

How 'Ethical Leadership and Work Climate' Drive Job Satisfaction: Insights from Banjarmasin's Health Department

Imania Pebrianti & Laila Refiana Said

Lambung Mangkurat University

Email: lrsaid@ulm.ac.id

Abstract

This research aims to analyze the influence of ethical leadership (X1) and ethical work climate (X2) on job satisfaction (Y) in employees of the Banjarmasin City Health Service, South Kalimantan Province, Indonesia. This quantitative research used a structural equation modeling (SEM) approach using SmartPLS. The population in this study was all employees of the Banjarmasin City Health Service, totaling 92 people. The total sampling technique of non-probability sampling was used. Findings showed that ethical leadership positively affects job satisfaction among Banjarmasin City Health Service employees. Furthermore, it showed that ethical work climate positively affects job satisfaction among Banjarmasin City Health Service employees.

Keywords: ethical leadership, ethical work climate, job satisfaction, structural equation modeling.

1. Introduction

One of the most important sectors in developing Indonesians is public health. Development and strengthening efforts in the health sector must be carried out in an integrated manner. One of the factors that can determine the success of health development is innovation. In the health sector, competent and innovative human resources are crucial for successfully executing work programs, as they are the most vital factor.

The success of the Banjarmasin City Health Service's work relies on the performance of its employees. The performance of employees at the Banjarmasin City Health Service significantly impacts the organization's goal of enhancing community services, particularly in supervising and addressing health service information and needs. (Razaq, 2021).

For management activities in an organization to run well, an organization must have employees who are qualified and competent in managing an organization. Human resources are an organization's core because employee performance will determine whether an organization is good or bad. Undoubtedly, employees are fundamental to an organization, as enhancing the quality of human resources is the primary factor in achieving organizational success (Efhendy et al., 2020).

One of the factors that is assumed to influence the performance of Health Service employees is job satisfaction. Job satisfaction often depends on various factors, including ethical leadership and ethical work climate. Several previous studies in leadership-based research found a positive influence of ethical leadership on job satisfaction (Junaidi, 2023). Using the social exchange

theory, Ahmad and Umrani (2019) find that superiors will treat employees fairly because ethical leaders are considered fair, moral, and sincere. It is also thought that superiors will encourage this behavior in the workplace, supported by rewards and discipline, which promotes positive responses from employees (Brown et al., 2005).

Ethical work climate in the workplace also has an important role in determining the level of employee satisfaction of Health Service employees. Al Halbusi et al. (2020) explain that ethical work climate is related to perceptions of trust, responsibility, and moral standards regarding right or wrong. Ethical work climate is also defined as organizational attitudes, perceptions, practices, and procedures with ethical content (Kia et al., 2019). When an organization promotes a culture based on ethical values such as integrity, honesty, and mutual respect, it can create an environment where employees feel supported and appreciated. Muamarah and Kusuma (2012) state that the smooth implementation of work and a good ethical work climate are expected to increase employee satisfaction and reduce ethical violations. This opinion aligns with the findings by Anaza et al. (2015), which found that ethical work climate positively affects job satisfaction.

Ethical leadership and cultivating an ethical work climate within workplaces, such as the Health Service under examination in this research, exhibit a symbiotic relationship in shaping employee job satisfaction and fostering favorable organizational performance. Ethical leadership shows that personal behavior is regulated in organizational relationships and aims to strengthen and improve employee ethical behavior (Al Halbusi et al., 2020). Ethical leadership sets clear expectations, cares for employees, and manages reasonably (Nejati et al., 2020). The superiors' actions and decisions influence an organization's culture, forming norms and values that all employees can accept. Thus, ethical leadership creates a solid foundation for an organization's positive ethical work climate. Both reinforce each other, where ethical leadership forms the foundation for a strong ethical work climate and vice versa. These factors increase job satisfaction because employees feel appreciated, supported, and involved in a work environment that promotes positive ethical values. Similar results were also found by Irsan (2011), which states that an organization's leadership and climate directly and positively influence employee job satisfaction. Following the problem formulation expressed above, the research objectives are: 1. To analyze the influence of Ethical Leadership on Job Satisfaction among Banjarmasin City Health Service employees. 2. To analyze the influence of the Ethical Work Climate on Job Satisfaction among Banjarmasin City Health Service employees.

2. Literature Review

Job Satisfaction is measured in various aspects related to work, such as work schedule, job security, salary, benefits, interpersonal relationships, relationships with supervisors, interest in work, family, and social relationships (Freire and Bettencourt, 2020). Job satisfaction can be caused by superior ethical behavior (Freire and Bettencourt, 2020). Fair treatment of employees can influence their work evaluation (Ahmad and Umrani, 2019). Ethical leadership positively impacts employees' satisfaction with their leaders, enhancing job satisfaction. Thus, it can be concluded that employees' perceptions of ethical leadership positively correlate with job

satisfaction (Ren and Chadee, 2017).

Theoretically, ethical leadership promotes moral values, integrity, and fairness, creating a safe, transparent, and supportive work environment. An ethical leader will prioritize employee welfare, set an example in behavior, and ensure that decisions are always considered ethically. This, in turn, increases employees' sense of trust and respect for their leaders and the organization. Additionally, empirical research shows that employees who work under ethical leadership feel more valued and recognized, positively impacting their job satisfaction. A fair and ethical work environment reduces stress and uncertainty, increasing employee motivation and commitment. Thus, this hypothesis is supported by evidence that ethical leadership creates working conditions conducive to employee well-being, ultimately increasing job satisfaction.

H1: Ethical Leadership has a positive effect on Job Satisfaction.

Job satisfaction is a factor in an organization that is influenced by the ethical work climate (Okpara and Wynn, 2008). According to Moon and Choi (2014), the ethical work climate in an organization can influence employee perceptions regarding what is permitted or prohibited and the ethical behavior expected in an organization. Furthermore, research by Kusmarini and Abadiyah (2022) proves that the organization's climate positively affects job satisfaction.

Theoretically, an ethical work climate refers to employees' perceptions of the ethical and moral standards implemented in the organization. An ethical work climate is characterized by fairness, transparency, social responsibility, and respect for individual integrity. In such a work environment, employees feel more appreciated, treated fairly, and have clarity regarding the expectations and values of the organization. It creates a sense of security and comfort, which is important for employees' psychological well-being. Empirical research supports this argument by showing that employees who perceive an ethical work climate are more likely to have high levels of job satisfaction. An ethical work climate reduces stress and ethical conflict and increases trust and loyalty to the organization. Additionally, employees who work in an ethical environment feel more motivated and engaged, directly contributing to increased job satisfaction. Thus, this hypothesis is supported by evidence that a strong and positive Ethical Work Climate creates an environment conducive to employee well-being and satisfaction.

H2: Ethical Work Climate has a positive effect on Job Satisfaction.

The theoretical framework of this research can be seen in Figure 1:

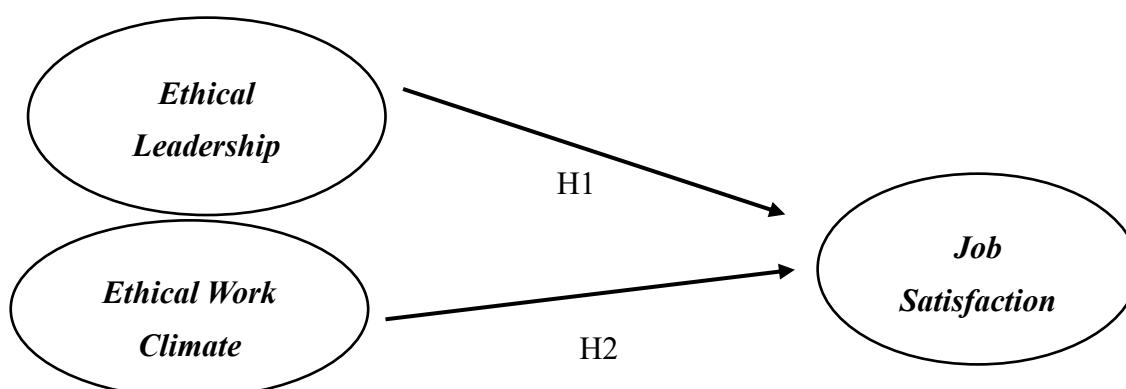


Figure 1. The influence of ethical leadership and ethical work climate on job satisfaction

Table 1 contains theoretical and operational definitions of the research variables and indicators.

Table 1. Research variables.

Variable	Theoretical Definition	Operational Definition	Dimension	Indicator
Ethical Leadership (X1) (Brown et al. 2005)	Ethical leadership is the practice of leaders who combine ethical behavior, moral wisdom, and integrity in their interactions with others, including promoting and encouraging appropriate moral norms in their followers. There are two dimensions: the moral personal factor (fairness, care, integrity, and trust) and the moral manager factor (ethical communication and responsibility for employee ethical behavior).	Ethical leadership is the perception of Banjarmasin City Health Service employees towards their superiors' leadership by ethical standards and applicable regulations.	a) Moral personal factor b) Moral manager factor	a) Justice b) Concern c) Integrity d) Trust e) Ethical communication f) Responsibility for employee ethical behavior
Ethical Work	An ethical work climate is the shared	Ethical work climate includes	a) Caring	a) Concern for others.

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Climate (X2) (Victor and Cullen, 1988)	perception of all employees towards the organization regarding norms, values, and behaviors related to ethics. There are five dimensions: caring, law and code, rules, instrumental, and independent.	how ethics is applied in the daily decisions and behavior of all Banjarmasin City Health Service employees and how the agency responds to ethical violations committed by employees.	b) Law and code c) Rules d) Instrumental e) Independent	b) Decision-making is based on external systems such as law and professional codes of ethics. c) Rules that the organization has determined. d) Decisions made for the common good. e) Individual behavior is based on moral beliefs, principles, and applicable rules.
Job Satisfaction (Y) (Luthans, 2011: 141)	Job satisfaction is defined as an individual's perception of their overall working conditions and the extent to which these conditions can meet employee expectations and needs. There are five dimensions: pay, promotion, supervision, coworkers, and work.	Job satisfaction describes how satisfied or happy employees at the Banjarmasin City Health Service are with their work, including aspects such as the work environment, relationships with coworkers, salary, awards, and the possibility of promotion.	a) Pay b) Promotion c) Supervision d) Coworkers e) Work itself.	a) Salary. b) Promotion. c) Superior leadership style. d) Coworkers. e) The nature of the individual's work.

3. Research Method

Population and sample. The unit of analysis in this research is individuals, namely employees who work at the Banjarmasin City Health Service with the status of Civil Servants (PNS), Government Employees with Work Agreements (PPPK), and Non-Civil Servants (Non-PNS). Where these employees consist of employees who work in the fields of: Secretariat, General and Personnel Subdivision, Planning and Finance Subsection, Public health, Disease Prevention and Control, Health Services and Resources. The non-probability sampling technique chosen for this research is census or total sampling of 92 employees.

Data collection and analysis methods. This research employs Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) using SmartPLS (Partial Least Squares) software for measurement. Data collection involved the following steps:

1. Pre-survey: A preliminary survey was conducted to observe field conditions at the Banjarmasin City Health Service, the research object, gather necessary data, and obtain research permits.
2. Distribution of questionnaire: The aim of distributing the questionnaire is also to obtain relevant data regarding respondents' assessments of ethical leadership, ethical work climate, and job satisfaction. Researchers distributed questionnaires online via Google Forms to implement a green environment that aims to reduce paper waste. Questionnaires were distributed to all employees of the Banjarmasin City Health Service where the questionnaire consisted of 25 statement items from the three variables adopted from previous research by Brown et al. (2005), Victor and Cullen (1988); Widjaja and Devie (2014).
3. Literature study: To complete the data needed to support the results of the variables studied, researchers also conducted a literature study by searching for data through journals and articles related to ethical leadership, ethical work climate, and job satisfaction.

4. Finding and Discussion

General description of the research object

The Banjarmasin City Health Service, South Kalimantan Province of Indonesia, is a Regional Government agency responsible for providing health services in the City of Banjarmasin. As part of the regional service organization, the Banjarmasin City Health Service must comply with regional regulations when carrying out its duties. These regulations are the basis for implementing organizational programs and activities. So, per the principles of good governance, the Banjarmasin City Health Service must actively participate in initiatives related to health problems in Banjarmasin City.

The Banjarmasin City Health Service has the following vision: "To achieve high-quality, dignified health services in Banjarmasin and become a leader in Kalimantan." The agency's missions are:

- Implementing Minimum Health Service Standards according to established targets.

- Encouraging community independence for healthy living.
- Providing facilities, infrastructure, and equipment that meet the standards and needs of each service unit.
- Meeting the needs and fostering the development of dedicated, professional, and sincere health human resources.
- Conduct health and non-health training based on organizational needs.
- Build character and instill organizational values within the Health Service and its staff.
- Simplify, expedite, and avoid delays in community services.

Respondent characteristics. The respondents in this study were all 92 Banjarmasin City Health Service employees. The instruments used were 10 statement items for the ethical leadership variable (X1), 10 statement items for the ethical work climate variable (X2), and 5 statement items for the job satisfaction variable (Y). The respondents' characteristics in this study were divided based on gender, age, and years of service at the Banjarmasin City Health Service. As shown in Table 2, of the total number of 92 Banjarmasin City Health Service employees, there were 33 people, or 35.9%, male employees and 59 people, or 64.1%, female employees. So, it can be concluded that women dominate the Banjarmasin City Health Service employees.

Table 2. Respondent characteristics based on gender

Gender	Number of Respondents	%
Male	33	35.9
Female	59	64.1
Total	92	100.0

Based on data from the results of the questionnaire that was distributed to respondents in Table 3, of the total number of 92 employees of the Banjarmasin City Health Service, there were 11 people, or 3.2% of employees, who were < 25 years old, then 33 people or 35.9% of employees aged 25-30 years, and as many as 56 people or 60.9% of employees aged > 30 years. So, it can be concluded that most Banjarmasin City Health Service employees have an average age of > 30.

Table 3. Respondent characteristics based on age

Age	Number of Respondents	%
< 25	3	3.2
25-30	33	35.9
> 30	56	60.9
Total	92	100.0

Table 4 shows the total number of 92 Banjarmasin City Health Service employees, 3 people, or 3.3% of employees, have worked for < 2 years, then 44 people or 47.8% of employees have worked for 2-10 years, and 45 people, or 48.9% of employees, have worked for > 10 years at

the Banjarmasin City Health Service. So, it can be concluded that most Banjarmasin City Health Service employees have an average working period of > 10 years. This can be attributed to the higher job stability offered by the government sector, including pension provisions for Civil Servants (PNS) or Government Employees with a Work Agreement (PPPK), which extend from a minimum age of 58 to a maximum age of 65 (Badan Kepegawaian Negara, 2017). This job security gives employees a sense of stability, encouraging them to remain with the agency.

Table 4. Respondent characteristics based on years of employment.

Years of employment	Number of respondents	%
< 2	3	3.3
2-10	44	47.8
> 10	45	48.9
Total	92	100.0

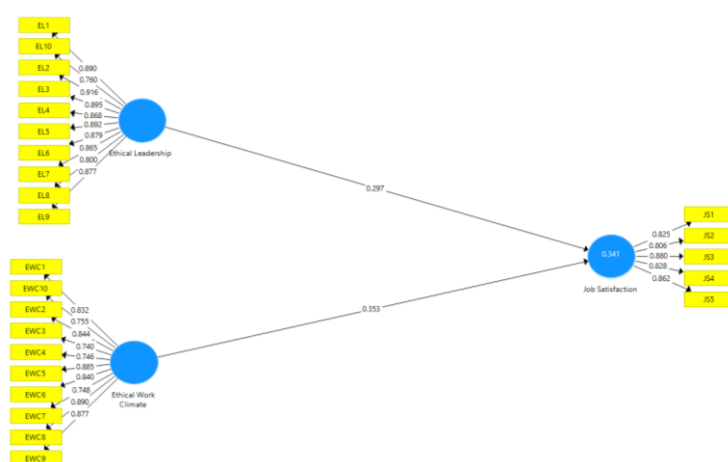


Figure 2. Validity testing is based on outer loading

Validity test. Based on the outer loading validity test in Table 5 and Figure 2, it can be seen that all outer loading values are > 0.7, which meets the validity requirements based on the loading factor value.

Table 5. Validity testing is based on outer loading.

	Ethical Leadership	Ethical Work Climate	Job Satisfaction
EL1	0.890		
EL10	0.760		
EL2	0.916		
EL3	0.895		
EL4	0.868		

EL5	0.892		
EL6	0.879		
EL7	0.865		
EL8	0.800		
EL9	0.877		
EWC1		0.832	
EWC10		0.755	
EWC2		0.844	
EWC3		0.740	
EWC4		0.746	
EWC5		0.885	
EWC6		0.840	
EWC7		0.748	
EWC8		0.890	
EWC9		0.877	
JS1			0.825
JS2			0.806
JS3			0.880
JS4			0.828
JS5			0.862

The recommended average variance extracted (AVE) value is greater than 0.5. As shown in Table 6, all outer loading values exceed 0.5, indicating that they meet the requirements based on the recommended AVE values.

Table 6. Average Variance Extracted (AVE).

	AVE
Ethical Leadership	0.749
Ethical Work Climate	0.669
Job Satisfaction	0.707

Another method to test discriminant validity is by comparing the square root of the AVE for each construct with the correlation value between constructs in the model. Discriminant validity is considered good when the square root of the AVE for each construct is greater than its correlations with other constructs in the model. Table 7 shows that the square root of the AVE for each latent variable is greater than its correlation with other latent variables, indicating that the discriminant validity requirements are met.

Table 7. Discriminant validity testing.

	Ethical Leadership	Ethical Climate	Work	Job Satisfaction
Ethical Leadership	(0.865)*			
Ethical Work Climate	0.612	(0.818)*		
Job Satisfaction	0.513	0.535		(0.841)*

Note: *the square root of AVE

Reliability test. Table 8 presents the results of reliability tests (composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha) for the research variables, indicating that the measurements are reliable.

Table 8. Reliability testing.

Variable	Composite reliability	Cronbach's alpha
Ethical Leadership	0.967	0.962
Ethical Work Climate	0.953	0.944
Job Satisfaction	0.923	0.897

Testing the inner model with R-Square. The R-squared value for job satisfaction is 0.341, indicating that ethical leadership and an ethical work climate account for 34.1% of the variance in job satisfaction. Therefore, it can be concluded that ethical leadership and an ethical work climate are quite influential (Ghozali and Latan 2015: 78) in employee job satisfaction at the Banjarmasin City Health Service.

Inner model testing with Q-Square and Goodness of Fit Model. The Q^2 test was conducted to assess the validity and relevance of the research model. A Q^2 value greater than 0 indicates that the model has predictive relevance. In contrast, a Q^2 value less than 0 indicates that the model lacks predictive relevance (Ghozali and Latan, 2015: 79). This research demonstrates a good observation value, with the Q-Square (Q^2) value for job satisfaction being 0.225, which is greater than 0. This indicates that ethical leadership and an ethical work climate have predictive relevance for job satisfaction. The goodness of fit test assesses how accurately a model describes the data. A PLS model meets the fit criteria if the SRMR value is less than 0.10 (Hair et al., 2018: 635). The results of data analysis show that the SRMR value = $0.074 < 0.10$ or the model is FIT. Therefore, it can be concluded that the proposed model fits the data and can be used to explain the phenomena in this research.

Coefficient paths test and significance effect. Table 9 and Figure 3 display the path coefficient test results and the effects' significance.

Table 9. Test coefficient paths and significance of influence.

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
Ethical Leadership -> Job Satisfaction	0,297	0,304	0,120	2,473	0,014
Ethical Work Climate -> Job Satisfaction	0,353	0,359	0,125	2,830	0,005

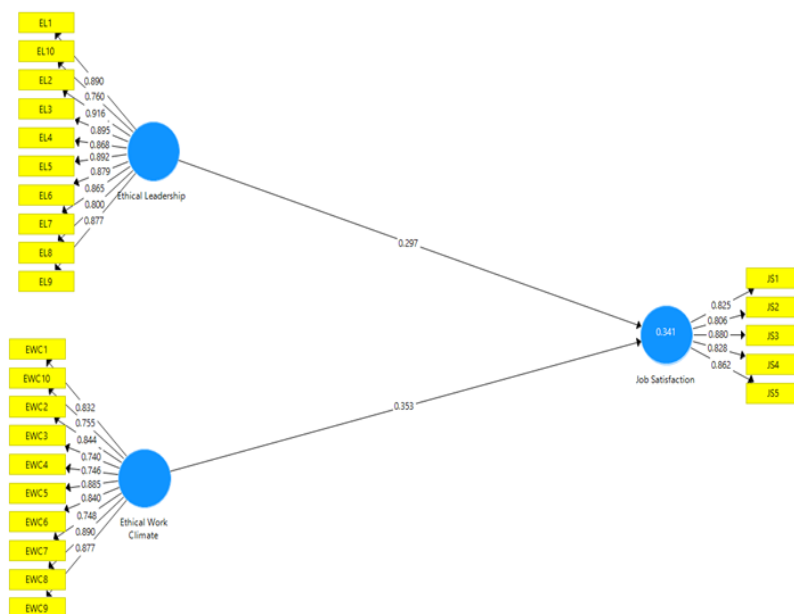


Figure 3. Testing the significance of direct influence

The results from Table 9 and Figure 3 reveal the following:

Ethical leadership positively affects job satisfaction, with a coefficient value of 0.297. The significance is confirmed by a t-test value of 2.473, exceeding 1.96, and a p-value of 0.014, less than 0.05. This suggests that implementing ethical leadership within the Banjarmasin City Health Service is likely to enhance job satisfaction, as supported by previous studies conducted by Aftab et al. (2022), Ren and Chadee (2017), Freire and Bettencourt (2020), Franczukowska et al. (2021), and Junaidi (2023).

Applying ethical leadership in the Banjarmasin City Health Service has increased employee job satisfaction. The ethical leadership indicators used in this research include justice, caring, integrity, trust, ethical communication, and responsibility for employee ethical behavior. Justice in ethical leadership ensures that every employee at the Banjarmasin City Health Service is treated equally and fairly, which increases employee trust and satisfaction. Concern shows the leader's attention to the welfare of employees at the Banjarmasin City Health Service, which

will create a more motivating work environment and build strong trust among Banjarmasin City Health Service employees to increase job satisfaction. Trust in work relationships fosters a sense of security and loyalty, while ethical communication ensures transparency and openness within the organization, which reduces uncertainty and increases employee satisfaction at the Banjarmasin City Health Service. Also, responsibility for ethical behavior encourages an organizational culture that supports and encourages employees at the Banjarmasin City Health Service to behave ethically to create a harmonious and satisfying work environment. So, overall, the results of this research emphasize the importance of ethical leadership in developing employee satisfaction. Therefore, it can be concluded:

Hypothesis 1 is accepted: Ethical leadership positively affects job satisfaction.

Ethical work climate positively affects job satisfaction, with a coefficient value = 0.353, and is significant, with $t\text{-test} = 2.830 > 1.96$ and $p\text{-value} = 0.005 < 0.05$. The study's findings show that employees agree that an ethical work climate within the Banjarmasin City Health Service will increase employee satisfaction. It is in line with previous research conducted by Muamarah and Kusuma (2012), Anaza et al. (2015), Irsan (2011), Okpara and Wynn (2008), and Moon and Choi (2014).

Implementing an ethical work climate at the Banjarmasin City Health Service has increased employee job satisfaction. The ethical work climate indicators studied include concern for other people, decision-making based on external systems such as laws and professional codes of ethics, rules determined by the organization, decisions made for the common good, and individual behavior under moral beliefs based on applicable principles.

Caring for others can create a work environment that supports and respects each other, increasing job satisfaction for Banjarmasin City Health Service employees. Decision-making is based on law and a professional code of ethics, ensuring that actions at the Banjarmasin City Health Service are under-recognized standards, thereby increasing employees' sense of security and trust in the organization. The rules set by the organization provide clear guidelines and improve work efficiency so that they will positively impact the job satisfaction of Banjarmasin City Health Service employees. Decisions made for the common good create a sense of justice and equality, thereby strengthening solidarity among Banjarmasin City Health Service employees as well as individual behavior that is based on moral beliefs and ethical principles, ensuring that the actions of Banjarmasin City Health Service employees are in line with organizational values. Overall, an ethical work climate has been proven to have a positive effect on increasing employee satisfaction. Therefore, it can be concluded:

Hypothesis 2 is accepted: Ethical work climate positively and significantly affects job satisfaction.

Theoretical implications. This study confirms previous research results regarding the effect of ethical leadership and an ethical work climate on employee job satisfaction. The results of this research support the theory from earlier research by Freire and Bettencourt (2020), which states that ethical leader behavior positively impacts employee job satisfaction. This implication

reinforces the importance of a leadership approach based on moral values and integrity. Additionally, this study aligns with prior research conducted by Moon and Choi (2014), indicating that fostering an ethical work environment correlates with heightened job satisfaction. It underscores that an organizational culture promoting integrity, transparency, and social responsibility contributes to a conducive atmosphere supporting employees' mental health. Moreover, the findings of this study reinforce the theoretical framework proposed by Asrunputri et al. (2020) regarding job satisfaction, which posits that elements like leadership and work climate play pivotal roles in shaping employees' perceptions of workplace contentment. Recognizing these factors becomes imperative in enhancing both job satisfaction and employee well-being. Consequently, the outcomes of this research offer robust empirical evidence supporting pertinent theoretical constructs within the human resource management literature, thereby aiding organizations in devising more effective policies and practices to bolster employee job satisfaction.

Managerial implications. The results of this research provide valuable direction for the Banjarmasin City Health Service to increase employee job satisfaction. The steps that can be taken are to utilize the results of this research to apply ethical leadership in everyday life to provide and increase employee job satisfaction. Even though the ethical communication indicator has the lowest mean in ethical leadership, this shows the need for special focus on improving this aspect to strengthen overall ethical leadership. Doing so will help create a more transparent and supportive work environment, increasing employee satisfaction. Additionally, the Banjarmasin City Health Service should prioritize establishing and maintaining an ethical work climate to further bolster employee satisfaction. It involves cultivating a culture characterized by compassion towards others, adherence to legal and professional ethical standards in decision-making, enforcement of organizational regulations, prioritization of the common good in decision-making processes, and adherence to moral beliefs consistent with applicable rules and principles. By aligning with the findings of this research, the implementation of ethical leadership and an ethical work climate can facilitate continuous improvement in employee job satisfaction, productivity, and overall organizational performance.

Research limitations. The limitations of this research are as follows: Firstly, the scope of the study is limited to the Banjarmasin City Health Service, but it could be broadened to include the various work units within the organization. Secondly, the research solely focuses on two variables—ethical leadership and ethical work climate—influencing employee job satisfaction, overlooking numerous other potential factors that could impact job satisfaction among Banjarmasin City Health Service employees.

5. Conclusion

The Banjarmasin City Health Service research underscores the following conclusions: Ethical leadership plays a crucial role in enhancing employee job satisfaction. Therefore, implementing ethical leadership practices can substantially boost job satisfaction levels among Banjarmasin City Health Service employees, fostering a more productive work environment for all

stakeholders. Additionally, the study highlights the positive impact of an ethical work climate on job satisfaction. By cultivating a supportive ethical work climate, organizations can effectively enhance job satisfaction, ultimately creating a gratifying and conducive work environment for all employees within the Banjarmasin City Health Service.

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