

# **SERVANT LEADERSHIP AND JOB PERFORMANCE: EVIDENCE FROM AIRLINE COMPANIES IN JORDAN**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study explores the impact of servant leadership (SL) on job performance among service employees in Jordanian airline companies. A convenient sample of (201) employees answered the self-administrated questionnaire. Structural Equation Model/AMOS was applied for statistical analysis. Results revealed a positive aggregate impact of SL on job performance (R-square = 0.44). Respondents showed moderate agreement that their leaders are exhibiting and practicing the SL style. Respondents assessed their performance level as moderate. The impact of sub-dimensions of SL revealed variation in impact on job performance. Conceptualization and creating value for the community sub-dimensions of SL did not show any impact on job performance. Servant leadership is a crucial element in enhancing the performance of employees, which in turn would improve the quality of services provided to customers.

**Keywords:** Servant leadership, job performance, Jordan Airlines.

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The world is witnessing hyper-turbulent business, social and economic changes, and significant global health and safety issues due to Covid 19 and various global crisis that affect most organizations (Saleem et al., 2022; The Global Risks Report, 2022; Ruiz-Palomino et al., 2022). Accordingly, business leaders need to respond by promoting the most effective measures for economic upheaval and taking actions that maximize economic recovery (Fernandez & Shaw, 2020). It has been supported empirically that servant leaders produce more significant behavioral and attitudinal outcomes than other types of leaders (Rabiul et al., 2021; Giolito et al., 2021). Thus, servant leaders are in better situations to act in such turbulent circumstances to reduce pain and

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minimize economic costs (Boin & Hart, 2003; Lett, 2014; Melchar & Bosco, 2010; Russell & Stone, 2002). Servant leadership manifests itself when leaders put employees first, have the courage, to tell the truth, treat others fairly, and listen actively. This allows leaders to deeply understand and appreciate their employees' needs and goals, leading to improving employees' performance and quality of work (Northouse, 2018).

The many examples used to support and advocate servant leadership as a theory are primarily anecdotal. Consequently, the theory lacks scientific and empirical evidence to justify its widespread acceptance. Although there is a vast volume of research covering servant leadership under different conditions, there still needs to examine the impact of servant leadership on job performance (Lee et al., 2020; Saleem et al., 2022). Thus, the positive side of servant leadership and its consequences are still to be uncovered and understood, especially in this study's context; the Jordanian environment. The airline sector is generally characterized by tough competition, making it hard to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage. The airline sector in Jordan is not immune to such competition and other market and economic factors that impact its growth and survival. Satisfying the customer is an essential and challenging target for most companies (Linden et al., 2014). To meet or exceed customers' expectations, the needs of employees become significant and immanent. For most leaders, the role of servant leadership is not evident in creating a culture of commitment to putting employees first. The concept is still strange to many leaders; secondly, the value of adopting servant leadership is not obvious to them (Northouse, 2018).

Previous research in Jordan examined transformational leadership (Nusair et al., 2012), democratic, autocratic, and other types of leadership (Ababneh & Athamneh, 2018). There is an apparent lack of research on servant leadership in the Jordanian context. Ababneh (2016) revealed that personal traits, cultural awareness, communication, human-task orientation, and participation and empowerment are the main components of successful leadership in the Arab work environment. Thus, this research aims to explore the impact of servant leadership on job performance and to determine to which extent this type of leadership influences airline employees' performance (Wang et al., 2018). The concept is still immature in the Jordanian environment, and uncovering its value is an important contribution to enhancing the performance of employees as a leadership strategy for creating a competent workforce.

Furthermore, a crucial question that remains primarily unexplored for servant leadership is its adoption in different cultural contexts (Eva et al., 2019). Thus, the main objective of this study is to explore the impact of servant leadership (conceptualization, emotional healing, employees first, helping employees develop, ethical behavior, empowerment, and creating value for society) on job performance. This study will also identify job performance and servant leadership levels in such organizations. To this end, this research investigates employees' perceptions and attitudes about the study constructs and relationships using a self-administrated questionnaire.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

Servant leadership was first introduced by Greenleaf (1970) that servant leaders' inner sense of serving drives a conscious choice to serve others. Such leaders have strong empathy to, care for others, and realize their needs. They are concerned with others' development, health, empowerment, and satisfaction. They want others to be better every day (Greenleaf, 1970). An

interesting definition of servant leadership was provided by the Greenleaf Centre for Servant Leadership as the philosophy that enriches people's lives, creates better organizations, and creates a world of care and justice (2021). Eva et al. (2019, p. 4) also define servant leadership as an: "(1) other-oriented approach to leadership, (2) manifested through one-on-one prioritizing of follower individual needs, and (3) concern for others within the organization and the larger community."

According to Van Dierendonck (2011), servant leadership is a comprehensive altruistic approach. It focuses on followers' needs and future ambitions, and implementing such an approach would reflect greater care for "service" without giving much thought and concern to the leadership itself. Hence, the leadership is absorbed or immersed in service to others rather than the leader's perceived authority. Recently, Kaltiainen and Hakanen (2022) found that improved servant leadership practices foster employees' tasks and performance, primarily through work engagement. In addition, Aboramadan et al. (2022) reveal that servant leadership positively influences employees' extra-role behaviors. Moreover, Khan et al. (2022) showed that servant leadership positively affected employees' task performance, which was further moderated by both task interdependence and information asymmetry. Therefore, the main topic to be explored in this study is the impact of servant leadership on job performance, which will be thoroughly summarized by the end of this literature review, and the relevant hypothesis is:

*H1: Servant leadership style has a positive impact on job performance as perceived by employees.*

Servant leadership, its sub-dimensions, and job performance are presented in more details next.

### **2.1. Job Performance**

Job performance is the aggregated value to an organization of the behaviors that an employee contributes directly and indirectly to organizational goals (Boin & Hart, 2003; Rashid et al., 2017). Performance is identified in how one goes about doing his/her job. Job performance has to serve the organization's strategic goals, customer satisfaction, and economic contribution (Jamal, 1985; Muhtasom et al., 2017). The capacity and capability to perform the job is exhibited through job performance. Researchers for a long time have concentrated on viewing employees' performance in terms of efficiency, effectiveness, and quality of work (Melchar & Bosco, 2010; Organ et al., 2005).

Researchers have focused on new dimensions, including innovation and creativity and perhaps doing something unique and different (Melchar & Bosco, 2010). However, researchers have identified three significant aspects of job performance that will guide this research. Task performance is the first aspect related to the collection of jobs and responsibilities that contribute to providing a product or a service or a managerial task. The second aspect is citizenship, which means all the steps or actions taken that may contribute to enhancing the work environment, like helping others in case of need, supporting the organizational goals, and treating others with respect. Moreover, offering suggestions and positive behavior is part of this aspect. Third, counterproductive behavior pertaining to any harm or deviation in behavior will affect the organization negatively (Robbins & Judge, 2005). For sure, researchers found a negative association between job performance and counterproductive behavior. The excellent performance involves in- and extra-role performance (Organ et al., 2005).

### **2.2. Servant Leadership Behaviors**

Literature has noted some potential behaviors of servant leadership. For example, Liden et al. (2008) offered the following behaviors: image or conceptualization, empowerment, emotional healing, putting followers first, development and success for followers, behaving ethically, and better value for society (Walumbwa et al., 2010). The first element is conceptualization, which is defined as a systematic and comprehensive view of the situation or a problem and the ability of the leader to envisage the future (Greenleaf, 1970). According to Senge (1990), it is the system of thinking where people can see the complete picture of any situation to arrive at long-term solutions for future problems (Muhtasom et al., 2017; Northouse, 2018). This is one significant dimension to be tested in this study and the focus of a sub-hypothesis:

*H1.1: Leaders' conceptualization has a positive impact on job performance as perceived by employees.*

The second dimension of servant leadership is emotional healing, which represents the degree of care and individualized consideration for employees' problems, needs, and satisfaction (Liden et al., 2015). Emotional healing leads to a high trust culture, respect and mutual care between the leader and the followers. Ultimately, employees' willingness and motivation to achieve quality work at a high-performance level will be positively influenced by such a level of concern and care (Barbuto Jr & Wheeler, 2006). This level requires leaders to be close to their followers and their organization's problems and issues. Thus, emotional healing requires the closeness of the leader to his/her followers. Kim (2016) stresses that servant leaders should know their employees, especially those who pass through challenges, difficulties, or even trauma (given the present crisis due to COVID-19). This is perhaps one of the essential features of a servant leader, with a strong influence on employees' feelings and, therefore, intrinsic motivation to perform well (Kim, 2016). Hence, studies show that this leadership characteristic has a positive impact on productivity, leading to the following hypothesis:

*H1.2: Leaders' emotional healing has a positive impact on job performance as perceived by employees.*

The third dimension of servant leadership is putting followers first, which is consistent with follower-centered leadership rather than a leader-centered style (Kim, 2016). This type of leadership is in congruence with team-based structures, highly participative or flat structures, and less bureaucratic structures. Van Dierendonck (2011) emphasizes that this leadership style is the most significant one in setting servant leadership apart from other leadership styles (Burton & Welty Peachey, 2013). Furthermore, servant leadership generates a climate of psychological safety inside the organization. Hence, human nature is emotionally receptive to those who care about them and to the extent that they become a priority in their concern. This study assumes further that such leadership concern and putting followers first will improve job performance in such organizations. Hence, the relevant hypothesis is:

*H1.3: Leader's putting employees first has a positive impact on job performance as perceived by employees.*

The fourth important dimension of servant leadership, which is highly consistent with putting people first and emotional healing, is helping followers grow and succeed. It seems that this is a

by-product of follower-centred leadership. Helping followers grow and succeed is an altruistic behavior that makes the leader feel happy when he/she contributes to assisting them in achieving their goals of growth and success (Northouse, 2018). Such leaders would never hesitate to provide support, budget, and encouragement to help employees develop their strengths, career, and talent (Spears, 2010). Studies show that such a leadership style positively influences high productivity levels and customer satisfaction (Walumbwa et al., 2010). Hence, the fourth related hypothesis is:

*H1.4: Leader's helping employees grow and succeed has a positive impact on job performance as perceived by employees.*

The fifth dimension is behaving ethically (Dodd et al., 2018). Leaders who behave ethically are those who exhibit candor, integrity, and fairness. Such leaders are also described as authentic leaders who are credible, altruistic, empathetic, and modest, with courage and drive (Bandura and Walters, 1977; Dodd et al., 2018; Shin et al., 2015).

The sixth dimension of servant leadership is empowerment and participative behavior. Northouse (2018) defines empowerment as the way leaders share their power and authority with their followers by allowing them to participate in decision-making (Van Dierendonck, 2011). Empowerment seems highly reasonable at this stage, according to (Melhem, 2003, 2004), along with the other dimensions of servant leadership, especially helping others grow and succeed. When the servant leader is close to his/her followers, making sure that they grow in skill, knowledge, and competencies, the leader will feel more comfortable providing empowerment, discretion, and opportunity to make their own choices at work (Heidari et al., 2019). Ultimately, this research predicts that this will lead to higher job performance and productivity levels. Hence, the fifth and sixth hypotheses are developed as:

*H1.5: Leader's behaving ethically has a positive impact on job performance as perceived by employees.*

*H1.6: Leader's empowerment has a positive impact on job performance as perceived by employees.*

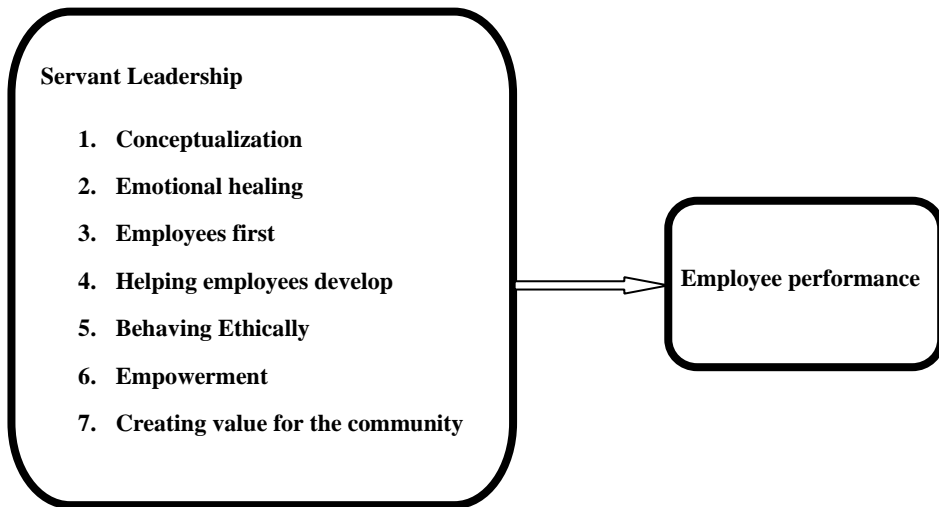
The last servant leadership dimension is Creating Value for the Community. Care, concern, and service are not limited to the organization's boundaries for servant leaders (Panaccio et al., 2015). Community service is part of servant leadership's zone of concern because they believe their organizations are integral to their community. Therefore, such leadership will encourage employees to serve better their customers and other stakeholders (Northouse, 2018). Hence, servant leadership is a wide circle of positive influence that their service transmits from one layer to the next, up to the community outside the organization (Russell & Stone, 2002). Ultimately, this study hypothesizes that creating value for the community will improve job performance. Given the fact that employees who are supported, empowered, and allowed to grow and develop are likely to perform well while trying to meet the community's expectations or even exceeding such expectations (Melhem, 2018). As such, the hypothesis that explores such relationships is:

*H1.7: Leader's creating value for the community has a positive impact on job performance as perceived by employees.*

### **2.3. *Servant Leadership and Job Performance***

In service organizations, in particular, Wang et al. (2018) asserted in a study of the banking sector in China that servant leaders can directly influence service performance. Liden et al. (2014) explain that when providing a good service via servant leaders, an inner motive is exerted among the employees to mimic such situations and to emulate such behaviors when serving their customers or others in general (Hunter et al., 2013; Wang et al., 2018). Similarly, Schwarz et al. (2016) argue that servant leadership has contributed significantly to encouraging employees to extend extra effort to help the customer and help colleagues at work. This, in turn, would significantly affect employee performance (Liden et al., 2014). However, Russell and Stone (2002) argue that it is not necessary that servant leadership would always lead to effective job performance. Moreover, Van Dierendonck et al. (2009) affirmed a similar finding that servant leadership has no impact on job performance, while the response of Shin et al. (2015) indicated that experimental research could not support the fact that servant leadership has an impact on job performance. One explanation is that the environment in which these studies were conducted might include context-related factors which require further investigation and exploration in other contexts or sectors.

**Figure 1: The Research Model**



## **3. METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1. *Research Design and Data Collection***

The air transport sector is one of Jordan's most critical strategic catalysts for economic growth. It contributes about 2.2 billion US dollars to GDP (5.7%) and provides 70,000 job opportunities according to the International Air Transport Association [IATA] (2020). The Civil Aviation Regulatory Commission (CARC) in Jordan sets all matters related to civil aviation, including aviation safety and security regulation and its economic and environmental regulations. The list of

airlines in Jordan includes mainly the Royal Jordanian, Jordan Aviation, Jordan International Cargo, and Royal Jordanian Shipping (CARC Annual Reports, 2022). According to the human resource departments of airline companies in Jordan, 800 employees are working in the Jordanian airline companies. The appropriate sample size when the total number of the population is 800 at ( $p \leq 0.5$ ) is 260 (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016), which was selected conveniently from the employees of RJ. It was impossible to take a more rigorous sample because of the management restriction on revealing employee records for security reasons (as stated by the management). Hence, the questionnaire was handled and distributed by the human resource management of RJ, who distributed the questionnaires internally for collection two weeks later. The authors retrieved 201 usable questionnaires for analysis.

The instrument consists of three parts; one of the demographic factors (gender, age, education, years of service, job level, and nature of the job); servant leadership items, and job performance items. The servant leadership section consists of 28 statements, with 4 for each dimension, adopting Liden et al. (2008) scale. The job performance section consists of 10 statements based on Lynch et al. (1999) and Befort and Hatrup (2003). Minor adjustments were made to fit the context of this study. Six academic experts in the field verified and tested the questionnaire to validate the instrument for construct and content validity. Their comments and suggestions were highly objective and constructive and enhanced the questionnaire's structure and clarity. Reliability testing was also conducted using confirmatory factor analysis using AMOS V20 and Cronbach Alpha. All results were in accordance with Sekaran and Bougie (2016) of a minimum of 70% Cronbach Alpha, and the highest was 93%. As such, the whole instrument was deemed to be reliable and valid in using both measures.

Though the study sample consists of diverse levels and types of employees, including branch managers, assistant managers, and department managers, their responses and perceptions refer to the leadership style under the top management philosophy supporting such style. To illustrate, items that start with "my leader" or "our leader" carry the respondent's perception pertaining to the management and the leadership practices dictated by the top management philosophy and direction. For example, "Our leader supports social responsibility" clearly refers to top leaders' SR initiative more than lower-level leaders. Overall, the perceptions collected by the respondents in this study refer to the generic practices of servant leadership under the top management belief and conception of such leadership style.

### **3.2. Descriptive Analysis**

Table 1 illustrates the coding of the variables and the relevant statements for each of the seven dimensions of servant leadership. Against each abbreviated dimension is the number of the related statement. For example, Conceptualization (CO) is the first dimension of servant leadership, measured by four statements (Co1 to Co4). This dimension is followed by seven dimensions, as shown in table 1. For example, the last dimension in the table is Job Performance (JP) measured by ten statements (from JP1 to JP10).

**Table 1: Dimensions and Abbreviations**

<b>Statements</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Sample statements</b>
Co1- Co2- Co3- Co4	CO	My leader is capable of detecting problems before they occur, and my leader views things in a comprehensive manner.
EM1- EM2- EM3-EM4	EM	My leader cares about us, my leader has an individual consideration and gives time for each of us at work
PU1-PU2-PU3-PU4	PU	My leader cares about our success, my leader sacrifice his/her own interest for ours
HE1-HE2-HE3-HE4	HE	My leader insists on our personal and career development, my leaders works hard to help us achieve our goals and targets
ET1-ET2-ET3-ET4	ET	My leader is a role model, my leader never sacrifices his/her ethics and values, integrity and honesty cannot be sacrificed
EP1-EMP2-EMP3-EM4	EMP	My leader gives us so much freedom in performing our jobs. We do not have to consult before we decide, and we have the autonomy to do that.
CRE1-CRE2-CRE3-CRE4	CRE	Our leader supports social responsibility. We are encouraged to serve the society

The Analysis uncovered missing data that was handled for eight statements, with 4% missing data within acceptable limits, according to Hair et al. (2010). For data outliers, a multivariate distance.

**Table 2: Sample Descriptive Statistics**

<b>Demographics</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>
Gender	Male	58.2	117
	Female	41.8	84
Age	< 30	12.4	25
	< 30 -40	42.8	86
	< 40 -50	30.8	62
	More than 50	13.9	28
	Education	High school	6.0
	Diploma	19.4	39
	BS	60.7	122
	Master	13.9	28
	PHD	0	0
Experience	< 5	10.4	21
	5 - < 10	18.9	38
	10 - < 15	33.3	67
	More than 15	37.3	75
Job Title	Manager	4.0	9
	Assistant Manager	5.0	10
	Unit Manager	11.4	23
	Dept manager	29.9	60
	Employee	49.3	99
Job name	Admin	48.3	97
	Technical	51.7	104

*Note:* N = 201.

Metric was employed (Mahalanobis D2 Distance), which found no outliers or extreme values in the data. The test for normality revealed that skewness was between -0.76 to 0.15, while kurtosis ranged between -1.73 to 1.15. This shows that the data is normal, according to Hair et al. (2010)



and (Byrne, 2001). Table 2 shows that the sample consisted of 58.2% males while 42.8% were female. 60.7% of the sample had a BS degree, and 37.3% had 15 or more years of experience. 49.3% of the sample was frontline employees. Front line employee group includes employees without managerial or supervisory positions (such as flight attendants, baggage handlers, caterers, gate agents, and pilots). The analysis also shows that 48.3% were administrators or managers. Accordingly, data show a diversity of the characteristics of the sample that indicate no overrepresentation or underrepresentation of any category.

**Table 3: Servant Leadership Mean Averages**

Rank	Dimension	Mean	Degree
2	Co	3.637	Moderate
4	EH	3.499	Moderate
6	EF	3.226	Moderate
3	HE	3.501	Moderate
1	EB	3.654	Moderate
5	EMP	3.363	Moderate
7	CV	3.036	Moderate
-	<b>Total average</b>	<b>3.417</b>	<b>Moderate</b>

*Note:* N = 201.

Table 3 shows that there is a reasonable degree of servant leadership practice in the company, albeit moderate, and ranges between 3.04 for creating value for the community and 3.65 for behaving ethically, while all other dimensions fall between these figures. This is not a surprising result, given the context of this study. However, this moderate degree seems intriguing because the respondents either do not want to provide an extremely bold response, or the servant leadership and its seven dimensions are subtle and less apparent to the target respondents during their exchange with their leaders. Specifically, behaving ethically was the highest level among the seven dimensions; employees feel that there is some degree of servant leadership but are unaware of its basic components.

The second question: what degree of job performance level is perceived by the sample? Analysis revealed that the value for job performance was high, at 3.431, indicating that they also perceive their performance as moderate.

## 4. DATA ANALYSIS

### 4.1. Practice Level of Leadership Servant and Job Performance

This is the sample of your paper. The major headings should be centred in column. Use capital to answer the research questions regarding the level of servant leadership among employees, we derived the means and the standard deviation for the sample using a five-point Likert Scale (from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). A high level of agreement on this scale ranges from 3.68 - 5; a moderate level of agreement ranges from (2.34 less than 3.68), and a low level of agreement is less than 2.34.

The first research question: to what extent is servant leadership (conceptualization, emotional healing, employees first, helping employees develop, behaving ethically, empowerment, creating value for the community) observed among the leaders? Table 3 illustrates the mean average for the seven dimensions.

#### 4.2. *Confirmatory Factor Analysis*

Confirmatory factor Indicator (CFI) analysis was employed to obtain the construct validity of the research instrument, and, through the process, we removed some variables that did not conform to the model fit and those with factor loadings less than 0.05, in accordance with the guidelines of Hair et al. (2010). Hence, table four illustrates the model fit indicators.

**Table 4: Model Fit Estimates**

Indicator	Model Fit Values
CMIN( Chi-Square)	$p$ -value > 0.05
CMIN/DF( Relative Chi-Square)	Value between 1 and 5 CMIN/DF <= 5 CMIN/DF <= 3
(P-Value)	$p$ -Value >= 0.05 $p$ -Value >= 0.10
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	CFI >= 0.85 CFI >= 0.95
Tucker- Lewis Index (TLI)	TLI >= 0.80 TLI >= 0.95
Normed-Fit Index (NFI)	NFI >= 0.80 NFI >= 0.95
Incremental Fit Index (IFI)	IFI >= 0.90 IFI >= 1.00
Root Mean Square Error (RMSEA)Approximation	RMSEA <= 0.08 RMSEA = 0

The results of the CFI reveal the need to remove “putting employees first”, while the overall fit of the servant leadership model can be confirmed, with factor loading values for servant leadership statements acceptable at ( $p \leq 0.5$ ) according to the table (5) (Byrne, 2001). Job performance fits well with the data, and its factor loadings were within the accepted level (Table 5) except for statement JP8, which was removed. Also, JP1 and JP2 were removed because of their negative impact on the model fit. Convergent validity and discriminant validity were tested in terms of the composite reliability (CR), average variance extracted (AVE), and Cronbach Alpha. As such, all values for the AVE are higher than 0.5, reliability is more than 0.7 (Hu & Bentler, 1999), while Cronbach Alpha was greater than 0.50 and acceptable according to Sekaran and Bougie (2016), (see Table 5 for more detail).

**Table 5:** Reliability and Discriminant Validity for Job Performance

Convergent Validity		Internal Reliability	Factor	Statement	Dimension	Variable
AVE	CR	Cronbach's Alpha	loadings			
0.660	0.885	0.89	0.87	CO1	CO	SL
			0.84	CO2		
			0.70	CO3		
			0.85	CO4		
0.660	0.884	0.87	0.80	EM1	EM	
			0.82	EM2		
			0.85	EM3		
			0.71	EM4		
0.744	0.896	0.91	0.80	HE1	HE	
			0.82	HE2		
			0.84	HE4		
0.779	0.934	0.93	0.88	ET1	ET	
			0.93	ET2		
			0.87	ET3		
			0.84	ET4		
0.665	0.886	0.89	0.75	EMP1	EMP	
			0.86	EMP2		
			0.87	EMP3		
			0.74	EMP4		
0.766	0.928	0.93	0.95	CRE1	CRE	
			0.99	CRE2		
			0.77	CRE3		
			0.78	CRE4		
0.520	0.885	0.88	0.54	JP3	JP	
			0.58	JP4		
			0.84	JP5		
			0.66	JP6		
			0.70	JP7		
			0.66	JP9		
			0.72	JP10		

*Note:* N = 201.

The total model fit was developed, and all the model fit indicators fit the instrument, as shown in Table 4. Model fit development and iterations required the removal of JP3 (“I do my job with the least errors” and JP4 (“I do my job in line with the required performance standards recommended by the organization). These two statements affected the model fit negatively and were removed to improve the model fit. Again, Discriminant Validity was tested, and the accepted value for this test is 0.85 or lower (Kline, 2011). Table (6) shows the results of this test.

**Table 6:** Discriminant Validity for the Measurement Model

I	CO	EM	HE	ET	EMP	CRE	JP
CO	1						
EM	0.716	1					
HE	0.770	0.766	1				
ET	0.699	0.698	0.822	1			
EMP	0.480	0.463	0.605	0.659	1		
CRE	0.495	0.569	0.509	0.583	0.503	1	
JP	-0.059	-0.039	0.065	-0.083	0.184	-0.051	1

**4.3. The Structural Model**

After detecting the validity of the measurement model, we turn to the structural equation model using (SEM) to define the strength of the hypothesized relationships in the model. Hence, the structural model using SEM is represented in figures 2 and 3.

**Figure 2:** Structural Model for Testing the Main Hypotheses

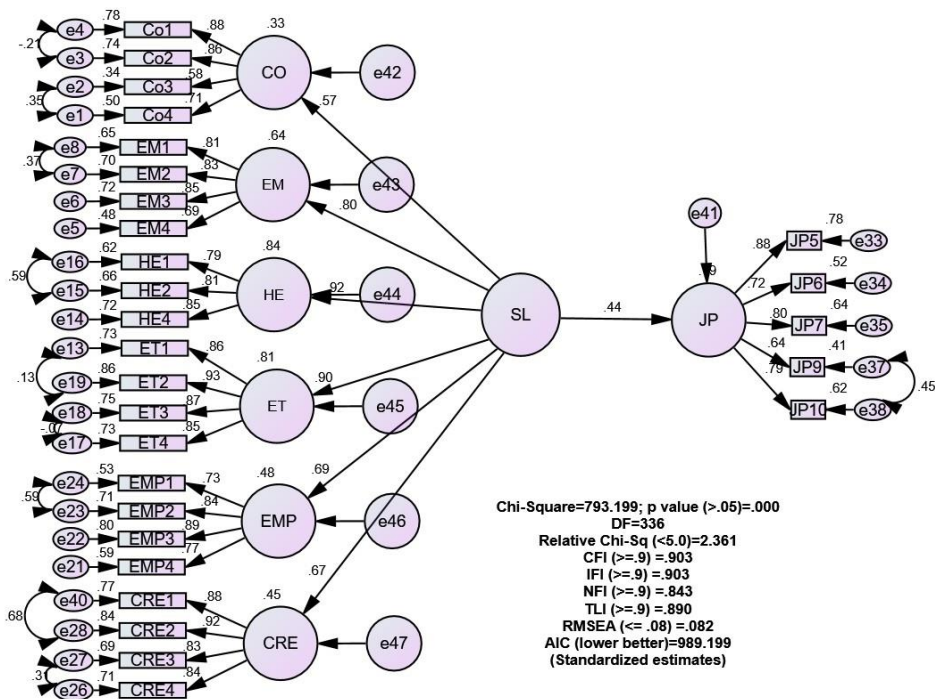
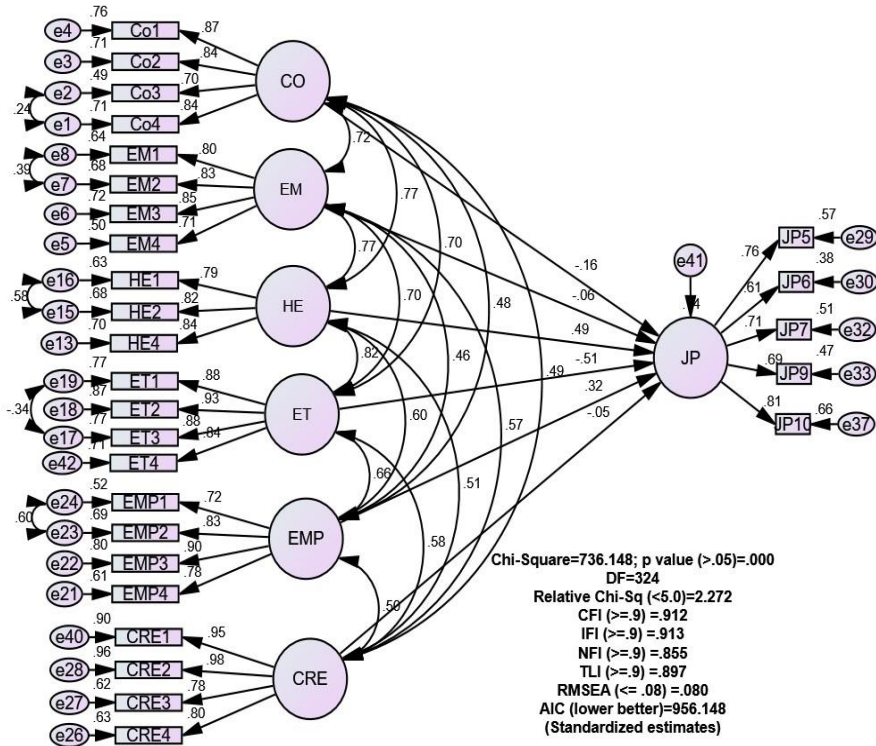


Figure 2 points to the model’s fitness in all indexes and indicators according to Table 4, except the RMSEA value of 0.082; MacCallum et al. (1996) state that this can be between 0.08 and 0.10 to be acceptable. In terms of testing the hypotheses, Figure 3 is considered to clarify the hypothesis results:

**Figure 3: Structural Model for Testing the Branch Hypotheses**



#### 4.4. Testing Hypotheses

After the model fit with the data, the research hypotheses can be tested through the structural model and the confirmation of the model fit as illustrated in Table 7.

**Table 7: Hypotheses Results**

Hypotheses results	p Value	C.R.	Standardized estimates		Unstandardized Estimates		Path
			Beta	S.E	Estimate		
H1: Accepted	0.001*	0.213	0.440	0.070	-0.015		JP ← SL
H1.1 Rejected	0.283	-1.074	-0.164	0.103	-0.111		JP ← CO
H1.2: Accepted	0.710	0.371	-0.061	0.135	0.050		JP ← EM
H1.3: Removed	Removed	Removed	Removed	Removed	Removed		JP ← PU
H1.4: Accepted	0.047*	1.985	0.488*	0.177	0.351		JP ← HE
H1.5: Accepted	0.005*	-2.788	-0.510**	0.130	-0.362		JP ← ET
H1.6: Accepted	0.008*	2.640	0.320**	0.100	0.263		JP ← EMP
H1.7: Rejected	0.657	0.444	-0.046	0.072	-0.032		JP ← CRE

Note: Sig. < 0.05.

As shown in Table 7, the results of the hypotheses were as follows:

1. H1: There is a significant impact of servant leadership on job performance at  $p < 0.05$ . The regression value  $R = 0.44$  indicates that there is a strong significant impact in that servant leadership explains 44% of the difference in job performance. Therefore, the first hypothesis was accepted.
2. H1.1: There is a significant impact of conceptualization on job performance at  $p < 0.05$ . The regression value of  $R$  was  $-0.017$ , and accordingly the hypothesis is rejected.
3. H1.2: There is no significant impact of emotional healing on job performance at  $p < 0.05$  significance level and the  $R$ -value was  $-0.061$ . Hence, this hypothesis was rejected.
4. H1.3: The third hypothesis was removed from further analysis due to the absence of model fit. Hence, removing it is more appropriate for the analysis consistent with Mueller and Hancock (2018) and perhaps recommended when reviewing the discriminant validity for the measurement model as demonstrated in the table (6), where JP is negatively correlated with CO ( $-0.059$ ) and ET ( $-0.039$ ), and CRE ( $-0.051$ ) (Byrne, 2001).
5. H1.4: There is a significant impact for helping others grow and succeed on job performance at  $p < 0.05$  significance level and the regression value of  $R = 0.49$ .

Therefore, this hypothesis was accepted.

6. H1.5: There is a significant negative impact of behaving ethically on job performance at  $P < 0.05$  and the regression value was  $-0.51$ , which signifies the negative impact between the variables. Hence, this hypothesis was rejected.
7. H1.6: There is a significant positive impact of empowerment on job performance at  $p < 0.05$  with  $R = 0.32$ , which means that this hypothesis was accepted.
8. H1.7: There is a significant positive impact for creating value for the community on job performance at  $P < 0.05$ . The regression coefficient was negative at  $R = -0.046$ . Hence, the hypothesis was rejected.
9. H1.5: There is a significant negative impact of behaving ethically on job performance at  $P < 0.05$  and the regression value was  $-0.51$  which signifies a negative relationship between the variables. Hence, this hypothesis is also accepted.

## **5. DISCUSSION**

This study arrived at several findings in light of the data analysis and hypothesis testing. The study sample believes that the level of servant leadership behavior is moderate. This result is confirmed by the hypothesis testing and data analysis, showing that not all dimensions of servant leadership are supported. The results also revealed that the perception of employees regarding their job performance was moderate. Caution is indispensable in interpreting this result because employees in service organizations tend to have a self-serving bias when commenting on their performance.

Also, the results demonstrated a positive impact of servant leadership on job performance. This result was supported in other research; for example, Tomigolung (2015) found that servant leadership impacted the performance of employees positively, though this study used different servant leadership dimensions, namely, vision, empowerment, trust, and modesty. This study was also supported by Muhtasom et al. (2017). Van Dierendonck (2011) and Lynch et al. (1999)

revealed similar results regarding the impact of servant leadership on job performance. Van Dierendonck et al. (2009), however, showed that servant leadership had no impact on performance. Culture might be a significant justification for such a result.

Conceptualization has no impact on job performance. This might be due to the fact that conceptualization implies long-term thinking and visionary leadership, so this construct does not have an evident immediate impact on employees' performance. This result was supported by Hussain and Ali (2012), who indicated that conceptual behavior has no impact on job performance. However, Tomigolung (2015) found a positive relationship between vision and job performance. Such conflicting findings between different studies urge researchers to keep exploring such models or problems to reach a consensus in future empirical studies.

Findings also illustrated the absence of any impact of emotional healing on job performance. Again, contradictory results were reached by Muhtasom et al. (2017). They found a positive association and impact of emotional healing with job performance. This contradiction also urges more research to uncover the relationship between job performance and emotional healing. So far, the interpretation is that sometimes and in some contexts, employees might misunderstand their managers' emotional expression and healing and attribute it negatively instead of taking it wholeheartedly. The study also demonstrated that helping employees grow, develop, and succeed positively impacts job performance. Two studies supported this result (Aguinis, 2009; DeNisi and Pritchard, 2006). In our research, this feature seems clear to employees because either you see your manager as helpful or otherwise.

The findings in this study revealed a negative association between managers' ethical behavior and job performance. Hence, the result was surprising and unexpected, negatively impacting ethical behavior on job performance. However, previous studies (Liden et al., 2014; Schwarz et al., 2016) found a positive relationship. The contradiction between this study's findings and previous research could be attributed to a different context, culture, or research environment. Furthermore, Schwarz et al. (2016) adopted different dimensions and variables that might justify such contradiction. Another possible interpretation of such a result is that employees with high performance may perceive their top managers' ethical behavior as not encouraging and unnecessary and that the culture only supports more autocratic leadership than servant leadership. However, this result requires more research to uncover the reason behind such a perception among employees. Western researchers (Dodd et al., 2018; Jaramillo et al., 2009; Schwarz et al., 2016) arrived at more positive associations between ethical behavior and servant leadership, as well as related constructs such as commitment, productivity, and organizational performance.

The empowerment antecedent shows a positive impact on job performance. This means that employees, perhaps, like to be left alone to perform their jobs, rather than with a total servant leader who tries to be close to the employee. The impact of empowerment on Job performance is also positive in Tomigolung (2015) and Schwarz et al. (2016).

Similarly, results show that creating value for the community has no impact on job performance. Employees do not perceive that creating value, by the company leaders, for the community would improve or reduce their performance. Perhaps employees in the airline sector do not get involved in community service or have indirect contact with the community when their leaders work towards

such a goal. Liden et al. (2015) and (Russell & Stone, 2002) have different findings with a positive impact on this association.

## **6. RECOMMENDATIONS**

In light of the findings in this study, the researchers encourage more research into this significant area of servant leadership and other employee-related outcomes because such leadership relates to the inner concern for human behavior and relationships rather than technical or purely managerial exchange and relationships.

We noticed that employees moderately agree that their leaders adopt servant leadership. Thus, we may say there is at least some degree of servant leadership in the airline sector. However, there is an opportunity for managers to invest in increasing their level of servant leadership while understanding the present culture to support such adoption and relate empowerment to servant leadership.

This study shows that servant leadership has an impact on job performance. Employees' empowerment is perceived as affecting job performance. Extensive research to date has a consensus that if you empower your employees, they will perform better, especially in service organizations and knowledge-based firms.

Conceptualization does not show any impact on job performance. However, leaders' vision and systematic views of issues and objectives are less apparent to lower-level employees. Therefore, specific programs are required to assimilate the big picture to the lower-level employees in the organization. Perhaps some training is required to integrate the vision of top managers into the operational work of lower-level employees in the organization.

Managers should also focus on designing initiatives for innovative and creative models of thinking. It is also vital to enhance the communication and connection between managers and their employees via more events, meetings, and perhaps workshops to communicate ideas and share problems and solutions. Creating value for the community seems to be managers' job, while employees are not engaged in this function. We suggest that employees must be aware of creating value for the community if we need to increase the community focus on employees' performance. We believe that employee performance will be of higher quality when driven by servant leaders than traditional leaders.

## **7. R LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

Future efforts might work on cross-sectional research by looking at different service firms to detect variations and differentials. Servant leadership is a culture-sensitive approach. Hence, future research might consider the cultural aspect, with the degree of servant leadership and cultural congruence. Job performance was not fully identified in this research. However, future research might look at job performance dimensions, especially quality, and effectiveness. Questions like whether servant leadership influences creative and innovative performance more than quantity outputs might be investigated. Employee satisfaction might be considered in future research as a



mediating variable, along with testing the association of other variables like loyalty and commitment and employee citizenship behavior are related aspects that could be considered when looking at employee performance.

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