

The Impact of Servant Leadership on Job Satisfaction, investigating the mediating Role of Trust and Moderating Role of Task Interdependence

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Abstract: The purpose of this study was to examine how servant leadership affects work satisfaction both directly and indirectly by using trust as a mediating factor and Task interdependence as a moderator. Two hundred (200) academic members from six universities—SZABIST, NUST, AIOU, COMSAT, Quaid-E-Azam, and Iqra—located in Rawalpindi and Islamabad was taken as sample size. Data collection was done by using a questionnaire. The results of the study demonstrated a substantial positive correlation between work satisfaction and servant leadership, as well as a somewhat positive mediating role for trust in the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The link between the dependent and independent variables was significantly and favorably moderated by task

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interdependence. Taking into account the importance of job satisfaction, managers and academic practitioners should focus on servant leadership style that increases their trust on colleagues and supervisors and in turn increases their satisfaction level at job in the respected organization.

Keywords: Servant Leadership, Job Satisfaction, Trust and Task Interdependence.

Introduction

1.1 Background of the study

In the light of human resource, leadership has been an important factor in an organization which aims at improving the performance of employees and organization by giving them direction and motivating them (Skansi, 2000). According to Mosadeghrad (2003b), leadership is an attitude and a set of behaviors that enhance people's lives, build stronger organizations, and eventually result in a more impartial and compassionate world. The long-term prosperity of a business is therefore defined by its capable leadership and committed, content workforce. In other words, job satisfaction is major factor or component for long term profitability of an organization. There are several factors that influence job satisfaction of leaders but leadership style is one of the important factors for their satisfaction in order to perform efficiently and servant leadership is the major determinant of job satisfaction. As leaders play a very important role in one's life as well as in economy of country. Thus they prepare employees; they train them, create awareness among them and produce and develop an employee who then contributes to the economy of a country by different ways. This all happens due to the leaders, the true servant leaders (Rad & Mohammadin, 2006). This study revolves around servant leadership as other leadership styles are no longer appropriate for today's employees as organizations are becoming flatter and leadership is becoming gradually more supportive (Bennis, 2007).

Crippen (2006) stated that servant leadership is defined as first to serve, then to lead. As the term servant leadership indicates that the leader is one who is a servant. Greenleaf's (1977) and Patterson (2003) theory supports to servant leadership and it is one who is inclined to serve rather than to lead. Their motive is to put forward other needs and other interests rather than looking for their own interests and organization goals. There are numerous additional theories regarding servant leadership as well, however compared to other leadership philosophies, the concept of servant leadership has received less attention. A paradigm of leadership called server leadership suggests that a leader should play a primary, supportive role with both subordinates and people in general (Greenleaf, 1977). Because servant leadership is distinct from other leadership philosophies, it is the right kind of leadership for situations where the goal is to assist others.

1.2 Research Questions

1. What is the effect of servant leadership on job satisfaction?
2. What is the impact of stress on job satisfaction?
3. Is there any impact of servant leadership on stress?
4. How does the relationship between job happiness and servant leadership get tempered by task interdependence?
5. How does trust mediate the relationship between servant leadership and job satisfaction?

1.3 Research Objectives

- To examine the impact of servant leadership on job satisfaction
- To analyze the effect of task interdependence between servant leadership, job satisfaction relationship
- To determine the impact of trust as a mediator between servant leadership and job satisfaction.

1.4 Research Gap

Previous studies focused on the impact of servant leadership on job satisfaction while trust mediates the relationship of servant leadership and job satisfaction. Abid, Gulzar and Hussain (2015) suggested checking trust as the mediator between the relationship of servant leadership and job satisfaction in Pakistan. Work has been done to check task interdependence to know about the impact of servant leadership on job satisfaction. Bambale (2014) suggested that task interdependence should be checked as moderator on the relationship of servant leadership and job satisfaction.

1.5 Delimitations of the Study.

Only one independent variable to job satisfaction has been taken for this research. Questionnaire was used as the only tool of data collection. This research study has been limited to one sector only i.e. education sector.

Literature Review

2.1 Job Satisfaction

Human Resource Management is the backbone of every organization and one of its outputs is job satisfaction that is strategically important for the organization to improve job performance and decrease turnover intention (Liao, Hu & Chung, 2009). Gill (2008) examined the impact of trust on employee's job satisfaction. The research study was conducted in a hospitality industry and it was suggested that if the level of employees trust on their manager is high, greater job satisfaction will be expected from them. According to Khany and Tazik (2015), there is no

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substantial correlation between work satisfaction and trust in Iranian academics. Chan and Mak (2014) investigated the relationship between job happiness, servant leadership, and trust in leaders in the setting of China on workers in private service-oriented businesses. They came to the conclusion that trust acts as a mediator in the relationship between job satisfaction and servant leadership. In a setting like this, where different stimuli support job happiness, job satisfaction would be attained (Akdere, Gider, & Top, 2012).

Gill (2008) stated that job satisfaction is important for managers/leaders to build employee trust. This is how; the employee would be more dedicated and satisfied in hospitality organization and will give their best. Brahmasari and suprayetno (2008) conducted a study suggests that employee's satisfaction influence positively and significantly organizational performance. In short, it is argued that the employee's high job satisfaction will lead to organizational efficiency. Likewise, Susanty and Miradipta (2013) study indicates a key positive connection between the performance of human resources and job satisfaction. The positive experiences of servant leaders that is respect, value, service and trust increase their satisfaction level and increased job satisfaction (Bang, 2011).

2.2 Servant Leadership

As it is said "if someone wants to be great, he must be servant of the rest; and if wants to be first, he must be the slave of all". So someone who wants to be great he should be serving others rather than leading. The aim of servant leadership is to get the needs of others fulfilled, to put forward others interests rather than own interests and valuing others by appreciating and praising them (Brown & Bryant, 2015). Afaq, Sajid and Arshad (2017) suggested that employees may increase their job satisfaction by practical implication of servant leadership in performing their daily functions in business schools of Azad Kashmir. Guillaume, Honeycutt and Austin (2013) study reported that servant leadership characteristics play a significant role in one's job satisfaction in private university of Atlanta Georgia. Sepahvand, Pirzad and Rastipour (2015) study confirmed that there was a significant positive impact of servant leadership on job satisfaction in telecom sector in Iran.

Drury (2004) identified that there is a significant positive bond between servant leadership and job satisfaction. Hussain and Ali (2012) examined the impact of servant leadership and job satisfaction in engineers of a defense organization where it was found that if supervisors show love and care for their subordinates, they in turn experienced of good attitudes and behavior towards the supervisor and organization. Thus it was expected that love care and service that are the servant leadership dimensions may enhance employee's job satisfaction.

2.3 Trust

In 2005, Joseph and Winston conducted research on the relationship between trust and servant leadership in West Indian Christian high schools and Bible colleges. They discovered a substantial correlation between trust and servant leadership. In their 2010 study, Sendjaya and Pekerti investigated how followers' faith in their leaders was affected in Indonesian educational

institutions. They discovered that servant leadership greatly contributed to the development of followers' trust in leaders. Abid et al., (2015) stated that trust among employees and on leaders increase unity among them and they are encouraged to attain their individual and organizational goals. Moreover, trust on leader increases organizational productivity. According to Abid et al., (2015) performance and trust on leaders play a significant role to strong the leader and organizational outcomes relationship. Sendjaya and Pekerti (2010) stated that subordinates perception about the best performance of servant leadership actually increases their trust level as compared to those whose perception is negative.

To make servant to perform at their best, trust on leaders play an important role and basically trust on leaders increase the productivity of servants which encourage them to serve above their assigned duties (Bambale, 2014). Lu (2014) stated that employees in trustworthy environment can show maximum satisfaction with organizations and they showed trustworthy feelings for each other. This suggests that employees are more ready to put additional efforts to accomplish the task given to them.

2.4 Task Interdependence

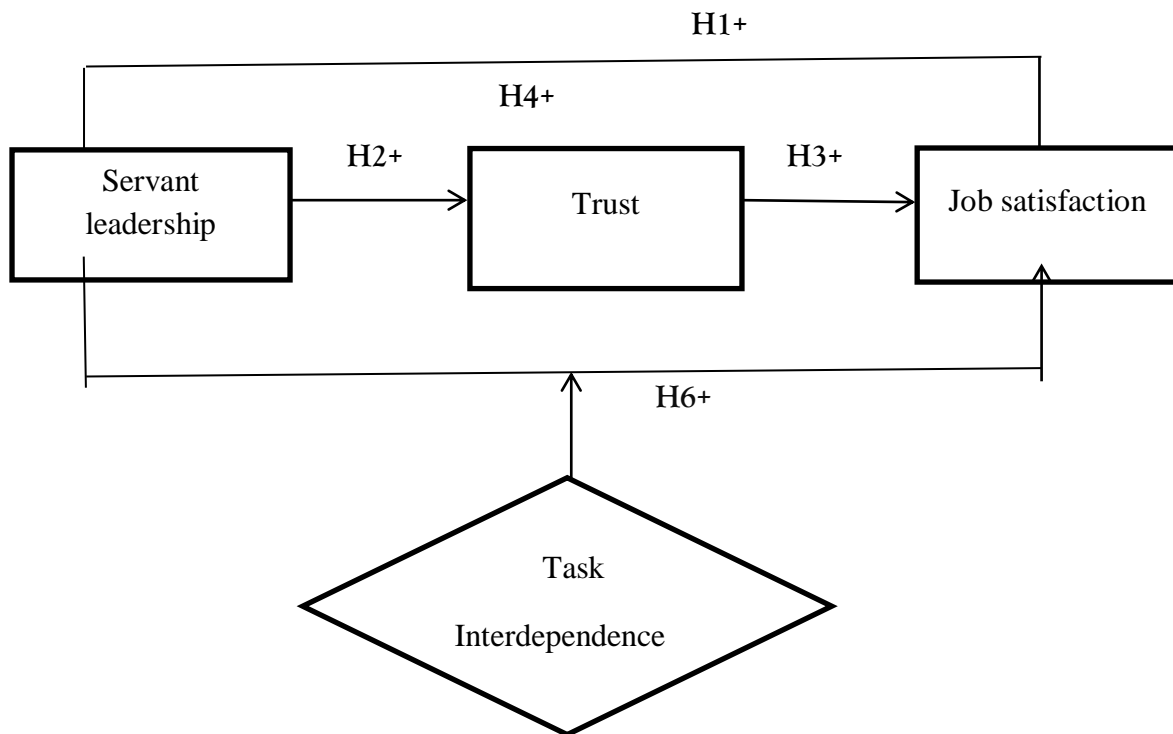
Gowen (2014) suggested that for the management individual independent task or organizational interdependent task improve employee's performance but the combination of these two tasks will lead to the maximum influence on overall employee's performance. Beverborg et al., (2015) stated that task interdependence, reward interdependence, and attraction to work in group are strongly independent factors influences on individual's intrinsic and extrinsic satisfaction. It was concluded that in organization with low interdependence task shows positive impact of Servant leadership on job satisfaction will be reduced. Task interdependence increases the impact of servant leadership on job satisfaction (Bambale, 2014). Vidyarthi, Anand and Liden (2004) checked task interdependence as moderator on the relationship of emotionally perspective leaders and employee performance found that task dependent on each other strengthened the relationship. Han and Bai (2014) studied the moderator of task interdependence between leader-member exchange and justice in health sector and concluded that in the presence of high task interdependence, employees perceive they are treated more fairly by their leaders. Thus, it may be expected high task interdependence also plays a major role in the job satisfaction of employees.

Ayub et al., (2009) derived a conclusion that in the presence of high task interdependence, counterproductive behavior may be decreased to increase employees well-being. Employees can be experiment of more job satisfaction when they perceive their jobs will be beneficial for their individual well-being. Jen (2013) conducted a study on the impact of conflict centrality and task interdependence on job satisfaction of engineers in Taiwan found that task interdependency moderates the relationship between within relationship conflict networks and job satisfaction. Khan, Khan and Chaudhry (2015) examined the relationship of servant leadership and workplace spirituality with the mediating role of involvement culture found positive impact of servant leadership on workplace spirituality. The evidence shows that there is dearth of research studies available on other moderators on the relationship between

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servant leadership and job satisfaction, therefore, we can expect taskinterdependence as a moderator.

2.5 Theoretical Framework



H1: There is a positive relationship of servant leadership on job satisfaction.

H2: There is a positive relationship of servant leadership on trust.

H3: Trust support positively job satisfaction.

H4: Trust mediates the relationship between servant leadership and job satisfaction.

H5: Task interdependence moderates the relationship between servant leadership and job satisfaction.

Research Methodology

The research is exploratory, causal and hypotheses testing approach. The research study is conducted on 200 faculty members. A structured closed ended adapted Likert scale is employed for data collection. To measure servant leadership, scales developed by Beck (2010), job satisfaction, scale developed by Zeffane and McLoughlin, (2006), task interdependence, scale developed by Langfred (2005) and trust, scales developed by Bunt et al., (2005) are adapted. Primary data is collected through non-probability convenience sampling technique from the faculty members of both private and public sector universities based in Rawalpindi and Islamabad.

Results and Discussion

In this study different SPSS tests are used to find the impact of servant leadership on job satisfaction, mediating role of trust between servant leadership and job satisfaction and task interdependence as moderation between servant leadership and job satisfaction.

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4.1 Demographic Analysis

Table 1

Demographics	Position	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Job Title	Lecturer	112	56.0	56.0	56.0
	Assistant professor	70	35.0	35.0	91.0
	Full professor	18	9.0	9.0	100
Gender	Male	141	70.5	70.5	70.5
	Female	59	29.5	29.5	100.0
Age	Less than 30	48	24.0	24.0	24.0
	30-39 yrs.	102	51.0	51.0	75.0
	40 and above	50	25.0	25.0	100.0
Education	Master	34	17.0	17.0	17.0
	MPhil	76	38.0	38.0	55.0
	PhD	89	44.5	44.5	99.5
	PD	1	0.5	0.5	100.0
Experience	5 years & below	74	37.0	37.0	37.0
	6-10 yrs.				
	11-15 yrs.	49	24.5	24.5	61.5
	Above 15 yrs.	31	15.5	15.5	77.0
		46	23.0	23.0	100.0

Data was collected from 200 faculty members i.e., Lecturers, Associate Professors and full Professors, out of which 56% were Lecturers, 35% were Associate Professors and 9% were full Professors. This indicates that most of the respondents were Lecturers. It explains the gender demographics of the respondents according to which 70.5% were males and 29.5% were females so it indicates that most of the respondents were males. It explains the age wise frequency distribution of the respondents according to which respondents less than 30 years were 24% of the sample size whereas respondents' 30-39 years of age constitute 51% and respondents of 40 years and above was 25% adopted servant leadership style. The table shows the education demographic of the respondents according to which respondents with different educational levels selected in the sample, out of which 17% were with master degree, 38% were with MPhil degree and 44.5% respondents were with PhD while only 0.5% were with PD (Post Doctorates). This shows that the maximum respondents were with MPhil degree while the minimum respondents were with PD (Post Doctorates). It gives the description about the job experience of respondents of this research study. The respondents with 5 years and less of

experience were 37% whereas the respondents with the experience of in 6-10 years and 11-15 years and above 15years were 24.5%, 15.5% and 23% of the sample size.

4.2 Reliability Analysis

The researcher runs the reliability test and the following tables 2 and 3 show the detailed reliability results.

Table 2 *n= 23*

Description	Cronbach's Alpha	N
Servant leadership	0.827	7
Job satisfaction	0.838	5
Task interdependence	0.830	7
Trust	0.810	6
Total	0.804	25

According to Nunnally (1976), the value of Cronbach's Alpha should be more than 0.6. Hence, in this respect the value of Cronbach's Alpha is determined. Table 2 indicates the reliability analysis for items used in this research study, according to which the value for servant leadership is determined as 0.827, job satisfaction is .0838, task interdependence .0830 and the value of trust is .0810. The table also shows the whole reliability of the pilot items which is .804. It is representing that these items are positively correlated to each other. The greater internal consistency reliability is showing that data is reliable sufficient to do additional tests and analysis.

Table 3

Reliability Analysis of the whole Study(N= 200)

Description	Cronbach's α	N
Servant leadership	0.841	7
Job satisfaction	0.864	5
Task interdependence	0.8664	7
Trust	0.732	6
Total	0.914	25

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Table 3 shows reliability analysis for complete study, according to which the value of Cronbach's Alpha for servant leadership is 0.841; the value of Job satisfaction is 0.864; the value of task interdependence is 0.866; the value of trust is 0.732 and the whole reliability is .914.

Table 4 shows the detailed summary of descriptive statistics. In this research study four variables are used in which servant leadership is independent while job satisfaction is dependent variable; task interdependence is moderator and Trust is mediator is measured on five points Likert scale. In this research study, the mean value of servant leadership is 3.96, job satisfaction is 3.85, task interdependence is 3.71 and trust is 3.48 concluded that the respondents gave more positive responses.

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic
SL	200	3.96	.65	-.44	.92
JS	200	3.85	.71	-.86	.57
TI	200	3.71	.70	-.57	.30
TR	200	3.48	.71	-.32	.49

Table 5
Correlation Analysis

	SL	TR	TI	JS
SL	1			
TR	.391**	1		
TI	.578**	.434**	1	

JS	.500**	.544**	.592**	1
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**p<0.05 level

The correlation table shows that job satisfaction (DV) and servant leadership (IV) value $r = .50$ which shows that the relationship between the dependent and independent variable is 50% that is moderate, positive and significant. The value of trust is $r = .54$ which shows that trust has positive, significant relationship with job satisfaction. The most significantly correlated and strong relationship of all the variables is between moderating variable (task interdependence) and dependent variable (job satisfaction) with the value of 0.59.

4.5 Regression Analysis

Regression analysis is used for examining the relationship among the variables. Multiple regression is used in this study in order to evaluate various variables. The general regression equation is given below for research model

$$Y = \alpha + \beta_1A + \beta_2B + \beta_3C + \beta_4D \dots + \epsilon$$

Where

A = Job Satisfaction, B = Servant Leadership, C = Trust, D = Task Interdependence, ϵ is error term

Table 6

Regression Analysis

Hypothesis	R ²	B	S.E	t-test	Sig	F-test	Sig.
H1: SL (IV) → JS(DV)	.250	.473	.622	6.15	0.00	66.13	0.00
H2: SL(IV) → T(DV)	.351	.326	.216	6.02	0.00	61.10	0.00
H3: T(IV) → JS(DV)	.132	.314	.017	6.00	0.00	19.02	0.00

**p<0.05, *p<0.01

Hypothesis 1: Servant leadership positively and significantly affects job satisfaction. The value of R square (.250) and T (6.15) confirms the hypothesis.

Hypothesis 2: There is significantly positive impact of servant leadership on trust, verified by the value of R square (0.351) and T (6.02).

Hypothesis 3: Trust has positive significant impact on job satisfaction. Therefore the study hypothesis is accepted, R square (.125), T (6.00) with significant value of 0.00.

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4.7 Mediation Analysis

The study utilized mediation analysis of Barron and Kenny (1986) that comprises of four steps. Four separate tests have been performed to check the mediation effect of trust between servant leadership and job satisfaction. The following table shows the summary results of the mediation effect.

Table 7

Mediation Analysis (N=200)

	R	R ²	F	B	T	Sig
Assumption 1: SL (IV) → JS (DV)	0.413	.181	40.13	.417	17.10	0.00
Assumption 2: SL (MV) → T (DV)	0.391	.161	61.11	.361	23.12	0.00
Assumption 3: T (IV) → JS (MV)	0.311	.129	29.01	.331	9.10	0.00
H6a: SL (IV) } JS (DV)	.309	.236	43.13	.177	6.10	0.00
T (MV)	.473	.301	73.14	.290	7.01	0.00

H6 (a): perceived supervisor support mediates the relationship between organizational trust and employee engagement.

Step 1: There is a positive impact of Servant leadership on job satisfaction. It is clear that R's value is 0.413 and R² is .181. The value of Model fitness is 40.13 which show that the relation is strong to measure. The Test statistic value is also more than 2 which confirm that Step is valid at 0.00 significance value.

Step 2: Servant leadership has positive significant impact on trust in organization. R value is 0.391 and R².161. The F value is also acceptable. The value of Test statistic which is more than 2 confirmed that there is positive relationship between the two variables.

Step 3: Trust positively and significantly affect job satisfaction. Value of R is 0.311 and R²0.129. The model is fit as per the given value. The value of Test statistics is 9.10 proved that there is positive significant relationship between these two variables.

Step 4: Servant leadership and trust has positive impacts on job satisfaction in the organization. Values of R's are 0.309 and 0.473, which indicates mediation effect of the variables on job satisfaction in the firm with high value of F statistics. The value of Test statistics confirms significance of the both the hypotheses. From the derived results, it can be concluded that the variable of trust partially mediates between servant leadership and job satisfaction in the organization.

4.7 Moderation Analysis

H7: Task interdependence moderates the relationship between servant leadership and job satisfaction.

Three steps of Baron and Kenny are used for moderation testing (Baron & Kenny, 1986).

Table 8

Moderation Analysis

Steps	IV	DV	R	R ²	F State	F State	B	B	t value	Sig
1	SL(IV)	TI (MV)	.389	.331	99.57	99.57	.627	.627	9.97	.000
2	TI (MV)	JS (DV)	.392	.347	106.58	88.58	.600	.600	10.24	.000
3	SL*TI (IV*MV)	JS (DV)	.388	.362	113.85	43.85	.100	.100	10.67	.000

H7): Task interdependence moderates the relationship between servant leadership and job satisfaction.

The moderation analysis in table 8 shows that Hypothesis H7 that was task interdependence moderates the relationship between servant leadership and job satisfaction is accepted. The statistical result shows that there exists moderation as test statistic is = 10.67, P<0.01. Hence Hypothesis H7 is accepted. Task interdependence positively moderates the relationship between servant leadership and job satisfaction.

Conclusion

First of all the research ensures that one of the main predictor of job satisfaction is servant leadership and the importance of which is increasing now a days. Working conditions always depend on the supervisor role. As the supervisor will be more serving behavior, the job satisfaction will be increasing.

So the strategies and managerial implications which researcher suggested are the most important outcomes from this crucial research. It was concluded that servant leadership create job satisfaction. The researcher also found some other important aspects which could increase job satisfaction accordingly. First thing which researcher pointed out is that these variables are

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related to job satisfaction. The reason behind this is that they are affecting positively towards job satisfaction in the context of direct relationship as supported by literature. If take a look at servant leadership and job satisfaction with the mediation of trust, it was concluded that trust partially mediates the relationship between these variable. It is concluded that the characteristics of servant leadership such as serving people, helping people, respecting people, valuing people and build relations are strongly affecting job. This represent logic that as these characteristics in a leader increases it will ultimately increase their job satisfaction. So the main findings of this research study are that the dimensions of servant leadership style can increase job satisfaction and it is suggested that first of all leaders would be focused on people-centered instead of self-centered and secondly to focus on people, to serving them, to give respect others are very important for job satisfaction in work related environment.

It is concluded that first of all servant leaders need to create an environment of trust where they trust on their colleagues and supervisors which finally increase their job satisfaction. If they lack these qualities then it definitely would decrease their satisfaction level at work. To look at the relationship of servant leadership and job satisfaction, managers need to concentrate on high task interdependence for the reason that in organization with low interdependent task, the positive impact of servant leadership on job satisfaction is reduced. Task interdependence increases the impact of servant leadership on job satisfaction i.e., the impact of servant leadership on job satisfaction has stronger in a higher task interdependence organizations than in a lower task interdependence.

Finally the major findings of this research is that if there is moderation of task interdependence between the “servant leadership” and “Job satisfaction” it ultimately increases job satisfaction as result indicates that if there is direct relationship of task interdependence with job satisfaction it is ultimately increasing the job satisfaction. It is also indicate from the relationship of servant leadership and task interdependence there is strong relation between them, so it is concluded that the task interdependence has strongly moderated the relation of “servant leadership” and “job satisfaction” and servant leaders with high interdependence task increases their satisfaction level at job.

Managerial and Academic Implications

This empirical research helps both male and female and similarly minorities as well to excel in their careers and to develop opportunities through initiating of servant leadership strategies. Especially for line managers as retaining employees are crucial for maintaining workforce in today ‘challenging and competitive environment.

For managers it is important to adopt that style of leadership which they think should be helpful for the welfare of people. They should adopt servant leadership style that increases their satisfaction level at the work and employees should feel that their stance and views are being valued and appreciated. Their contribution to the organization means a lot to them. Valuing employees suggestions not only raise the employee’s self-esteem but it also increases

their satisfaction level. It was concluded that one who wants to be great he must be servant of the rest and if he wants to be first he must be the slave of all. One who is a leader he should not think in a way they will control people. They should not be bossy at all. They should incline to serve others. Servant leaders need to build trustful relations with employees so that they can perform best in organizations. Servant leader style must be appropriate in Pakistani organizations with people who want respect, value, trust from supervisors in organizations more than financial rewards. It was found that the role of servant leader was to build relationships with workers on trust, so this characteristic of servant leader should be best understood by considering the nature and process of social relationships between leaders and subordinates. Under such conditions servant leaders should be able to work effectively with subordinates on assigned tasks. Servant leaders make evaluative decisions based on the receiving of resources and support from each other. These decisions create their positive or negative attitudes and actions. It is concluded that in organizations with low interdependence tasks, the positive effect of servant leadership on job satisfaction was reduced. It was concluded that trust partially moderates the relationship between servant leadership and job satisfaction. This study is beneficial for scholars in a way that it gives them a new insight towards how servant leadership works in the education sector.

5.2 Limitations of the Research

The study is limited to two cities Rawalpindi and Islamabad. Data was collected from five universities based on non-probability convenience sampling as it was easy to access data from these six universities. In this research sample size was not too large thus respondents were also limited due to time constraint. This research study is cross-sectional in nature.

5.3 Future Research and Recommendations

This study did not check the dimensions of servant leadership individually so each dimension should be checked individually. A research study needs to be conducted on servant leadership tactics with the dependent variables of career development. In the current study, sample size was limited. It should be increased to broaden the scope of the study. This research was also limited to those employees working in universities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi. In future studies, social identity theory, interaction theory and organizational theory can be applied for further research in this domain.

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