

Servant Leadership and Organizational Commitment in Female Academics: The Mediating Role of Work-Life Balance

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Model of Organizational Commitment of Female Teaching Staff Through Servant Leadership and Work-Life Balance as Mediator



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ABSTRACT (9 pt)

Objective: This teaching staff commitment is a crucial factor influencing the success and continuity of various activities within higher education. This research seeks to develop and evaluate a theoretical model that examines the impact of servant leadership on organizational commitment, with work-life balance serving as a mediating variable for female teaching staff in the higher education sector. **Method:** The study involved 117 female teaching staff who were permanent staff, married, and had at least one year of experience in higher education. Using a quantitative research design, the researchers employed Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) for analysis. Data collection involved scales measuring organizational commitment, servant leadership, and work-life balance. The validity and reliability of the constructs were assessed using an outer model, and the research data were analyzed using an inner model in SmartPLS 4.0. **Results:** The study findings demonstrate the development of a theoretical framework illustrating the impact of servant leadership on organizational commitment, with work-life balance serving as a mediating role, consistent with the empirical evidence. However, the results indicate that the relationship between servant leadership and organizational commitment cannot be explained by work-life balance acting as a mediator. **Novelty:** This study introduces a new approach by simultaneously testing a model for involving the variables of organizational commitment, servant leadership, and work-life balance, with a special focus on female teaching staff who work and are married in a university environment.

INTRODUCTION

The progress of the ages has heavily influenced women's societal status. Currently, women are involved in a diverse range of responsibilities in domestic affairs. These responsibilities include, but are not limited to, caring for children and family members, educating children, maintaining family health and welfare, and managing household affairs (Goodwin et al., 2005). In the contemporary era of rising living expenses, women must contribute to their families' financial provision and support their partners in earning an income. Furthermore, women are expected to manage their duties as homemakers alongside their other roles (Ryff, 2014). A profession that has seen a significant increase in demand among women is teaching staff (Toffoletti & Starr, 2016). As professional educators, female teaching staff are bound by the stipulations of Law No. 14 of 2005 on teaching staff and teachers, which outlines their primary responsibilities in the realms of knowledge development, transformation, and dissemination of science, technology, and the arts through educational practices, community engagement, and research initiatives. The predominance of female teaching staff in higher education represents a crucial human resource and a vital asset for enhancing the educational quality within this sector. The role of teaching staff is fundamental to the functioning of higher education institutions, enabling them to achieve their aspirational objectives (Syakur et al., 2020).

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In education, teaching staff hold a pivotal position in fostering human resource development and preparing college students navigate the challenges encountered throughout their academic journey (Al Zeer et al., 2020). The advancement of human resources requires a strong commitment to the educational institutions where these educators are employed. However, it has been observed that female educators often exhibit lower institutional commitment than their male counterparts. This disparity can be attributed to the additional responsibilities that female educators take on as homemakers, including managing family obligations (Howe-Walsh & Turnbull, 2016). As professionals, female educators are expected to demonstrate high commitment to their respective institutions (Hossain & Rokis, 2014). The dual responsibilities of female educators often lead to various workplace conflicts (Cerrato & Cifre, 2018). Consequently, it is essential to provide internal and external support to enhance their organizational commitment, facilitate institutional development, and optimize their contributions within educational environment (Simons & Buitendach, 2013).

Organizational commitment is a psychological concept that signifies the interpersonal connection between employees and the organization and impacts employees' choices to remain affiliated with the organization (Allen & Meyer, 1990). Organizational commitment signifies a strong connection between employees and the organization, characterized by employees' eagerness to be part of the organization, their striving to perform at their best, and their embrace of the organization's values and objectives (MacKenzie et al., 1974). Organizational commitment is defined as an employee's inclination to remain a member of an organization (Colquitt et al., 2011) and the ability to align with values and participate actively within it (Kreitner et al., 2001).

In the working world, many employees, in fact, await guidance from their supervisors rather than taking the initiative to complete designated tasks (Aboramadan et al., 2021). Employees with strong commitment demonstrate a readiness to contribute their energy and take on the responsibility to promote the well-being and achievement of their affiliated organization. They also tend to remain with the organization (Mercurio, 2015; Nam & Lee, 2018). According to research, highly dedicated female teaching staff will demonstrate a strong presence in their classrooms, thereby minimizing the cancellation of lectures and striving to enhance the overall learning experience for their students (Cesário & Chambel, 2017; Farid et al., 2015). Strong commitment to the organization results in behaviors that support the institution, foster collaboration among colleagues, and contribute to the organization's overall advancement and continuity (Rathakrishnan et al., 2016). Conversely, female teaching staff with low organizational commitment tend to exhibit diminished performance, a lack of altruistic behavior, and feelings of demotivation in their professional roles (Tai et al., 2021). This situation may lead to increased turnover among teaching staff, as they lack the incentive to contribute to their institution's advancement (Xiao & Wilkins, 2015). In contrast, teaching staff who possess a high level of organizational commitment are characterized by their ability to identify with the organization and their desire to remain actively engaged, often going above and beyond in their efforts for the institution (Abebe & Assemie, 2023; Newstrom, 2014; Noe et al., 2019). Organizational commitment plays a crucial role in attaining an organization's objectives. Teaching staff with high levels of commitment are likely to make substantial contributions to the success and achievement



of these goals. Therefore, comprehending the motivations that drive such commitment is essential for enhancing overall organizational performance (Beloor et al., 2017; Suryani, 2018).

38 According to the research conducted by Allen and Meyer (1990), organizational commitment can be categorized into three distinct dimensions: 1) Affective commitment, which refers to the emotional connections employees develop to their organization. This type of commitment is characterized by employees' identification with and involvement in the organization, driven by their intrinsic motivations and alignment with its vision, mission, and objectives. It reflects the degree to which employees feel emotionally invested, familiar with, and engaged in their workplace. 2) A continuous commitment is based on rational needs. This commitment is formed based on employees' perceived advantages and disadvantages associated with remaining or leaving an organization. 3) Normative commitment is grounded in employees' internalized norms and beliefs regarding their obligations to the organization. Research indicates that affective commitment, in particular, can diminish turnover intentions (DiPietro et al., 2020) and enhance organizational citizenship behaviors (Lombardi et al., 2019). Furthermore, affective commitment is positively correlated with proactive work behaviors (Luu, 2018) and overall performance (Van Waeyenbergh et al., 2022), including contributions beyond standard role expectations (Puncreobutr & Wattanasan, 2016).

Internal and external factors shape a person's commitment to a particular organization. Servant leadership is an external factor that influences organizational commitment and is characterized by a leadership approach that focuses on serving subordinates' needs. According to the study, employees' organizational commitment is significantly affected by their satisfaction with leaders (Ramli & Desa, 2014). Consistent 114 Allen et al. (2018), servant leaders significantly impact employee commitment and contribute to the development of a stronger, supportive work environment within an organization. The degree of servant leadership demonstrated by leaders can impact employees' affective and normative commitment to the organization (Emmazli, 2019). Lapointe and Vandenberghe (2018) elucidate that a positive correlation between servant leadership and affective and normative commitment arises. The more prominently leaders demonstrate servant leadership behaviors and the more positively their subordinates perceive these behaviors, the greater the organizational commitment employees exhibit toward their organization.

Servant leadership, as articulated by Greenleaf (1977) in his work "Servant Leadership: A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness," emphasizes the leader's role in prioritizing their followers' needs over their personal interests (Greenleaf, 2007). Greenleaf characterizes servant leadership as a leader's capacity to nurture and support subordinates, creating an environment in which followers' needs, aspirations, and interests are paramount (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006). This leadership approach guides and influences subordinates, making the leader a role model (Sendjaya & Sarros, 2002). The essence of servant leadership lies in the leader's commitment to serving their team while simultaneously fulfilling their leadership responsibilities, creating a synergistic relationship that enhances both service and leadership (Kyambade et al., 2024). Furthermore, this leadership style is deeply attuned to the growth and



development of followers and the broader community where they operate (Vondey, 2016).

According to Barbuto and Wheeler (2006), servant leadership comprises five aspects: 1) Altruistic calling, which describes a leader's strong desire to make a positive difference in the lives of others, prioritizing their interests above personal ones and working diligently to meet subordinates' needs. 2) Emotional healing describes a leader's commitment and skills to enhance and restore subordinates' spirits from trauma or suffering. 3) Wisdom, which describes a leader's ability to perceive environmental cues, thus understanding situations and their implications. 4) Persuasive mapping, which describes a leader's skills in problem mapping and conceptualizing the highest probability of occurrence, as well as motivating individuals to act when articulating opportunities. 5) Organizational stewardship describes a leader who prepares the organization to contribute positively to its environment through community service programs and development, while encouraging higher education as a community initiative.

One important factor affecting organizational commitment is the concept of work-life balance. A study by Al Momani (2017) revealed a notable correlation between work-life balance and various dimensions of organizational commitment, including affective, sustainable, and normative aspects. The findings suggested that a favorable work-life balance can significantly improve organizational commitment, particularly among female employees. This conclusion is supported by the research of Shabir and Gani (2020), which found a strong positive relationship between work-life balance and organizational commitment among female workers. Further analysis indicated a beneficial link between work-life balance and affective normative commitment. Therefore, work-life balance is essential for fostering organizational commitment. Moreover, research by Akter et al. (2019) found that work-life balance positively affects organizational commitment among university teaching staff.

Hudson (2005) defines work-life balance as a state of engagement that prioritizes the congruence among the various roles an individual undertakes. Fisher et al. (2009) observe that work-life balance can be perceived as either a beneficial or detrimental influence of the professional role on one's personal life. Individuals who can strike a balance between their professional and personal lives tend to be more productive, deliver superior work outcomes, and show a greater inclination to volunteer. According to Schermerhorn et al. (2005), work-life balance is an individual's capacity to balance professional responsibilities with personal and familial obligations.

Hudson (2005) delineated three primary dimensions of work-life balance: 1) Time balance, which is related to the distribution of time between professional responsibilities and personal pursuits, encompassing family time, leisure activities, and rest. 2) Engagement balance addresses the psychological and emotional balance between work and personal life and the degree of physical and emotional investment in each area. 3) Satisfaction balance relates to the level of contentment individuals experience regarding their accomplishments in both work and personal spheres, alongside their capacity to meet the needs and expectations in these domains.

Work-life balance may also serve as a mediator for fostering organizational commitment (Larasati et al., 2023). An individual who exemplifies a servant-leadership



approach can effectively manage their personal life and professional duties. By using the servant leadership model, they can enhance employee productivity and performance (Kaltiainen & Hakanen, 2022). Therefore, the concept of work-life balance serves as both a primary or affecting organizational commitment and as an intermediary factor that facilitates the impact of servant leadership on organizational commitment.

This research introduces a novel approach by employing a model test that incorporates a mediation framework, focusing specifically on female teaching staff who both employed and married in a university setting. Previous research primarily focused on the direct relationship between servant leadership and organizational commitment (Allen et al., 2018; Erdurmazlı, 2019; Lapointe & Vandenberg, 2018; Ramli & Desa, 2014) without considering mediating variables, particularly the role of work-life balance. Earlier studies have examined only the direct effects of work-life balance as an independent variable on organizational commitment (Akter et al., 2019; Al Momani, 2017; Shabir & Gani, 2020). The findings of this study are anticipated to enhance the understanding and foster organizational commitment among female teaching staff who navigate the dual responsibilities of professional and domestic roles. The primary objective of this research is to develop and evaluate a theoretical model that elucidates the influence of servant leadership on organizational commitment, mediated by work-life balance, specifically among female teaching staff at a university.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Procedure

Research procedures consist of methods for gathering, examining, and interpreting data to address research questions or evaluate hypotheses. These procedures encompass (1) problem identification, which involves determining the research topic based on observations, literature reviews, or practical needs; (2) literature review, which entails collecting and analyzing relevant sources to grasp the research context existing theories, identify gaps in prior studies, and discover research novelties; (3) problem formulation, which requires clearly and specifically articulating research issues; (4) hypothesis formulation, which involves developing testable hypotheses for empirical analysis; and (5) research design, which includes selecting appropriate research methods, defining the population, choosing sampling techniques and research samples, and determining suitable data collection instruments. Subsequently, (6) preparing data collection tools by adapting existing measurement instruments used in relevant prior studies and tailoring them to fit the research topic, (7) gathering data through pilot testing of measurement tools and proceeding with data collection from selected participants, (8) performing data analysis by processing the collected research data using suitable analytical methods and interpreting the results, (9) examining and presenting findings by thoroughly discussing the research outcomes and comprehensively showcasing them to address the research questions, and (10) formulating conclusions and suggestions by summarizing the research findings based on the obtained results and offering recommendations for practical applications or future studies.

Research Participant



Participants in this research comprise 117 college faculty members who are female, married, hold permanent employee status, and have been employed for at least one year. This research employed a purposive sampling method. The purposive sampling method involves selecting a specific group of participants based on predetermined characteristics.

Data Collection Method

The study employed a data-collection method using scales. The measurement instrument used in this research comprises scales for organizational commitment, work-life balance, and servant leadership. The scaling model employed a Likert scale from 1 to 4, with options including "very inappropriate," "inappropriate," "appropriate," and "highly appropriate." The Organizational Commitment Scale was developed according to Allen and Meyer's (1990) framework encompassing affective, continuance, and normative commitment. Instances of items from the organizational commitment scale include statements such as "I still feel happy regardless of how heavy the workload is at the University," representing the affective commitment dimension, "I keep on performing well as long as I feel good treatment from the University" representing the continuance commitment dimension, and "I feel obligated to repay the University for its services" representing the normative commitment dimension.

The servant leadership scale is developed based on the theoretical framework established by Barbuto and Wheeler (2006), encompassing dimensions such as altruistic calling, emotional healing, wisdom, persuasive mapping, and organizational stewardship. Illustrative items from this scale include "My superior strives to provide the best support for their subordinates," representing the altruistic calling dimension; "My superior motivates subordinates facing work-related fatigue," reflecting the emotional healing dimension; "My superior demonstrates the ability to foresee the consequences of implemented policies" related to the wisdom dimension, "My superior effectively identifies various challenges present in the work environment" associated with the persuasive mapping dimension, and "My superior shows concern for societal issues and actively seeks solutions" linked to the organizational stewardship dimension.

The scale for assessing work-life balance is based on Hudson's (2005) theory and incorporates elements of time management, engagement, and overall satisfaction. The elements from the work-life balance scale include "I allocate my working hours to work-related tasks and reserve my leisure time for family responsibilities," representing the time balance aspect. "I dedicate my attention to work responsibilities during office hours and shift my focus to family matters once I return home," highlighting the involvement balance aspect. "I try to perform my duties proficiently in both my professional and familial roles," reflecting a satisfactory balance.

Validity and Reliability

The study conducted validity and reliability tests using the outer model in SmartPLS 4.0. The outer model functions as a measurement framework designed to evaluate the validity and reliability of the constructed measurement model and second-order Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). Construct validity evaluation encompasses both convergent and discriminant validity. Convergent validity is defined as the assessment

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of the strength of the correlation between latent variables and their associated constructs, as indicated by standardized factor loading. As asserted by Hair et al. (2021), a common guideline for evaluating convergent validity is that the factor loading value should exceed > 0.5, which is regarded as practically significant, and an Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value > 0.5 (Hair et al., 2021). Discriminant validity refers to the expectation that the magnitude of the loading value between the construct and the corresponding item surpasses that of other constructs. The evaluation outcomes are derived from the comparison that the square root of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for a construct must exceed the correlation coefficients among the latent variables (Hair et al., 2021; Worthington, 2019). The study conducted reliability tests using two distinct methodologies, e.g., Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability. The anticipated thresholds for Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability are set at > 0.7 (Sarstedt et al., 2021).

The scale for measuring organizational commitment comprises 36 individual items. The external model assessment confirmed the validity of 16 items and identified 20 items as invalid. The servant leadership scale comprises 30 items. The evaluation of the outer model yielded 14 valid items and 16 invalid items. The work-life balance instrument comprises 24 distinct items. The evaluation of the outer model yielded 10 valid items, while 14 were deemed invalid.

Data Analysis

The researchers analyzed the data using SmartPLS 4.0 to assess the structural model (inner model). The evaluation of the inner model is executed through three methodologies, specifically 1) utilizing the coefficient of determination (R^2) to quantify the extent of variation in the changes/influences of exogenous variables on endogenous variables, 2) employing predictive relevance (Q^2) to measure the accuracy of the observed values generated by the model alongside its parameter estimations, and 3) examining the Goodness-of-Fit (GoF), which serves as an index indicating the overall adequacy of model fit. Hypothesis testing is performed by analyzing the original sample value, t-statistic value, or probability value alongside p-values. Hypothesis testing aims to determine whether an exogenous variable is significantly associated with an endogenous variable by examining the t-statistic at the 5% significance level or a 95% confidence interval, which is achieved when the t-statistic exceeds 1.96.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The data analysis in this study consisted of validity and reliability testing. Competent experts validate, through professional judgment, before conducting validation and reliability tests on measuring instruments. Expert validation is needed in this research to determine the instrument's accuracy across various aspects (Xiao & Wilkins, 2015). Item analysis is a technique used to examine items on a scale. The analysis process is intended to eliminate inconsistent items. This research was tested using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) in SmartPLS 4.0. The testing involved two stages: outer model testing and inner model testing. The construct validity and reliability of the model were

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assessed using the outer model, while the research data were analyzed using the inner model.

Results of Outer Model Test

The scale for measuring organizational commitment comprises 36 individual items. The external model assessment confirmed the validity of 16 items and identified 20 items as invalid. The convergent validity test yielded item loadings ranging from 0.629 to 0.866, indicating validity. An Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value of 0.54 was also obtained. The findings of the discriminant validity assessment yielded an Average Variance Extracted (AVE) root value of 0.735, suggesting that the organizational commitment scale demonstrates superior predictive ability for the latent variables compared to other constructs. In the research study, the reliability test yielded Cronbach's alpha of 0.944 and composite reliability of 0.951. These findings confirm the validity and reliability of the organizational commitment scale, establishing its viability as a research instrument.

The servant leadership scale comprises 30 items. The evaluation of the outer model yielded 14 valid items and 16 invalid items. The convergent validity assessment revealed item loadings ranging from 0.846 to 0.922, along with an Average Variance Extracted (AVE) of 0.664. Furthermore, the discriminant validity analysis indicated an AVE of 0.815, suggesting that the servant leadership scale demonstrates superior predictive capability for its items compared to other constructs used to assess latent variables. The reliability assessment produced a Cronbach's alpha of 0.960 and a composite reliability of 0.963. Consequently, these findings affirm that the servant leadership scale is valid and reliable, making it suitable for research measurement.

The work-life balance instrument comprises 24 distinct items. The evaluation of the outer model yielded 10 valid items, while 14 were deemed invalid. The findings from the assessment of convergent validity indicated a valid item loading factor ranging from 0.747 to 0.874, along with an Average Variance Extracted (AVE) of 0.558. The outcomes of the discriminant validity assessment indicated an AVE root value of 0.747, suggesting that the work-life balance instrument exhibits superior predictive validity for its items relative to alternative constructs measuring the same latent variables. The results of the reliability analysis indicated Cronbach's alpha of 0.911 and composite reliability of 0.915. In light of these findings, the work-life balance instrument is confirmed to be valid and reliable, making it an appropriate tool for research measurement. The output of the outer model is illustrated in Figure 1 below.

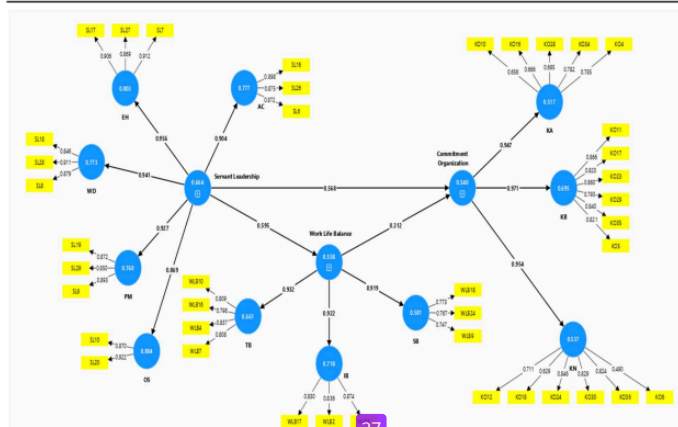


Figure 1. Output of the Outer model

Results of Inner Model Test

The inner model test aims to verify the accuracy and reliability of the constructed structural model. The examination of the inner model comprises three essential components: 1) Coefficient of determination (R²), 2) Predictive relevance (Q²), and 3) Goodness of Fit (GoF). The results presented below are derived from the analysis of the collected data.

22 Coefficient of determination (R^2)

40 The coefficient of determination (R^2) serves as a metric to assess the extent to which
endogenous variables can be elucidated by exogenous variables, thereby reflecting the
predictive capability of the structural model (Hair et al., 2021). Values are classified as
strong when exceeding 0.67, moderate when falling between 0.33 and 0.67, and weak
when ranging from 0.19 to 0.33 (Chin et al., 2020; Hair et al., 2021). In the present study,
the coefficient of determination (R^2) was 0.630, indicating that the impact of exogenous
variables (organization commitment) on the endogenous variable (servant leadership) is
strong. Conversely, the effect of the endogenous variable (servant leadership) on the
mediator variable (work-life balance) was 0.354, placing it in the moderate category.

Predictive Relevance (Q²)

The predictive relevance test (Q^2) is utilized to evaluate the effectiveness of the blindfolding procedure in generating observation values by assessing the predictive relevance value (Q^2). The Q^2 (predictive relevance value) is **positive**, suggesting the

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model has predictive relevance. If the predictive relevance value (Q^2) is negative or falls below 0, it indicates that the model's predictive relevance is minimal or nonexistent (Chin et al., 2020). The predictive relevance (Q^2) of the compiled model in this research is 0.564, indicating its ability to predict outcomes accurately.

Goodness of Fit Index (GoF)

The goodness-of-fit (GoF) index provides an overall measure of model fit, thereby validating the model's overall framework, including the assessment of measurement and structural models. The goodness of fit (GoF) threshold of 0.10 is classified within the weak category, 0.25 is categorized as moderate, and 0.36 is designated within the strong category (Hair et al., 2021).

According to the calculation based on the earlier GoF formula, the resulting GoF value is 0.537. This value indicates that the overall degree of model adequacy is robust. Consequently, the theoretical framework that elucidates the impact of exogenous variables (organizational commitment) on endogenous variables (servant leadership) is consistent with the empirical data, thereby confirming that the servant leadership model has undergone rigorous testing and can elucidate the dynamics among its associated variables. The findings on the inner model output are illustrated in Figure 2 below.

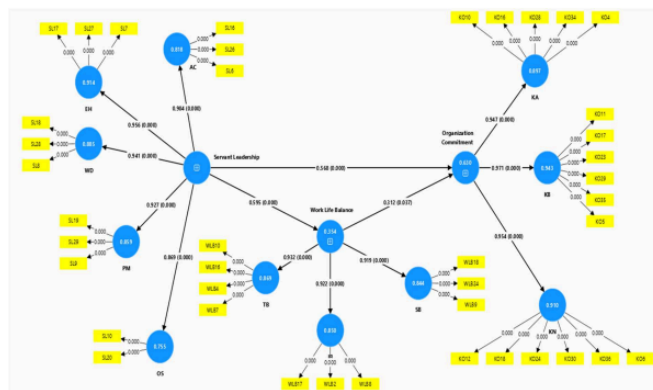


Figure 2. Output of the Inner model

Results of Hypothesis Test

The objective of hypothesis testing is to examine the effect of servant leadership on organizational commitment through work-life balance, which serves as a mediator. In this process, the original sample value, t-statistic value, and probability value are considered. Based on the tests conducted, the p-values, t-statistics, and original sample values are presented in Table 1 below.



Table 1. Results of the hypothesis test

Variable	Original Sample	T-statistic	P-value	Remarks
Servant Leadership - Organizational Commitment	0.568	3.893	0.000	Highly Significant
Work-life Balance - Organizational Commitment	0.312	2.092	0.037	Significant
Servant Leadership - Work-life Balance	0.595	4.578	0.000	Highly Significant

Table 2. Results of the indirect effect hypothesis test

Variable	Original Sample	T-statistic	P-value	Remarks
Servant Leadership - Organizational Commitment through Work-life Balance	0.185	1.611	0.107	Not Significant

The hypothesis test results, as presented in Tables 1 and 2, indicate a statistically significant positive correlation between servant leadership and organizational commitment. Similarly, a significant positive correlation exists between work-life balance and organizational commitment. Additionally, servant leadership is found to exert a very significant positive influence on work-life balance. The indirect effect indicates that work-life balance does not mediate the relationship between servant leadership and organizational commitment.

Discussion

This study presents a theoretical model demonstrating the impact of servant leadership on organizational commitment through work-life balance as a mediating variable. Empirical data support the model and align with existing literature in the field. The results are based on the fulfillment of the requisite indicators, including the coefficient of determination (R^2) in the moderate category, the model's good predictive relevance ($Q^2 > 0$), and the goodness-of-fit (GoF), which indicates a strong match between the theoretical and empirical. This model provides an acceptable explanation of the influence of servant leadership on organizational commitment; however, work-life balance does not mediate this relationship.

The novel aspect of this study is the design and testing of a theoretical model of organizational commitment in female teaching staff. The organizational commitment model's design and testing entail examining servant leadership as an independent variable and work-life balance as a mediator variable. In previous studies, servant leadership and work-life balance were treated as independent rather than mediating variables. Moreover, previous studies by Amelia et al. (2024), Alomran et al. (2024), and

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Mansourkhani et al. (2024) employed regression analysis to assess the influence between variables rather than utilizing structural equation modeling (SEM) to test the model. Furthermore, previous studies on organizational commitment were still predominantly focused on economic perspectives (Asri, 2022; Bagis et al., 2020; Setiawan & Aprillia, 2022; Wai et al., 2022).

The findings of this study demonstrate a marked positive correlation between servant leadership and organizational commitment among female teaching staff. These findings suggest that leaders who adopt a servant-leadership approach tend to foster higher organizational commitment among their employees. This result is consistent with Erdurmazlı's (2019) study, which demonstrated that the degree of servant leadership exhibited by leaders influences their followers' affective and normative commitment to the organization. These findings are also consistent with Harwili's (2016) research, which indicates that servant leadership fosters more robust and positive relationships with employees and increases employee commitment to the organization. Furthermore, given that leaders are representatives of the organization, the implementation of a servant leadership style, which is characterized by positive regard for followers, has the effect of engendering better feelings of obligation among members toward the organization, manifesting in the form of high levels of organizational commitment (Miao et al., 2014). Therefore, it would be beneficial for servant leaders to strive to create a work environment that offers structural empowerment and encourages stronger commitment on the part of employees to the organization (Allen et al., 2018).

The presence of servant leadership is likely to enhance organizational commitment among female teaching staff. As the adoption of the servant leadership style grows, so does the organizational commitment among teaching staff (Rajapakse, 2021). Hence, the organization must continuously uphold and strive to enhance the servant-leadership approach to foster greater organizational dedication (Khan et al., 2020). Female teaching staff who believe that their leaders prioritize their well-being and make genuine efforts to address their needs are more likely to empathize with and support their colleagues in times of failure or work-related mistakes. They possess a keen awareness of circumstances and their potential effects, and can effectively address the challenges faced by female teaching staff, thereby increasing their confidence in their role within the organization. Female instructors will experience a sense of disorientation upon departure from their positions and professional environments. Therefore, there exists a sense of desire, respect, obedience, and trust in the leader to execute the given tasks and the institution's objectives and aims, enabling it to operate effectively and efficiently.

This study's findings also indicate a notable positive influence of work-life balance and organizational commitment among female teaching staff. These findings are corroborated by Aryadisti et al. (2024), who demonstrated that work-life balance positively and significantly influences employee organizational commitment. Leaders and employees alike must pursue strategies that facilitate achieving work-life balance and enhance organizational commitment in professional environments that adhere to full-day working hours, as exemplified by the banking sector (Nwibere, 2024). Further research indicates that the contribution of work-life balance to organizational commitment is 26%, consistent with Seierstad and Kirton's (2015) findings, which asserted that work-life balance significantly impacts organizational commitment.



According to the research, achieving a work-life balance can increase an individual's dedication to their organization (Tennakoon & Senarathne, 2020). **Arathi and Mala's (2016)** study revealed that female teaching staff who achieve a work-life balance are likely to demonstrate higher levels of organizational commitment. The concept of a healthy work-life balance will foster greater employee commitment to their organization. According to social exchange theory, when an organization "provides" a family-friendly culture, teaching staff will be better positioned to achieve a balance between their professional and personal lives (Aragona et al., 2024). This provision will lead to a perception amongst teaching staff that the organization treats them fairly and that they feel obliged to "return the favor" by demonstrating more commitment to the organization (Talukder, 2019). When developing policies, every organization tends to consider the importance of work-life balance (Syam et al., 2024). Establishing a balance between work and personal life as a teaching staff will lead to a higher level of commitment to the organization where they are employed (Tayfun & Çatır, 2014).

The perception of work-life balance among female teaching staff is intricately linked to the equilibrium they achieve between their professional responsibilities and personal lives, which is often regarded as a positive aspect. Those female teaching staff who successfully navigate the demands of both their careers and family obligations tend to experience greater psychological and emotional stability. This balance fosters a sense of satisfaction regarding their accomplishments in both domains, contributing to their overall happiness, comfort, focus, and tranquility while performing their duties. When leaders give female teaching staff the autonomy to manage their work-life balance, they are likely to respond with greater responsibility and a commitment to fulfilling their professional obligations to the best of their abilities. Consequently, female teaching staff develop a deeper emotional connection to their organization, feeling a sense of belonging and reluctance to depart from an environment that supports their well-being.

The findings of this research also indicated a positive and notably significant relationship between servant leadership and work-life balance. The outcomes of this investigation align with those of earlier studies, which have asserted that servant leadership exerts a positive and substantial impact on work-life balance (Lamprinou et al., 2021). Although employees frequently lack direct interaction with organizational leaders, they generally derive benefits from servant leadership through the values the organization promotes, as reflected in its policies and practices (Lamprinou et al., 2021). A leader's proficiency in fostering work-family balance indicates that they adeptly navigate the demands and resources across professional and personal realms (Haar et al., 2017). The servant leadership theory has emerged as a theoretical framework for exploring employee work-life balance, intending to elucidate its effects on employee work outcomes (Haar et al., 2017). The more authentically a leader embodies the principles of servant leadership, the more pronounced the improvement in work-life balance will be for female teaching staff. This assertion is corroborated by the research conducted by Vanesa et al. (2022), which demonstrates that servant leadership positively and significantly influences work-life balance.

A leader who practices servant leadership will prioritize the teaching staff's interests, especially female teaching staff, demonstrate an ability to understand and provide encouragement, exhibit sensitivity to the situation of female teaching staff who work and



have families, and even be capable of identifying the root problems faced by female teaching staff who have families. In light of these circumstances, female teaching staff have a significant opportunity to achieve a healthy work-life balance. Female teaching staff can maintain the balance between their professional and familial responsibilities, sustain psychological and emotional equilibrium across their work and family lives, and experience satisfaction with their achievements in both domains. Kenion's (2024) study corroborated this assertion, indicating that servant leadership characteristics influence work-life balance among organizational leaders.

Work-life balance can serve as an intermediary in promoting organizational commitment (Larasati et al., 2023). Work-life balance not only directly influences organizational commitment but also acts as a mediator between servant leadership and organizational commitment. A leader who embodies a servant-leadership style demonstrates the ability to harmonize their personal life and professional responsibilities, thereby enhancing employee performance (Korhonen & Hakanen, 2022). A servant-leadership approach also affects an individual's balance between work and personal life, as it promotes the growth and success of members within an organization, thereby leading to goal achievement (Sirgy & Lee, 2018). Additional research findings indicate that the impact of servant leadership, when mediated by work-life balance, is positively correlated with work involvement. Furthermore, it was found that work-life balance fully mediates the influence of servant leadership, underscoring the importance of maintaining a balance between work and personal life (Haar et al., 2017). Utilizing a servant leadership approach may lead to various favorable outcomes, including increasing engagement, organizational citizenship behavior, and improving performance (Fakhri et al., 2024).

CONCLUSION

Fundamental Finding: The study's findings demonstrate the development of a theoretical framework that illustrates the impact of servant leadership on organizational commitment through the mediating role of work-life balance, and this framework fits the empirical data. The study also reveals that servant leadership has a highly significant and positive direct effect on organizational commitment. The study demonstrates that work-life balance has a significant positive impact on organizational commitment through its indirect effect, and the influence of servant leadership on work-life balance is highly significant. The indirect impact suggests that work-life balance does not mediate the relationship between servant leadership and organizational commitment. **Implication:** This study yielded a validated, robust organizational commitment model that can be used to address organizational commitment among female teaching staff. It is expected that leaders will be able to apply the servant leadership style to female teaching staff, particularly married ones, to manage their organizations effectively. This approach is believed to positively influence organizational commitment. Those in leadership roles who adopt a servant-leadership style will also facilitate the expansion of opportunities for female teaching staff to achieve a healthy work-life balance. **Limitation:** This study used a cross-sectional design with a relatively low response rate. **Future Research:** Future researchers can further examine the factors influencing organizational commitment, as this study examined only the relationship with servant leadership

Commented [A14]: discussion is a bit repetitive, restating findings already presented in the results section. The authors should focus on interpreting their findings in the context of previous literature, as they have attempted to do, but without restating the core results of their own study.

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Commented [A16]: implications and future research sections are well-structured, but the authors should be more specific in their recommendations. For example, suggesting a larger sample size is good, but they could also propose adding other variables that might act as mediators or moderators.

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through the mediator of work-life balance. This investigation can be done by reviewing both internal and external factors related to individuals' organizational commitment. Furthermore, the sample size needs to be increased to allow the research results to be generalized to the education sector or to teachers in general. Apart from that, future researchers can expand their research by using additional variables that serve as mediators or moderators.

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