



Effect of Servant Leadership and Leader-Member Exchange on Organizational Commitment through Job Satisfaction

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the effect of servant leadership and leader-member exchange on organizational commitment with job satisfaction as a mediation. The population in this study were s of the Central Java I Regional Tax Office who had no subordinates totaling 135 respondents. Sampling was done by using census sampling technique that took all the existing population. The type of data used is primary data and the method of data collection is done by using a questionnaire. The analysis used in this study is linear regression analysis using SPSS 21 software. The results of the study show that servant leadership and leader-member exchange have a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction. In addition, servant leadership, leader-member exchange, and job satisfaction have a positive and significant impact on organizational commitment. Job satisfaction also mediates the effect of servant leadership and leader-member exchange on organizational commitment.

INTRODUCTION

Organizational commitment is an important work attitude for an organization because members of the organization who are committed will show a willingness to work harder to achieve organizational goals. Robbins & Judge (2013) define organizational commitment as a condition in which employees identify with a particular organization and its goals, and wishes to maintain membership in the organization. Furthermore, it is stated that employees who have high organizational commitment have a low intention to leave the organization even though they feel dissatisfied with the situation. Thus, one of the ideal conditions of a high organizational commitment individually is that a member of the organization has a low intention to leave the organization.

The Directorate General of Taxation (DGT) is an agency in charge of collecting state revenues in the form of taxes. Human resources

in DGT are important considering the role of DGT as the main source of revenue collection for the state. Several years ago, a large number of DGT employees had resigned (Glienmourinsie, 2015; Kharismawati, 2014; Suryowati, 2014). The head of DGT stated that during 2007 to 2012 the number of DGT employees decreased by 1,500 people (DJP, 2012). Some of the problems that are often cited as the reason for the resignation of DGT employees are the mismatch between the compensation received and the responsibilities, risks, and workload. The discrepancy between these various factors will ultimately reduce employee job satisfaction. The decrease in job satisfaction will then reduce employee organizational commitment.

In addition to this, in a study conducted by Arini & Soliha (2017), it was revealed that the organizational commitment of DGT employees, especially the Account Representative (AR) in the Central Java I Regional Tax Office was still

lacking. This is indicated by the number of ARs who are reluctant to participate in the promotions offered for various underlying reasons. The results of research conducted by Mulyani & Soliha (2014), Belo et al. (2014), and Wardhani et al. (2015) stated that the factors that can influence organizational commitment include work, motivation, and job satisfaction. It is presumed that employees who have high job satisfaction will have high organizational commitment. This makes the effect of job satisfaction on organizational commitment an interesting subject to study.

An organizational mentality that prioritizes customers is indeed needed in the context of the sustainability of the organization. However, sometimes organizations forget another important thing, namely a good relationship between superiors and subordinates. Positive social relations between employees and superiors have a close relationship with overall job satisfaction (Humphrey et al., 2007). In the same study, it was also conveyed that positive social support – one of them from superiors – was also associated with lower stress levels and lower intention to leave. This is in accordance with the characteristics of employees who have good organizational commitment (Robbins & Judge, 2013). We can conclude that the research results of Humphrey et al. (2007) show that a positive relationship with superiors will increase organizational commitment.

A manager will have their own way of carrying out their duties and functions as a leader. Servant leadership or leadership that serves or protects is one type of leadership style. The term servant leadership was popularized by Robert K. Greenleaf in the 1970s. Van Dierendonck (2010) collected various conceptual models as well as various empirical studies that measure servant leadership, and summarized them into a conceptual model. One of these conceptual models illustrates that the characteristics of a leader who serve will affect the quality of the relationship between superiors and subordinates which in turn will affect self-actualization in the form of work behavior of subordinates. The work behaviors of subordinates listed include commitment and job satisfaction.

A quality working relationship between superiors and subordinates will logically increase employee job satisfaction. The same thing is to be expected for the servant leadership style. Meanwhile, the effect of job satisfaction on organizational commitment has been widely reviewed (Ćulibrk et al., 2018; Tarigan & Ariani, 2015; Top et al., 2014; Yousef, 2016). This makes the effect of servant leadership and leader-member exchange

on organizational commitment through the mediating role of job satisfaction an interesting subject to study. Arini & Soliha (2017) has concluded that job characteristics, motivation, and job satisfaction have a positive effect on organizational commitment. The study also states that job satisfaction mediates the positive effect of job characteristics and motivation on organizational commitment.

There have been many studies that aim to discuss the variables that affect organizational commitment. However, there are several empirical studies whose results are not in accordance with the theoretical studies. A number of empirical study results can be used as a research gap which is an interesting reason that supports this research. Regarding the relationship between servant leadership and job satisfaction, a study by Farrington & Lillah (2018) which examines the influence of servant leadership dimensions on job satisfaction shows that there are servant leadership dimensions in the form of humility and service that have no effect on job satisfaction. Meanwhile, regarding the relationship between the servant leadership and organizational commitment, Setyaningrum (2017) states that servant leadership has no effect on organizational commitment. Furthermore, in a study conducted on 170 employees of a non-traditional campus, Drury (2004) found a negative relationship between servant leadership and organizational commitment. At the end, the study stated that one of the recommendations for further research is the expansion of the research to other types of organizations. The effect of leader-member exchange on job satisfaction has been discussed in various studies. However, in a study conducted at a restaurant in Surabaya by Gutama et al. (2015) found that the leader-member exchange had a positive but not significant effect on job satisfaction. Regarding the topic of intention to leave the organization – which is closely related to organizational commitment – research conducted by Morrow et al. (2005) showed results which differs from various existing theoretical studies. The results of this study suggest that the relationship between leader-member exchange and the intention to leave may not be linear. The intention to leave reaches its lowest point (the ideal condition of organizational commitment) when the leader-member exchange is in a moderate condition. Leader-member exchange that is at low and high levels will increase the intention to leave. Finally, regarding the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment, the results of the research by Wijanto & Sutanto (2013)

show that job satisfaction has no effect on organizational commitment.

Based on the phenomena and a number of research gaps above, this study will try to analyze the effect of servant leadership and leader-member exchange on job satisfaction. This study will also try to analyze the effect of servant leadership, leader-member exchange, and job satisfaction on organizational commitment, as well as analyze the role of job satisfaction in mediating the influence of servant leadership and leader-member exchange on organizational commitment. The research novelty is elaborate organizational context in Coronavirus pandemic.

HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

Servant leadership or leadership that serves or protects is a type of transformational leadership. We can logically describe that a subordinate who has a superior who serves or protects will certainly feel happier in carrying out his daily work. Job satisfaction is a person's affective or emotional response toward various facets of that person's job (Kinicki & Fugate, 2018). The servant leadership conceptual model proposed by Van Dierendonck (2010) states that the characteristics of servant leadership will ultimately increase the self-actualization of subordinates. Self-actualization can take various forms, one of which is the work behavior of subordinates in the form of job satisfaction.

Research conducted by Al-Asadi et al. (2019) concludes that servant leadership has a positive effect on job satisfaction. The same conclusion was also stated in various other studies (Tischler et al., 2016; Zhang et al., 2016). Thus, based on the theory and empirical studies above, it can be concluded that subordinates who have superiors with a servant leadership style will feel more satisfied with their job.

H1: Servant leadership has a positive effect on job satisfaction

One of the factors that influence job satisfaction is supervision or guidance from superiors (Mathis & Jackson, 2006). The same thing was also expressed by Luthans (2011). The leader-member exchange theory is a theory of the relationship between superiors and subordinates which states that, due to limited resources (time, attention, etc.) superiors will divide their subordinates into in-group members and out-group members (Gibson et al., 2012). The superior will devote more time, attention, and help to in-group members than to out-group members. If subor-

dinates get more time, attention, and assistance from superiors, then the subordinates should find it easier to carry out their job. This will ultimately increase the job satisfaction of subordinates.

The positive effect of leader-member exchange on job satisfaction has been widely discussed in various studies (Bozdoğan & Elibol, 2020; Kim & Yi, 2019; Li et al., 2018). Furthermore, research by Volmer et al. (2011) shows that there is a positive and reciprocal effect between leader-member exchange and job satisfaction. Thus, based on the theory and empirical studies above, it can be concluded that subordinates who have a quality reciprocal relationship with their superiors will feel more satisfied with their work. H2: Leader-member exchange has a positive effect on job satisfaction

Servant leader is someone who has a natural feeling of wanting to serve first, then that choice consciously brings that person to aspire to lead (Greenleaf, 1970). Allen & Meyer (1990) stated that employees with strong affective commitment will stay in the organization because they want to. This desire can be caused by various things including comfort and experience. One of the factors that influence organizational commitment in the form of intention to stay in the organization is support from superiors (Mathis & Jackson, 2006). It is further stated that superiors can increase employees' intentions to stay in the organization by providing feedback and support for the work of subordinates. So that there is a relationship between servant leadership style and employees' affection for the organization. In other words, we can state that servant leadership will have a positive effect on employees' organizational commitment.

One of the conclusions of the research conducted by Türkmen & Gül (2017) is that servant leadership has a positive effect on organizational commitment. The same conclusion is also expressed by other studies (Harwiki, 2016; Lapointe & Vandenberghe, 2015). Thus, based on the theory and empirical studies above, it can be concluded that subordinates who have superiors with a servant leadership style will have better organizational commitment.

H3: Servant leadership has a positive effect on organizational commitment

The leader-member exchange model of leadership, conceived by George Graen and Fred Dansereau, stresses the importance of variable relationships between supervisors and each of their subordinates (Griffin & Moorhead, 2013).

Leader-member exchange plays a role as one of the factors that influence organizational commitment (Miner, 2005). In that literature review research, it was revealed that the leader-member exchange has a positive effect on performance, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. A subordinate who has a good quality relationship with a superior, is expected to show higher organizational commitment, for example in the form of a lower intention to leave. However, people become committed to organizations for very different reasons in individualistic and collectivist societies. Employees with collectivist values make organizational commitments because of their personal ties to managers, owners, and co-workers (collectivism) and much less because of the nature of the job or the particular compensation scheme (Adler & Gundersen, 2008).

Various studies have explained the positive effect of leader-member exchange on organizational commitment (Darmawan & Riva'i, 2019; Ioannidou et al., 2016; Jaiswal & Dhar, 2016; Li et al., 2018). Thus, based on the theory and empirical studies above, it can be concluded that subordinates who have a quality reciprocal relationship with their superiors will have better organizational commitment.

H4: Leader-member exchange has a positive effect on organizational commitment

Job satisfaction is one of the factors that influence organizational commitment (Mathis & Jackson, 2006). Loyal employees tend to be satisfied with their jobs. They also feel more satisfied in terms of relationship with the company. Logically, employees who are satisfied with their job will have a lower intention to leave their jobs. The low intention to leave is one indicator of organizational commitment (Robbins & Judge, 2013). An employee's work experience influences his affective commitment (Allen & Meyer, 1990). The work experiences can be grouped into experiences that provide a sense of satisfaction with the work (job satisfaction), as well as experiences that make an employee feel more competent in the work that is his duty. The same statement was made by Colquitt et al. (2019) that job satisfaction will positively influence organizational commitment.

Research conducted by Čulibrk et al. (2018) stated that job satisfaction has a positive effect on organizational commitment. Similar results were stated in other studies (Prasetio et al., 2017; Yousef, 2016). Thus, based on the theory and empirical studies above, it can be concluded that subordinates who are satisfied with their work will

have better organizational commitment.

H5: Job satisfaction has a positive effect on organizational commitment

Based on the descriptions above, a research model can be described in Figure 1.

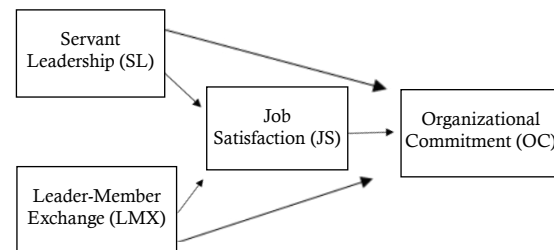


Figure 1. Research Model

METHOD

The population of this study were employees of the Central Java I Regional Tax Office who had no subordinates / non-structural totaling 135 people. The selection of employees who do not have subordinates is based on the existence of a leader-member exchange variable which is the quality of the interaction or reciprocal relationship between superiors and subordinates. The determination of the research sample was carried out using the census sampling technique, in which all members of the population were sampled.

Based on the source, the data used in this study is primary data, namely data obtained directly from the original source. In this study, the source of the data came from the questionnaire given to the respondents. Technical implementation of data collection is done by distributing questionnaires to respondents. Respondents were given a number of statements and asked to choose one of the available answers according to the measurement scale. The measurement scale in this study was using a 7-point Likert scale.

Data analysis was performed using linear regression analysis using SPSS 21. The servant leadership variable was measured using 11 indicators adapted from Irving (2005), the leader-member exchange variable was measured using 9 indicators adapted from Liden & Maslyn (1998), the job satisfaction variable was measured using 11 indicators that were processed from Luthans (2011), and the organizational commitment variable was measured using 9 indicators adapted from Allen & Meyer (1990). The instrument was tested with validity and reliability test. All indicators were declared valid and all variables were declared reliable before hypothesis testing and

mediating effects testing were carried out.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Hypotheses testing was carried out using a partial test or t test to test the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable directly with the criteria for a significance of less than 0.05. The results of SPSS output on the direct influence analysis can be seen in table 1. Based on table 1, it can be concluded as follows:

	β	t	Sig.
SL \rightarrow JS	0.375	5.137	0.000
LMX \rightarrow JS	0.415	5.692	0.000
SL \rightarrow OC	0.228	3.003	0.003
LMX \rightarrow OC	0.428	5.517	0.000
JS \rightarrow OC	0.201	2.427	0.017

Based on the results of the regression test, it is found that there is an influence of servant leadership on job satisfaction with a regression coefficient of 0.375 and a significance of $0.000 < 0.05$ so that individually there is a positive and significant effect of servant leadership on job satisfaction. Thus, the first hypothesis H1: Servant leadership has a positive effect on job satisfaction, is accepted.

The results of this study are in line with previous studies which state that servant leadership has a positive effect on job satisfaction (Al-Asadi et al., 2019; Tischler et al., 2016; Zhang et al., 2016). Servant leader as someone who has a natural feeling of wanting to serve first, then that choice consciously brings that person to aspire to lead (Greenleaf, 1970). Servant leadership is a type of transformational leadership style, namely a leadership style that inspires subordinates to change into prioritizing the interests of the organization above personal interests. Servant leadership also prioritizes development and guidance to subordinates (Eagly et al., 2003). Development and guidance will fulfill employees' satisfaction so, the existence of high servant leadership will be able to help increase employees' job satisfaction.

Based on the results of the regression test, it is found that there is an effect of leader-member exchange on job satisfaction with a regression coefficient of 0.415 and a significance of $0.000 < 0.05$ so that individually there is a positive and significant effect of leader-member exchange on job satisfaction. Thus, the second hypothesis H2: Leader-member exchange has a positive effect on job satisfaction, is accepted.

The results of this study are in line with previous studies which state that leader-member exchange has a positive effect on job satisfaction (Bozdoğan & Elibol, 2020; Kim & Yi, 2019; Li et al., 2018). Leader-member exchange is a theory which states that superiors use different approaches in dealing with their subordinates, which in turn will result in different types of relationships and exchanges (Liden & Maslyn, 1998). These relationships range from mere contractual relationships (low LMX or out-group members) to those characterized by mutual trust, respect, liking, and reciprocal influence (high LMX or in-group members) (Gibson et al., 2012). The quality of good reciprocal relationships between superiors and subordinates, which shows a good leader-member exchange, can help increase employee job satisfaction as shown by the result.

Based on the results of the regression test, it is found that there is an influence of servant leadership on organizational commitment with a regression coefficient of 0.228 and a significance of $0.003 < 0.05$ so that individually there is a positive and significant effect of servant leadership on organizational commitment. Thus, the third hypothesis H3: Servant leadership has a positive effect on organizational commitment, is accepted.

The results of this study are in line with previous studies which state that servant leadership has a positive effect on organizational commitment (Harwiki, 2016; Lapointe & Vandenberghe, 2015; Türkmen & Gül, 2017). Based on the description submitted by Eagly et al. (2003) and Greenleaf (1970), it can be concluded that servant leadership or a leadership style that serves intersects with a type of transformational leadership model that focuses on the development and guidance of subordinates and ensuring the fulfillment of the individual needs of these subordinates. The fulfillment of individual needs of subordinates will increase employees' organizational commitment.

Based on the results of the regression test, it is found that there is an effect of leader-member exchange on organizational commitment with a regression coefficient of 0.428 and a significance of $0.000 < 0.05$ so that individually there is a positive and significant effect of leader-member exchange on organizational commitment. Thus, the fourth hypothesis H4: Leader-member exchange has a positive effect on organizational commitment, is accepted.

The results of this study are in line with previous studies which state that leader-member exchange has a positive effect on organizational commitment (Darmawan & Riva'i, 2019; Ioannidou et al., 2016; Jaiswal & Dhar, 2016; Li et al., 2018). Superiors will group their subordinates into in-group members and out-group members (Gibson et al., 2012). In-group members tend to share ties and value systems with their superiors – things that out-group members do not or rarely have. Thus, we can conclude that a quality reciprocal relationship between superiors and subordinates, or in other words a good leader-member exchange, can help increase employee organizational commitment.

Based on the results of the regression test, it is found that there is an effect of job satisfaction on organizational commitment with a regression coefficient of 0.201 and a significance of $0.017 < 0.05$ so that individually there is a positive and significant effect of job satisfaction on organizational commitment. Thus, the fifth hypothesis H5: Job satisfaction has a positive effect on organizational commitment, is accepted.

The results of this study are in line with previous studies which state that job satisfaction has a positive effect on organizational commitment (Ulubrik et al., 2018; Prasetyo et al., 2017; Yousef, 2016). Job satisfaction is a result of employees' perception of how well their job provides those things that are viewed as important (Luthans, 2011). Meanwhile Colquitt et al. (2019) stated that job satisfaction is closely related to an employee's organizational commitment. The fulfillment of employee job satisfaction will help increase employee organizational commitment.

The mediation effect test was conducted to determine the indirect effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable through the mediating variable. The mediation effect was tested using the Sobel test with a significance of Z less than 0.05. The results of SPSS output on the indirect influence analysis can be seen in table 2. Based on table 2 it can be concluded as follows:

Table 2. Indirect Effect Test Results

	Z	Sig.
SL → JS → OC	3.2481	0.0012
LMX → JS → OC	3.0363	0.0024

The effect of servant leadership on organizational commitment through job satisfaction

The mediating effect of job satisfaction (JS) on the relationship between servant leadership (SL) and organizational commitment (OC)

is significant. This can be seen from the Z statistic value of 3,2481 with a significance of $0.0012 < 0,05$ which can be interpreted that job satisfaction succeeded in mediating the relationship of servant leadership and organizational commitment.

The indirect effect of servant leadership through job satisfaction on organizational commitment is greater than its' direct effect. Superiors with characteristics of servant leaders will increase the self-actualization of their subordinates, one of which is the work behavior of subordinates in the form of job satisfaction (Van Dierendonck, 2010). Furthermore, job satisfaction will affect organizational commitment (Mathis & Jackson, 2006). From a practical point of view, employees who have superiors with servant leadership traits will have an impact on increasing the employees' organizational commitment. The employees' organizational commitment will increase if it is supported by a good level of job satisfaction. So that the role of the organization in maintaining the level of job satisfaction of its employees is important.

The mediating effect of job satisfaction (JS) on the relationship between leader-member exchange (LMX) and organizational commitment (OC) is significant. This can be seen from the Z statistic value of 3,0363 with significance of $0.0024 < 0,05$ which can be interpreted that job satisfaction succeeded in mediating the relationship of leader-member exchange and organizational commitment.

The indirect effect of leader-member exchange through job satisfaction on organizational commitment is greater than its' direct effect. One of the factors that influence job satisfaction is supervision or guidance from superiors (Luthans, 2011). Technical and non-technical guidance provided by superiors is closely related to the quality of the reciprocal relationship between superiors and subordinates. Furthermore job satisfaction itself can affect organizational commitment, especially affective commitment (Colquitt et al., 2019). An employee who has a good leader-member exchange will tend to have good organizational commitment. The employees' organizational commitment will increase if it is supported by a good level of employee job satisfaction. So, it is important for the organization to maintain the job satisfaction of its employees.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The conclusion of this study is that servant leadership has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

In addition, leader-member exchange also has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction and organizational commitment. It was also found that job satisfaction succeeded in mediating the effect of servant leadership and leader-member exchange on organizational commitment.

Based on the results of this study, it is found that job satisfaction is a variable that mediates the influence of servant leadership and leader-member exchange on organizational commitment. Therefore, the HRD of Central Java I Regional Tax Office needs to continually increase job satisfaction of its' employees, including by increasing opportunities for employees to learn or develop competencies, increasing togetherness and cohesiveness of employees in carrying out their duties, and providing income that is more in-line with the duties and responsibilities carried out by employees. Leader-member exchange has the greatest influence on job satisfaction as seen from the value of β in the multiple linear regression test. The HRD needs to continue to improve the leader-member exchange, including by increasing the sense of togetherness between subordinates and superiors and ensuring that superiors provide protection for the work of their subordinates.

Suggestions for further research are expected to be able to conduct research on different objects so that research results can be generalized. There are other factors that may have an effect on organizational commitment, such as organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), empowerment, and organizational culture. So, it hoped that further research can use those factors to study their effects on organizational commitment.

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