



Role of Servant Leadership via Emotional Intelligence, Grit, and Compassion on Job Performance

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Abstract

Servant Leadership has emerged as a prominent leadership style that has been investigated and implemented in diverse settings. This study focuses on examining the role of servant leadership within the higher education institute of Quetta, Baluchistan. The purpose of this research is to assess the impact of servant leadership on job performance while considering the mediating role of grit, compassion, and emotional intelligence. The study employs a non-probability convenience sampling technique to gather data from 250 pairs of followers and leaders within the higher education institute. A survey was administered to collect the necessary data, which were subsequently analyzed using SPSS v26 and SMART PLS 4. The findings of the study reveal significant relationships and shed light on the mediating effects of three key constructs: grit, compassion, and emotional intelligence. The results indicate that servant leadership significantly influences job performance within the higher education context. Additionally, the study highlights the partially mediating role of grit, compassion, and emotional intelligence in the relationship between servant leadership and job performance. This research contributes to the understanding of leadership dynamics within the specific context of higher education in Quetta, Baluchistan. By emphasizing the importance of servant leadership in promoting job performance and identifying the underlying mechanisms through which servant leadership influences performance, this study offers valuable insights. The findings underscore the significance of fostering servant leadership qualities and cultivating grit, compassion, and emotional intelligence to enhance performance outcomes in educational institutions.

Key words: *Servant Leadership, Grit, Compassion, Emotional Intelligence and Job Performance.*



Introduction

The transformation of the information-based economy, technological advancements, societal shifts, and the diminishing availability of conventional funding sources have raised concerns about traditional approaches to leadership in higher education. Traditional leadership methods have proven inadequate in achieving success within the higher education sector compared to other industries. Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted higher education, resulting in increased workloads and stress among academic staff. In times of disruption and change, servant leadership has emerged as an effective leadership paradigm for promoting well-being (Turner, 2022).

While extensive research on leadership styles and outcomes has been conducted in various disciplines such as business, health, and education, the higher education sector has received limited attention from scholars (Ghasemy et al., 2022). Moreover, it is believed that leaders within higher education occasionally employ ineffective leadership styles that negatively affect not only the institution but also its staff and students (Blase & Blase, 2006). Consequently, effective leadership is crucial to keep teaching staff engaged in higher education (Quinn & Andrews, 2010). Recognizing such issues in the higher education sector, researchers have called for the exploration of alternative leadership approaches that can enhance performance within this context. Haider & Ahmed (2017) argue that higher education plays a crucial role in societal development, preparing future employees and leaders to be valuable assets to their organizations and society. Therefore, it is essential to identify leadership styles that are suitable for the higher education sector and can yield positive results. Similarly, Ghasemy et al. (2022) suggest that servant leadership, which has demonstrated positive outcomes in other settings, should be examined within higher education institutes. Servant leadership is an approach that prioritizes the needs of followers and operates on the principles of serving first (Liden et al., 2008). Additionally, Graham (1991) describes servant leadership as a style that integrates principles, ethics, and integrity. It aligns well with the higher education sector as it differs from other types of leadership by emphasizing serving first and leading second, requiring a mindset focused on serving society wholeheartedly. Servant leadership is also characterized by care, love, and empathy (Sendjaya et al., 2008). Therefore, it is seen as beneficial in educational settings as it helps motivate teachers



(Haider & Ahmad, 2017). Consequently, there is a growing trend to emphasize serving communities and the need to study servant leadership in higher education settings (Ghasemy et al., 2022).

Furthermore, it has been observed that leaders who possess passion and perseverance, known as grit, are more productive in their work environments. Additionally, for a servant mindset, emotional intelligence and compassion towards followers are imperative. While previous studies have explored servant leadership primarily from the perspective of leaders, this study seeks to examine the relationship considering the perspectives of both leaders and followers.

Addressing the literature gap, particularly within the context of Balochistan, Pakistan, this study aims to investigate the relationship between servant leadership, grit, compassion, emotional intelligence, and job performance among university professors and their department heads. Specifically, the study aims to examine (a) the impact of servant leadership on employee job performance, (b) the mediating role of emotional intelligence in the relationship between servant leadership and job performance, (c) the mediating role of grit in the relationship between servant leadership and job performance, and (d) the mediating role of compassion in the relationship between servant leadership and job performance.

Literature Review

Servant Leadership

In his article "The Servant as Leader," Robert Greenleaf proposed that an individual can embody both the attributes of a leader and a servant. Greenleaf's idea of servant leadership was inspired by Hermann Hesse's fictitious book "Journey of the East," where a character named Leo portrayed a servant of men on a quest for truth. The group faced disarray and inability to continue their journey when Leo departed. This led Greenleaf to conclude that Leo was not just a servant but the true leader of the group, as without him, they couldn't even get started (Greenleaf, 1977). This sparked Greenleaf's curiosity about whether such individuals could be effective in contemporary organizations, and he believed that leaders who prioritize the needs of their followers could be more effective. Greenleaf argued that as society evolves, so do people's perceptions of successful leadership, power, and authority. He coined the term "Servant Leaders" to describe leaders who prioritize the interests of their followers over their own and aim to serve others rather than being served themselves.



Furthermore, Eva et al. (2019) conducted a comprehensive review of the servant leadership literature and provided a definition. According to them, servant leadership is a leadership approach that focuses on followers, prioritizes their interests and needs, and involves a shift in concern from self to others within the organization and the larger community. A servant leader listens to and understands the dreams of their followers and coaches them to achieve their objectives. What sets servant leadership apart is its emphasis on assisting followers in reaching their full potential and fulfilling the requirements of broader stakeholder groups.

Servant leadership is characterized by several key attributes:

Conceptualization: The leader has a deep understanding of the organization, can perceive the big picture, and effectively communicates a vision to their followers.

Empowering: Followers are given independence and authority to make decisions about their work.

Helping subordinates grow and thrive: The leader is genuinely concerned about the career development and well-being of their followers, offering assistance and guidance.

Putting subordinates first: The leader sacrifices personal interests and prioritizes the needs and expectations of their followers.

Behaving ethically: The leader adheres to established ethical norms and demonstrates ethical behavior that is acceptable to followers.

Emotional healing: The leader is attentive to the problems, issues, and feelings of others, and possesses the ability to restore emotional well-being.

Adding value to the community: The leader contributes to the cause of their followers and the broader community.

These characteristics make servant leadership distinct from other leadership approaches. It challenges the conventional notion of leadership, which typically associates leadership with competence, authority, and the ability to exert control over others.

Servant leadership is seen as a successful leadership strategy for various contexts. It defies individuality and emphasizes the growth of followers in the long run, benefiting sectors such as



higher education. Servant leadership has been found effective even in bureaucratic organizations with excessive formalization and centralization.

Overall, the philosophy of servant leadership revolves around compassion, empathy, and prioritizing the needs of followers. By fostering the growth and well-being of their followers, servant leaders aim to create wiser, healthier, and more autonomous individuals.

Servant Leadership and Job Performance

Hypothesis 1 suggests that servant leadership has a positive influence on job performance. This hypothesis is based on previous research that has found a link between servant leadership and improved work performance (Vuong, 2022). Servant leaders, who prioritize the well-being of their employees, also recognize the importance of employee job performance (Frech, 2003). Proactive servant leaders adopt a serving mindset to achieve long-term organizational performance (Eva et al., 2019).

Numerous studies conducted in different cultures and organizations have shown that servant leadership predicts various positive outcomes, including team and organizational performance (Liden et al., 2008; Liden et al., 2015; Eva et al., 2019). However, there is some variance in the strength of the relationship between servant leadership and job performance (Lee et al., 2019; van Dierendonck, 2011). Some studies have found a strong link, while others have found a weak connection (Ling et al., 2016; Neubert et al., 2016). As a result, our understanding of servant leadership's impact on job performance is still limited (Lee et al., 2019).

Based on this information, it is hypothesized that servant leadership positively influences job performance. Further research and empirical evidence are necessary to fully understand the nature and strength of this relationship. Therefore, it is hypothesized that:

Hypothesis 1: Servant leadership positively influences Job Performance

Servant Leadership, Emotional Intelligence and Job Performance

Hypothesis 2 proposes that emotional intelligence mediates the relationship between servant leadership and job performance. Emotional intelligence refers to an individual's ability to understand and manage their own emotions and the emotions of others (Salovey & Mayer, 1990).

While servant leadership emphasizes the importance of internal states, emotional intelligence is seen as crucial for the application of servant leadership principles. Previous research has found



that servant leaders who possess emotional intelligence are more effective than those lacking emotional intelligence (Plessis et al., 2015; Lee et al., 2019). Studies have also demonstrated a positive relationship between servant leadership and emotional intelligence (Shamshad, 2016; Barbuto, Gottfredson & Searle, 2014; Shahzad et al., 2013).

Additionally, emotional intelligence has been found to influence job performance (Kaur & Sharma, 2019). Both the emotional intelligence of employees and managers have been shown to impact job satisfaction and performance (Sy, Tram, & O'Hara, 2006). However, research by Barbuto et al. (2014) suggests that while emotional intelligence is a good predictor of a leader's servant-leader philosophy, it may not strongly predict servant-leader actions as perceived by followers. Given the limitations in the existing research, this study aims to address the gap by examining the role of emotional intelligence as a mediator in the relationship between servant leadership styles and job performance. It is believed that emotional intelligence can help individuals think positively, let go of negative emotions, and utilize emotions for the benefit of organizations. Leaders with high emotional intelligence can effectively manage the emotions of their colleagues, leading to improved staff performance (Aashkanasay & Dasborough, 2003). Individuals with strong emotional intelligence are also more likely to maintain positive working relationships, which in turn enhance job performance (George, 2000).

Moreover, studies have indicated that emotional intelligence predicts servant leadership, and servant leadership has been found to mediate the relationship between servant leadership and job performance (Kumari et al., 2022). However, the specific role of employees' emotional intelligence in the relationship between servant leadership and job performance, particularly in higher education institutions within a South Asian context, remains unknown.

Based on the above information, it is hypothesized that emotional intelligence mediates the relationship between servant leadership and job performance. Further research is needed to investigate and understand the mechanisms through which emotional intelligence influences the link between servant leadership and job performance.

Therefore, it is hypothesized that;

Hypothesis 2. Emotional intelligence mediates the relationship between Servant Leadership and Job Performance.



Servant Leadership, Grit and Job Performance

Hypothesis 3 suggests that grit mediates the relationship between servant leadership and job performance. Grit, as defined by Duckworth et al. (2007), refers to perseverance and passion for long-term goals, demonstrating dedication and persistence in the face of obstacles and fear of failure. Considering the definition of grit, there is a logical connection between servant leadership and grit, as servant leaders require passion and perseverance in their service-oriented tasks.

Servant leadership is characterized by providing opportunities for followers to learn and grow in order to achieve their short and long-term goals (Luthans & Avolio, 2003). Long-term focus and goal achievement are closely related to a mindset of grit (Duckworth, 2007). Similarly, servant leadership is centered around serving others to achieve long-term success (Sendjaya, 2015). A servant leader embodies a learner with a growth mindset, continuously developing various aspects of servant leadership, such as empathy, emotional healing, awareness, persuasion, foresight, and community building. This learning process is long-term and requires grit for successful development and implementation of these servant leadership behaviors (Chan, 2016).

Moreover, grit is considered crucial for success in life (Duckworth et al., 2017). It is believed that non-academic characteristics exhibited by teachers provide a more beneficial educational experience for students. Numerous studies have shown that grit contributes to personal and organizational outcomes (Duckworth et al., 2007; Dugan, Hochstein, Rouziou, & Britton, 2018). Trait-based leadership approaches have also emphasized the significance of personality traits in leadership effectiveness evaluations, with traits accounting for over 31% of the variance (Derue, Nahrang, Wellman, & Humphrey, 2011).

Although the role of grit in organizational settings has been explored (Lee, 2022), the role of grit as exhibited by followers in the relationship between servant leadership and job performance remains unexplored. Therefore, it is hypothesized that grit mediates the relationship between servant leadership and job performance. Further research is needed to investigate and understand the mechanisms through which grit influences the link between servant leadership and job performance, particularly in the context of followers' grit within the servant leadership framework.

As a result, it is proposed that:

Hypothesis 3. Grit mediates the relationship between Servant Leadership and Job Performance



Servant Leadership, Compassion and Job Performance

Hypothesis 4 suggests that compassion mediates the relationship between servant leadership and job performance. Compassion is described as being affected by another's pain and having the desire to assist (Lazarus, 1991). It involves experiencing, recognizing, detecting, and acting to alleviate the suffering of others (Dutton et al., 2014). Servant leaders who display compassion and empathy are genuinely concerned about the well-being of their employees (Jit et al., 2017). According to van Dierendonck and Patterson (2015), compassion can motivate servant leaders to be more empathetic and better address the suffering of others. Research has shown that compassion is a strong predictor of work success across various companies (Cameron et al., 2004), as it generates positive emotions that enhance employee work performance.

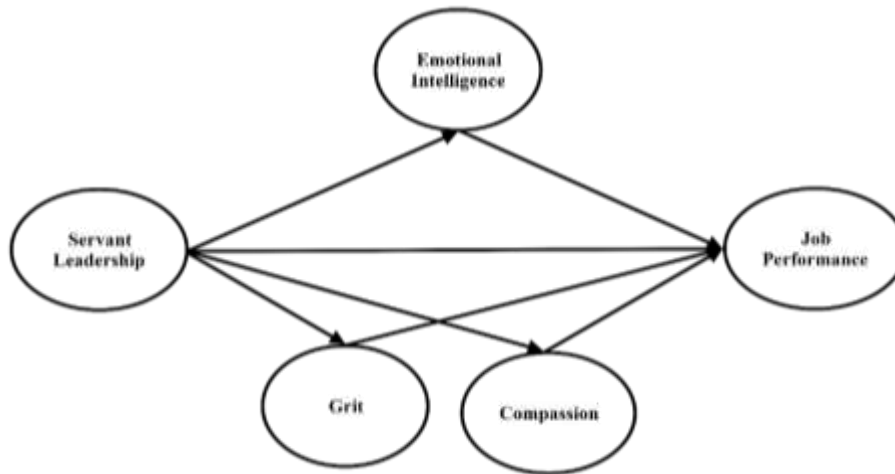
Job performance is influenced by motivation, and when employees perceive that their employer listens to their needs and values their opinions, they are more driven. Compassion, rooted in kindness, caring, and willingness to help others, aligns with the concept of prioritizing the needs of employees in servant leadership. Incorporating compassion in work settings can strengthen positive relationships, increase the leader's influence over followers, and subsequently enhance follower job performance.

While studies have demonstrated the positive influence of a leader's compassionate attitude on job performance (Ahmed et al., 2022), the role of employee or follower compassion in the relationship between servant leadership and job performance remains unexplored. Therefore, it is hypothesized that compassion mediates the relationship between servant leadership and job performance. Further research is needed to explore and understand how employee or follower compassion interacts with servant leadership and its impact on job performance. Therefore, it is hypothesized that;

Hypothesis 4. Compassion mediates the relationship between Servant Leadership and Job Performance.



Figure 1
Conceptual Framework



Research Design

The research design of the present study was quantitative and explanatory, aiming to explore the relationship between servant leadership, emotional intelligence, grit, compassion, and job performance. The following sections provide details on the method, participants, procedure, and measures employed in the study.

Method

The study utilized a non-probability sampling method, specifically employing convenience sampling to collect data from the respondents. This sampling technique involves selecting participants based on their availability and accessibility.

Participants

The population for this study consisted of teaching faculty members and heads of departments from five universities in Quetta, Pakistan. A total of 300 questionnaires were distributed among the participants. Ultimately, 250 usable matched responses were received, resulting in an 83% response rate. The respondents comprised 61 heads of departments (HODs) and the faculty members working under them. Each group consisted of one HOD and 2 to 5 faculty members.

Procedure

Information about the respondents was obtained from university websites, and professors available in the departments were contacted and invited to participate in the study. Teaching faculty



members were informed that their immediate superiors (Heads of Department) would assess their work performance. They were also asked to evaluate their leaders' servant leadership skills, as well as their own emotional intelligence, grit, and compassion. Similarly, department heads were requested to assess the work performance of the teaching staff they supervised.

Separate questionnaires were administered to teaching faculty members and their supervisors. The responses of teaching faculty were coded to ensure anonymity, and the codes allowed for linking each teacher's responses to their leaders' responses.

Measures

To measure the study constructs, various scales borrowed from previous studies were used:

Servant Leadership: A 7-item scale developed by Liden et al. (2008) was employed, measured on a 7-point Likert scale. The scale had a Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of 0.93. An example item is "My HOD/Supervisor/Boss takes time to talk to others on a personal level."

Grit: An 8-item scale developed by Duckworth et al. (2007) was used, also measured on a Likert scale. The scale's reliability coefficient was 0.76. A sample item is "I often set a goal but later choose to pursue a different one."

Compassion: The Santa Clare brief compassion scale developed by Hwang et al. (2008) was employed, consisting of multiple items. The scale had a reliability coefficient of 0.90. A sample item is "I often have caring feelings towards people (strangers) when they seem to be in need."

Emotional Intelligence: A 16-item scale by Wong and Law (2002) was used to measure emotional intelligence. The scale had a reliability coefficient of 0.89. A sample item is "I really understand what I feel."

Job Performance: A 5-item scale was employed to measure job performance, with items adapted from Kuvaas (2007). The reliability coefficient of the scale was 0.86. An example item is "My subordinate almost always performs better than what can be characterized as acceptable performance."



Data analysis

For data analysis, the study employed two software programs: SPSS v26 and SMART PLS 4. These tools were used to perform statistical analyses and structural equation modeling (SEM) to examine the relationships and test the hypotheses.

The choice to use both SPSS and SMART PLS indicates that the study employed a mixed-method approach, utilizing descriptive statistics and inferential analysis through SPSS, as well as conducting a more advanced analysis of the structural model using SMART PLS 4. This comprehensive analysis allows for a deeper understanding of the relationships between servant leadership, emotional intelligence, grit, compassion, and job performance.

Results

Data analysis includes preliminary and secondary steps. Preliminary steps include data screening, detecting outliers, normality assessment, and presenting the respondents' profile, and secondary steps include reliability, validity, and hypotheses testing through structural equation modelling (SEM). For preliminary steps IBM SPSS 26 and for analyzing secondary steps SmartPLS 4 have been used.

Demographic details of the study were comprising on, sample respondents comprised 250 subordinates and 61 HODs. Out of the 250 respondents of study 151 (60.4%) were males and 99 (39.6%) were female. 211 (84.4%) respondents were from public universities and 39 (15.6%) were from private universities. Their ages were from 34.1 to 60 years ($M = 34.1$). Regarding position 187 (76.8%) were Lecturers, 58 (23.2%) were assistant professors, 3 (1.2%) were associate professors, and only 2 (0.8%) were professors. Whereas, 61 HODs include; 41(67%) male and 20 (33%) female. In addition, table 4.1 contain mean, standard deviation, skewness and kurtosis details.

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
SERV_01	250	5.340	1.186	-0.845	1.246
SERV_02	250	5.520	1.065	-0.747	1.065
SERV_03	250	5.770	0.987	-0.834	1.200
SERV_04	250	5.540	1.091	-0.720	0.405



SERV_05	250	5.480	1.173	-0.921	0.896
SERV_06	250	5.280	1.250	-0.539	-0.164
SERV_07	250	5.730	1.051	-0.576	-0.298
EI_01	250	5.680	0.892	-0.362	-0.241
EI_02	250	5.760	0.943	-0.458	-0.256
EI_03	250	5.670	0.952	-0.307	-0.557
EI_04	250	5.610	1.056	-0.463	-0.576
EI_05	250	5.760	0.996	-0.568	0.117
EI_06	250	5.640	1.013	-0.235	-0.841
EI_07	250	5.610	1.009	-0.369	-0.098
EI_08	250	5.610	1.067	-0.295	-0.769
EI_09	250	5.690	1.020	-0.290	-0.747
EI_10	250	5.620	1.000	-0.384	-0.330
EI_11	250	5.640	1.037	-0.412	-0.399
EI_12	250	5.680	0.966	-0.317	-0.495
EI_13	250	5.640	0.973	-0.322	-0.532
EI_14	250	5.730	0.955	-0.389	-0.502
EI_15	250	5.770	1.010	-0.944	1.771
EI_16	250	5.710	1.029	-0.683	0.506
GIT_01	250	4.610	1.405	-0.188	-0.008
GIT_02	250	5.540	1.277	-0.897	0.753
GIT_03	250	4.540	1.459	-0.283	-0.013
GIT_04	250	5.700	1.230	-1.046	1.165
GIT_05	250	4.440	1.373	-0.416	0.579
GIT_06	250	4.400	1.320	-0.053	-0.046
GIT_07	250	5.740	1.027	-1.291	2.721
GIT_08	250	5.980	0.929	-1.111	2.690
Compas_01	250	5.730	0.903	-0.566	0.514
Compas_02	250	5.770	0.950	-0.627	0.513
Compas_03	250	5.760	0.948	-0.474	-0.382
Compas_04	250	5.880	0.893	-0.616	0.080
Compas_05	250	5.990	0.862	-0.584	-0.260
Perf_01	250	5.680	0.719	-0.603	1.386



Perf_02	250	5.860	0.745	-0.474	0.222
Perf_03	250	5.850	0.805	-0.469	0.384
Perf_04	250	6.000	0.889	-0.648	-0.097
Perf_05	250	5.980	0.850	-0.642	0.316
Perf_06	250	5.980	0.806	-0.434	-0.331

Furthermore, Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) was used to test the theoretical model. PLS-SEM. Hair et al. (2021) recommended PLS-SEM as a suitable method and its usage have a significant effect on the quality of the findings. In the measurement model, we assess the reliability by (indicator and internal consistency reliability) and validity by (convergent and discriminate validity) (Hair et al., 2021).

Indicator / Individual Item Reliability

Indicator reliability examines the indicator loadings. Loadings greater than 0.708 show that the concept explains more than 50% of the variation in the variable, which indicates that the indicator has a good level of item reliability (Hair et al., 2021). The indicator EI_10 and EI_14 were removed from the model due to low loading. In this study, the outer loadings for each latent variable were high enough to establish the indicator item reliability (see Table.3).

Internal Consistency Reliability

Three tests are used to assess internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's alpha [CA], composite reliability [CR], and rho A [RA]). While Cronbach's alpha is conservative, the composite reliability (rho c) may be relatively liberal, and the actual reliability of the concept is often considered as falling between these two extreme values (Sarstedt et al., 2021). A score of .7 or higher is considered acceptable (Sarstedt et al., 2021). Table 4.3 shows the value of measured constructs that have a value of .70 or higher. Thus, internal consistency reliability was achieved.

Convergent Validity

The AVE is defined as the average mean value of the squared loadings of the construct's indicators. According to Hair et al. (2021), the value of the AVE must be $> .5$ (Sarstedt et al., 2021). Table 4.2 shows that the AVE values for all variables in the current study model are well above .5. As a consequence, it has been discovered the convergent validity of the present model is not problematic.



Table 2

Evaluation of the Measurement Model

Variables name	Item Label	Factor Loading	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	CR	AVE
Compassion	Comp_01	0.827	0.870	0.873	0.906	0.659
	Comp_02	0.748				
	Comp_03	0.817				
	Comp_04	0.844				
	Comp_05	0.821				
Emotional Intelligence	EL_01	0.731	0.924	0.925	0.934	0.504
	EL_02	0.679				
	EL_03	0.730				
	EL_04	0.694				
	EL_05	0.677				
	EL_06	0.722				
	EL_07	0.731				
	EL_08	0.723				
	EL_09	0.772				
	EL_10					
	EL_11	0.695				
	EL_12	0.703				
	EL_13	0.669				
	EL_14					
	EL_15	0.705				
	EL_16	0.697				
Grit	GIT_01	0.746	0.876	0.881	0.903	0.540
	GIT_02	0.766				
	GIT_03	0.776				
	GIT_04	0.774				
	GIT_05	0.750				
	GIT_06	0.769				
	GIT_07	0.522				
	GIT_08	0.743				
Job Performance	Perf_01	0.787	0.855	0.860	0.892	0.581
	Perf_02	0.799				
	Perf_03	0.658				
	Perf_04	0.768				
	Perf_05	0.771				
	Perf_06	0.783				
Servant Leadership	SERV_01	0.684	0.835	0.836	0.876	0.502
	SERV_02	0.705				
	SERV_03	0.739				
	SERV_04	0.747				
	SERV_05	0.694				
	SERV_06	0.730				
	SERV_07	0.658				

Note: *** = Item deleted due to low loading



Discriminant Validity:

The fourth and last stage of the measuring model assessment is discriminant validity. It assesses how different the variables/(items) are from each other. Generally, two criteria are used for measuring discriminant validity (Fornell-Larcker criteria, and Heterotrait-Monotrait [HTMT] criteria).

To assess discriminant validity, the square root of construct AVE should be higher than the correlations of other constructs in the model of study. (Hair et al., 2021). In table 4.3, all bold values represent the square root of the construct's AVE, and off-diagonal numbers show correlation values with other variables. In the table, all bold values are greater than off-diagonal values. As a consequence, it suggested that discriminant validity is not a problem in the current study as per the Fornell-Larcker criteria.

Table 03
 Discriminate Validity (Fornell-Larcker Criteria)

	Compassion	Emotional Intelligence	Grit	Job Performance	Servant Leadership
Compassion	0.812				
Emotional Intelligence	0.606	0.710			
Grit	0.623	0.624	0.735		
Job Performance	0.590	0.606	0.627	0.762	
Servant Leadership	0.549	0.562	0.714	0.582	0.709

Heterotrait-Monotrait [HTMT]) value should be less than .85. In addition, researchers should assess if the HTMT values are substantially lower than 1 (by upper confidence intervals). The HTMT values of the current study for all variables are well below .85 as shown in Table 4.4. As a consequence, we determined that the constructs used in this research have adequate discriminant validity. Thus, it has been concluded that the measurement model fulfilled all four criteria.



Table 4

Discriminate Validity (Heterotrait-Monotrait Criteria [HTMT])

	Compassion	Emotional Intelligence	Grit	Job Performance	Servant Leadership
Compassion					
Emotional Intelligence	0.675				
Grit	0.724	0.696			
Job Performance	0.680	0.676	0.728		
Servant Leadership	0.637	0.633	0.831	0.686	

Note: UB95: Represents the upper bounds of the 95% confidence interval.

Stage Two: Structural Model Assessment (Hypothesis Testing)

The structural model is examined once step one (measurement model evaluation) is finished (Hair et al., 2021). To establish the significance level of the path coefficients, the current study employed the usual bootstrapping approach with 5000 sub-samples and 250 respondents

Direct relationship: Originally, H1 proposed that Servant Leadership is positively associated with job performance of employees. Results presented in Table 4.6 and Figure 4.1 have shown that there is a statistically significant association between servant leadership and job performance ($\beta = .171$, $SE = .080$, $t\text{-value} = 2.144$, $p\text{-value} = .032$, $CI\ LB = .020$, $CI\ UB = .337$). Hence, it supported H1.

Mediation Analysis: Mediation analysis perform as per recommendation. Initially, H2 hypothesizes that Emotional Intelligence mediates the relationship between the relationship between Servant Leadership and Job Performance. Results presented in Table 4.5 and Figure 4.1 have shown that emotional intelligence complementary partially mediates (since in the presences of indirect effect direct effect still significant) the association between servant leadership and job performance ($\beta = .138$, $SE = .035$, $t\text{-value} = 3.3981$, $p\text{-value} < .000$, $CI\ LB = .074$, $CI\ UB = .212$). Hence, it supported H2.



Originally, H3 proposed that Grit mediates the relationship between Servant Leadership and Job Performance. Results presented in Table 4.5 and Figure 4.1 have shown that there is a statistically significant association between servant leadership and job performance ($\beta = .158$, SE = .053, t-value = 2.977, p-value = .003, CI LB = .058, CI UB = .264). Hence, it supported H3.

Originally, H4 proposed that Compassion mediates the relationship between servant leadership and Job Performance. Results presented in Table 4.5 and Figure 4.1 have shown that there is a statistically significant association between servant leadership and job performance ($\beta = .115$, SE = .035, t-value = 3.227, p-value = .001, CI LB = .0048, CI UB = .188). Hence, it supported H4.

Table 05

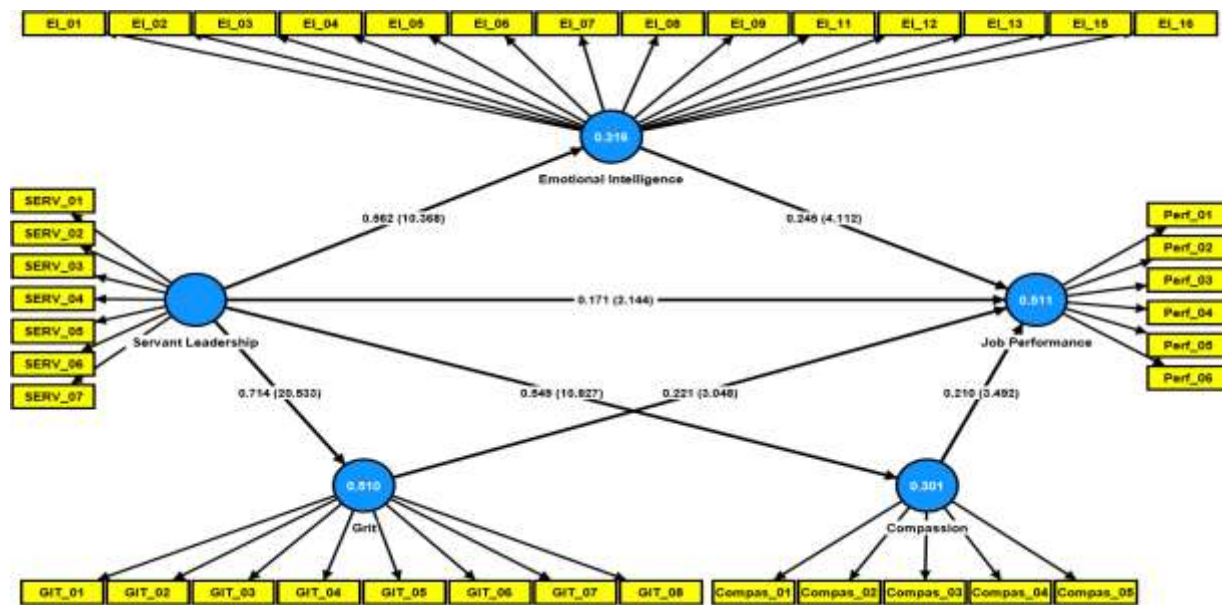
Testing Hypothesis Using Path Coefficients

H	Relationship	Std Beta	SE	T Value	P Value	CI LL	CI UL	Decision
H 1	Servant Leadership -> Job Performance	0.171	0.080	2.144	0.032	0.020	0.337	Supported
H 2	Servant Leadership -> Emotional Intelligence -> Job Performance	0.138	0.035	3.981	0.000	0.074	0.212	Supported
H 3	Servant Leadership -> Grit -> Job Performance	0.158	0.053	2.977	0.003	0.058	0.264	Supported
H 4	Servant Leadership -> Compassion -> Job Performance	0.115	0.036	3.227	0.001	0.048	0.188	Supported



Figure 2

Structural Model of the Study



Third Step: Assessment Predictive Relevance (R-square and f-square):

To determine the predictive significance of the model, R² of the endogenous constructs and the f² effect size of the predictor constructs was assessed. The coefficient of determination (R²) is a measure of the model's explanatory strength, also known as in-sample predictive power, and it represents the variance explained in each of the endogenous. Higher values of the R², which range from 0 to 1, indicate more explanatory power. In general, R² values of 0.25, 0.50, and 0.75 can be categorized as weak, moderate, and considerable in a variety of social science areas (Hair et al., 2021). However, Raithel, et al. (2012) elaborate, that acceptable R² levels depend on the

In this study setting, and in certain fields, such as stock return prediction, an R² value as low as 0.10 is considered to be satisfactory. In addition, The R² value of an endogenous construct may also be examined in relation to the elimination of a particular predictive construct. For this step researcher used f². As Figure 4.1 illustrate R² of the current study is .511, which indicates the current study model has considerable explanatory power.



Discussion

The present study aimed to investigate the relationship between servant leadership and job performance in the higher education sector in Quetta, Balochistan. Additionally, it explored the mediating roles of emotional intelligence, grit, and compassion. The findings of this study provide valuable insights into the effects of servant leadership on job performance and shed light on the underlying mechanisms.

Consistent with prior research (Vuong, 2022; Liden et al., 2015; Eva et al., 2019), the results of this study confirm that servant leadership has a positive impact on followers' job performance. This finding highlights the importance of leaders exhibiting servant leadership qualities in organizations, particularly in the higher education sector. By prioritizing the needs of their followers and fostering a supportive work environment, servant leaders can contribute to improved job performance among their subordinates.

Moreover, this study reveals that emotional intelligence plays a mediating role between servant leadership and job performance. These findings align with previous research demonstrating a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and servant leadership (Kumari et al., 2022; Ullah et al., 2022; Lee, 2019; Barbuto et al., 2014). Leaders with high emotional intelligence are better equipped to manage their own and others' emotions, leading to increased effectiveness in their leadership roles. Thus, organizations should consider providing emotional intelligence training to their staff and executives to enhance job performance.

Furthermore, the results indicate that grit mediates the link between servant leadership and job performance. This finding is consistent with the work of Lyons (2022) and suggests that individuals with a gritty mindset, characterized by perseverance and passion for long-term goals, are more likely to demonstrate higher job performance. Organizations should, therefore, encourage and cultivate a culture of perseverance and passion among their employees to promote job-related outcomes.

Additionally, compassion was found to mediate the relationship between servant leadership and job performance. These findings align with previous studies emphasizing the positive association between servant leadership and compassion (Ahmed et al., 2022; Dierendonck & Patterson, 2015). Compassionate leaders who show kindness, caring, and a willingness to help others can



enhance job performance by creating positive emotional experiences for their followers. Organizations should prioritize the development of compassionate leadership and foster a culture of compassion and sympathy to promote positive work outcomes.

Practical Implications

The findings of this study have practical implications for organizations, particularly those in the higher education sector. Recognizing the positive impact of servant leadership on job performance, organizations should prioritize the training and development of leaders who exhibit servant leadership qualities. By selecting and promoting leaders who possess the ability to serve and inspire their employees, organizations can enhance job performance and create a positive work environment.

Furthermore, organizations should consider providing emotional intelligence training to their staff and executives. Developing emotional intelligence among leaders and employees can contribute to improved leadership effectiveness and job performance. Additionally, fostering a caring company culture that values compassion and sympathy can enhance job satisfaction and overall organizational performance.

Theoretical Contributions

This study makes several theoretical contributions to the fields of business administration, particularly in the context of the higher education sector in Quetta, Balochistan. It extends previous research by providing additional evidence of the influence of servant leadership on job performance (Vuong, 2022), thereby expanding the body of knowledge in the South Asian context.

Moreover, this study contributes to the work of Duckworth and her team by exploring the role of grit in predicting job-related outcomes in an Asian context. While previous studies focused on grit as a predictor of educational outcomes, this study demonstrates its relevance in the organizational context, particularly in relation to job performance.



Conclusion

This study provides valuable insights into the relationship between servant leadership and job performance in the higher education sector. The findings support the positive influence of servant leadership on job performance and highlight the mediating roles of emotional intelligence, grit, and compassion. These findings contribute to the existing literature and offer practical implications for organizations seeking to enhance their leadership practices.

By recognizing the importance of servant leadership and its impact on job performance, organizations can focus on developing and promoting leaders who possess servant leadership qualities. Additionally, fostering emotional intelligence, grit, and compassion among leaders and employees can further enhance job performance and create a positive work environment.

However, it is important to note that the study has limitations, such as its cross-sectional design and specific context. Future research should address these limitations and explore the relationship between servant leadership and job performance in different sectors and regions. Longitudinal and experimental studies can provide further insights into the causal effects and mechanisms underlying this relationship.

Overall, this study contributes to the understanding of servant leadership and its influence on job performance. It provides practical guidance for organizations and emphasizes the importance of leadership qualities that promote employee well-being and organizational success.

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