

Determinants of Job Performance of Public Servants in Asian Countries: A Systematic Literature Review

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Abstract

The primary causes that affect job performance among civil servants in Asian countries were addressed in this systematic literature review. The review further determines six key themes that are based on 14 peer-reviewed studies published between 2020 and 2024, which are leadership styles and behaviours, emotional and psychological factors, organisational commitment and citizenship behaviour, human resource management practices and skills, organisational support and perceptions of fairness, and work environment and job demands. These factors play pivotal roles in improving job performance and are grounded in established frameworks such as Transformational and Servant Leadership Theory, Organizational Commitment Theory, and Strategic HRM, along with supporting concepts like Emotional Intelligence, Self-Efficacy, and Equity Theory. These perspectives elucidate the interaction of factors to shape performance outcomes. The cultural dynamics comprising collectivism and hierarchical structures affect how these factors are perceived as well as how it is applied across national contexts. It also emphasises the importance of people-centred leadership, fair governance, and culturally sensitive reforms that address workload pressures and psychological well-being in the public service. The limitations are indicating to the need for broader regional and longitudinal studies together with a narrow geographical scope and uneven thematic coverage, pointing to the need for broader regional and longitudinal studies.

Keywords: Civil Servant Performance, Transformational Leadership, Human Resource Management (HRM), Organizational Commitment, Emotional Intelligence, Asia

INTRODUCTION

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In recent years, public administration in Asia has undergone a significant transformation, driven by globalization, digital governance, and post-pandemic reforms (Lewis & Tiernan, 2021). The governments are under increasing pressure to enhance service delivery, accountability, and responsiveness while upholding public trust (Malik et al., 2022). While the civil servants represent the backbone of these reforms, research on their job performance presents fragmented and conflicting findings across the area (Haque, 2021). Diverse bureaucratic traditions, governance structures, and cultural hierarchies hinder the understanding of what drives good performance in Asian public sectors (Sardana et al., 2024). The public administration systems are shaped

by various political histories, socioeconomic realities, and cultural values in Asian countries. (Malik et al., 2022). In this context, examining job performance requires a regionally specific analysis that views these contextual variations (Malik et al., 2022). Over the past decade, extensive research has investigated the determinants of civil servant performance, including leadership style, organisational commitment, work environment, organisational support, HR practices, and job satisfaction. Nevertheless, the results vary significantly between nations, organisational levels, and research approaches. While Western literature offers important information on leadership and motivation in public service, Asian civil services remain underrepresented in systematic syntheses. Prior assessments generally concentrate on specific subregions or isolated variables, which then overlook how contextual factors such as hierarchy, collectivism, and reform agendas interact to determine performance (Yeboah, 2023). Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent recovery measures have further impacted work conditions, leadership practices, and psychological well-being, which makes a recent and regionally focused review particularly relevant (Kim et al., 2022); (Muhammad Zulhelmi and Nurul Hidayana). Thus, a comprehensive and well-organised study is required to integrate these diverse findings, identify similarities and distinctions, and gain a more comprehensive understanding of what influences the job performance of civil servants in this region (Page et al., 2021).

Therefore, this study conducts a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) of empirical research published from 2020 to 2024, aiming to consolidate evidence and uncover emerging factors that influence job performance among Asian civil servants (Page et al., 2021). Besides, the geographical focus is limited to Asian countries, where public service structures, cultural dynamics, and administrative practices may vary considerably from Western models. This systematic literature review not only connects multiple findings but also uncovers theoretical and methodological gaps in the conceptualization of public sector performance within non-Western contexts (Paul & Barari, 2022).

LITERATURE REVIEW

The body of literature discussing civil servant job performance within Asian nations delivers a diverse array of theoretical frameworks utilized to structure empirical research endeavors. Some studies explicitly reference specific theories, while others utilize conceptual models that embody broader themes within public administration, organizational behavior, and psychology. This section also provides an understanding of

the conceptual foundations of civil servant performance research by synthesizing the key theoretical frameworks found in the studies.

In the public sector, job satisfaction is often cited as a key determinant of performance. It refers to the positive emotional response an individual has toward their work environment and responsibilities. The satisfied employees demonstrate greater motivation, cooperation, and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), which contribute to higher productivity and service quality (Tagliabue et al.). However, the relationship between job satisfaction and performance may differ across cultures and job settings. For example, in collectivist environments, satisfaction often stems from group harmony and fair leadership rather than personal achievement (Mohammad Anuar et al., 2023). This highlights that the meaning and antecedents of satisfaction in the Asian public sector may not align fully with Western conceptualizations.

Furthermore, job commitment represents an employee's psychological attachment and loyalty to the organization. A highly committed workforce tends to exhibit lower turnover intention and greater willingness to engage in discretionary behaviors that enhance organizational performance (S Arulsenthilkumar and N. Punitha). Numerous studies have confirmed the positive influence of organizational commitment on the performance of civil servants (Nurjanah et al., 2020; Arifin & Narmaditya, 2024). Commitment also interacts with other variables such as leadership and empowerment, amplifying their effect on motivation and productivity. Yet, the literature remains fragmented, as some findings focus primarily on affective commitment, while others emphasize normative or continuance commitment without considering their combined influence.

Besides, leadership behavior has also been extensively studied as a determinant of job performance. In the public sector, transformational leadership has emerged as the most influential model, characterized by inspiration, vision, and individualized consideration (Bakker et al., 2023). Transformational leaders foster trust and shared purpose, resulting in greater motivation and job performance (Vuong et al., 2023; Khuong & Mai, 2022). However, this leadership style may function differently across hierarchical Asian bureaucracies, where authority and respect often outweigh participatory decision-making. The servant leadership model, which emphasizes humility and moral responsibility, has also been explored as an alternative model (Rasheed et al., 2023).

While fewer studies address this perspective, it offers a culturally relevant approach aligned with collectivist values and ethical governance.

Moreover, job performance itself is a multifaceted construct encompassing task performance, contextual performance, and adaptive performance (Saidin et al., 2024). Civil servants' performance extends beyond completing assigned duties to include interpersonal behavior, initiative, and adherence to ethical standards. There are recent studies that emphasize the importance of contextual and adaptive performance in dealing with complex public challenges such as digital transformation, service innovation, and crisis response (Kim et al., 2022; Lewis & Tiernan, 2021). In many Asian countries, job performance is also closely linked to bureaucratic reform agendas that aim to enhance accountability, integrity, and citizen-centered service delivery.

Therefore, a comparative examination of past studies reveals several patterns. Leadership and organizational commitment theories dominate the literature, while constructs such as empowerment and perceived support receive relatively less attention. Transformational leadership and job satisfaction are consistently identified as predictors of performance, but their mechanisms differ depending on cultural and institutional settings. Psychological theories such as emotional intelligence and self-efficacy are also gaining recognition, yet they are often studied in isolation rather than integrated into broader organizational frameworks. This fragmentation underscores the need for a systematic approach to unify diverse theoretical perspectives and contextual findings across Asian civil service systems.

Therefore, this study undertakes a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) to integrate and analyze empirical evidence on the determinants of civil servant job performance in Asian countries. By synthesizing recent research from 2020 to 2024, this review aims to identify recurring patterns, theoretical gaps, and contextual influences that shape performance outcomes. The SLR approach enables a comprehensive understanding of how leadership, empowerment, satisfaction, commitment, and perceived organizational support collectively influence job performance within diverse Asian public-sector environments.

METHODOLOGY

A systematic literature review (SLR) methodology is employed to determine, assess, and synthesize the relevant empirical studies related to the job performance of

civil servants in Asian countries. The study follows the PRISMA 2020 protocol to ensure transparency, replicability, and rigor in study selection and synthesis (Page et al., 2021). Additionally, Scopus and Web of Science were selected for their multidisciplinary coverage and high-quality indexing (Baas et al., 2020; Ewald et al., 2022). By restricting the period to 2020–2024, the study captures the most recent research that reflects post-pandemic administrative realities and reform trends (Kraus et al., 2020). While PRISMA ensures systematic identification and reporting, further measures were applied to minimize bias. First and foremost, language bias was mitigated by screening abstracts of non-English titles in databases to confirm that only truly unavailable English versions were excluded. Second, to reduce database bias, both Scopus and Web of Science were combined to enhance recall and coverage. Next, publication bias was addressed by including both qualitative and quantitative studies and avoiding restriction to high-impact journals alone (Paul & Barari, 2022). These decisions ensure the representativeness of diverse methodologies across Asian nations and this method provides contextual depth beyond statistical aggregation, which is particularly appropriate given the cultural heterogeneity of Asian civil services.

Eligibility Criteria

The eligibility involves the inclusion and exclusion criteria outlining the study's scope. The inclusion period spans from 2020 to 2024 to comprehensively analyse job performance among civil servants in Asian countries. Emphasising contemporary studies and exploring the relationships among recent discoveries improves the quality of understanding and leads to future research directions. (Kraus et al., 2020). Table 1 outlines the inclusion and exclusion criteria for the study.

Table 1:
Criteria for Inclusion and Exclusion

Criterion	Inclusion	Exclusion
Publication Year	2020 -2024	Prior 2020
Keyword	Job Performance, Civil servants, Public Service Sector, Asian	Other policies than Job Performance, Private Sector, Non-project-based/oriented organizations, and non-profit organizations
Language	English	Non-English

Research type	Empirical	The exclusion criteria for this study include review-based, conceptual, theoretical, methodological, and technical studies
Type of Document	Journal Article	Book chapter, series, monograph, thesis, conference proceeding
Database	Indexed in Scopus and Web of Science	Articles not available in Scopus and Web of Science

Information Sources

The research employs two major academic databases, which are Scopus and Web of Science, that encompass a broad and interdisciplinary range of empirical literature. Scopus is recognised for its meticulous content selection, which includes global journals and conference proceedings. The quality of its content is consistently evaluated by an independent advisory board (Baas et al., 2020). Web of Science and Scopus are considered the principal sources for bibliometric and multidisciplinary research. Relying on various databases improves coverage and recall, preventing essential studies from being overlooked (Ewald et al., 2022). The utilisation of both databases reduces the likelihood of database-specific bias and enhances the validity of the findings. The final retrieval of information from these databases was completed on 30 April 2025.

Search Strategy

The authors employed keywords such as job performance, public sector, civil servants, Asian countries and government sector to encompass all empirical studies on job performance within Asian countries that focus on the individual and organisational level. To refine the search results, specific search strings were constructed and combined using Boolean operators. However, the exclusion of keywords such as “public sector,” “government sector,” and “civil servants” in the Web of Science (WoS) database is intended to facilitate a broader extraction of relevant articles in comparison to their inclusion. The input phrases utilized are as follows:

Table 2:
The Search Strings

Database	Search String
Scopus	(TITLE-ABS-KEY (job AND performance) OR TITLE-ABS-KEY (asian AND countries) AND TITLE-ABS-KEY (civil AND servants) OR TITLE-ABS-KEY (project-driven AND environment) AND TITLE-ABS-KEY (public AND sector) AND TITLE-ABS-KEY (government AND sector)) AND PUBYEAR > 2019 AND PUBYEAR < 2024 AND (LIMIT-TO (DOCTYPE , "ar")) AND (LIMIT-TO (LANGUAGE , "English"))
Web of Science	TS=("job performance" OR "asian countries") AND TS=("public sector" OR "public servant*" OR "civil servant*") AND PY=(2000-2025) AND LA=(English) AND DT=(Article)

Selection, Screening, and Retrieval Process

The Scopus database yielded 63 records, while Web of Science produced 75, totalling 138. After merging duplicates and removing two retracted records, 134 remained. Screening for relevance led to the exclusion of 71 records based on the following criteria: (1) studies focused on job performance without public sector employee or was not within Asian countries, (2) research on methodological, technical, or theoretical aspects of projects, and (3) articles misclassified as research papers. Although some of them were pertinent, they were not within the focus of this review. The remaining records were systematically arranged in a spreadsheet and fairly allocated among the authors. Each record underwent a thorough manual assessment, examining titles, keywords, and abstracts to remove articles based on the exclusion criteria. Additionally, full texts were obtained from publishers' websites or research collaboration platforms. Figure 1 illustrates the procedural flow diagram for this study, derived from the PRISMA 2020 protocol (Page et al., 2021).

Data Collection

The final selection of 14 articles was reviewed, and thematic analysis was conducted, a systematic qualitative approach for identifying, analysing, and categorising patterns within textual data (Abdullah et al., 2022). Through this method, phrases and

statements reflecting the characteristics and requirements of job performance among civil servants within Asian countries were identified and grouped into themes, with consensus achieved among all authors.

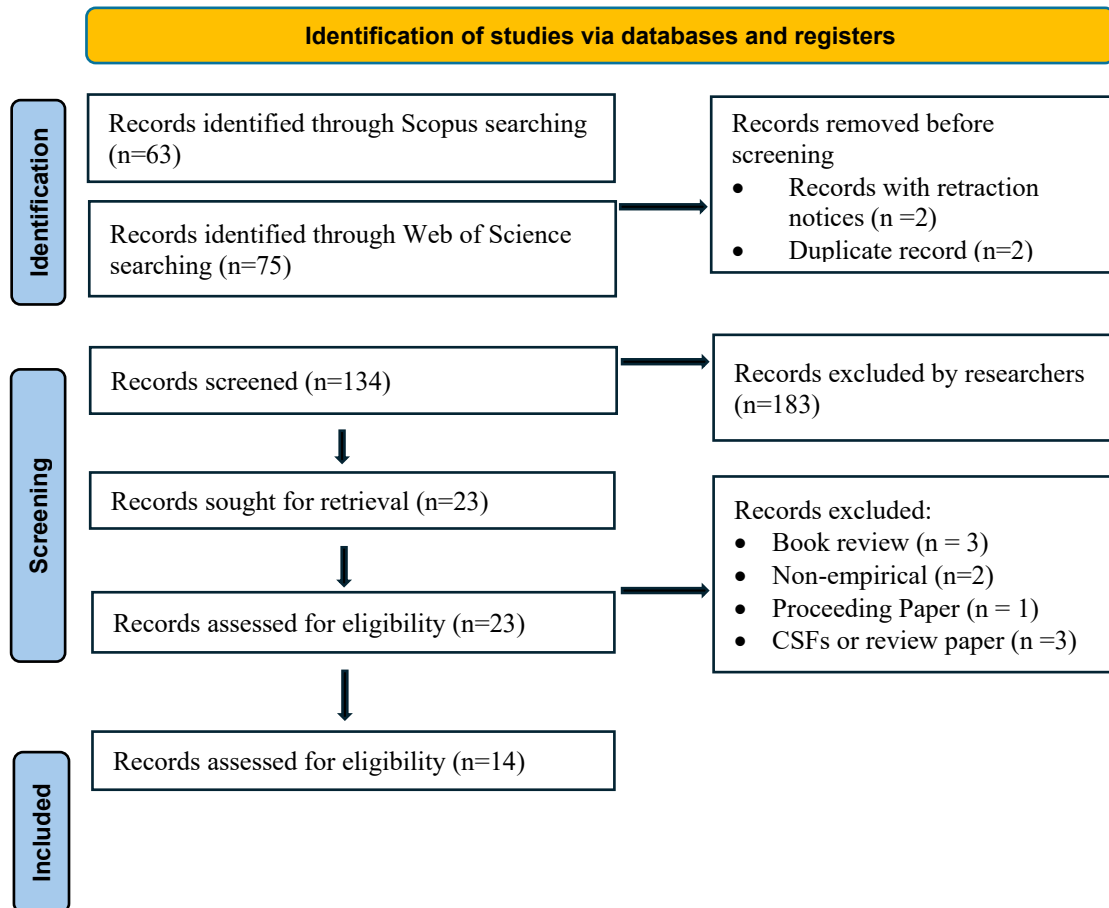


Figure 1: Flow diagram of the methodology processes, adapted from Page et al. (2021)

RESULTS

The descriptive analysis gives a summary of the studies that are part of this review, emphasizing pertinent trends in the research design, thematic relevance,

publication year, and geographic distribution. All 14 articles selected for this SLR were published between 2020 and 2024, demonstrating present interest in civil servant job performance in the post-COVID and reform-driven age. A considerable concentration of research appeared in 2022 and 2023, reflecting rising academic attention to public sector effectiveness in the face of shifting policy and organizational issues. Geographically, the areas of study were entirely focused on Asian contexts, with Malaysia, Vietnam, Indonesia, and China emerging as the most represented countries. Other contributions came from Pakistan and multi-country analyses within Southeast Asia. This regional emphasis maintains cultural and institutional relevance but also indicates a lack of comparative studies across greater Asian subregions. In terms of methodology, the review includes a combination of quantitative, and mixed-methods research. While eleven studies used quantitative survey-based methods, which are typically analyzed using regression analysis or structural equation modeling (SEM). Three studies employed a mixed-methods strategy to give both depth and generalizability. Despite methodological variation, all studies maintained a common emphasis on empirical research involving civil officials from national, regional, or municipal organizations. The incorporation of various methodological techniques accords with best practices in systematic reviews, providing a more thorough and balanced knowledge of the research environment (Snyder, 2019).

The systematic review identifies 6 major factors influencing the job performance of civil servants in Asian countries. Table 3 summarizes the findings, and further explanation is provided below.

Table 3:
Summary Matrix of Reviewed Studies on Civil Servant Job Performance (2020–2024)

No.	Author(s) / Year	Theme	Country	Method	Key Findings
1	Nurjanah et al., 2020	Organizational Commitment and OCB	Indonesia	Quantitative (Survey, SEM)	Organizational commitment mediates the relationship between job satisfaction and performance; affective commitment

					strengthens employee performance.
2	Suong, 2021	Leadership Styles and Behaviors, Organizational Commitment and OCB, Organizational Support and Fairness Perception	Vietnam	Quantitative (Survey)	PSM has a positive influence on job performance, with organizational support and fairness perceptions serving as moderating factors.
3	Supramaniam & Singaravelloo, 2021	Emotional and Psychological Factors, HRM Practices and Skills	Malaysia	Quantitative (Survey)	OCB mediates the relationship between commitment and job performance, reinforcing positive work attitudes.
4	Khuong & Mai, 2022	Leadership Styles and Behaviors, Organizational Commitment and OCB	Vietnam	Quantitative	Transformational leadership enhances performance by motivating and empowering individuals.
5	Lizar et al., 2022	Leadership Styles and Behaviors, HRM Practices and Skills	Indonesia	Quantitative	Service orientation / HRM orientation (training/standards) improves public sector performance.
6	Tran et al., 2022	Emotional and Psychological Factors	Vietnam	Quantitative	Career adaptability mediates the link between well-being and job performance; adaptive employees perform better.

7	Ahmad et al., 2022	Emotional and Psychological Factors, Organizational Commitment and OCB, HRM Practices and Skills, Organizational Support and Fairness Perception, Work Environment and Job Demands	Malaysia	Quantitative	High job demands and team conflict increase stress, lowering performance; support mechanisms buffer the effect.
8	Kim et al., 2022	HRM Practices and Skills, Work Environment and Job Demands	South Korea	Mixed Method	HRM practices and supportive leadership foster resilience and sustain job performance during disruptions.
9	Vuong et al., 2023	Leadership Styles and Behaviors, Emotional and Psychological Factors	Vietnam	Quantitative (Survey)	Transformational leadership influences performance through PSM; cultural values, such as power distance, moderate the relationship.
10	Rasheed et al., 2023	Leadership Styles and Behaviors	Pakistan	Quantitative (Survey, SmartPLS)	Servant leadership reduces stress and improves both in-role and extra-role performance.

11	Mohammad Anuar et al., 2023	Leadership Styles and Behaviors, Emotional and Psychological Factors, Organizational Commitment and OCB	Malaysia	Mixed Method	The influence of self-efficacy and locus of control towards self-motivation and self-performance among public servants.
12	De Janvry et al., 2023	Organizational Support and Perceptions of Fairness, Human Resource Management Practices and Skills, Emotional and Psychological Factors	China	Mixed Method	Introducing uncertainty about the evaluator's identity reduces strategic behavior and improves bureaucratic work performance.
13	Arifin & Narmaditya, 2024	Leadership Styles and Behaviors, Organizational Commitment and OCB, Organizational Support and Fairness Perception	Indonesia	Quantitative (Survey)	OCB mediates the relationship between commitment and job performance, reinforcing positive work attitudes.
14	Tang, Bai, & Bao, 2024	Leadership Styles and Behaviors, HRM Practices and Skills, Organizational	China	Quantitative	Transparent and fair incentives strengthen employee motivation and public-sector performance.

Support and
Fairness
Perception,
Work
Environment
and Job
Demands

1. Leadership Styles and Behaviors

Leadership consistently proved to be a critical factor in work performance. Transformational leadership elevates staff motivation, promotes goal alignment, and cultivates dedication to public service objectives (Vuong et al., 2023; Suong, 2021). Transformational leadership was also found to be a key driver of civil servant performance in China's West Lake District, where leaders enhanced motivation by setting specific incentive goals and aligning organizational and personal interests through transparent evaluation practices (Tang, Bai, & Bao, 2024). Similarly, improved customer service and less work-related stress were linked to servant leadership, which prioritises the growth and well-being of subordinates (Rasheed et al., 2023; Alfansi et al., 2022). Leadership is crucial for task-oriented and empowering behaviours that cultivate trust, enhance autonomy, and promote a proactive work culture (Khuong & Mai, 2022). Hierarchical public sector settings in Asia are particularly dependent on these leadership dynamics, as leadership legitimacy and respect frequently influence employee morale and work ethics (Mohammad Anuar et al., 2023).

Results of the reviewed studies indicate that hierarchical and participatory bureaucracies exhibit a significant disparity in leadership effectiveness. In countries with pronounced hierarchical systems, such as China and Pakistan, transformational and servant leadership styles are effective within strict authority frameworks. In these contexts, a leader's capacity to inspire is frequently tied to the preservation of respect and formality (Tang, Bai, & Bao, 2024; Rasheed et al., 2023). The given contexts suggest that the legitimacy of leadership is more closely tied to positional authority than to collaborative engagement. In contrast, in participatory environments such as Vietnam and Indonesia, transformational leadership fosters greater empowerment and alignment with goals, as followers view the decision-making process as more inclusive (Vuong et al., 2023; Khuong & Mai, 2022; Arifin & Narmaditya, 2024). The tendency for mutual trust

and teamwork is shown in the fact that Vietnamese and Indonesian civil officials reacted more favorably to relational and motivating leadership than to directive control. In Malaysia, a blend of hierarchical respect and participative mentoring has emerged (Mohammad Anuar et al., 2023), indicating that effective leadership within Asian bureaucracies relies on a careful balance between authority, empathy, and empowerment.

2. Emotional and Psychological Factors

Emotional intelligence and psychological well-being have a profound impact on job performance, particularly for frontline public servants who face substantial emotional demands (Supramaniam & Singaravelloo, 2021). High emotional intelligence enables improved interpersonal communication, empathy, and stress management, thereby supporting individual resilience and productive teamwork (Vuong et al., 2023). To add, the role of personality traits such as neuroticism and extraversion in shaping stress tolerance among civil servants, noting that individuals with high neuroticism experience greater anxiety and lower stress resilience, which can impair performance outcomes (Ahmad et al., 2022). Emotional stability was associated with enhanced decision-making under duress and a reduced occurrence of counterproductive conduct (Mohammad Anuar et al., 2023). The correlation between performance and psychological well-being indicators includes life meaning and satisfaction (Tran et al., 2022).

Nonetheless, the emotional and psychological dynamics can vary significantly depending on the organizational cultures and administrative frameworks in place. Emotional intelligence and interpersonal harmony are recognized as collective assets that maintain morale and cohesion in collectivist administrations such as Vietnam and Malaysia (Supramaniam & Singaravelloo, 2021; Tran et al., 2022; Mohammad Anuar et al., 2023). In these contexts, civil servants tend to achieve better outcomes when leaders promote empathy and a sense of shared responsibility, as opposed to fostering individual autonomy. In more performance-driven or competitive bureaucracies, like China's reform-oriented public institutions, emotional regulation and resilience are regarded as personal capabilities associated with accountability and evaluation outcomes (Ahmad et al., 2022; Tang, Bai, & Bao, 2024). These distinctions suggest that psychological well-being is a social and structural factor, supported by relational support in collectivist environments and cultivated through adaptive buffering in hierarchical, target-driven systems.

3. Organizational Commitment and Organizational Citizenship Behaviour

Organizational commitment and citizenship behaviour (OCB) significantly influenced job performance (Khuong & Mai, 2022). Civil servants who aligned with corporate values, perceived acknowledgement, and shared objectives exhibited elevated performance levels and participation in extra-role behaviours, including assisting colleagues and facilitating organisational transformation (Nurjanah et al., 2020). Moreover, the motivation-hygiene factors show specifically trust, workplace equity, and accountability that can improve lasting commitment and discretionary effort (Mohammad Anuar et al., 2023). Organizational commitment, that are reflected in employees' emotional attachment and loyalty to their institutions, was also found to directly improve performance among Indonesian civil servants (Arifin & Narmaditya, 2024). Furthermore, their study confirmed that organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) plays a critical mediating role, linking both transformational leadership and organizational commitment to job performance outcomes (Arifin & Narmaditya, 2024).

Divergences in commitment and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) are apparent between bureaucracies that emphasize collective loyalty and those that prioritize individual accountability. Affective commitment and shared identity in Indonesia and Vietnam influence citizenship behaviors, including voluntary assistance and collaboration (Nurjanah et al., 2020; Khuong & Mai, 2022; Arifin & Narmaditya, 2024). Instead of formal appraisal procedures, these participatory systems enhance OCB through relationship trust and informal reciprocity. In contrast, in hierarchical systems such as Malaysia and China, commitment is primarily influenced by institutional trust and fairness rather than interpersonal relationships (Ahmad et al., 2022; Tang, Bai, & Bao, 2024). Employees exhibit organizational citizenship behavior predominantly when they recognize fair treatment and well-defined career pathways. This contrast reveals several strategies to maintain performance-enhancing civic behavior, with rule-bound institutions relying on procedural fairness to elicit discretionary effort, whereas collectivist bureaucracies rely on emotional attachment and social responsibility

4. Human Resource Management (HRM) Practices and Skills

Human resource management (HRM) practices, which include training, performance appraisal, peer mentoring, and health support, have a significant impact on job performance in the public sector (Supramaniam & Singaravelloo, 2021). Findings

from Ahmad et al. (2022) also underscore the mediating role of job demands in the relationship between personality and stress, suggesting that effective workload management is a crucial HRM function in preventing stress-related performance decline. This also underlines the importance of employee empowerment and organised service training as crucial elements in enhancing service readiness and reducing performance failures (Alfansi et al., 2022). Moreover, job demands are established as a key stressor that impacts performance, especially in high-pressure public service positions. The public sector HRM should prioritise demand-balancing and resource allocation strategies (Ahmad et al., 2022). HRM approaches that focus on employee growth and wellness should effectively provide staff with essential skills while also addressing common issues in the public sector, such as emotional fatigue and burnout (Kim et al., 2022). The public sector demonstrates a need to prioritise strategic HRM that focuses on resilience-building, emotional intelligence training, and leadership coaching.

Human Resource Management systems in Asian bureaucracies exhibit divergent approaches to performance management and capacity development. In reform-oriented China and South Korea, human resource management practices emphasize structured evaluations, quantifiable objectives, and accountability linked to incentives (Tang, Bai, & Bao, 2024; Kim et al., 2022). Extrinsic motivation is employed to enhance performance while maintaining control in these systems, which are frequently top-down design. In contrast, participatory administrations in Indonesia and Malaysia utilize HRM strategies that focus on empowerment, peer learning, and emotional intelligence training to improve intrinsic motivation (Lizar et al., 2022); Supramaniam & Singaravelloo, 2021). Hierarchical contexts emphasize compliance and assessment, whereas participatory contexts foster adaptability and interpersonal competence. This divergence underscores that the effectiveness of HRM is contingent upon the alignment of training, evaluation, and motivation systems with the existing bureaucratic culture, which may either reinforce authority or facilitate employee autonomy.

5. Organizational Support and Fairness Perception

The research findings indicate that there is a significant impact on civil servant performance when an employee receives organisational support and fairness. Employees who experience fairness in performance evaluations are given recognition and are more likely to exhibit organisational loyalty and job satisfaction. Having institutional trust and appreciation encourages the morale of public employees and motivates them to put in

better efforts for the organization (Suong, 2021). To illustrate, China's performance management reform was fair and used an organised appraisal system, which boosted motivation and reduced cynicism in the workplace (Tang, Bai, and Bao, 2024). Additionally, when an employee perceives unfairness in workload distribution and performance feedback, it increases stress and decreases motivation (Ahmad et al., 2022). Therefore, these studies demonstrate that organizational support based on justice and equity serves as both a psychological buffer and a structural enhancer of performance in hierarchical civil service environments.

In hierarchical bureaucracies, such as those in China, fairness is integrated into formal evaluation systems and transparent promotion criteria, which help maintain motivation despite restricted employee voice (Tang, Bai, & Bao, 2024; De Janvry et al., 2023). Employees depend on procedural justice and uniform regulations to maintain legitimacy in centralized frameworks. In Vietnam and Indonesia, organizational support is influenced by relational fairness and moral leadership, with employees anticipating empathy, recognition, and equitable treatment from their superiors (Suong, 2021; Arifin & Narmaditya, 2024). Additionally, Malaysian studies suggest that when fairness is regarded as selective or opaque, tension and demotivation increase (Ahmad et al., 2022). Hierarchical systems rely on institutional fairness to establish compliance and trust, whereas participatory systems depend on interpersonal fairness and reciprocal respect to promote commitment and engagement.

6. Work Environment and Job Demands

Findings demonstrated that the work environment of the organization had a significant impact on the job performance of civil servants in high-pressure positions. Mainly in frontline public sector professions, the combination of rising job expectations and poorly managed workloads resulted in increased stress and decreased job satisfaction (Ahmad et al., 2022). In the context of crisis response, this means that when employees are overworked and lack adequate support from their employers, their job performance deteriorates (Kim et al., 2022). Furthermore, they found that to avoid burnout and maintain resilience, flexible work arrangements and focused occupational health programs were essential (Kim et al., 2022). In a China case study, they adopted a unique strategy that connected performance incentives to job types, such as routine versus campaign-style assignments, and engaged staff across multiple operational tasks (Tang, Bai, and Bao, 2024).

Work environment pressures vary across administrative structures. In rigid, high-power-distance systems, such as those found in China and Malaysia, substantial workloads and top-down management often lead to stress and diminished autonomy, necessitating robust support systems to sustain morale (Ahmad et al., 2022; Tang, Bai, & Bao, 2024). In such systems, employees often prioritize obedience and efficiency rather than creativity. In contrast, in more adaptable bureaucracies, such as those in South Korea and Vietnam, participatory leadership and flexible work policies have been implemented to maintain resilience during crises (Kim et al., 2022; Tran et al., 2022). The comparative findings indicate that participatory systems address job demands by fostering adaptability and implementing employee well-being initiatives, whereas hierarchical systems depend on control and structured incentives. Effective performance thus depends on whether the institutional culture prioritizes conformity or empowerment in dealing with workload challenges.

DISCUSSION

The systematic literature review assessed the factors that influence civil servant job performance across various Asian countries. The discoveries indicated that there is a consistent agreement on six fundamental themes, which are leadership behaviors, emotional and psychological traits, organizational commitment and citizenship, human resource management (HRM) practices, perceived organizational support and fairness, and the influence of work environment as well as job demands. While these factors are broadly relevant, their manifestation and focus vary across different institutional settings and sociocultural contexts.

Firstly, transformational and servant leadership emerged as powerful drivers of job performance. Transformational leaders enhance motivation, foster a sense of mission, and promote commitment to public service goals (Vuong et al., 2023; Mohammad Anuar et al., 2023). Meanwhile, servant leadership, characterised by ethical care and service to subordinates, improves engagement and psychological well-being (Rasheed et al., 2023). To harness these benefits, leadership development in Asian civil services must evolve beyond hierarchical models and instead cultivate emotionally intelligent, communicative, and participative leaders (Khuong & Mai, 2022). A more thorough theoretical analysis, however, shows that the cultural foundations of leadership in Asia are inextricably linked to its efficacy. Transformational leadership theory, initially grounded in Western principles of autonomy and vision-sharing, operates distinctly within hierarchical Asian

bureaucracies, where authority, loyalty, and seniority are the standard social norms. Leaders in these contexts frequently encounter the paradox of fostering innovation while upholding respect for hierarchical structures. Thus, transformational behaviors become increasingly paternalistic and less participatory, combining authority with compassion, which is a cultural adaptation that aligns with Confucian relational ethics (Vuong et al., 2023; Tang, Bai, & Bao, 2024). Meanwhile, servant leadership aligns with collectivist and moral traditions that emphasize humility and communal welfare, distinguishing it from Western managerial rationalism (Rasheed et al., 2023).

Emotional intelligence, resilience, and psychological well-being were also found to significantly impact job performance, particularly for front-line civil servants exposed to occupational stress, such as nurses. High emotional intelligence correlates with better coping mechanisms, interpersonal relationships, and fewer counterproductive behaviors (Supramaniam & Singaravelloo, 2021; Tran et al., 2022). Governments should therefore invest in building psychological resilience through supportive HR structures and mental health initiatives to reduce burnout and promote sustainable productivity. The study indicates that emotional and psychological factors within Asian bureaucracies are fundamentally rooted in collectivist values, wherein emotional regulation facilitates both individual adaptation and group harmony. In contrast to Western models that prioritize self-actualization, Asian civil servants regard emotional stability as a moral obligation essential for preserving team cohesion and social order (Mohammad Anuar et al., 2023). To apply emotional intelligence theory in this environment, a cultural translation is required, one which defines "self-awareness" and "empathy" as respect for social hierarchy and relationship balance rather than self-expression.

Furthermore, organizational commitment and citizenship behaviors (OCB) serve as critical mediators between internal workplace dynamics and employee performance. When civil servants feel trusted, recognized, and aligned with institutional values, they demonstrate greater willingness to go the extra mile and stay loyal (Nurjanah et al., 2020; Arifin & Narmaditya, 2024). Reforming civil service cultures to emphasize appreciation, equity, and shared goals could thus amplify both job satisfaction and performance outcomes. Thus, leadership and HR systems must intentionally build environments that support OCB through consistent communication, transparent rewards, and equitable policies. Critically, the widespread use of collectivist norms alters the concept of organizational commitment in Asian contexts. Organizational Commitment Theory emphasizes individual alignment with organizational objectives in Western contexts,

whereas in Asia, it is characterized by a collective alignment with institutional and societal missions. The sense of duty among employees is characterized by relational rather than contractual obligations, which are influenced by social hierarchy and cultural morality (Nurjanah et al., 2020). In Asian bureaucracies, OCB frequently manifests as loyalty, respect, and moral compliance, contrasting with the initiative-taking autonomy characteristic of Western employees (Arifin & Narmaditya, 2024). This divergence demonstrates that theories based on individualist beliefs require reconsideration through a collectivist perspective to accurately reflect their behavioral significance.

Moreover, strategic HRM practices, particularly training, appraisal systems, and empowerment mechanisms, have a significant influence on the effectiveness of civil servants' performance. Crisis-responsive HR strategies, including workload management, flexible work arrangements, and health support, have proven especially beneficial in high-demand situations (Kim et al., 2022; Lizar et al., 2022). Institutionalizing these practices, especially those grounded in skills development and well-being, can enhance civil service agility and morale. From a theoretical standpoint, strategic HRM in Asian bureaucracies represents a balance between top-down control and bottom-up empowerment. Unlike Western models that focus on individual agency and performance-driven autonomy, HRM practices in Asia emphasize stability, harmony, and collective accountability (Tang, Bai, & Bao, 2024). This adaptation illustrates the influence of hierarchical values on Strategic HRM principles. Training programs emphasize compliance and respect over risk-taking, while empowerment is provided conditionally within established authority limits. Therefore, HRM effectiveness is contingent upon cultural factors, achieving success only when it aligns with the general bureaucratic principles of control and social harmony.

Besides that, organizational support and fairness perceptions further emerged as indispensable factors. Perceived fairness in evaluations, promotions, and task assignments boosts trust and job engagement (Tang, Bai, & Bao, 2024). Likewise, stress and motivation are undermined by perceived unfairness in the distribution of burden or recognition (Ahmad et al., 2022). Asian countries should establish management systems that are equitable and accessible to all, fostering a culture of trust, commitment, and psychological security (Kim et al., 2022). A critical cultural analysis of these findings suggests that fairness in Asian bureaucracies is perceived less as procedural impartiality, a fundamental aspect of Western Equity Theory, and more as moral justice influenced by hierarchical ethics. Employees anticipate fairness from both systems and the moral

integrity of leaders (Suong, 2021; Arifin & Narmaditya, 2024). This expectation is rooted in collectivist norms, positioning leaders as custodians of harmony rather than simply as enforcers of rules. Consequently, fairness functions in a relational manner, grounded in empathy and reciprocity, in contrast to the Western bureaucratic model of fairness, which is based on neutrality and impersonal treatment. Thus, this distinction highlights the necessity of culturally contextualizing equity and support theories in the application to Asian governance frameworks.

Furthermore, the work environment and job demands are crucial contextual factors that impact public servant performance. Additionally, inadequate institutional support, ambiguous role expectations, and excessive responsibilities can lead to emotional exhaustion and disengagement (Kim et al., 2022). When viewed through the cultural lens, job demands in hierarchical systems are often internalized as expressions of duty rather than burdens, consistent with collectivist acceptance of authority. Employees in such environments endure high workloads to uphold organizational loyalty and preserve face, a dynamic less common in Western public services, where work stress is often framed within an individual rights discourse (Ahmad et al., 2022). For this reason, interventions in Asian bureaucracies should not simply import Western stress management models but rather design support mechanisms that respect these moral obligations while ensuring overall well-being.

There are tailored resolutions to alleviate these pressures and sustain high performance, such as diverse task incentives, role-specific assistance, and responsive deployment, which are essential (Tang, Bai, & Bao, 2024). When interpreting the sociocultural frameworks of Asian public sectors, the employee perceptions on leadership, fairness, and loyalty are strongly influenced by collectivist values and hierarchical standards (Vuong et al., 2023). The reform efforts must accordingly be culturally prudent and tailored to the situation to ensure alignment between performance goals and public expectations. Ultimately, this analysis reveals that the theories underpinning civil servant performance, which include Transformational Leadership, Organizational Commitment, Equity, and Strategic HRM, cannot be understood without acknowledging their cultural reconfiguration in Asia. Collectivism transforms motivation into moral obligation, while hierarchy turns leadership and fairness into relational authority rather than procedural systems. Western-origin theories thus acquire new meanings in Asian bureaucracies, where harmony and respect often supersede autonomy and rationalism as drivers of high performance. Effective civil service transformation

relies on striking an appropriate balance between institutional accountability and responsiveness, taking into account local cultural dynamics (Sutiyoso & Faedlulloh, 2024). In conclusion, the job performance criteria are universally relevant, and their effective implementation requires culturally aware leadership, strategic human resource management design, and a supportive organizational ecosystem that values fairness, emotional well-being, and employee empowerment. Future reforms should incorporate these attributes to enhance the effectiveness and integrity of public service institutions across Asia.

CONCLUSION

This systematic literature review is limited by the scope and availability of empirical studies specifically addressing civil servants in Asian contexts. The inclusion of 14 articles facilitates thematic saturation, however, the findings are contingent upon the depth and quality of these studies, many of which are country-specific, such as Malaysia, Vietnam, Indonesia, and China. As such, broader generalizations across the Asian region should be approached with caution. Additionally, this review acknowledges potential limitations arising from language and database restrictions, as only English-language and indexed publications were included. This may have excluded valuable regional or non-English studies published in local administrative journals. Moreover, the small sample size and thematic imbalance with some factors, like fairness and work environment, receiving less coverage may limit the representativeness of the synthesis. Hence, future research should integrate multilingual databases, include a broader range of Asian subregions, and employ longitudinal designs to strengthen the external validity of findings.

This review identifies six key factors, empirically supported factors that influence job performance among Asian civil servants, which are leadership styles and behaviors, emotional and psychological factors, organizational commitment and OCB, HRM practices and skills, organizational support and fairness perception, and work environment and job demands. Collectively, these factors show an integrated picture of performance that is impacted by both individual capacities and institutional conditions. The analysis emphasizes that civil servant performance is determined not only by motivation and competence but also by perceived legitimacy, fairness, and organizational culture. As such, effective interventions must concurrently address leadership development, HRM reform, emotional resilience, and fairness-centered policies. By

aligning these techniques with the cultural and bureaucratic environment of each country, governments may construct more flexible, engaged, and high-performing public service systems.

Cultural and bureaucratic dimensions are explicitly integrated into mainstream public administration theories, which is what differentiates this review from previous work. This study illustrates how collectivism and hierarchy influence the relationships between leadership, HRM, and job satisfaction in Asian bureaucracies, contrasting with earlier reviews that regarded these constructs as universal. This theoretical contribution enhances public administration scholarship by situating Western-origin models such as Transformational Leadership, Organizational Commitment, and Equity Theories within non-Western governance systems. The article provides a culturally informed synthesis that enhances the comprehension of performance mechanisms in societies influenced by moral authority, group harmony, and hierarchical respect in organizational behavior.

From a policy standpoint, Asian public administrations can take advantage of these insights. Policymakers ought to emphasize leadership training that integrates authority and empathy, advocate for equitable and transparent evaluation systems that embody both procedural and relational justice and enhance HRM frameworks that foster employee well-being and empowerment within hierarchical structures. Furthermore, civil service reforms should prioritize culturally suitable methods of motivation, leveraging collective values and loyalty to achieve efficiency, accountability, and citizen trust. Integrating these findings into policy design enables Asian governments to develop a more adaptive, ethical, and performance-oriented bureaucracy.

In summary, this review provides a culturally integrated comprehension of the determinants of job performance in Asian civil services, providing a practical and theoretical contribution to the field of public administration. This promotes future scholars to enhance comparative research and urges policymakers to convert insights into practical reforms that honour local traditions while adhering to global governance standards.

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