

THE ROLE OF APPRECIATIVE LEADERSHIP IN SHAPING EMPLOYEE JOB SATISFACTION AT PT.PEGADAIAN SYARIAH BABAT

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the implementation of Appreciative Leadership and its influence on employee job satisfaction at PT. Pegadaian Syariah Babat Branch. The research problem focuses on how appreciative leadership practices are implemented and their contribution to creating a positive work atmosphere. This study uses a qualitative approach with field observation and interview methods. Observations were conducted directly to understand the conditions of the work environment, interaction patterns between leaders and employees, and organizational work dynamics, while interviews were used to obtain in-depth information from employees and leaders. The results of the study indicate that the implementation of Appreciative Leadership has been running well and has had a positive impact on employee job satisfaction. Leaders implement two-way communication, provide appreciation as a form of motivation, open up space for employee participation, and create a conducive and supportive work environment. Clear division of tasks and granting trust according to job descriptions make employees feel appreciated and responsible for their work. The level of employee job satisfaction is in the good category, characterized by high work enthusiasm, a comfortable work environment, and harmonious work relationships. These findings are in line with Herzberg's Two Factor Theory and strengthen previous research on the effectiveness of appreciative leadership.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Job satisfaction is one of the primary indicators in assessing the quality of human resources within an organization. Employees who are satisfied with their jobs tend to be more productive, demonstrate higher levels of loyalty, and provide better service performance (Bakotić 2021). However, in practice, job satisfaction is not solely determined by material compensation. Psychological, social, and work environment factors also play a significant role in shaping employees' perceptions and attitudes toward their work (Kim, S., & Park 2021). Based on interview results with employees at PT. Pegadaian Syariah Babat Branch, it is evident that the level of job satisfaction is categorized as high. Employees exhibit enthusiasm in performing their duties, feel comfortable within the work environment, maintain harmonious relationships with colleagues, and experience a sense of support and security in the workplace. A positive and conducive work environment (Nguyen, T. T., & Nguyen 2020) has been widely recognized as a crucial factor in enhancing job satisfaction (Chandra, T., & Priyono 2022a).

Based on interview results with employees at PT. Pegadaian Syariah Babat Branch, it is evident that the level of job satisfaction is categorized as high. Employees exhibit enthusiasm in performing their duties, feel comfortable within the work environment, maintain harmonious relationships with colleagues, and experience a sense of support and security in the workplace (Hidayati, N., & Rahman 2023). A positive and conducive work environment has been widely recognized as a crucial factor in enhancing job satisfaction (Chandra, T., & Priyono 2022b). Although there are reasonable work demands and occasional complaints, these do not significantly disrupt overall comfort and job satisfaction. This

condition indicates that employee job satisfaction is not only derived from material aspects but is also strongly influenced by psychological (Lestari, D., & Wibowo 2024) well-being and social comfort in the workplace (Putri, R. A., & Sari 2022).

When associated with Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (Firman et al. 2013) this condition indicates that both motivator factors (such as recognition, achievement, and responsibility) and hygiene factors (including work environment, interpersonal relationships, and job security) have been adequately fulfilled, thereby creating stable and sustainable job satisfaction. Motivator factors play a crucial role in enhancing employees' enthusiasm and work spirit, while hygiene factors function to maintain comfort, security, and harmonious interpersonal relationships. In other words, job satisfaction at PT. Pegadaian Syariah Babat Branch is built upon a positive work climate and strong interpersonal relationships between leaders and employees.

The implementation of Appreciative Leadership (Shea, Rohani, and Mon 2025) by management plays an important role in fostering employee job satisfaction. The results of interviews with leaders indicate that the core principles of Appreciative Leadership (Eka, Riyadi, and Surabaya 2023), namely inquiry, illumination, inclusion, inspiration, and integrity (Trosten-bloom, Whitney, and Ph 2016), are consistently applied in daily practices. Leaders provide appreciation (Ph.D. n.d.) as a form of motivation, maintain effective communication through one on one meetings, deliver work direction through regular briefings, create opportunities for employees to express their ideas, and assign responsibilities in accordance with their respective job descriptions. These practices contribute to

the creation of a conducive and supportive work environment and encourage active employee engagement. As a result, employees feel valued, involved, and motivated in carrying out their duties, which ultimately strengthens overall job satisfaction within the organization.

The implementation of Appreciative Leadership directly influences both motivator and hygiene factors within Herzberg's theory. From the perspective of motivator factors, employees feel valued, demonstrate high levels of work enthusiasm, experience comfort in their roles, and are able to collaborate effectively within teams. The appreciation provided by leaders serves as a reinforcement of motivation, allowing employees to feel that their contributions are recognized. From the perspective of hygiene factors, leaders successfully create a work environment that is safe, harmonious, and psychologically supportive. This condition strengthens job satisfaction while simultaneously minimizing dissatisfaction.

Previous studies also support these findings. Several studies indicate that leadership appreciation enhances job satisfaction among employees in (Ahmad 2014) the financial services sector. Other research demonstrates that Appreciative Leadership is effectively implemented in Islamic financial (Amelia, Febriani, and Sa 2022) institutions to improve employee motivation and work (Kurniawati, Mansur, and Adhein 2021) loyalty. In addition, prior findings emphasize that the fulfillment of Herzberg's motivator and hygiene factors has a significant influence on job satisfaction among banking (Hidayat et al. 2024) employees. Furthermore, studies suggest that strength based participative leadership can enhance employee motivation, satisfaction, and performance. Therefore, the implementation of Appreciative Leadership at PT. Pegadaian Syariah Babat Branch is consistent with

both established theories and previous empirical findings.

Based on the above explanation, this study is designed to analyze the implementation of Appreciative Leadership and its influence on employee job satisfaction, with the expectation that the findings will provide insights for management in enhancing productivity, loyalty, and service quality through appreciation based leadership practices.

The objectives of this study are as follows: (1) to identify the implementation of Appreciative Leadership principles by leaders, (2) to analyze the influence of appreciative leadership on motivator and hygiene factors in employee job satisfaction, and (3) to evaluate the supporting and inhibiting factors in the implementation of Appreciative Leadership in the workplace.

This study is expected to provide both theoretical and practical contributions. Theoretically, it contributes to strengthening the understanding of the relationship between appreciative leadership and job satisfaction based on Herzberg's theory. Practically, the findings can serve as a reference for leaders at PT. Pegadaian Syariah and similar organizations in implementing leadership practices that enhance job satisfaction, motivation, loyalty, and the quality of services provided to the community.

2. METHODS

This study employs a qualitative case study approach to analyze the implementation of Appreciative Leadership and its influence on employee job satisfaction at PT. Pegadaian Syariah Babat Branch. A qualitative design was chosen because it allows for an in depth exploration of social phenomena, particularly leadership practices and employee perceptions, within their natural context. The case study approach enables the researcher to gain a comprehensive

understanding of the specific organizational setting and the dynamics (Abdussamad 2021) that shape job satisfaction.

The researcher was directly involved in the field to conduct observations and in depth interviews with selected informants. Observation was used to examine the actual working conditions, the physical and psychological work environment, interaction patterns between leaders and employees, and daily organizational activities. This method provided contextual insights that could not be captured solely through interviews.

The data collection process involved two observers with different focuses in order to enrich the findings. The first observer explored the leader's perspective, represented by Mr. Luckyto, focusing on the implementation of Appreciative Leadership principles, including inquiry, illumination, inclusion, inspiration, and integrity. This also included examining leadership practices such as providing appreciation, conducting regular briefings, facilitating communication, and encouraging employee participation. The second observer explored the employee's perspective, represented by Mr. Mukhlis, focusing on work experiences, perceptions of leadership style, interpersonal relationships, and the level of job satisfaction experienced in the workplace.

The observations and interviews were conducted on November 28, 2025, after working hours. This timing was deliberately chosen to avoid disrupting operational activities and to create a more relaxed environment, allowing informants to express their views openly and honestly. Each interview was conducted in a semi structured format, enabling flexibility while still maintaining alignment with the research objectives.

The data obtained were systematically recorded in detailed field notes and supported by interview transcripts. The analysis was carried out using thematic analysis, where data were coded, categorized, and interpreted based on key themes derived from Appreciative Leadership principles and Herzberg's Two Factor Theory, particularly motivator and hygiene factors. This approach allowed the researcher to identify patterns and relationships between leadership practices and job satisfaction.

To ensure the validity and reliability of the findings, data triangulation was applied by comparing information obtained from different sources and methods, including observation and interviews. Method triangulation strengthened the credibility of the results by reducing potential bias. In addition, the researcher maintained reflexivity by continuously evaluating interpretations during the analysis process.

Ethical considerations were strictly observed throughout the research process. Informants participated voluntarily and were informed about the purpose of the study. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained by not disclosing sensitive personal information. Overall, this methodological approach provides a robust framework for understanding how Appreciative Leadership contributes to the formation of employee job satisfaction within the organizational context.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Implementation of Appreciative Leadership Principles by the Management of PT. Pegadaian Syariah Babat Branch

The results of interviews with the management of PT. Pegadaian Syariah Babat Branch indicate that the

implementation of Appreciative Leadership has been consistently carried out in daily leadership practices. The leader emphasized that providing appreciation to employees is always practiced as a form of motivation to maintain work enthusiasm and enhance employees' sense of responsibility in performing their duties.

In terms of communication, the leader adopts a one on one meeting approach that enables open two way communication. Through this approach, the leader seeks to identify the challenges faced by employees and to find solutions collaboratively. In addition, work directions are delivered in a positive and structured manner through regular morning briefings, ensuring that all employees clearly understand their respective job descriptions and responsibilities.

The leader also provides opportunities for employees to express their ideas and opinions and actively listens to feedback and complaints. This is facilitated through learning sessions conducted once every month, which include discussion forums and question and answer sessions. In terms of trust, the leader delegates authority to employees according to their respective roles and work systems, while still maintaining professionalism and individual accountability.

Furthermore, the leader strives to create a comfortable and conducive work environment as a foundation for building harmonious working relationships. All of these leadership practices reflect the application of Appreciative Leadership principles, including inquiry, illumination, inclusion, inspiration, and integrity, as proposed by Whitney and Trosten Bloom (2010). This indicates that appreciative leadership is not only implemented formally but is also manifested in practice

through the development of supportive and motivating workplace relationships.

These findings are consistent with previous studies by Ahmad (2014) and Amelia et al. (2022), which state that appreciative leadership has a significant effect on improving employee motivation (Ayu, Shoimah, and Putri 2025) and job satisfaction in the financial sector.

The Relationship between the Implementation of Appreciative Leadership and Motivator and Hygiene Factors in Employee Job Satisfaction at PT. Pegadaian Syariah Babat Branch

Appreciative Leadership plays a strategic role in shaping employee job satisfaction, as this approach directly addresses both motivator and hygiene factors within Herzberg's Two Factor Theory.

1. Role in Motivator Factors

The role of Appreciative Leadership is evident in enhancing motivator factors, where employees demonstrate enthusiasm, feel comfortable in their work, exhibit strong work motivation, and are able to collaborate effectively within teams. The appreciation provided by leaders functions as a reinforcement of motivation, allowing employees to feel valued for their contributions. This is consistent with Herzberg's theory, which identifies recognition, achievement, and responsibility as key elements in fostering intrinsic job satisfaction.

Practices such as morning briefings, open communication, and the provision of appreciation indicate that leaders successfully promote motivator factors through the principles of inquiry, illumination, and inspiration (Ayu 2023). Therefore, appreciative leadership serves as a key driver in fostering strong work motivation among employees at PT. Pegadaian Syariah Babat Branch.

2. Role in Hygiene Factors

In addition to motivator factors, Appreciative Leadership (Tamara and Maimun 2022) also influences hygiene factors, including a comfortable work environment, harmonious relationships among employees, and a supportive organizational culture. Employees reported that workplace facilities are adequate, the work culture is positive, and there are no significant obstacles in performing their duties, although some employees still feel hesitant to express their ideas openly.

This condition indicates that leaders have successfully created a psychologically safe work environment through the principles of inclusion and integrity. According to Herzberg's theory, the fulfillment of hygiene factors helps minimize dissatisfaction. In this context, appreciative leadership plays a significant role in maintaining workplace comfort and employees' (Rismayadi et al. 2022) emotional stability.

For PT. Pegadaian Syariah Babat Branch, the implementation of Appreciative Leadership also adds value as it aligns with Islamic management principles that emphasize justice, trustworthiness, and collective well being. Leadership based on appreciation is believed to enhance job satisfaction, which ultimately contributes to improved performance, employee loyalty, and service quality.

3. Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in the Implementation of Appreciative Leadership

Based on the results of observations and interviews, the implementation of Appreciative Leadership at PT. Pegadaian Syariah Babat Branch is supported by several internal organizational factors. The main supporting factors include adequate

workplace facilities, strong leadership support, harmonious relationships among employees, and a well established organizational culture. These conditions create a positive, safe, and conducive work environment, enabling leaders to consistently implement appreciation based leadership practices.

Adequate facilities allow employees to perform their tasks without significant technical obstacles, while leadership support strengthens employees' trust in organizational direction and policies. Harmonious relationships and a positive work culture further promote teamwork and open communication. According to Herzberg's Two Factor Theory, these conditions fall under hygiene factors, which play an essential role in maintaining job satisfaction stability and minimizing potential dissatisfaction.

On the other hand, this study also identifies an inhibiting factor in the implementation of Appreciative Leadership, namely the hesitation of some employees to express ideas, opinions, or feedback directly, particularly when interacting with leaders. This finding suggests that although participatory spaces have been provided, the internalization of the inclusion principle has not yet been fully optimized. Employees still require psychological encouragement and a more egalitarian communication culture to enhance their confidence in expressing opinions.

Despite this limitation, it does not significantly hinder the overall implementation of Appreciative Leadership. Leaders remain capable of maintaining a conducive work environment and positive working relationships. As a result, Appreciative Leadership continues to have a positive impact on employee job satisfaction at PT. Pegadaian Syariah Babat Branch.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study and the discussion presented, it can be concluded that the implementation of Appreciative Leadership by the management of PT. Pegadaian Syariah Babat Branch has been effectively carried out and has made a positive contribution to employee job satisfaction. The leader consistently applies the principles of Appreciative Leadership, namely inquiry, illumination, inclusion, inspiration, and integrity, in daily work activities through two way communication, the provision of appreciation, clear task delegation, and the creation of a supportive and conducive work environment.

The implementation of appreciative leadership has been proven to influence the fulfillment of both motivator and hygiene factors in Herzberg's Two Factor Theory. From the perspective of motivator factors, employees feel valued, recognized for their contributions, demonstrate high work enthusiasm, and are able to collaborate effectively within teams. The appreciation and trust provided by the leader strengthen employees' intrinsic motivation and enhance internal job satisfaction. Meanwhile, from the perspective of hygiene factors, the leader has successfully created a comfortable work environment, ensured psychological safety, and fostered harmonious working relationships, thereby minimizing potential job dissatisfaction.

In addition, this study finds that the successful implementation of Appreciative Leadership is supported by adequate work facilities, a positive organizational culture, and strong interpersonal relationships between leaders and employees. The main challenge identified is the hesitation of some employees to express ideas directly

to their leader. However, this limitation does not significantly affect the overall practice of appreciative leadership within the organization.

Overall, the findings of this study confirm that Appreciative Leadership is an effective leadership approach in enhancing employee job satisfaction, particularly within Islamic financial institutions. These results are consistent with Herzberg's Two Factor Theory and reinforce previous studies highlighting the importance of appreciation based leadership in fostering employee motivation (Pintauli 2023), loyalty, and performance. Therefore, the implementation of Appreciative Leadership can be recommended as a sustainable leadership strategy to improve the quality of human resources and organizational service performance.

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