

# THE INFLUENCE OF SERVANT LEADERSHIP ON ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT MEDIATED BY JOB SATISFACTION

**Qotrun Nada<sup>1</sup>, Achmad Sudjadi<sup>2</sup>, Dwita Darmawati<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Qotrun Nada, qotrunnada697@gmail.com, Indonesia

<sup>2</sup>Achmad Sudjadi, achmad.sudjadi@unsoed.ac.id, Indonesia

<sup>3</sup>Dwita Darmawati, dwitadarma75@gmail.com, Indonesia

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## ABSTRACT

In the midst of increasingly dynamic and complex business developments, leadership plays a pivotal role in shaping an effective and productive organizational culture. One of the leadership approaches is servant leadership, which emphasizes the principles of service and concern for the well-being of subordinates as the fundamental foundation for carrying out leadership tasks. In a workplace environment that is growing more complex and diverse, it is crucial to comprehend how leadership paradigms like servant leadership can influence key factors within organizations, such as organizational commitment and job satisfaction. This study aims to analyze the influence of servant leadership on organizational commitment mediated by job satisfaction. This research falls under the category of quantitative research with an explanatory research design employing a cause-and-effect (causal step) approach. The analysis method employed is mediation regression analysis, processing questionnaire data using SPSS software.

**Keywords:** Servant Leadership, Job Satisfaction, Organizational Commitment.

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## 1. Introduction

Servant Leadership is a leadership concept in which a leader acts as a servant, focusing on the ethical and humble use of power. This leader prioritizes building trust and genuine relationships with their followers, as well as creating the foundation for establishing a supportive and positive work environment (Wong & Davey, 2007). The servant leadership style is not only a promising choice in various industries but is also recommended as a global leadership approach to address the unique challenges arising from culturally diverse communities (Irving, 2010). One common issue that organizations face in achieving success revolves around human resources related to demands from both the organization and the individuals involved. In the organizational context, the challenges often require different leadership styles that can impact organizational commitment and employee job satisfaction.

Job satisfaction holds significance for both organizations and individuals as it can influence the level of company productivity. Job satisfaction also refers to employees' perceptions of how well their jobs fulfill essential needs, such as the nature of the work itself, salary, promotion opportunities, supervision, and other aspects of satisfaction (Luthan, 1998). Job satisfaction is a pleasant emotional state that arises from an individual's assessment of their job or work experiences (Locke, 1976). According to Davis (1988), the primary goal in designing jobs and managerial policies in an organization is to ensure that employees obtain maximum satisfaction from their needs through these jobs and policies. Job satisfaction can be linked to the role of leadership, where being a leader in the present era significantly differs from being a leader in the 1970s. A leader not only relies on their authority but also utilizes influence to motivate others. While performing their duties, a leader will encounter various personalities, behaviors, and traits among team members. There are various leadership styles, one of which is servant leadership or leadership characterized by a service-oriented approach

Furthermore, job satisfaction is also greatly influenced by the level of organizational commitment. There is a wealth of research that has explored the impact of Human Resources (HRM) practices on job satisfaction and organizational commitment, both in the secondary and service sectors (Devonish, 2018; Hao et al., 2016; Chang et al., 2016; Moritz, 2014 ; Saleem and Saleem, 2014; Meisler, 2014). Although there are various conceptualizations of organizational commitment, most research in this field uses the conceptualization proposed by Meyer and Allen (1991). Meyer and Allen's (1991, 1997) model of organizational commitment identifies three components, namely affective, continuity, and normative. This research examines the relationship between servant leadership and organizational commitment and job satisfaction as mediating variables. This research is very important for organizations and individuals because it can create a positive work environment where employees feel respected and appreciated. Companies that use a servant leadership style tend to have a stronger work culture with high morale so that the organization can grow well and employees will also feel empowered.

Although many researchers have been interested in investigating job satisfaction and have identified important relationships between job satisfaction and outcomes, studies related to servant leadership and organizational commitment are still limited. In this context, servant leadership has a significant impact on organizational commitment through factors such as commitment, loyalty, sense of belonging, and employee perceptions of the company as a whole, all of which contribute to organizational success (Carter & Baghurst, 2013). Employees who work under the leadership of a servant leader have strong ties to the organization through close peer relationships. They feel appreciated, which then encourages them to feel responsible, provide good service to customers, and play an active role in achieving company success.

## **2. Literature Review**

### ***2.1 Servant Leadership***

A core characteristic of a servant leader is that they ignore their personal interests and focus entirely on meeting the needs of their followers (Barbuto and Wheeler, 2006; Liden et al., 2015). In contrast to other leadership styles such as transformational leadership, where the primary focus is the well-being of the organization, a servant leader primarily seeks to create conditions that support the growth and development of followers (Van Dierendonck, 2011). In an attempt to explain servant leadership to researchers, Spears (2002) identified ten characteristics taken from

Greenleaf's writings that serve as a focus for servant leadership development. These characteristics include: listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people, and building community. Most previous leadership theories are based on behavior, while servant leadership emerges from the leader's principles, values, and beliefs of the leader (Walker, 2003).

## ***2.2 Job Satisfaction***

Job satisfaction has two main components, namely affective and cognitive, as proposed by Parker (2007). Affective job satisfaction involves the emotions perceived by employees towards their work. On the other hand, cognitive job satisfaction is not only a rational perception of work conditions, such as salary (Thompson & Phua, 2012). The long-term importance of job satisfaction largely reflects the management's and the scholarly community's concern for enhancing organizational effectiveness. This is based on abundant evidence linking job satisfaction to various attitudes and outcomes, such as absenteeism, employee turnover, organizational citizenship, commitment, and organizational performance (e.g., Diestel et al., 2014; Flickinger et al., 2016; Tziner et al., 2008; Ziegler et al., 2012). However, there is also an ethical impetus to increase job satisfaction, as a significant relationship has been found between job satisfaction and an individual's physical and psychological well-being (e.g. Grant et al., 2009; Tsaousis et al., 2007).

## ***2.3 Organizational Commitment***

Allen and Meyer's (1990) three-component model refers to affective commitment, normative commitment, and continuance commitment. According to Allen and Meyer (1990), affective commitment signifies a sense of ownership, identification, and emotional involvement of employees towards the organization or company. Normative commitment reflects an individual's belief that they have an obligation to the organization after becoming a part of it. Employees with high levels of normative commitment will display greater enthusiasm and energy in supporting the company. Continuance commitment pertains to an individual's tendency to remain engaged in the organizational process, determined by the perception of costs and benefits associated with sustained involvement or the potential losses they would experience if they were to leave the organization. Individuals with a high level of continuance commitment will invest their energy in advancing the organization, because they see it as important to their own interests.

## ***2.4 Servant Leadership on Organizational Commitment***

Servant leaders have a greater tendency to prioritize the interests and aspirations of the people they lead over their own personal interests. When the needs and interests of employees have been met by their leader through the service provided, and the leader successfully sets a good example for the employees, loyalty and commitment to the organization begin to grow within each employee towards their job and the organization itself (Wike Santa Maria and Meily Margaretha, 2012). Similar to research conducted by Émilie Lapointe and Christian Vandenberghe (2015), which demonstrates a positive influence between Servant Leadership and organizational commitment. The positive impact that organizations can gain includes increased productivity, work quality, job satisfaction, as well as a decrease in lateness, absenteeism, and employee turnover (Mathiew & Zajak, as cited in Yulianto, 2001). Therefore, based on this explanation, the following hypothesis can be formulated:

H1: Servant Leadership has a positive effect on Organizational Commitment.

### ***2.5 Organizational Commitment***

Several studies (Rami Al-Asadi et al., 2019; Tobias M. Huning et al., 2020; Mohammad A. et al., 2019) provide empirical evidence of the positive relationship between servant leadership as a single construct and employee job satisfaction. Al-Asadi, R., et al. (2019) shows that servant leaders have a strong and positive relationship with job satisfaction. Huning, T. M., et al (2020) stated that servant leadership is significantly positively correlated with job satisfaction. Aboramadan, M., et al (2019) stated that there is a positive correlation between servant leadership and job satisfaction. Previous research by Zhang, Z., et al (2016) shows that there is a relationship between job satisfaction at two levels, namely the individual level and also the organizational level. The influence of servant leadership on job satisfaction is significantly stronger at the organizational level than at the individual level, indicating varying relationships between job satisfaction at different levels.

H2: Servant Leadership has a positive effect on Job Satisfaction.

### ***2.6 Organizational Commitment***

Workplace learning programs provided by the company can also signal to employees that the organization is making efforts to establish a long-term relationship with its employees (Allen et al., 2003). A review of the literature indicates that there has been extensive research on organizational commitment over time, with many studies focusing on the influence of job satisfaction on organizational commitment. It reveals a strong correlation between the two (Samuel K. Sejakka & Twaha K. Kaawaase, 2014; Alborz Gheitani et al., 2018; Geunpil Ryu & Seong-Gin Moon, 2019). Rogers Mwesigwa (2019) demonstrates a significant and positive correlation between job satisfaction and organizational commitment, implying that when academic staff are satisfied with their jobs, organizational commitment can be enhanced. The positive effects of organizational commitment are well-acknowledged in management literature. The findings of Lam and Ozorio (2012) confirm that high levels of satisfaction among employees have a positive impact on loyalty and job commitment.

H3: Job Satisfaction has a positive influence on Organizational Commitment

### ***2.7 Job Satisfaction as a Mediation***

Servant leadership has an important contribution in forming positive employee attitudes and creating a positive work environment, both for the organization and employees (Eva et al., 2019; Walumbwa et al., 2010). In this context, it can be assumed that when employees feel positive leadership qualities, they tend to show enthusiasm, wisdom and optimal performance (Bambale, 2014). More specifically, followers will feel a higher level of satisfaction when they have a leader who cares about their well-being (Yukl, 2010). Based on empirical research, Kaur (2018), Neubert et al. (2016), and Amah (2018) found that servant leadership plays an important role in increasing employee job satisfaction. In addition, it can be argued that job satisfaction is considered an antecedent factor to organizational commitment (Meyer et al., 2002). This shows that employees who feel happy and satisfied tend to have a higher level of dedication and attachment to their organization. This argument finds support from previous research by Dirani and Kuchinke (2011) and Kaur (2018), which found that satisfied employees tend to show higher levels of organizational commitment.

H4: Job Satisfaction mediates the relationship between Servant Leadership and Organizational Commitment.

### **3. Research Methodology**

#### ***3.1 Research Design***

The type of research conducted is explanatory research, which aims to understand the relationships and influence among the variables identified in the hypothesis, namely servant leadership on organizational commitment, with job satisfaction as the mediator. The subjects in this research were employees from various industries in Jakarta. Primary data was collected through a survey using a questionnaire consisting of specially developed questions, while secondary data was obtained from literature reviews and references related to the research problem, as well as journals discussing the research variables. Both primary and secondary data were collected through structured questionnaire questions and surveys as the data collection methods.

Population refers to the entire group of unique individuals, events, or things that possess specific characteristics and quantities. Additionally, in-depth analysis is conducted to discover facts or opposing opinions based on sample statistics (Sekaran & Bougie, 2017). The population in this research consists of employees from various industrial fields. According to Sugiyono (2017:81), a sample is a portion of the quantity and characteristics possessed by the population. When the population is large and researchers face limitations in terms of resources, personnel, and time to study all aspects of the population, researchers can use a sample that represents the population. The sampling in this research used Non-Probability Sampling, and the sampling method is based on the Roscoe formula.

#### ***3.2 Method of collecting data***

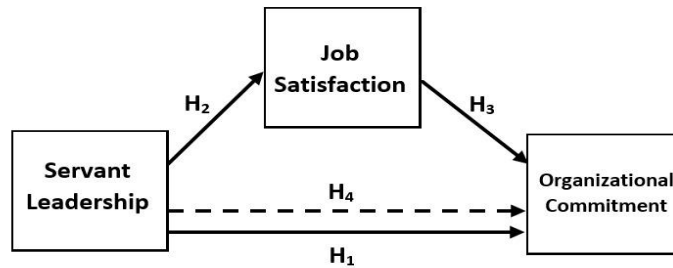
The data collection method in this research utilizes the questionnaire method, where a questionnaire is a data collection method that is carried out by giving a number of written statements or questions to respondents who are then answered in accordance with the technical instructions explained by the researcher (Sugiyono, 2019: 199). This method was chosen because the variables used (servant leadership (X), organizational commitment (Y), and job satisfaction (Z) are primary data so that in order to obtain the data a direct approach is needed. The questionnaire in the research will be prepared based on indicators that have been determined by the researcher using a Likert scale (1-5).

#### ***3.3 Data Analysis Methods***

This research utilizes mediating variables which are defined as intermediate variables or intermediaries between exogenous and endogenous variables so that the exogenous variables do not have a direct influence on the endogenous variables. The approach used is a causal step approach which was developed by Baron and Kenny in 1986 (Munawaroh et. al., 2018). The stages in using the causal step approach are as follows:

- Create a regression equation for the exogenous variable (X) against the endogenous variable (Y).
- Create a regression equation for the exogenous variable (X) against the intermediate variable (M).
- Create a regression equation for the exogenous variable (X) against the endogenous variable (Y) by including the mediating variable size (Z).
- Conclude whether the mediating variable mediates perfectly (perfect mediation) or mediates partially (partial mediation).

Figure 1. Research Framework



The steps above are then quoted from research by Munawaroh et. al. (2018) is translated into the following equations:

Equation I :  $Y = \beta_0 + \beta X$  .....(1)

Equation II:  $Z = \beta_0 + \beta X + \beta_1$ .....(2)

Equation III:  $Y = \beta_0 + \beta X + \beta_1$ .....(3)

In this research, to analyze data, researchers used the SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) program as a tool. The data analysis methods that will be used are validity and reliability testing, panel data regression and hypothesis testing. The stages of data analysis after the mediation regression equation is formed are described as follows:

- **Validity Test**  
The validity test is used to determine whether a questionnaire is valid or not. Validity testing is carried out to ensure that each question in the questionnaire can clearly measure the variables that have been determined previously. A question item is said to be valid if it has a loading factor greater than 0.40.
- **Reliability Test**  
The aim of the reliability test is to see whether the questionnaire has consistency if measurements are carried out using the questionnaire repeatedly. The basis for taking reliability tests for research instruments uses the Cronbach Alpha method and is applied to items that have previously passed validity tests. According to Wiratna Sujerweni (2014) a questionnaire is said to be reliable if the Cronbach Alpha value is > 0.6. Questionnaire The results of reliability testing are presented in the table below.

The research uses a causal step approach or paradigm which was developed to analyze the magnitude of the indirect influence variance. We can calculate it using the VAF (Variance Accounted For) method which was developed by Preacher dan Hayes (2008). Preacher dan Hayes (2008) then derived the following VAF calculation formula:

$$VAF = \frac{\textit{indirect influence}}{\textit{direct influence} + \textit{indirect ifluence}}$$

**4. Results**



In this research, the researcher utilized three variables under examination, where each of these variables will be tested for its influence on one another. There is an independent variable, namely Servant leadership, an intervening variable, which is job satisfaction, and a dependent variable, which is organizational commitment. This study was conducted in Jakarta with the research subjects being employees of the organization. The research instrument used in this study was a questionnaire distributed to the organization's employees.

**4.1 Validity Test**

Based on the results of the validity test table, it shows that the results of 20 items on the independent variable, namely servant leadership, are proven to be valid. , for the attachment variable, namely organizational commitment, the 15 questionnaire items for this variable have been proven valid. Each question in the questionnaire has a calculated r value > rtable of 2.254, which indicates that all items in the questionnaire meet the validity requirements and can be used in further analysis.

However, a different situation occurs with the intervening variable, namely job satisfaction, where not all items in the questionnaire meet the validity requirements. Of the total 18 questionnaire items, one item did not meet the requirements with a calculated r value < r table of 2.254. Therefore, these items will not be used in further analysis.

**4.2 Reliability Test**

Tabel 1. Reliability Test

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Result
Servant Leadership (X)	0,918	Reliabel
Job Satisfaction (Z)	0,946	Reliabel
Organizational Commitment (Y)	0,911	Reliabel

Based on the data in table 1 above, it can be concluded that the questionnaire for all variables is declared reliable. This is proven by the Cronbach Alpha value for each variable > 0.6.

**4.3 Regression Servant Leadership on Organizational Commitment  
Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	5,703	8,711	,655	,515
	X_Servant_Leadership	,655	,098		

a. Dependent Variable: Y\_Organizational\_Commitment

- From the regression of the servant leadership variable on organizational commitment, the result is c = 0.655 and the significance value is 0.000, which shows that the value is significant.

**4.4 Regression Servant Leadership on Job Satisfaction**

**Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	5,795	10,679		,543	,589
	X_Servant_Leadership	,790	,121	,652	6,550	,000

a. Dependent Variable: Z\_Job\_Satisfaction

- From the regression of the servant leadership variable on job satisfaction, the result is a = 0.790 and the significance value is 0.000, which shows that the value is significant.

**4.5 Regression Servant Leadership and Job Satisfaction on Organizational Commitment**

**Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	3,034	7,270		,417	,678
	X_Servant_Leadership	,291	,108	,292	2,691	,009
	Z_Job_Satisfaction	,461	,089	,561	5,165	,000

a. Dependent Variable: Y\_Organizational\_Commitment

- From the regression of the servant leadership variable on job satisfaction, the result is b= 0.461 and the significance value is 0.000, which shows that the value is significant.
- compare the values of c and c'. Because the values a, b, c are significant and the c value decreases from 0.655 to 0.291, it can be concluded that job satisfaction absolutely mediates the causal relationship between servant leadership and organizational commitment.

**4.6 Regression for job satisfaction as mediating**

$$VAF = \frac{\text{indirect influence}}{\text{Direct influence} + \text{indirect influence}}$$

$$VAF = \frac{(0,652 \times 0,561)}{(0,658) + (0,652 \times 0,561)}$$

$$= \frac{0,366}{1,024} = 0,357$$

- Because the value  $20\% \leq VAF \leq 80\%$ , job satisfaction partially mediates the relationship between servant leadership and organizational commitment.

**5. Discussion**

This research shows support for the proposed theoretical model as presented in Figure 1. In this section the researcher will discuss the implications of each hypothesis.



The first hypothesis confirms the existence of a positive influence between servant leadership and organizational commitment. The data results also support this assumption, there is a positive correlation between service-oriented leadership and organizational commitment (OC). The findings from the data also support this assumption, because the research results show that service-oriented leadership has a key role in strengthening trust in leaders and organizational commitment among employees. This highlights that employees demonstrate higher levels of trust in their leaders and stronger levels of commitment when their leaders implement a service-oriented leadership style in the organizational context. These findings suggest that service-oriented leadership behavior can provide significant benefits, especially for leaders in overcoming the distance between themselves and their followers by providing support for followers' well-being.

This research empirically validates the positive relationship between servant leadership and levels of job satisfaction. The results of this research are also in line with existing literature (Rami Al-Asadi et al., 2019; Tobias M. Huning et al., 2020; Mohammad A. et al., 2019). confirming that when leaders have confidence in putting individuals first and show concern and empathy for their team members, this will ultimately result in increased job satisfaction. Servant leadership not only has a significant role in establishing a culture that is reliable, fair, mutually beneficial, and transparent, which ultimately increases the effectiveness of individuals and the organization as a whole. But also, this leadership also provides support and attention to the welfare of followers in the organizational context (Parris D and Peachy J., 2013).

Saks (2006), individuals who continue to participate in their work do so because they perceive a beneficial exchange. This tends to occur in stronger relationships and trust between individuals and their employers who possess high-quality attributes. By considering job satisfaction as a mediating variable, we also reinforce the influence of psychological stimulation on individual actions. This study indicates that both trust and exchange quality are highly important factors in predicting job satisfaction. This is quite intriguing, as we have not found any research in India that has investigated both of these factors before.

## **6. Conclusion**

The conclusion of this research is that servant leadership has a positive influence on organizational commitment, and this relationship is mediated by job satisfaction. These findings show that leaders who apply servant leadership principles can increase the commitment of organizational members by creating job satisfaction. This result is supported by the hypothesis results which show that all variables in this study have a positive effect. In more detail, the results of data analysis show that equation 1, equation 2, and equation 3 are significant, which means that servant leadership directly has a positive influence on job satisfaction, job satisfaction has a positive influence on organizational leadership, and servant leadership also has a positive influence on job satisfaction. indirectly to organizational commitment through job satisfaction.

Thus, this research provides an important contribution to the understanding of how servant leadership can increase the commitment of organizational members through creating job satisfaction. These results can be a guide for organizations to develop leaders who apply servant leadership principles to improve the performance and commitment of organizational members.

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