic and diversified environment makes it a perfect place to explore the correlation between motivational factors and public officials' work performance.

In the context of Johor government employees, this study seeks to further develop knowledge of job performance dynamics and motivation in the public sector by providing valuable insights for enhancing performance management strategies, raising employee engagement, and enhancing retention. Existing research backs up this claim by showing shortcomings in general motivation theories when applied to the specific setting of government employees working in the environmental sector. Though they focus on extrinsic and intrinsic motivators, they fail to acknowledge the complexity of environmental management (Smith & Johnson, 2019; Kumari 12 et al., 2021).

For instance, there may be some differences between the problems faced by government workers in environmental jobs and the findings of Smith and Johnson's study conducted in the private sector. The study aims to provide measurements that can considerably enhance organisational policy, public service delivery, and overall citizen satisfaction by understanding the intricate link between selected motivational attributes, length of service, and job performance. Ultimately, this study addresses the critical need for a focused investigation of the challenges affecting work performance among government employees in Johor. The research aims to fill existing gaps and contribute valuable insights for improving job performance in the unique context of environmental governance by focusing on specific motivational factors, providing contextual definitions, and incorporating additional supporting data.

## **2. Literature Review**

### *2.1 Job Performance*

Job performance is a key focus in organisational psychology and human resource management, referring to how effectively individuals fulfil their job obligations and responsibilities. This section reviews literature published since 2019 to provide insights into significant elements and theories related to job success. An individual's skills and abilities greatly influence job performance, along with personal attributes such as personality traits, cognitive abilities, and job-specific knowledge. Research has shown that these factors significantly impact job performance (Judge et al., 2019).

Several studies in organisational psychology have established a strong link between specific personality traits and work performance. For example, conscientious individuals perform better at work due to their organised nature and strong sense of duty (Maharani, 2023). They ensure tasks are completed promptly and with great attention to detail. Moreover, extroverts, with their outgoing and confident demeanour, are often well-suited for roles that require strong interpersonal skills, significantly contributing to productive collaboration and communication (Maharani, 2023).

Motivation is another crucial factor affecting job performance. Motivated employees are likelier to invest the effort and energy needed to excel in their roles. Various motivational theories about job performance have been explored, such as self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2019) and goal-setting theory (Locke & Latham, 2019). Intrinsic motivation, driven by internal factors like interest and satisfaction, has been associated with higher levels of job performance (Latham & Pinder, 2020). Additionally, setting challenging and specific goals has been shown to enhance motivation and job performance (Latham & Pinder, 2020).

Job satisfaction also has a well-documented relationship with job performance. Employees who are satisfied with their jobs tend to be more productive, engaged and committed (Spector et al., 2019). When individuals feel fulfilled, recognised, and autonomous, they are more likely to invest time and effort into effectively carrying out their job responsibilities.

Beyond individual qualities and abilities, organisational support and leadership styles significantly influence job performance. Research by Johnson et al. (2021) indicates that employees who perceive strong organisational support, including opportunities for skill development and growth, tend to demonstrate enhanced job performance. Furthermore, leadership behaviours that promote employee autonomy provide feedback, and foster a sense of purpose have been linked to improved job performance (Brown et al., 2020).

In conclusion, job performance is a multidimensional construct influenced by individual attributes, motivation, job satisfaction, organisational support, leadership styles, and cultural considerations. This comprehensive review provides a nuanced perspective on the complex nature of job success in contemporary organisational settings.

## 2.2 *Motivation*

Motivation is crucial in psychology and management, influencing people's behaviour and organisational performance. The motivation literature investigates numerous theories and elements influencing individuals' motivation levels and their impact on workplace results. Deci and Ryan (2019) introduced Self-Determination Theory (SDT) as a notable theory in the field of motivation. According to SDT, individuals have fundamental psychological requirements for autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Higher levels of intrinsic motivation are experienced when these needs are met, driven by internal causes such as interest, enjoyment, and a sense of personal fulfilment. Intrinsic motivation positively influences job performance because intrinsically motivated individuals put in more effort, perseverance, and innovation.

Locke and Latham's (2019) goal-setting theory proposes that creating challenging goals might improve individuals' motivation and performance. Clear and well-defined goals, according to this view, give individuals a sense of direction, focus, and purpose. In conjunction with regular feedback and monitoring, goal clarification can boost individuals' motivation to attain established objectives and enhance performance outcomes.

Finally, motivation literature emphasises the complex interplay of inner and external elements that influence individuals' behaviour and performance inside organisations (Hattie et al., 2020). Understanding and applying motivation theories can help organisations develop motivational tactics that improve employee engagement, satisfaction, and work performance. Organisations may nurture a motivated workforce that contributes to their success by creating a work environment that meets individuals' psychological needs, sets clear and challenging goals, provides social support and recognition, and

promotes meaningful work (Lysova et al., 2019). Based on previous studies and theories, four factors of motivation are used in this study: reward, promotion, commuting time, and organisational culture. The following paragraphs describe the literature related to each variable under investigation.

### 2.2.1 *Reward*

The significance of rewards in employee motivation and job success is crucial. Rewards are various incentives and reinforcements given to employees in honour of their contributions, successes, or efforts (Osundina & Adaeze, 2021). Employee motivation, contentment, and overall job performance are all influenced by rewards (Ali & Anwar, 2021). The reward literature investigates various types of rewards, their effects on employee behaviour, and the underlying ideas that explain their success. The two basic types of rewards that have received substantial research are intrinsic and extrinsic incentives (Karayanni & Nelken, 2022). The psychological benefits of completing a task or participating in an activity are intrinsic rewards.

The benefits include a sense of accomplishment, personal progress, and fulfilment. Intrinsic rewards are incredibly motivating, enhancing job satisfaction and engagement (Deci & Ryan, 2019). Employees are more likely to be motivated to perform well if they perceive their work as inherently satisfying and meaningful. In contrast, extrinsic rewards are external reinforcements given to employees in appreciation of their performance or achievements. These incentives include financial bonuses, promotions, public recognition, or material incentives (Buwembo et al., 2020). Extrinsic rewards have been found to improve employee engagement and job performance in numerous research studies (Latham & Pinder, 2020).

Monetary incentives related to specific performance targets, for example, might motivate employees to invest effort and increase their performance levels. On the other hand, the success of extrinsic rewards depends on various elements, including the perceived fairness of the reward system, the degree of choice and influence employees have in obtaining rewards, and the alignment of the rewards with individuals' needs and values. When rewards are fair and achievable, they can boost motivation and job performance (Agbaeze et al., 2019). While rewards are regarded as unjust or undermine individuals' sense of autonomy, undesirable outcomes such as lower intrinsic motivation and work satisfaction can occur (Cameron & Pierce, 2019).

Employee motivation can be increased by tailoring rewards to individual preferences (Rybnicek et al., 2019). Finally, the literature on incentives underlines the significance of both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards in motivating employees and increasing job performance. Long-term motivation requires intrinsic rewards that tap into people's sense of fulfilment and purpose. When designed and implemented correctly, extrinsic rewards can give additional motivation and reinforce desired behaviours. Fair incentive distribution, timely delivery, and customisation to individual preferences are critical for using rewards to improve employee motivation and performance.

### 2.2.2 *Promotion*

Promotion is an essential part of both organisational success and career development. It is a strong motivator for employees, significantly impacting their job performance, happiness, and overall organisational success (Abu et al. et al., 2019). The promotion literature investigates various aspects of promotions, their effects on individuals and organisations, and the underlying ideas that explain their influence. Promotions are commonly perceived as recognising an employee's ability, skills, and organisational contributions. They offer employees possibilities for career advancement, additional responsibility, and advancement within the organisational structure (Abu et al., 2019). Promotions have been shown in studies to improve employee motivation and job performance (Setyawati et al., 2022). The idea of progression and related gain

in status and benefits can motivate employees to work hard, achieve in their current roles, and demonstrate their potential for future success (Ali & Anwar, 2021).

Expectancy Theory seeks to explain the thoughts that go through a worker's mind as they labour to complete a task and how those thoughts connect to their motivation to complete the activity. The employee may ask how completing the assignment will help them achieve their personal goals depending on what they hope to achieve (Johari & Jha, 2020). The employee may expect more in return for the additional work necessary to meet the job goals to be appropriately motivated to attain the anticipated acceptable outcome and performance levels (Lokman, 2022). Employees' reactions to promotions are influenced by the promotion process's fairness and perceived transparency in decision-making. Employees are more likely to regard the system as credible and motivated to perform at their best when promotion decisions are perceived as fair and based on merit (Cable & Judge, 2019). If the promotion process is perceived as arbitrary or biased, it might result in adverse reactions, lower motivation, and decreased job satisfaction.

Recognising that promotions can have positive and negative outcomes depending on the situation is crucial. While promotions can boost enthusiasm and job performance, they can also offer new difficulties and expectations, which can cause stress and anxiety (Kim & Jung, 2022). Furthermore, ineffective promotion attempts, or the perception of limited promotion chances, can lead to employee unhappiness and decreased motivation. Finally, the literature on promotions emphasises the importance of promotions in terms of employee engagement, job performance, and career growth. Promotion possibilities incentivise individuals to perform well and contribute to the organisation's success (Murphy, 2019). Fairness, transparency, and precise performance goals may maintain employee motivation and engagement. A robust promotion system that supports excellent performance, career development, and employee satisfaction is made possible by effective leadership and a supportive organisational culture.

### 2.2.3 *Organisational Culture*

The common ideas, beliefs, conventions, and practices that define an organisation and guide its members' behaviour are called organisational culture (Asatiani et al., 2020). It is an essential aspect of a company that determines staff attitudes, behaviours, and overall organisational performance. The literature on organisational culture investigates many aspects of culture, their impact on people and companies, and the underlying principles that explain their importance. Organisational culture is defined by Daneshmandnia (2019) as "a lasting set of assumptions, beliefs and values that describe organisations". It includes the values, attitudes, and behavioural standards that govern employee relationships, decision-making processes, and overall organisational performance. Employees gain a feeling of identity, purpose, and a shared knowledge of what is valued and expected inside the organisation through organisational culture. Employee attitudes and behaviours have been demonstrated to be significantly influenced by organisational culture.

Employee engagement, job happiness, and dedication are all related to a robust and healthy organisational culture (Cherian et al., 2021). Employees who identify with and align with the organisational culture's values and norms are likelier to feel a sense of belonging, purpose, and drive in their jobs. According to the literature, organisational culture significantly impacts employee behaviour and performance. A culture encouraging innovation, cooperation, and learning can boost employee creativity, flexibility, and problem-solving skills. A culture that is resistant to change, hierarchical, or bureaucratic, on the other side, may impede employee performance and organisational progress (Sung et al., 2021).

Remembering that organisational culture is not a fixed idea that can change over time is vital. External influences such as industry trends, technical breakthroughs, and shifting market conditions can all impact an organisation's culture (Karneli, 2023). Furthermore, mergers,

acquisitions, and organisational reform projects can all impact the existing culture, necessitating cultural integration and transformation. Finally, the literature on organisational culture emphasises the importance of culture in affecting employee attitudes, behaviours, and organisational performance. An excellent and influential organisational culture that matches the organisation's values, goals, and strategic direction can improve employee engagement, job satisfaction, and performance outcomes (Fidyah & Setiawati, 2019). A healthy and productive work environment requires effective leadership and an adaptive culture encouraging creativity and collaboration. Understanding and controlling organisational culture can contribute to an organisation's success and longevity in today's dynamic and competitive business environment.

#### 2.2.4 *Commuting Time*

Commuting time significantly influences people's everyday lives, well-being, and job performance. Research on commuting duration studies the effect of commuting time on various outcomes, including job satisfaction, stress levels, work-life balance, and general quality of life (Clark et al., 2020). Commuting duration is when people travel from home to their workplace and vice versa. Increased stress, weariness, and decreased job satisfaction have been reported in previous literature (Morris et al., 2020). Commuting time and energy can detract from an individual's general well-being and limit their ability to participate in other activities such as leisure, family time, or hobbies. Longer commute times influence adverse health outcomes, such as increased psychological discomfort and worse overall life satisfaction (Frey et al., 2010).

Another critical aspect determining commute experiences and general quality of life is people's dwelling location, especially their closeness to their employer. Staying closer to work has advantages, including shorter commute times, lower transportation costs, and more flexibility in combining work and family time (Naess et al., 2019). According to studies, people who live close to their workplace have higher job satisfaction, better work-life balance, and more productivity (Clark et al., 2020). Living close to work improves time management, participation in activities, and quality family time. Furthermore, commute time and residential location can impact job performance. Long and stressful commutes have been linked to higher absenteeism, tardiness, and lower productivity (Wang et al., 2021).

Prolonged commuter tiredness and stress can pour over into the workplace, impairing people's ability to concentrate, make judgments, and perform well. On the other hand, individuals who have shorter commutes and live close to their workplace may experience less weariness and stress, leading to improved job performance and engagement. Finally, the literature on commuting duration emphasises the importance of this element in terms of individuals' well-being, job satisfaction, work-life balance, and job performance (Dinh, 2020). Long commutes can harm people's stress levels, overall life satisfaction, and health results. The advent of remote employment has also created opportunities to rethink commute dynamics. Organisations and individuals should examine the effects of commuting duration on various aspects of well-being and performance when making decisions about work arrangements (Emre et al., 2021).

Therefore, these explanations lead to the following hypotheses:

- H1: There is a significant relationship between reward and job performance.
- H2: There is a significant relationship between promotion and job performance.
- H3: There is a significant relationship between commuting time and job performance.
- H4: There is a significant relationship between organisational culture and job performance.

### 2.3 Conceptual Framework

Herzberg's Two-factor Theory guides the development of the conceptual framework for this study. For several reasons, Herzberg's Two-Factor theory may apply to research evaluating the relationship between work performance, motivational variables, and the moderating variable of length of service or length of service among Johor government employees. The reason is that Herzberg's approach differentiates motivators and hygiene factors. For example, hygiene factors involving organisational culture or commuting issues may be able to avoid disappointment and job dissatisfaction, but what really might improve job performance for those issues are motivation factors, such as personal development or acknowledgement. A new variable, commuting time, was added based on the recommendations of previous studies. The conceptual framework of this study is shown in Figure 1.

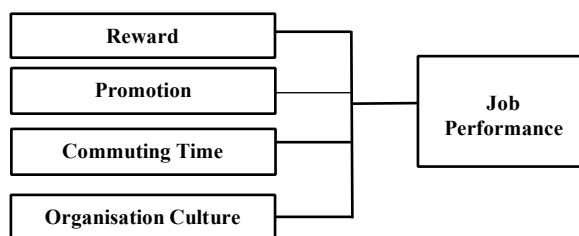


Figure 1. Conceptual framework

### 3. Research Methodology

A positivist approach was used to explore the relationship between variables. The study was primarily conducted via a survey among 150 government staff in one government office in Johor. The G\*Power software was used to calculate the sample size for this study. The effect size was set at 0.15 (medium effect),  $\alpha$  at 0.05, and power at 0.80; thus, the sample size is 77. However, the researcher distributed the questionnaire to 150 academicians to obtain an excellent response rate (Willott, 2019). Census sampling was used to select the respondents. The strategy yields more accurate and broadly applicable results by involving the entire population, eliminating sampling bias.

The development of the research instrument for this study was based on an extensive literature review that combined the existing validated measurements. The questionnaire consists of three sections measuring demographic profile, motivation and job performance, which were used to collect the data. The respondents were requested to complete the questions relating to their demographic backgrounds, such as gender, age, highest educational level, occupation grade, employment status (contractual or permanent), monthly salary, travelling time, travelling distance and length of service. Five items adapted from Salim et al. (2021) and Ng et al. (2020) were adapted to measure reward. Five items were adapted from the study of Ikon et al. (2020) to measure promotion. Meanwhile, five items Kollárová (2017) developed were adopted to measure organisational culture. Finally, five items Arogundade (2020) developed were adapted to measure job performance. The researchers employed a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

A pre-testing was conducted to verify that the questions used in the questionnaire were free from vagueness and bias and that the respondents could understand the questions. Pre-testing is also essential to avoid poor data quality and prevent or reduce items' deletion during the measurement model evaluation (Memon et al., 2017). For this study, two (2) experts were invited for the pre-testing phase to provide

feedback regarding the questionnaire items. A modification based on the pre-testing was used to generate the final version of the instrument for this study.

Data was collected using the survey method. The researchers approached the respondents via email and WhatsApp and briefed them about the inclusion criteria. The respondents have been given written explanations and instructions as guidelines to understand the questionnaires better. The respondents who fulfilled the requirements were given the questionnaire to answer. The respondents needed around 5 to 10 minutes to complete answering the questionnaires. One hundred fifty questionnaires were distributed via Google Forms to the respondents, and only 145 questionnaires were returned. Data were analysed using SPSS version 28.0. A multiple regression analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between variables.

#### 4. Analysis and Results

As shown in Table 1, the sample consisted of 92 males (63.4%) and 53 females (36.6%). Most respondents were between 41 and 50 (55.2%), followed by those aged 31–40 (33.8%). Most participants had a Diploma qualification (42.8%), while smaller proportions held a bachelor's degree (24.8%) or a master's degree (20%). Regarding employment grade, 73.8% were technical staff (C/J/A/F), while 26.2% were administrative staff (N/H/W). Regarding employment status, most held permanent positions (71.7%), while 28.3% were contracted. Monthly salaries were primarily within the RM3001–RM5000 range (53.8%), with a smaller percentage earning RM1500–RM3000 (35.2%). For most participants (73.8%), travelling to work was between 30 minutes and one hour, with 13.8% requiring less than 30 minutes and 12.4% travelling for more than one hour.

Table 1. Demographic Profile of Respondents

Demographic Variable	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>		
<i>Male</i>	92	63.4
<i>Female</i>	53	36.6
<b>Age</b>		
<i>18-24 years old</i>	4	2.8
<i>25-30 years old</i>	5	3.4
<i>31-40 years old</i>	49	33.8
<i>41-50 years old</i>	80	55.2
<i>51-60 years old</i>	7	4.8
<b>Highest educational level</b>		
<i>SPM</i>	15	10.3
<i>Diploma</i>	62	42.8
<i>Bachelor's Degree</i>	36	24.8
<i>Master's Degree</i>	29	20
<i>Doctorate or PhD</i>	3	2.1
<b>Grade</b>		
<i>C/JA/F (Technical Staff)</i>	107	73.8
<i>N/H/W (Admin)</i>	38	26.2
<b>Employment status</b>		
<i>Contract</i>	41	28.3
<i>Permanent</i>	104	71.7
<b>Monthly salary range (in RM)</b>		
<i>Less than RM1500</i>	2	1.4
<i>RM1500 - RM3000</i>	51	35.2
<i>RM3001 - RM5000</i>	78	53.8
<i>RM5001 - RM7000</i>	5	3.4
<i>RM7001 - RM10,000</i>	4	2.8
<i>More than RM10,000</i>	5	3.4



<b>Travelling time to work (one way):</b>		
<i>Less than 30 minutes</i>	20	13.8
<i>30 minutes to 1 hour</i>	107	73.8
<i>More than 1 hour</i>	18	12.4
<b>Traveling distance to work</b>		
<i>Less than 5 kilometres</i>	19	13.1
<i>5 to 10 kilometres</i>	109	75.2
<i>More than 10 kilometers</i>	17	11.7
<b>Methods of travel to work</b>		
<i>Car</i>	82	56.6
<i>Motorcycle</i>	20	13.8
<i>Carpooling</i>	32	22.1
<i>Public Transport</i>	11	7.6

This study conducted a normality analysis using skewness and kurtosis. The assumptions were tested by running the descriptive statistics, and the Skewness and Kurtosis results were presented. The normality test shows that the data was generally distributed since the value of the skewness and kurtosis was  $\pm 3$  for each variable (Coakes, 2013). The results indicated that the data met the normality assumption, as the skewness and kurtosis values for all variables were within this acceptable range. Table 2 presents the descriptive and normality statistics of the study.

Table 2: Descriptive and Normality Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Reward	3.2861	.62786	-1.129	.399
Promotion	3.2069	.58053	-1.004	-.247
Organisation Culture	3.2761	.49709	-1.486	.890
Commuting Time	3.2060	.47994	-.930	-.062
Job Performance	3.2060	.53449	-1.470	1.114

Table 3 demonstrates the reliability of the data for each tested variable. Thus, it can be concluded that all the variables measured in this study are reliable and appropriate, following the guidelines of Sekaran and Bougie (2012).

Table 3: Reliability Analysis

	No of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Indicator
Reward	5	0.788	Good
Promotion	5	0.719	Good
Organisation Culture	5	0.677	Fair
Commuting Time	5	0.604	Fair
Job Performance	5	0.692	Fair

Sekaran &amp; Bougie, 2012

Multiple regression analysis was used to measure the relationship between the variables. This multiple regression addressed which variable in a set of independent variables can be considered the best predictor or most significant factor influencing the dependent variable. Table 4 shows the results of the multiple regression analysis conducted in this study. The result shows no collinearity problem as the value of the VIF was less than ten, and the tolerance value was below 1.0, given from the three independent variables.

The findings further revealed that reward, promotion and organisational culture explain 72.1% of the variance in job performance. Other factors explain another 37.9%. The result from multiple regression analysis indicated that there was a significant relationship between reward ( $\beta=0.411$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), organisation culture ( $\beta=0.393$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) and commuting time ( $\beta=0.411$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) with job performance. However, this study indicated no significant relationship between promotion and job performance ( $\beta=0.106$ ,  $p>0.05$ ). Table 5 shows the results of the summarised hypotheses of this study.

Table 4: Multiple Regression

	Standardised Coefficients (Beta)	T	sig	Lower	Upper	Tolerance	VIF
Reward	0.411	5.162	0.000	0.228	0.511	0.338	2.958
Promotion	0.106	1.141	0.256	-0.076	0.282	0.250	3.993
Commuting Time	0.411	5.162	0.000	0.228	0.511	0.338	2.958
Organisation Culture	0.393	4.401	0.000	0.232	0.612	0.270	3.710
R <sup>2</sup>	0.721						
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.714						
F change	111.949						
Sig F Change	0.000						

Table 5: Summary of Hypotheses

Hypotheses	Result
H1: There is a significant relationship between reward and job performance.	Supported
H2: There is a significant relationship between promotion and job performance.	Rejected
H3: There is a significant relationship between commuting time and job performance	Supported
H4: There is a significant relationship between organisational culture and job performance	Supported
H5: Length of service has a significant moderating effect on the relationship between motivational factors and job performance	Supported

## 5. Discussion

This study examined the relationship between motivational factors and job performance among government employees in Johor, offering valuable insights into the interplay of intrinsic and extrinsic motivational elements and their varying effects based on employees' tenure. The findings significantly enhance the understanding of workforce motivation in the public sector and propose practical approaches to improving job performance through tailored strategies.

Regression analysis demonstrated that rewards ( $\beta=0.411$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) and organisational culture ( $\beta=0.393$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) are significant predictors of job performance, collectively accounting for 72.1% of the variance. These results are consistent with Deci and Ryan's (2020) Self-Determination Theory, underscoring the importance of intrinsic motivators, such as personal growth and a supportive work environment, in driving employee engagement and performance. The strong influence of rewards also aligns with motivational theories that emphasise the dual role of intrinsic and extrinsic rewards in fostering motivation. Organisational culture, as a cornerstone of employee attitudes and behaviours, has proven critical in creating environments that promote commitment and collaboration, which in turn enhance job performance.

Interestingly, promotion opportunities ( $\beta=0.106$ ,  $p>0.05$ ) did not exhibit a statistically significant effect, suggesting that public sector employees may perceive promotional pathways as either less attainable or less impactful compared to immediate and tangible rewards. This finding highlights a potential misalignment between employee expectations and organisational practices regarding career progression. As suggested by Hassan et al. (2023), enhancing the impact of promotions as a motivator requires organisations to ensure transparency, fairness, and alignment with employees' aspirations. Addressing the limited impact of promotion opportunities, as identified in this study, calls for greater transparency and fairness in career progression systems to align with employee aspirations and build trust.

These findings underscore the importance of fostering a supportive organisational culture and providing meaningful rewards to enhance job performance. While extrinsic motivators, such as monetary compensation, play an important role, intrinsic motivators, such as professional development opportunities and autonomy, are more sustainable in driving long-term engagement (Korn Ferry, 2020). Promoting

intrinsic motivation through autonomy-supportive practices complements extrinsic incentives, ensuring employees remain motivated over time.

Public sector organisations must adopt flexible motivational strategies tailored to employees' career stages. For instance, initiatives targeting new employees could prioritise intrinsic motivators, such as professional development programs, mentorship, and recognition of achievements. Conversely, experienced employees may benefit more from a blend of tangible rewards and enhanced autonomy. Furthermore, strategies such as flexible work arrangements or transportation support could alleviate commuting stress, further boosting productivity and job satisfaction. These recommendations align with holistic human resource strategies that integrate diverse motivational and environmental factors to foster engagement and retention.

In conclusion, this study underscores the critical role of both intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors in enhancing job performance among government employees in Johor. By identifying key predictors such as rewards and organisational culture, it highlights actionable strategies to foster a more engaged and productive workforce. Initiatives such as mentorship programs, professional development opportunities, and flexible work arrangements can help address challenges like commuting stress and work-life balance, which are particularly relevant in urban centres like Johor.

By adopting these tailored strategies, Malaysia's public sector can enhance employee satisfaction, reduce turnover, and ultimately improve the quality of public service delivery. This research offers valuable insights into the importance of integrating holistic and sustainable motivation practices to strengthen the public sector's capacity to meet the evolving demands of Malaysian society.

## **6. Conclusion**

This study contributes to the growing body of knowledge on public sector employee performance by providing empirical evidence on the relationship between motivation and job performance among government servants in Johor. The findings highlight the significant role of rewards, commuting time, and organisational culture in shaping job performance. These results emphasise the importance of developing targeted strategies to enhance employee motivation in these areas, which can directly influence the efficiency and effectiveness of public service delivery. However, it was found that there is no significant relationship between promotion and job performance. This finding challenges the assumption that promotions motivate employees and suggests the need to reevaluate the importance of promotions as a motivational tool within public organisations. Public sector employees in Malaysia often enjoy high job security, which reduces reliance on promotions for job stability. This security may lead to a reduced drive to compete or enhance performance for career advancement, as job retention is less threatened by poor performance.

Understanding employee motivation shifts allows organisations to implement more targeted and effective HR strategies that address employees' unique needs at various career stages. By customising motivational strategies to align with these stages, organisations can enhance employee satisfaction and overall performance, leading to a more engaged and productive workforce in the public sector.

The findings of this study have practical implications for human resource management within government agencies. Organisations can develop targeted interventions and strategies to boost motivation and performance by identifying the motivational factors that impact job performance over time. These insights can be valuable in enhancing efficiency, productivity, and service delivery in the public sector.

Furthermore, the study's findings can inform policy development in Malaysia's public sector. Policymakers can create and implement regulations that foster a motivating work environment by recognising the motivational elements that positively influence job performance. This, in turn, can lead to increased employee satisfaction and engagement, and overall organisational effectiveness may improve.

Despite its contributions, this study has limitations that should be acknowledged. The focus on a single government entity in Johor restricts the generalisability of the findings. Future research should expand to

include diverse public sector organisations across various geographical locations to validate these results. Additionally, the study did not consider potential moderating factors, such as leadership styles or work-life balance, which could offer a deeper understanding of the dynamics between motivation and job performance. Further exploration of emerging factors, such as remote work and technological innovations, is warranted, particularly in the evolving post-pandemic workforce. Therefore, future studies should bridge this limitation gap.

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## Conflict of interest statement

We certify that the article is the original work of the authors and co-authors. The article has yet to receive prior publication and is not under consideration for publication elsewhere. This research/manuscript has not been submitted for publication, nor has it been published in whole or in part elsewhere. We testify that all Authors have contributed significantly to the work, validity, and legitimacy of the data and its interpretation for submission to ABRIJ.

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