Impact of Servant Leadership on Job Execution: Mediating Role of Interpersonal Coordination

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ABSTRACT

Servant leadership has gained increased interest over the past few years; nevertheless, little research has been conducted on the dynamics of servant leadership and symbiotic diversity settings and their influence on the behavior of the employee. The objective of the study is to examine the mediating effect of interpersonal coordination between servant leadership and job execution. The managerial employees of the leading four cellular networks in Pakistan were surveyed and data were analyzed with the help of structural equation modeling (SEM) using Smart PLS 4.0. It was found that servant leadership significantly predicts job execution and interpersonal coordination. Moreover, it was also found that the interpersonal coordination partially mediates between servant leadership and job execution. The research emphasizes the value of servant leadership in a variety of workplaces and provides some practical implications on how to build inclusive cultures and enhance employee performance by implementing relational and identity-based leadership.

INTRODUCTION

Leadership can be defined as the ability to influence people in the process of accomplishing shared organizational objectives (Chen et al., 2025; Meuser & Smallfield, 2023). In the modern-day dynamic work places, leadership has taken center stage in solving problems, innovation and organizational culture (Dong & Kuvaas, 2025; Ly, 2024). Servant leadership is one of the leadership styles that have attracted more and more attention due to its ethical base and the focus on empowering others, healing emotions, and building relationships (Canavesi & Minelli, 2022; Latif et al., 2021). In contrast to the conventional leadership approaches, servant leadership is focused on satisfying the needs of followers and fostering mutual support, inclusivity, and equity, which eventually leads to the improvement of employee engagement, performance, and commitment (Greenleaf, 1977; Ekmekcioglu &

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Oner, 2023). The current research examines the impact of servant leadership on job execution (Kuo et al., 2024). More importantly, the study also investigates relational process, i.e., interpersonal coordination, as mediating variable (Caetano et al., 2023). In spite of the increasing number of studies on servant leadership, there are still some important gaps. The majority of the available research concentrates on the outcome variables and overlooks the relational processes that determine the way these outcomes are achieved (Kuo et al., 2024). In addition, there is little studies exist that focus on the role of servant leadership influencing interpersonal coordination in organizational settings (Zhan et al., 2023). Using the Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986), the study conceptualizes the way that servant leadership can help employees to identify themselves with their group or organization by means of interpersonal coordination. Hence, the aim of the study is to: (a) assess the impact of servant leadership on job execution and interpersonal coordination (b) to test the mediating effects of interpersonal coordination in between servant leadership and job execution. The study has some practical implications on leadership literature and dynamic workplaces.

Hypotheses Development

Servant Leadership and Interpersonal Coordination

Leadership is crucial in creating conditions that make employees feel motivated, appreciated, and aligned to the goals of the organization. Servant leadership is one of the leadership styles that are distinguished by the focus on the needs of the followers and the development of the ethical and people-oriented working environment (Greenleaf, 1977). Servant leaders are focused on the growth and empowerment of their employees and their psychological comfort, which creates a nurturing environment that promotes teamwork and trust (Mayer et al., 2008; Van Dierendonck et al., 2014). Interpersonal coordination is one of the key processes in which servant leadership has its impact since it is the process of coordination between people in terms of coordinating their efforts, exchanging information and coordinating their actions to reach common goals. Through open communication, empathy, and mutual respect, servant leaders establish the environment in which employees can better coordinate their efforts with each other (Liden et al., 2008). When workers feel that their leader is caring and supportive, they tend to trust each other, solve problems together, and make a positive contribution to group dynamics. Servant leaders contribute to interpersonal coordination by satisfying the employees with their basic psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Such satisfaction does not only increase individual motivation but also promotes team-based behaviors that demand interpersonal harmony and pursuit of common goals (De Clercq et al., 2014). Servant leaders create an environment in which teamwork is not only promoted but integrated into the organizational culture resulting in an increased

synergy, a decrease in conflict and a better integration of the tasks (Sousa & Van Dierendonck, 2017). Moreover, servant leaders lead by example morally and inclusively, which reinforces common values and builds informal norms of helping, cooperation and role clarity, all of which are essential to effective coordination (Mayer et al., 2008). Taken together, these dynamics indicate that servant leadership is a source of interpersonal coordination in that it influences the emotional tone as well as behavioral standards of the work team. Employees who feel servant leadership are more inclined to constructive interactions, align their efforts and contribute to the common goals.

H1: *Servant leadership positively effects interpersonal coordination.*

Servant Leadership and Job Execution

Leadership has been considered as one of the major drivers of employee engagement, behavior and performance. Servant leadership is one of the leadership styles that have gained a lot of influence because of the core values of empathy, empowerment, and follower development (Greenleaf, 1977; Liden et al., 2008). Servant leaders are concerned with the welfare and the personal development of their workers, creating an atmosphere at the workplace based on trust, respect and support (Mayer et al., 2008). One of the most important channels through which servant leadership can affect the results of an organization is by boosting the job execution of the employees, which is defined as the ability to perform the duties assigned in a way that is effective, efficient, and with a consistent quality. Job execution is encouraged by servant leaders who ensure that their leadership behaviors are aligned to intrinsic motivational needs of employees. Self-Determination Theory explains that the fulfillment of basic psychological needs (autonomy, competence and relatedness) results in optimal functioning and performance (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Servant leaders develop these needs by giving employees greater authority over their job (autonomy), encouraging them to improve their skills (competence), and ensuring that they have a supportive connected team (relatedness) (De Clercq et al., 2014; Van Dierendonck et al., 2014).

Servant leaders instill the sense of purpose in employees by offering valuable direction and resources that enhance engagement and ownership of work tasks (Macey & Schneider, 2008). Such an enhanced involvement leads to greater proactivity, flexibility, and concentration which are the main components of efficient job performance (Salanova & Schaufeli, 2008). Moreover, servant leadership promotes constant feedback and learning and, therefore, increases problem-solving ability and task quality in the long term (Sousa & Van Dierendonck, 2017). In addition, servant leadership fosters a psychologically safe environment in which the employees are motivated to take initiative and innovate without

fearing any adverse repercussions. This security is necessary so that employees can be able to undertake complex or high-responsibility tasks with confidence and accountability (Bakker & Leiter, 2010). This way, servant leaders reduce the performance hurdles, including stress, conflict, and ambiguity, and allow workers to perform their duties more consistently and to a higher standard (Barrick et al., 2015). Servant leadership has a direct impact on the better job performance of individuals because of its focus on enabling others and eliminating barriers to performance.

H2: *Servant leadership positively effects job execution*

Interpersonal Coordination as a Mediator

Interpersonal coordination refers to the cooperation and alignment among team members, fostering a shared interpersonal identity that leverages diverse backgrounds and skills to solve problems effectively (Caetano et al., 2023; Sluss & Ashforth, 2007). Servant leaders promote this by addressing followers' needs, encouraging knowledge sharing, and creating a respectful, goal-aligned environment that strengthens loyalty and inclusivity (Hollander, 2009; Gittell, 2020; Randel et al., 2018). This supportive culture reduces misunderstandings and enhances organizational identification through open communication and participation (Guo et al., 2022; Leroy et al., 2022; Latif et al., 2021). Grounded in social identity theory, servant leadership fosters trust and engagement by involving employees in decision-making, which improves relationship coordination and task performance (Turner et al., 1979; Chen et al., 2023; Roberson & Perry, 2022). The leader's ongoing support and openness encourage frequent, accurate interactions among team members, boosting interpersonal coordination and motivating followers to provide leader-directed support (Carmeli et al., 2010; Latif et al., 2021). Based on these insights, the following hypotheses were formulated.

H3: Interpersonal coordination has a significant effect on job execution.

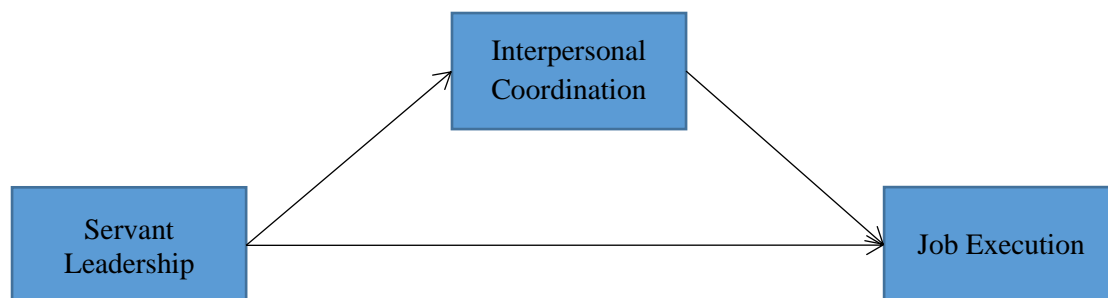H4: Interpersonal coordination mediates between servant leadership and job execution.

Figure No. 1: Conceptual Framework

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The research was conducted on middle and lower level managerial staff of four leading

cellular network providers in Pakistan namely Jazz, PTCL, Ufone and Telenor. These companies have been chosen on the basis of: (a) the reputation they have in the telecommunication industry, (b) their internal leadership culture and diversity of operations and (c) their wide employee base, which provides representative and inclusive sample. Stratified random sampling was used to make the sampling representative and minimize sampling bias. The strata were created on the basis of organization (company), department (e.g. HR, Sales, Technical), and managerial level (mid and lower). In every stratum, employees were randomly sampled through lists that were made available by HR departments. This method was useful to control the heterogeneity of the population and increase generalizability (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). The lead investigator used professional networks to obtain organizational access and send online surveys. The involvement was voluntary, and confidentiality was guaranteed. The information was anonymized and was only utilized in research.

Analytical Strategy

The study employed Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) using Smart PLS 4.0, a variance based SEM (Hair et al., 2022). Smart PLS was selected due to its robustness in handling non-normal data distributions and smaller sample sizes, as well as its ability to model hierarchical latent constructs like servant leadership. To evaluate model fit, the Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) was used as the key global fit indicator, with a value of 0.061, which falls below the recommended threshold of 0.08, indicating an acceptable model fit (Henseler et al., 2016). Additionally, multicollinearity was assessed through Variance Inflation Factors (VIFs), all of which were below the cut-off of 3.3, confirming no multicollinearity issues (Hair et al., 2022). To address common method bias (CMB), multiple procedural and statistical remedies were employed. Procedurally, the study used a time-lagged, multi-wave data collection design across three points to temporally separate the measurement of independent, mediating, and outcome variables, reducing the likelihood of same-source bias (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Statistically, a full collinearity test was conducted using the approach recommended by Kock (2015), where VIF values below 3.3 indicated no serious CMB threat.

Measurements

The study constructs were measured using a structured questionnaire that applied a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). Three subject-matter experts reviewed the instrument carefully to make sure survey instrument had a face and content validity. The scales used to measure all variables were taken and modified based on validated

and well-established sources that have good psychometric properties. The independent variable, servant leadership (leadership style focused on serving follower's growth, well-being, and ethical treatment) was measured by 21 items that were spread over seven sub dimensions, which included behaving ethically (3 items; Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006), development (3 items; Ehrhart, 2004), emotional healing (3 items; Liden et al., 2008), empowerment (3 items; Van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2011), pioneering (3 items; Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006), relationship building (3 items; Ehrhart, 2004). The mediating variable was quantified by 3 items of interpersonal coordination (the extent to which individuals collaborate and synchronize their work with colleagues effectively) (Gittell et al., 2000). The outcome measure, i.e., job execution (the quality and effectiveness with which employees perform their core job responsibilities) was measured via 3 items (Williams & Anderson, 1991). Following are the definitions of constructs. The control variables were excluded from the final model for theoretical and empirical reasons. Prior research has shown inconsistent effects of demographic controls (e.g., age, gender, tenure) on relational leadership outcomes, and excessive controls can mask meaningful variance (Spector & Brannick, 2011). Given our focus on relational processes and contextual moderators, we prioritized model parsimony to avoid over fitting and preserve statistical power. Reliability was estimated and all values exceed the recommended thresholds of 0.70 (Nunnally, 1978), indicating good internal consistency.

Table No. 1. Reliability

Construct	Cronbach's α	CR
Servant Leadership	0.91	0.93
Interpersonal Coordination	0.83	0.85
Job Execution	0.79	0.82

Data Collection

Data was collected using a structured online questionnaire administered in English. To ensure the quality and reliability of the responses, each participant was provided with a unique identification code. The questionnaire included measures for all key study variables, including servant leadership, interpersonal coordination, and job execution, along with demographic information such as age, gender, education, and tenure. A total of 529 questionnaires were distributed to employees across various organizations, out of which 520 were completed and returned, resulting in a high response rate of 98%. To enhance objectivity in outcome assessment, participants were also asked to nominate a coworker with whom they had worked for at least three months to provide peer-based ratings for job execution and related constructs. This peer-nomination approach helped mitigate the risk of

self-report bias and improved the overall validity of the data (Podsakoff et al., 2003). The high response rate and the use of multi-source data strengthened the robustness of the study findings. Descriptive statistics of the respondents' demographic characteristics are presented in the table below.

Table No. 2. *Demographics*

Factors	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	315	62.4%
	Female	190	37.6%
Age	21–30 years	142	28.1%
	31–40 years	203	40.2%
	41–50 years	112	22.2%
	Above 50 years	48	9.5%
Qualification	Graduate	244	48.3%
	Masters	261	51.7%

ANALYSIS

Direct Effects

The structural model was assessed by the values of R-square (R2) and effect size (f2) to identify the explanatory power and practical significance of the relations as suggested by Chin (2010). The R-square values showed that the model was moderate to strong in predictive power with R2 = 0.251 on interpersonal coordination, and R2 = 0.534 on job execution . The practical importance of the direct paths was further confirmed by the f 2 effect sizes, with servant leadership having medium-to-large effect sizes on interpersonal coordination (f 2 = 0.25), and job execution (f 2 = 0.38). These findings support the substantive effect of servant leadership on outcome variables. Concerning direct effects, servant leadership positively contributed to interpersonal coordination (0.501, t = 12, p < 0.05), and job execution (0.671, t = 18, p < 0.05) thus confirming H1 and H2. The study also found that interpersonal coordination has a significant effect on job execution (beta = 0.107, t = 3, p < 0.05) confirming H3 is accepted.

*Mediating-Effect: Bootstrapping*

A bootstrapped impact magnitude of 5000 was obtained by evaluating paths a and b via a bootstrapping technique. The mediation impacts were also evaluated using bootstrapping. Furthermore, the related standard errors (SE) and indirect outcomes were estimated. The findings at p 0.05 demonstrated the significant indirect effects of the mediation presumption. A 95% established confidence interval (CI) was utilized in order to verify the mediated effects (Hayes, 2009). The process for computing the bootstrapping via CI is presented in Table 3. The significance of the mediating influences within the SEM paths was further evaluated by bootstrapping (Henseler et al., 2009). Hypothesis H4 states that interpersonal

coordination mediates between servant leadership and job execution. The indirect influence of a 95% Boot CI, which includes [LLCI: 0.128 and ULCI:.301], didn't bisect zero in between, whichdemonstrates a mediating effect (Preacher & Hayes, 2008), so H4 is accepted.

Table No. 4. SEM Estimation

Direct Effect	Weighs	SE	t	P	[CI 95%]	
					LLCI	ULCI
Servant Leadership -> Interpersonal Coordination	0.501	0.042	12.06	0.000	0.278	0.413
Servant Leadership -> Job Execution	0.671	0.037	18.01	0.000	0.289	0.565
Interpersonal Coordination -> Job Execution	0.107	0.029	3.68	0.000	0.179	0.281
Indirect Effect	Weighs	SE	T	P	[CI 95%]	
Mediating Effect					LLCI	ULCI
Servant Leadership -> IC -> Job Execution	0.054	0.021	2.50	0.000	0.128	0.301

Note. M: Sample Mean, O: Original Sample, STDEV: Std Deviation, and CI: Confidence-Interval
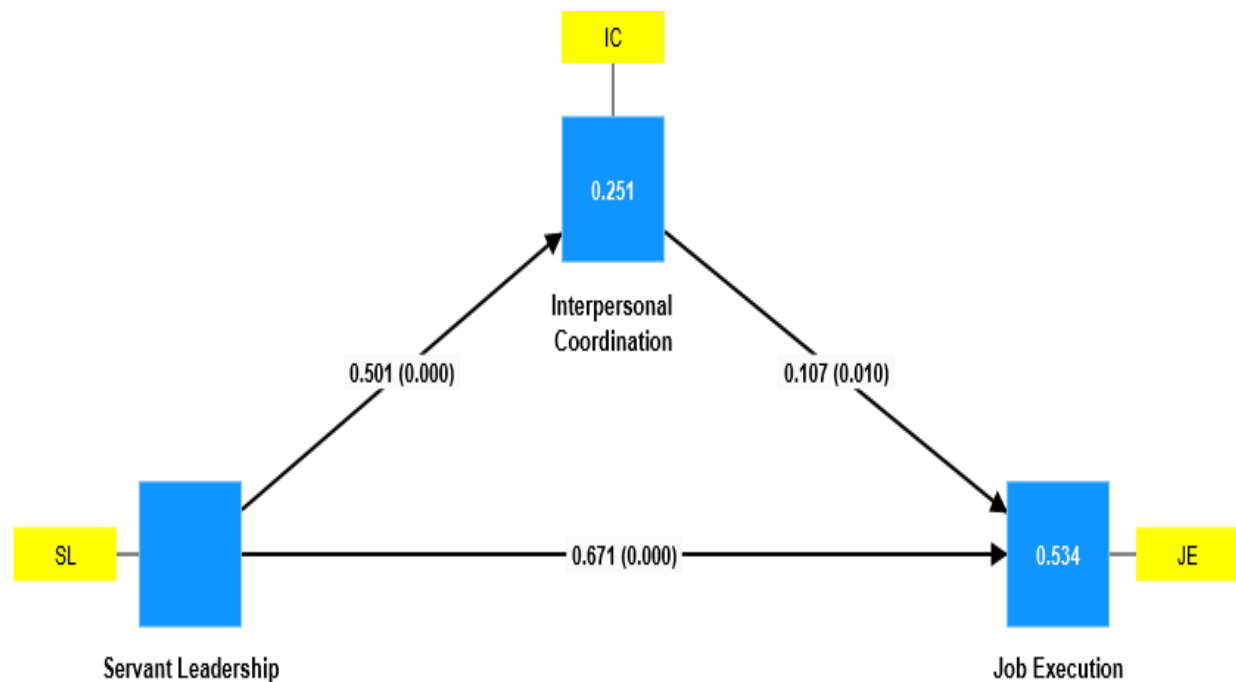
Figure 3: Structural path estimation outcome

DISCUSSION

The findings of this paper provide a strong argument as to why servant leadership plays a central role in influencing positive employee outcomes by means of relational processes . The direct effects reveal that servant leadership has a strong positive influence on the interpersonal coordination (beta = 0.501, p < 0.001) and job execution (beta = 0.671, p < 0.001), which means that servant leadership is effective in developing cohesive, high-performing teams. These results are consistent with the previous literature on the positive effects of servant leadership in various organizational contexts, with leaders who focus on the

development and welfare of their workers being a contributing factor to positive workplace performance (Fatima, Abbas, & Hassan, 2023; Manzoor et al., 2024).

Most importantly, the mediation analysis indicates that interpersonal coordination mediates the association between servant leadership and job execution (indirect effect = 0.054, p < 0.001) indicating that the capacity of servant leaders to promote cooperation and mutual respect among the team members is a significant process through which the performance is improved. This mediating process supports the explanatory capacity of social identity theory (Turner, Brown, & Tajfel, 1979) that holds that the sense of belonging and identification of an individual to a group influences strongly the behaviors that an individual exhibits in the workplace.In addition, the organizations are advised to put in place mechanisms that would constantly monitor how employees feel supported and belonging, and change leadership strategies to build trust, coordination, and improved productivity.

Practical Implications

The findings offer several practical implications. First, organizations should integrate servant leadership principles such as empathy, empowerment, and ethical conduct into leadership training and performance evaluations. Second, targeted development programs should train managers to lead diverse teams by enhancing interpersonal coordination and fostering inclusion. Third, organizations should establish leadership pipelines that prioritize relational and inclusive capabilities, not just task performance. Fourth, maintaining a synergy at workplace culture enhances the interpersonal relationship and status perception among employees based on the servant leadership model. Fifth, managers should pay attention to the workers and valued togetherness in order to produce the desired outcome in the organization. Seventh, the management needs to promote servant leaders at all organizational levels. Sixth, the servant leadership can be used in practice for motivation, direction, selflessness, and support amongst the employee. This is in line with Randel et al. (2018) as the servant leaders' inspire employees to view themselves as those making positive impacts on the society. Lastly, leadership training should go beyond basic awareness to include practical strategies for managing complex team dynamics and promoting creative, inclusive problem-solving (Randel et al., 2018; Richard et al., 2019).

Research Limitations

This study has some limitations. First, the use of a cross-sectional design limits the ability to draw strong causal conclusions. Future studies should consider employing longitudinal or cross-lagged panel designs. Second, servant leadership was assessed using self-reported measures from the same respondents, which may raise concerns about common method bias.

Future research would benefit from collecting data from multiple sources such as supervisor ratings or peer assessments to further reduce potential bias. Third, the study was conducted in Pakistan, a country characterized by cultural factors such as high power distance and limited acceptance of formal diversity initiatives. Therefore, it is recommended that future research replicate this model in diverse cultural contexts particularly in low power-distance or Western societies to evaluate the generalizability and robustness of the observed relationships.

Future Research Area

Future studies should also broaden the conceptual scope and sample diversity by incorporating a wider range of surface-level (e.g., gender, age) and deep-level (e.g., values, beliefs) diversity attributes. Additionally, researchers could examine other important outcomes such as team collaboration, creativity, or innovation, and explore alternative mediators, including emotional tone, psychological empowerment, or self-reflection. Future work should also consider contextual moderators like leader-member similarity, role clarity, or organizational justice perceptions. Finally, comparing servant leadership with related leadership styles such as inclusive leadership, authentic leadership, or paternalistic leadership could help clarify what is uniquely effective about servant leadership in promoting relational and diversity-related outcomes. Such comparative studies using mixed-methods or multi-level SEM could deepen theoretical insights and practical applications.

Conclusion

Leaders must focus on elevating individual performance and organizational identity via skillfully handling interpersonal coordination. Our research provides useful insights into the ways and circumstances how leaders embrace job execution effectively by managing interpersonal coordination. Our results also close the gap in the existing research on interpersonal coordination and job execution. In conclusion, we provide practitioners and academics with an environment in order to further investigate the conditions and processes of the reasons why servant leadership generates favorable results in teams, diverse work forces, and organizations. The study concluded that the servant leadership has a beneficial impact on interpersonal coordination and job execution.The servant leadership creates an environment that is equitable, empowered, and supportive. As a result, employees become might be more creative, innovative, and proficient in regards to addressing problems. The study enhances our knowledge about the patterns of servant leadership, interpersonal coordination and job execution. The study results have ramifications for leadership development and provide insightful information to companies who improve worker performance.

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