An analysis of the relationship between servant leadership and organizational citizenship behavior: The effect of emotional intelligence as a mediating role

Rokaya Albdareen[a*]

[a]*Jadara University, Jordan*

A B S T R A C T

The current study's primary goal is to ascertain the impact of servant leadership on organizational citizenship behavior as being affected by emotional intelligence as the mediating variable. This descriptive study was applied to the academic staff of private and public universities. The questionnaire was used for data collection. The dimensions of servant leadership (SL) were nine, the dimensions of emotional intelligence were nine while five dimensions of organizational citizenship behavior were used and collected from literature review. The questionnaire was distributed to 304 of the academic staff. The findings indicate a moderate degree of the servant leadership practice. Also, the evaluation of organizational citizenship behavior practice and emotional intelligence was negative in academic institutions. The results showed that servant leadership affects positively organizational citizenship behavior using emotional intelligence as a mediator. Servant leadership is very important in higher educational organizations when followed properly and affects organizational citizenship behavior by considering the emotional aspects of the academic staff.

1. Introduction

Success leadership deals with the organization as one unit with a similar end target and seeking one vision. The organizational structure in normal conditions works integrated functions to reach the organization's target. On the other hand, the human resources of the organization form the key that will lead the organizational targets (Bany Mohammad et al., 2022; Al-Okaily, 2022; Smith et al., 2015). In any normal organizational surroundings, the variation in human resources capabilities and attitudes is different. Capabilities building of humans to meet organizational needs is considered the responsibility of leadership and the contribution of different human resources (Denti & Hemlin, 2012; Nusari et al., 2018).

The internal support of human resources to exchange experiences and to lead the organization to the planned direction called the attention to search for a new concept that facilitates these contributions and given the term Leadership of servant (SL) (Alafeshat & Aboud, 2019). The attention of SL was analyzed in two directions. The first one is related to the lower positions' needs to lead the production process, while the other direction is the tendency of the upper leadership to guide the others to improve their skills in the production process. The second direction led to another important concept which the organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) (Kim & Wnag, 2018). Both SL and OCB are highly connected to each other and the output of OCB reflects the extent of SL within the organization.

Servant leadership results in organizational citizenship behavior by enhancing the quality of the leader-follower relationship and promoting psychological empowerment (Newman et al., 2017; Hwan, 2011; Shoukat & Iqbal Khan, 2019). The pathways

that facilitate psychological empowerment and leader-member exchange (LMX) explain the process by which servant leaders elicit discretionary organizational citizenship behavior between adherents (Taleghani & Mehr, 2013). Servant leadership behaviors such as growth, vision, and community building increase psychological empowerment, which in turn positively influences organizational citizenship behavior (Ai Ping et al., 2023a,b; Al-Okaily, 2022; Mira & Margaretha, 2012). Additionally, followers' proactive personality moderates the indirect effects of servant leadership on organizational citizenship behavior through LMX. By emphasizing empowerment and developing servant leaders, organizations can promote organizational citizenship behavior and maximize their achievements (Margono Setiawan & Wahdiyat Moko, 2023).

Emotional intelligence plays a significant role in improving servant leadership (Anderson, 2016; Du Plessis et al., 2015; Mukonoweshuro et al., 2016; Shamshad, 2016). It has been found that there is a positive and significant relationship between emotional intelligence and servant leadership (Gregory, 2016). Furthermore, emotional intelligence has a greater impact on female servant leadership facets compared to men (Shabani et al., 2021). The integration of emotional intelligence and servant leadership skills can enhance leadership performance and effectiveness. Emotional intelligence and trust in the manager also affect servant leadership. Therefore, organizations should consider conducting emotional intelligence training for leaders to improve their performance and the variables affected by servant leadership in the workplace. Overall, emotional intelligence plays a crucial role in developing and enhancing servant leadership qualities and behaviors (Safiullah et al., 2023).

Emotional intelligence also plays a significant role in improving organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) (Antony, 2013; Setiawan et al., 2017; Rajamohan, 2011; Zia et al., 2018). Studies have shown that conflict resolution strategies are positively related to OCB, and emotional intelligence moderates and strengthens this relationship (Widayati et al., 2020). Transformational leadership also has a direct and indirect influence on OCB, with emotional intelligence acting as a mediator (Setiawan et al, 2017). Additionally, emotional intelligence has a positive relationship with OCB. (Tofighi et al, 2015). In the context of IT executives, emotional intelligence significantly contributes to OCB, and developing emotional skills can promote interpersonal effectiveness, job satisfaction, and organizational effectiveness (Karthikeyan & Arulkumar,2022). Therefore, organizations should focus on improving emotional intelligence among employees to minimize conflicts and enhance OCB. This study aims at investigating the effect of SL on OCB using emotional intelligence (EI) as mediator.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Servant Leadership Style

Servant leadership has its roots in religious and moral philosophy. It is based on the writings of Robert K. Greenleaf, who argued that the purpose of leadership is to help followers reach their fullest potential as human beings. Greenleaf argued that a leader should serve followers with humility and decency, and strive to create a sense of community (Eva et al., 2019). Servant leadership has been used successfully in many industries, such as healthcare, education, and technology. Several corporations, as well as governments around the world, have adopted this leadership style (Mookgo, 2018; Zafar et al., 2012). Servant leadership is a style of leadership focused on servanthood and helping others to develop, succeed, and grow. Servant leaders view their role as not just to rule, but to serve. As Greenleaf said, "The servant-leader is servant first… It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first." (Broadwell, 2013). Servant leadership theory is a form of leadership that emphasizes on putting the needs of followers first (Allan et al., 2019). The servant leader seeks to understand the needs and perspectives of employees, and works collaboratively to meet those needs and help them grow (Al-Okaily, 2023a,b; Abu-Salih et al., 2022; Abd Rahman et al., 2020; Kumari et al., 2022). This style of leadership focuses on collaboration between the leader and follower and encourages employees to take initiative and share ideas. Servant leadership encourages leaders to think of employees and customers as the prime focus (Abid et al., 2015). Servant leadership has many practical applications in both business and government organizations. For example, in business, servant leadership can motivate employees to take on new responsibilities and think in creative ways (Howladar & Rahman, 2021). In government organizations, servant leadership encourages civil servants to serve their constituents in the best way possible (Lee, 2019).

2.2 OCB Concept

Organizational citizenship behavior theory states that employees who are committed to their organizations and help others voluntarily in order to improve the overall organizational climate can lead to positive resources for the organization (Tafzal Haque et al., 2019). It implies that employee's contributions to their organizations go beyond their specific job roles and can help create new resources the organization can use for success (Aime et al., 2011; Shahid & Azhar, 2013). Examples of such voluntary behavior include going the extra mile on a task without being asked, being willing to mentor new employees, and helping coworkers without expecting recognition or reward (Garg, 2019). This theory suggests that organizations should create an environment that encourages organizational citizenship behavior in order to take advantage of the various resources available to the firm (Iqbal & Piwowar-Sulej, 2023; Salim, 2023; Xie et al., 2023).

2.3 EI Concept

Peter Salovery and John Mayer coined emotional intelligence (EI) as two psychology researchers in 1990 to describe the ability to understand and manage one's emotions as well as those of others (Nazari & Emami, 2012). It is often described as

the ability to recognize emotions, to feel empathy for one another, to process one's emotions versus only reacting to them, and to manage one's emotions in positive ways (Maccann et al., 2020). It is an important component of overall well-being because it allows us to better understand how our emotions can influence our behavior (Kumari et al., 2022). People with higher emotional intelligence are typically better at managing relationships, have better impulse control, and can better handle stressful situations (Pishghadam et al., 2022). Additionally, research has shown that those with higher EI are more successful in leadership situations, as EI can help managers understand their employees more by being able to bring a sense of empathy and insight to a team (Mehta & Singh, 2013). Overall, emotional intelligence can be seen as an important aspect of life, as it can significantly help us manage difficult emotional situations, as well as understanding others (Garbenis & Palujanskienė, 2021).

2.4 Relationship among SL, OCB and EI

Servant leadership has been found to have a positive effect on organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) (Abid et al., 2015; Kim & Wnag, 2018; Mathur & Negi, 2014). It has been found to increase trust, loyalty, and subordinate motivation, leading to a greater willingness to go above and beyond what is expected of team members and colleagues in their job roles (Abid et al., 2015). These behaviors contribute to the success of organizations and benefit the team, organization, and society as a whole. The effect of servant leadership on OCB is further enhanced when combined with high emotional intelligence (EI) within the leader (Kim & Wnag, 2018). Leaders with high EI demonstrate better self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management, all of which are qualities that tend to contribute to greater OCB (Haricharan, 2015). When a leader has a high level of EI and utilizes servant leadership principles, the expectation is that the team members will also possess higher levels of EI (Almahdali et al., 2021). This combination of leadership and team member's EI can result in a team whose members are more likely to willingly and actively engage in OCB behaviors (Nazari & Emami, 2012). As these team members demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of the importance of teamwork and collaboration, the level of OCB increases and can lead to greater organizational success (Prasetio et al., 2015; Somech & Khotaba, 2017). The effect of servant leadership on organizational citizenship behavior may be positive, depending on the level of emotional intelligence of the servants. Emotional intelligence is the ability to understand people's emotions and respond in a positive manner (Serrat, 2017). Servants who have high emotional intelligence are often better able to motivate their team members to higher levels of performance and to build strong relationships with them (Lee, 2019). In turn, this may lead to higher levels of organizational citizenship behavior. Team members who feel supported and respected by their leader may be more likely to show support for and loyalty to the organization by engaging in behaviors such as speaking positively about the organization or volunteering to help with special projects (Al-Kofahi et al., 2023; Al-Okaily et al., 2022; Benevene, Buonomo & West, 2020). Research has shown that emotional intelligence is associated with higher levels of both servant leadership and organizational citizenship behavior (Kim & Wnag, 2018). Thus, it is reasonable to expect that the effect of servant leadership on organizational citizenship behavior may be enhanced through the influence of emotional intelligence.

3. Methods

3.1 Settings

Cross-sectional descriptive study was conducted to investigate the effect of SL on the OCB using EI as moderator.

3.2 Research Population and Sample

The study targeted the academic staff of three universities. Two of these universities were private, while the third one was governmental. A stratified simple random sample was selected. The sample included 400 respondents distributed equally between the three universities and the academic staff was selected randomly from each university. The selected random sample exceeds the size of the random sample that could be used when the simple random sample calculator is used. The confidence interval used was 95% and the error was 5%. The response rate reached 95.6% of the total sample from the three universities (n=304).

3.3 Research Model

The following Figure represents the research model and the hypothesis of the study (Fig. 1).
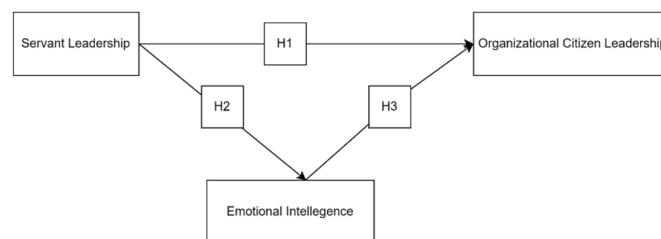

Fig. 1. Research model and hypothesis distribution

3.4 Research hypothesis

Based on literature the following hypothesis were developed:

H₁: *Servant leadership is positively related to organizational citizenship behavior.*

H₂: *Servant leadership is positively related to Emotional intelligence.*

H₃: *Emotional intelligence is positively related to organizational citizenship behavior.*

H₄: *Emotional intelligence positively mediates the relationship between Servant leadership and organizational citizenship behavior.*

3.5 Research variables

Table 1 shows the variables of this research and the source of dimensions used to measure each variable. The study combined the dimensions of two sources to create a new input for the study of SL, OCB and EI.

Table 1
Research variables

Variables	Dimensions	Source
Servant Leadership	Love	(Almahdali et al., 2021)
	Empowerment	(Almahdali et al., 2021)
	Vision	(Almahdali et al., 2021)
	Humility	(Almahdali et al., 2021)
	Trust	(Almahdali et al., 2021)
	Character orientation	(Purnomo & Tung, 2022)
	People orientation	(Purnomo & Tung, 2022)
	Task orientation	(Purnomo & Tung, 2022)
	Process orientation	(Purnomo & Tung, 2022)
Emotional intelligence	Introduction self	(Almahdali et al., 2021)
	Self-regulation	(Almahdali et al., 2021)
	Motivation	(Almahdali et al., 2021)
	Empathy	(Almahdali et al., 2021)
	Social skills	(Almahdali et al., 2021)
	Perceiving emotions	(Purnomo & Tung, 2022)
	Facilitating thoughts	(Purnomo & Tung, 2022)
	Understanding emotion	(Purnomo & Tung, 2022)
	Managing emotions	(Purnomo & Tung, 2022)
Organizational Citizenship behavior	Altruism	(Almahdali et al., 2021) (Purnomo & Tung, 2022)
	Civic virtue	(Almahdali et al., 2021) (Purnomo & Tung, 2022)
	Consciousness	(Almahdali et al., 2021) (Purnomo & Tung, 2022)
	Courtesy	(Almahdali et al., 2021) (Purnomo & Tung, 2022)
	Sportsmanship	(Almahdali et al., 2021) (Purnomo & Tung, 2022)

3.6 Data collection

The questionnaire was the tool used for data collection.

Table 2
The Cronbach's alpha results for the different variables

Variables and dimensions	Code	Cronbach's alpha	Variables and dimensions	Code	Cronbach's alpha
Love	q1		Introduction self	q15	
Empowerment	q2		Self-regulation	q16	
Vision	q3		Motivation	q17	
Humility	q4		Empathy	q18	
Trust	q5		Social skills	q19	
Character orientation	q6		Perceiving emotions	q20	
People orientation	q7		Facilitating thoughts	q21	
Task orientation	q8		Understanding emotion	q22	
Process orientation	q9		Managing emotions	q23	
Servant Leadership	**SL**	**0.885**	**Emotional intelligence**	**EI**	**0.854**
Altruism	q10				
Civic virtue	q11				
Consciousness	q12				
Courtesy	q13				
Sportsmanship	q14				
Organizational citizenship behavior	**OCB**	**0.748**			

The questionnaire included four parts. The first part concerned the data collection of the academic staff demographic characteristics. The second part was concerned with the collection of data related to the servant leadership. The third part is concerned with data collection for organizational citizenship behavior. The fourth part of the questionnaire was concerned with the collection of data for emotional intelligence. The prepared questionnaire was distributed to the pilot sample to measure the validity and reliability. The collected notes were reflected on the questionnaire. Moreover, the reliability of the questionnaire was measured using Cronbach's Alpha. The results of reliability showed that the different values of Cronbach's values were higher than 0.7 and within the acceptable range for such research (Aws et al., 2021; Al-Okaily, 2021; Holcomb & Cox, 2018).

3.7 Statistical analysis

The collected questionnaires were entered and cleaned through SPSS ver. 26. AMOS was used for structural equation modeling (SEM) analysis. Two types of statistics were used. Descriptive statistics were used to measure the frequency and percentage of the demographic characteristics of the academic staff. The means and standard deviations were used to measure the approval of the academic staff for the different dimensions of SL, EI and OCB. The inferential statistics using SEM was used to test the model and measure the hypothesis of the study.

4. Results

4.1 Demographic characteristics

The results showed that the percentage of males in the sample was 62.5%, while the females formed 37.5% of the sample. The dominant age group of the sample was 41-50 years with a percentage of 33.6%, followed by the age group 30-40 years with a percentage of 30.9%, then the age group < 30 years with percentage (23.7%) and the least age group distribution was for the group > 50 years with percentage (11.8%). Concerning experience, the most dominant experience group was for 10-15 years (59.9%) followed by the group with more than 15 years of experience (14.5%) and < 5 years (13.8%). The least dominant experience group was for 5-10 years (11.8%) (Table 3).

Table 3
The demographic characteristics of the academic staff

Character	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	190	62.5
Female	114	37.5
Age		
< 30 years	72	23.7
30 – 40 years	94	30.9
41-50 years	102	33.6
> 50 years	36	11.8
Experience		
< 5 years	42	13.8
5-10 years	36	11.8
10-15 years	182	59.9
> 15 years	44	14.5

4.2 The attitudes of the academic staff for SL, EI, and OCB

The assessment of the SL practice in educational organizations was very low (2.85±0.03) which below the expectations for academic institutions. The most important dimension of SL was for love (3.10±0.03) showing moderate attitude, followed by task orientation (2.98±0.04) showing a negative attitude. The third rank was given for character orientation (2.97±0.04) with negative attitude, while the fourth rank was given for trust (2.89±0.04) also with negative attitude. Humility was found in the fifth rank with a mean (2.88±0.04). The sixth position was the people orientation for the people in the organization (2.82±0.05) followed by process orientation (2.77±0.05). The assessment of empowerment was in the eighth rank (2.75±0.05) and the lowest rank was for vision (2.54±0.05) (Table 4). The results of the SL showed that the trends were negative for most of the sample.

The attitudes for EI were moderate (3.01±0.03). The highest trend was given for facilitating thoughts (3.25±0.03), followed by understanding emotions (3.16±0.04). The fourth trend was given for managing emotions (3.11±0.04). Negative trends were given for the perceiving emotions (2.99±0.04), social skills (2.97±0.04), self-regulation (2.88±0.04), empathy (2.86±0.04), and the last was for introducing self (2.80±0.05) (Table 4).

The trend for OCB was negative (2.86±0.03). The only moderate trends were for civic virtue (3.08±0.03), while the trends were negative for altruism (2.99±0.04), sportsmanship (2.84±0.05), consciousness (2.73±0.04), courtesy (2.66±0.05) (Table 4).

Table 4
The academic staff trends for SL dimensions, EI dimensions, and OCB dimensions

Variables and dimensions	Mean	S. E	Rank
Love	3.1	0.03	1
Task orientation	2.98	0.04	2
Character orientation	2.97	0.04	3
Trust	2.89	0.04	4
Humility	2.88	0.04	5
People orientation	2.82	0.05	6
Process orientation	2.77	0.05	7
Empowerment	2.75	0.05	8
Vision	2.54	0.05	9
Servant Leadership	2.85	0.03	
Facilitating thoughts	3.25	0.03	1
Understanding emotion	3.16	0.04	2
Managing emotions	3.11	0.04	3
Motivation	3.09	0.04	4
Perceiving emotions	2.99	0.04	5
Social skills	2.97	0.04	6
Self-regulation	2.88	0.04	7
Empathy	2.86	0.04	8
Introduction self	2.8	0.05	9
Emotional intelligence	3.01	0.03	
Civic virtue	3.08	0.03	1
Altruism	2.99	0.04	2
Sportsmanship	2.84	0.05	3
Consciousness	2.73	0.04	4
Courtesy	2.66	0.05	5
Organizational citizenship behavior	2.86	0.03	

4.3 Model and hypothesis testing

The collected data were tested for normal distribution for each item and the variables to measure the possibility of measuring the model of the study using structural equation modeling (SEM) (Table 5). The SEM was used to measure the loading of each dimension to its variable and to measure the effect of one variable on another. Fig. 2 shows the general structure of the model related to the study and the hypothesis.
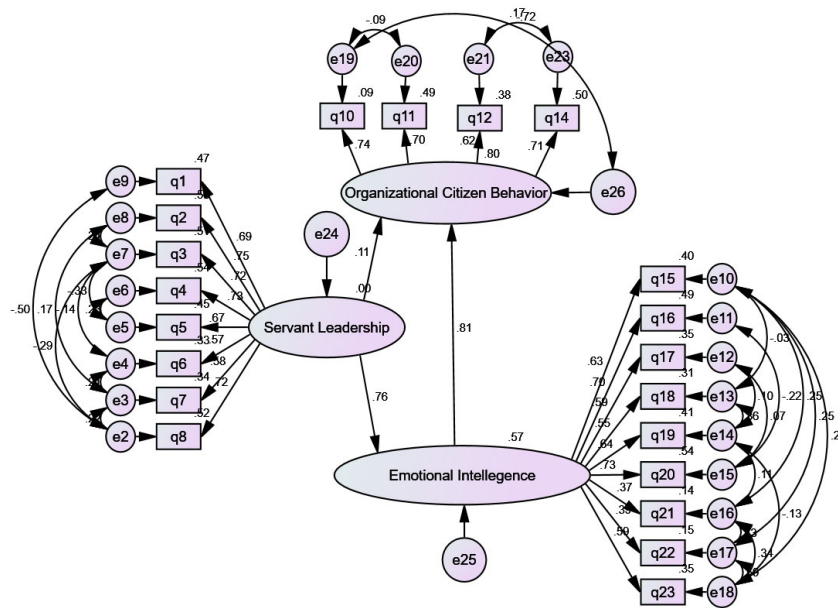

Fig. 2. Structural equation modeling for the effect of SL on OCB and EI, and the effect of SL on OCB under EI

Table 5 shows the SEM fitting measurements. The results showed that the criteria related to Chi-square/df, model probability, CFI, RMSEA and TLI results were within the range which lead to the acceptance of the model to measure the different interactions and effects (Sahoo, 2019).

Table 5
Model fitness criteria for SL, EI, and OCB

Criteria	Acceptable value	Model Value	Result
Chi-square/df	≤ 5	2.86	Accepted
Chi-square	--	460.64	p<0.05
Probability	≤ 0.05	0.001	Accepted
CFI	≤0.9	0.901	Accepted
PNFI	>0.05	0.657	Accepted
CMIN/DF	2-5	2.861	Accepted
RMSEA	≤0.08	0.078	Accepted
TLI	≤0.9	0.870	Accepted

The effect of SL on EI was highly significant (p<0.001) with a regression coefficient (0.759). The effect of SL on OCB was positive with regression coefficient (0.11) and the effect was significant (p<0.05). The highest effect was for EI on OCB with a regression coefficient (0.804). The results showed that EI improved the OCB in the organization (Table 6).

The highest dimension that affects SL according to the academic staff assessment was for empowerment with regression weight (1.277) with a highly significant effect (p<0.001). The second effect on SL was for the vision with a regression coefficient (1.274) and a highly significant effect (p<0.001). The results according to the regression weights showed that the rank was for humility, people orientation, trust, and character orientation, and the least was for love (Table 6).

For EI, the results showed that the highest dimension that affected EI was the perceiving emotion with regression weight (1.082) with a highly significant effect (p<0.01). The second effect was for self-regulation with regression weight (0.914) and a highly significant effect ([<0.001). The fourth effect was for social skills with a regression coefficient (0.845) and a highly significant effect (p<0.001). The fourth effect was for managing emotions with regression weight (0.834) and a highly significant effect (p<0.001). The least effect was for motivation, followed by empathy, and understanding emotions, and the least was for the facilitating of thoughts (Table 6).

For OCB, the results showed that sportsmanship and consciousness had the greatest effect on OCB with regression weight (1.202 and 0.972). The least effect was for civic virtue with regression weight (0.834). The effect of the different dimensions was significantly high (p<0.001) (Table 6).

Table 6
The loading factors of the different dimensions related to their variables and the effect of SL on OCB under the effect of EI

Path			Regression weights	S.E.	C.R.	P
EI	←	SL	.759	.087	8.766	***
OCB	←	SL	.110	.083	1.334	***
OCB	←	EI	.804	.104	7.766	***
q8	←	SL	1.000			
q2	←	SL	1.277	.109	11.694	***
q3	←	SL	1.274	.127	10.010	***
q4	←	SL	1.084	.093	11.631	***
q7	←	SL	.930	.090	10.298	***
q5	←	SL	.924	.087	10.598	***
q6	←	SL	.808	.088	9.227	***
q1	←	SL	.779	.085	9.151	***
q15	←	EI	1.000			
q20	←	EI	1.082	.105	10.289	***
q16	←	EI	.914	.092	9.968	***
q19	←	EI	.845	.089	9.502	***
q23	←	EI	.834	.082	10.113	***
q17	←	EI	.773	.088	8.748	***
q18	←	EI	.746	.090	8.286	***
q22	←	EI	.542	.078	6.935	***
q21	←	EI	.436	.067	6.544	***
q14	←	OCB	1.202	.140	8.605	***
q12	←	OCB	.972	.124	7.848	***
q11	←	OCB	.834	.102	8.167	***
q10	←	OCB	1.000			

The direct and indirect effects of EI as mediator on the effect of SL and OCB

Path analysis was used to test the hypothesis of this study and the findings presented in Table 7. The results show that the direct effect of standardized estimate beta for SL and OCB was 0.110 with significant effect reflecting that the hypothesis

related to the effect of SL on OCB is accepted. The results show that the direct effect (standardized estimate beta) for SL and EI is 0.775 with significant effect reflecting the acceptance of the hypothesis there is effect of SL on EI. The results showed that the standardized estimate beta for EI and OCB direct effect was 0.806 with significant results reflecting the acceptance for the effect of EI on OCB. The results showed that the standardized estimate beta for the indirect effect of SL, EI and OCB was 0.713 with significant results reflecting the acceptance for the effect of SL on OCB using EI as mediator.

Table 7
Standardized direct and indirect effect of SL on EI and OCB

Path	Standardized estimate Beta	Critical Ratio (CR)	P value	Hypothesis result
Direct effect				
SL→OCB	0.110	1.334	0.001	Accepted
SL→EI	0.755	8.766	0.001	Accepted
EI → OCB	0.806	7.766	0.001	Accepted
Indirect Effect				
SL→EI →OCB	0.713	6.150	0.001	Accepted

5. Discussion

The objective of this study is to investigate the effect of SL on OCB using the EI as mediator. The study targeted the academic staff of three universities including two private and one public university. The study of servant leadership and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) among academic staff is important because it helps understand the factors that contribute to organizational success. Moreover, the study concerned the application of different dimensions of SL, EI and OCB included in most literature related to this area. Wide variety of demographic characteristics of academic staff were recorded which reflects the different views concerning the subject of this study. The study views included males and females, different experiences, and different ages.

The assessment of SL necessity in the higher education organization was below moderate. This reflects the lack of practicing SL in universities. The level of servant leadership practice among academic staff varies across the studies. In the Ethiopian Teacher Training Colleges, the practice of servant leadership was found to be at a 'middle' or 'sometime' level (Bite, 2018). A study on university lecturers in Iran found that the practiced servant leadership principles were at a high level, except for the commitment to others' growth principles (Golzar & Abdullah Miri, 2020). The output of the universities is connected to the contribution of each member of these organizations to target its objectives. Almahdali et al. (2021) reported that SL behavior is considered the key to the organization's goals. The accomplishment of the university objectives requires the distribution of love among the working academic staff. The distribution of love will increase the cooperation that will facilitate the gathering of the different efforts to reach the objectives of the organization. The role of love in the SL is concentrating on the distribution of love emotions between the top management and the academic staff. This behavior will help practice other SL dimensions related to trust. Patterson and Dierendonck (2015) have shown that love is considered one of the most important dimensions of SL as well as it can be considered as a motivation for changing functioning inside the organization. This leads to the justifications related to the highest rank given for task orientation and character orientation. According to Patterson and Dierendonck (2015), love can be considered the key to going through the task and character orientation in the organization on the organizational level.

Servant leadership has been found to have positive effects on both individuals and organizations. On a personal level, servant leadership enhances values of self-transcendence, leading to increased job meaningfulness and improved job performance. It also promotes a sense of meaningfulness among employees by providing personal attention and relating change to a larger picture, which is particularly important during times of organizational change. Additionally, servant leadership has been shown to promote desirable employee attitudes, behaviors, and performance outcomes, thus facilitating effective organizational change. At the organizational level, servant leadership influences organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) by directly and indirectly affecting employee self-efficacy, job satisfaction, and trust, ultimately contributing to the well-being and proper functioning of the organization. Jiang (2015) has shown that the SL purpose is to make changes on both personal level and organization level. The SL practice, in this research, was under the expected levels, which requires deep improvements on the long run.

The assessment of the EI was ranked moderate among the academic staff. This low existence of EI requires more concern to encourage the practice of EI among leaders which can be reflected positively on OCB. According to the psychological aspects, emotions cannot be separated from the individual's behavior. The emotions from the initiatives control the individual's behavior in most cases. Recognizing others' emotional intelligence is important for effective management. Studies have shown that emotional intelligence has a positive effect on the capacity to set objectives and make right decisions. It has been found that emotional intelligence can produce more effective play work practitioners and lead to better support for teams. Being emotionally aware in the workplace benefits both employees and the organization in the long run, as it helps in resolving emotional outbursts and managing stress effectively. Educational leaders who demonstrate emotional intelligence skills contribute to a positive organizational climate. Additionally, managers with higher levels of emotional intelligence have been found to have better decision-making abilities and higher role efficacy. Therefore, recognizing and valuing others' emotional

intelligence can lead to improved management outcomes and overall organizational success. Lee (2019) has shown that the EI is positively related to the SL which leads positively to change in the individual's orientations.

The OCB forms the core of behaviors that the employee has inside the organization concerning the original functionality or the behaviors related to the reaction with others. The results showed that the assessment of the different dimensions of OCB was high. The effect of SL was high on OCB when mediating EI. These results support the method that SL, EI and OCB are highly connected to each other. The SL effect on OCB was improved under the existence of the EI in the organization (Almahdali et al., 2021; Mathur & Negi, 2014). The leadership's understanding of the employees' needs and emotions can change their behavior inside the organization and facilitate reaching the objectives of the organization. Kumari et al. (2022) have shown that SL, EI and OCB are working together toward the goals of the organization. The concern for SL should be increased among the academic institutions in line with increasing the use of EI which will affect the OCB positively and improve the outputs of the organization.

6. Conclusions and Recommendations

The objective of this study is to investigate the effect of SL on OCB behavior using EI as mediator. The study was applied to three universities. The questionnaire was built using the different dimensions used by literature to measure the three variables. The study figures out that the SL is considered the initiative to increase the individuals' participation in the organization at both the business level and personal level too. The successful SL will form the server that stores, analyzes, and directs the emotions of the other and behaves inside the organization. The practice of SL on different management levels will facilitate the practice of SL inside the organization. The low level of SL, EI and OCB reflect the shortages exited at the universities which requires high concern. The study recommended increasing the awareness among the academic intuitions leaderships to adopt the SL as well increasing the EI to improve the attitudes of practicing OCB among the academic staff. Organizations should consider promoting servant leadership principles, providing leadership training, and creating leadership centers in higher education institutions to enhance the practice of servant leadership and improve OCB and emotional intelligence among academic staff.

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