

Mediational Role of Job Satisfaction between Servant Leadership and Employees' Commitment: Empirical Evidence from Private Universities

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Abstract *This study was taken to explain the role of job satisfaction as a mediator between servant leader behavior and employees' commitment. Altruistic calling, persuasive mapping and organizational stewardship were the strong predictors of employees' commitment. A structured questionnaire was used to get responses from 136 faculty members of different private universities. The findings of this work showed that faculty members from private universities not only affirm their behavioral importance while making policies and rules for the reward system (Job satisfaction) but showed their concerns to develop and adopt its behaviors as well. The contribution of this present study is not only to add to the novelty of literature in the field of servant leadership model approach, but it also contributes towards the employees' commitment and job satisfaction in private universities. Theoretical, as well as practical suggestions, are provided at the end of the paper.*

Key Words

job satisfaction, servant leader, universities, faculty and private.

Introduction

The business complication is headed everywhere. Dealings with customers, making prospects and treating other stakeholders are not easy than before. Globalization shaped and changed every aspect of the modern business world (Chughtai, 2016). The business uncertainty and risk of investments in a different portfolio, flaws of rewards system mechanism and retaining the technical minds are challenges and issues. Personality with servant elements is considered in coping with these issues and challenges (Hashim, Khan, Adnan, 2019; Rimes, 2011). Organizations police can only be shaped when an equal justice mechanism introduced and disseminated. Behavior plays an important part in developing human resources to use their skills in an effective way to shape the organizational activities, whether financial or non- financial to achieve the desired objectives (Hashim & Hameed, 2012). Leaders are watchers to understand problems relating to employees, systems, culture and environment to respond to them in the best technical way and utilize the entire resources effectively and efficiently (Carter, 2012). Employees' commitment is the advocacy of the organization's image to the outside public. Studies showed a positive relationship between job satisfaction, organizational commitment and servant leader behaviors (Ding et al., 2012; Hashim, 2018; Koesmono, 2014).

Zang and Bartol (2010) have mentioned that leadership plays an important role in employees' commitment by increasing their creative process. Ding et al. (2012) mentioned that job satisfaction plays an important role in employees' trust and commitment. Leaders' behaviors are also considered as one of the most important tools for increasing employees' commitment (Hashim, Khan, Adnan, 2019).

The objective of this study was to provide novel literature on servant leaders' behavior such as altruistic calling, organizational stewardship and persuasive mapping on employees' commitment. On the basis of previously available work, this study has proposed a model that servant leadership increases employees' commitment with the intervention of job satisfaction of the employee (Ding et al., 2012). Macan et al. (2014) have also mentioned that servant behaviors increase commitment but this commitment can be stronger when there is a good reward system (Hashim et al., 2016). Few studies have explored this area in this detailed structure. This is the first attempt to provide a complete model of employees' commitment that increases employee trust, retention and advocacy in an organization, and that the job satisfaction further moderates this relationship.

Objectives

- To explore the impact of servant leader behaviors on employees' commitment
- To evaluate the impact of altruistic calling on commitment
- To examine the effect of persuasive mapping on commitment
- To analyze the impact of organization stewardship on commitment
- To see how job satisfaction affects the relationship between servant behavior and employees' commitment

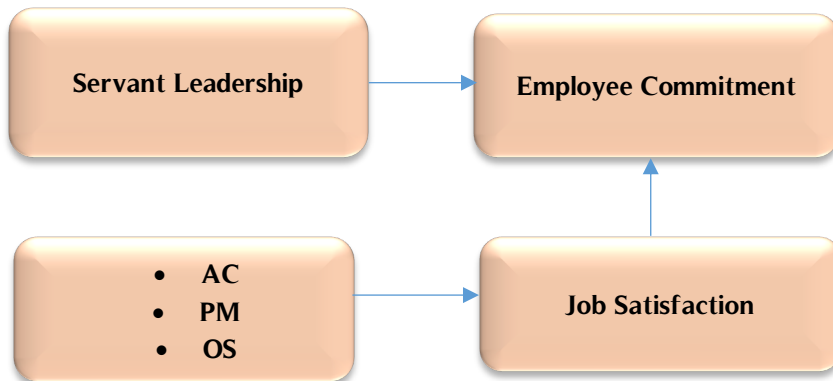
Literature Review

Servant Leadership (SL)

In the last few years, SL gained popularity not only in the academic side but also among corporate and consultants leaders (Yukul, 2010). The servant leadership model is accepted because of its unique ethical behavior characteristics (Liden et al., 2008). As mentioned by Yukul (2010) that due to its distinctive features, this model is becoming popular not only for supervision but also for the overall administration. It is likely to create employees' trust, loyalty and commitment and thus enhances satisfaction (Hashim, Khan, Adnan, 2019; Hashim et al., 201). The core priority of servant leaders is to keep the interest of workers on the top (Hashim, 2018; Rimes, 2011). Servant leader works for the benefit of subordinates, develops them morally as well as ethically and try to empower them for creative processes to increase employees' commitment (Jaramillo et al., 2015).

Different studies showed particular dimensions of servant-leader such as Van (2011), Petterson (2003), Laub (1998), Green leaf and Spears (1998) and Page and Wong (2000). This study used three facets from the model of Barbuto and Wheeler (2006) they are: altruistic calling; this facet of the servant leader is to care for people and advance their social benefits and safety (McCann et al., 2014). The second is persuasive mapping; this facet encourages and motivates subordinates to do the work with passion and self-assurance and to attain the objectives (Rimes, 2012). The third dimension is organizational stewardship; this facet identifies how a servant-leader is interested to make the organization more socially responsible (Luu, 2016).

Figure 1. Conceptual Model



Behaviors of Servant Leadership and Job Satisfaction

Work satisfaction lying on employees' pleasure and happiness and it is the internal feeling of someone regarding the environment of the job (Ilies & Judge, 2004; Rimes, 2012). Job satisfaction divided into two categories: internal satisfaction, which is the internal need of the individual, and external satisfaction which is but based on monetary rewards (Adeniji, 2011). Servant behaviors are employees oriented and care for people about their social issues and motivate them to achieve desire targets (Carter, 2011). Characteristics of servant leaders also enhance employee satisfaction (Ding et al., 2012; Hashim, 2018). Servant leaders are interested to serve first for the subordinates and give benefits to them. Thus, this approach not only increases employees' trust but also makes them contented (Chughtai, 2016).

Hypothesis 1: Servant leadership and job satisfaction are related positively.

Job Satisfaction and Commitment

As anticipated that job satisfaction improves employees' commitment because, job satisfaction offers external satisfaction in the sense of such as increasing employee responsibility with a good status, recognition, providing them opportunities for growth and development and alike (Adeniji, 2011). Commitment can be employees' trust and attachment with the organization and usually results from employees' positive thinking about an organization (Ding et al., 2012). The triggers of commitment are career development opportunities, recognition, motivation towards the attainment of goals and other benefits for self- sustainability (Liden et al., 2008). Commitment refers to the interest of workers to stay or continue their jobs within an organization or not (Newstrom, 2009). According to Bettencourt et al. (2001) job satisfaction is positively related to employees' commitment. Work satisfaction can enhance employees' trust and commitment (Wang et al., 2009).

Hypothesis 2: Job satisfaction and commitment have a positive association.

Servant Leadership and Commitment

Commitment always results from employees' positive perceptions regarding organization (Jaramillo et al., 2009). Stress-free environment, good relations with superiors, empowerment and recognition are the main predictors of employees' reliance and loyalty (Hat & Thompson, 2008). Servant behaviors make employees' commitment more strong because behaviors like persuasive mapping, stewardship and altruistic calling increase the level of workers' satisfaction and commitment (Liden et al., 2008). Luu (2016) also found that servant leadership has a positive impact on employees' devotion and reciprocally increases commitment and trust. Commitment can also be increased with good behavior of leaders such as participation of employees in decision-making processes, discussing with them their problems, always thinking for their interest and growth and empower them to achieve the objectives (Nehmeh, 2009).

Hypothesis 3: Servant leadership behaviors have a positive impact on commitment

Servant Leadership, Job Satisfaction, and Commitment

The servant attitude of the leader plays an important role in an organization's work environment and motivation of employees (Rimes, 2011). Commitment always results in employees' trust and depends on employees' work satisfaction to a great extent (McCann et al., 2014). Ding et al. (2012) have proved from their studies that there is imperative relationship between servant leader's attitude and job satisfaction, which further enhances employee commitment. Persuasive mapping and stewardship both features of servant leadership, increase work satisfaction and thus commitment (Carter, 2012). Adeniji (2011) also mentions that satisfaction such as: good working environment, promotion chances, recognition and good relation build employees' trust and increase effective performance.

Hypothesis 4: Job Satisfaction plays a mediating role between Servant leadership and Commitment.

Methodology

The methodology of the study can be divided into three sections such as population, sample size and instrumentation.

The population of this study was 3 private universities namely: Iqra National University (INU), City University (CU) and Cecos University (CeU) Peshawar. The number of staff in all three universities was 320.

The data was collected from 125 participants as a simple size. For sample selection, the approaches of Uma Sekaran (2000) and Karjacie and Morgan (1979) were followed. Data was collected through a questionnaire, which was sent to the concerned departments' heads to assist in the process. The entire questionnaires were first checked for their possible acceptance as the face and content validity. Experts' opinions were obtained before sending them to each department at the campus. A simple random sampling technique was used to obtain the data for further analysis. A total of 145 questionnaires was used in a survey.

Respondents returned 125 questionnaires. It was an 86 percent response rate. Some of the questionnaires were not usable which were excluded for any further analysis. The majority of the responses had come from male participants, which were 72 percent of the total population, and female participation was 35 percent. The education level of the respondents was MS, which constituted 92 percent of the population. Similarly, the job experience was between 8 to 12 years. The average age of the respondents was between 32 to 46 years. Control variables were age and education.

The data was collected with the help of an established questionnaire. For servant leadership, a model of Barbuto and Wheeler (2006) was used which included 16 items. The items' reliability was excellent as it was between .77 to .91. For job satisfaction, a job satisfaction survey was used to collect the data from respondents. A

total of 12 items from Wies et al. (1969) were used to know the perception of faculty regarding job satisfaction. The reliability of the items was good, which ranged from .67 to .90. For employees' commitment 15 items questionnaire, developed by Pandey and Khare (2012) was used. All the items were reliable and useable. The reliability of all items was in an acceptable range. The reliability ranged from .71 to .89.

Results and Analysis

Descriptive Statistics.

The following results of table 1 shows a strong relationship among all variables:

As SL has an affirmative impact on job satisfaction, the correlation value is 0.58 and the servant leadership and commitment value is also positive, which is 0.60. The relationship between job satisfaction and commitment was also positive. These details provided support to the acceptance of our study hypotheses.

Measurement Model.

To find out the model fit and to test the hypotheses of the study, the measurement model is very important to answer these questions (Rahman, 2012). This study used AMOS 23 to test the measurement model. This model tells us how the observed variables are related to the main variables (Chughtai, 2016). The SEM approach was used to run CFA for each individual dimension of servant leadership, job satisfaction, and commitment. The overall values of these individual dimensions were significant and good fitted. The values ranged between: for CMIN from 3 to 3.56; for CFI from 0.90 to 0.92; for NFI from 0.89 to 0.91; for GFI from 0.91 to 0.92; and for SRMR from 0.41 to 0.4; and for RMSEA all the values are less than .60. All the values were in an acceptable range and showed good indicators of the latent variables.

The overall model for measurement was also tested. Factor loadings were checked separately, as well, as a whole. The three components in the measurement model were servant leadership, commitment, and job satisfaction. The model was taken first with two factors only and run the SEM, the results showed the model was not as strong as it was desired, then the

Items	Mean	S.D	Education	Age	SL	JS	C
Education	0.30	0.30	***				
Age	0.33	5.76	0.41	***			
1.Servant leadership	3.00	0.67	0.11*	0.04	0.91		
2.JS	3.34	0.89	0.10**	0.17**	0.58**	0.90	
3.Commitment	3.61	0.79	0.20	0.14*	0.34**	0.60**	0.89

Table 1. Descriptive information details

The model was run with three variables and this time the model found well fitted as all the factor loadings showed acceptable values. The fit statistics for all three components were good. As CMIN value was 3.52 as mentioned by Rahman (2012) that the acceptable value of CMIN should be between 3 to 5. The value of other statistics was also good and showed an acceptable range. The CFI was 0.91, RMR was 0.42, NFI 0.90 and square residual was 0.41.

Table 2. Model fit Values

	CMIN	DF	NFI	CFI	NNFI	RMSEA
	3.52	35	0.90	0.91	0.94	0.41
Recommended value	5< (CMIN value)	≥ 0.90	0.90	0.90	0.03	

Table 3. Bootstrapping for Mediation Standardized Direct and Indirect Effect with Significance Levels

Direct Effect	Servant Leadership	JS
JS	0.44	0.001
Commitment	0.41	0.001
Indirect Effect		
Js 0.31	0.001	
commitment	0.56	0.131

The bootstrapping approach was applied with the help of AMOS 23 to find out the mediation between servant leadership behaviors and commitment. It was found in both ways direct and indirect. The direct impact of servant leadership on commitment was 0.41 with 0.001 level, besides the indirect impact which was greater than the direct impact and that it was 0.56 as shown in the above table. Job satisfaction mediates between commitment and servant leadership, hence the hypothesis accepted.

Discussion

The primary goal was to inspect the relation of SL and commitment with the mediating role of job satisfaction. Data was collected using a sample of 136 faculties of different private sector universities in Peshawar, Pakistan. The results showed a strong relationship between servant leader behaviors and faculty commitment but this relation was stronger when job satisfaction mediates between these relationships. The research also indicated that SL behavior was, directly and indirectly, related to faculty commitment.

For H1, the correlation matrix results showed ($r = 0.58$ with $p < 0.01$), the data supported this hypothesis. For H2, ($r = 0.60$ with p -value 0.01), the results also supported this research hypothesis. For H3, ($r = 0.34$ with significance level 0.01) and for H4, the directly standardized coefficient is .41 with commitment and it was significant but the indirect effect changed the value with the mediation of job satisfaction to .56 with insignificant value, which showed full mediation of LMX between servant leadership and commitment.

These results are supported by previous studies of Jyoti and Bhau (2015), Qu, Janssen, and Shi (2015) and Gumusluoglu and Ilsev (2009). Furthermore, the possession of all these abilities of Altruistic Calling, Persuasive Mapping and Organizational Stewardship of a servant leader is not only important but critical for universities to attract more qualified academic staff and to enhance in them the creative and innovative process.

Conclusion

The main purpose was to see whether any relationship exists between servant leader behaviors and commitment with the mediating the role of job satisfaction or not? The findings showed that servant leadership behavior was the important predictor of commitment but this relationship is stronger when job satisfaction mediates. So to create good relationships with employees and make them more committed, organization leaders should espouse servant leadership behavior and characteristics.

Implications

This research contributed to the existing literature in two ways: first, it provides empirically proved association among faculty commitment and servant leader behaviors as mentioned by different studies like Shusha (2013) who found that positive behavior of leaders contributed to followers' commitment. Servant leadership in such a case is an ignorant area; therefore, this research provides that servant leader behaviors make employees 'commitment more strong. Second, this research used job satisfaction as a mediating variable to examine whether was there any strong association between servant leader behavior and employee commitment? The findings showed that the indirect relationship between exogenous and endogenous variables was stronger as compared to a direct relationships. The findings of this research were in line with other studies that indicated that leader can enhance follower's commitment and innovation by providing good organizational structure and relationships (Chughtai, 2016; Zhang & Bartol, 2010).

Furthermore, this research also provides the role of extant literature to job satisfaction. It was also proved that servant leadership has a positive relationship with job satisfaction and job satisfaction can enhance commitment (Qu et al., 2015; Shusha, 2013). Lastly, the most important contribution of this research was the geographical location that was selected for this study that is Pakistan. Pakistan is a country that is more collectivistic in nature and more power distanced country. There are many issues and problems political instability, poverty, economic duress and law and order situations being faced every now and then, which in turn affects behaviors. The findings of this research proved that servant leadership behavior can bring positive change and yet in this distinctive environment. In nutshell, servant leadership behavior is the driving force for employees' commitment. This research contributes practically to help the management, administration and policymakers in controlling and making the rules regulation for organizational innovation and effectiveness.

Limitations of the study

Test size could be the main constraint of this examination as just 136 employees were partaken in the review from various universities in Peshawar to answer the inquiries as required. The second constraint could be the qualities of

servant leaders, as in this exploration just three attributes were utilized to gauge the servant initiative conduct. It could be unique if all the other qualities are utilized to quantify its conduct. The third impediment could be the cross-sectional information as utilized in this examination. The data was collected just for the one time and not extended as longitudinal research. The fourth limitation could be the less availability of time and resources to accurately draw the results from the data.

Further research

Further studies on other potentials variables should be taken that could increase the positive contribution in the relationship of commitment and servant leadership with the mediating role of job satisfaction. Further studies on other sectors should be taken on the same variables to investigate outcomes.

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