EXAMINING THE IMPACT OF SERVANT LEADERSHIP ON TEACHERS’ JOB SATISFACTION

Aneeqa Afaq¹, Mushtaq A. Sajid² & Adeel Arshad³

Abstract

The aim of this study is to investigate the impact of servant leadership qualities on teachers’ job satisfaction in business schools of Kotli Azad Kashmir. For this study, data were collected through adopted instruments. A sample of seventy one subjects was randomly selected from different business schools of Kotli, Azad Kashmir. Results reveal that there is a significant and positive impact of servant leadership attitude on job satisfaction of faculty members. The results of this study can be practically employed to increase teachers’ job satisfaction by directing the efforts of educational administrators towards servant leadership behavior in their routine activities. Practical implications and future directions for research are also discussed.

Keywords: Servant leadership, Job satisfaction, business schools

JEL Classification: Z000

¹-² & ³- University of Management Sciences & Information Technology Kotli (A.K), Pakistan
Introduction

In this era of globalization, the organizational success depends upon the creativity, performance and motivation of employees, which in turn help in improving the overall performance of organization (Van de Ven, 1986; Pfeffer & Veiga, 1999; Lawler, 2003; Cross et al., 2003; Bruch and Ghoshal, 2003). Therefore, it is necessary to exploit the capabilities of employees for the achievement of organizational goals and objectives efficiently and effectively. In this regard, effective leadership has been considered as one of the most crucial and relevant success factor (Yukl, 2002; Northouse, 1997). Thus, leadership is considered to be a phenomenon of vital importance for the success of any organization.

The concept of servant leadership is of major importance for educational institutions because of its principle of building trust based relationship in subordinates (Sergiovanni, 2006; Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, 2010; Lian and Kiang, 2011; Ferch and Spears, 2011). Brumely (2012) revealed that servant leaders are a continuous source of improvement in the organization. They are able to find out opportunistic approaches which results in fulfilling the expectations of teachers (Tey, 2006). In educational institutions, they ensure a highest level of trust (Stone, et. al., 2004). Therefore, servant leaders possess the ability to create a positive culture in an educational institution (Autry, 2004) which in turn results in greater satisfaction of teachers’ and their retention as well (Hunter, 2004).

Although the research on teacher job satisfaction is well documented (e.g. Rossmiller, 1992; Reyes and Shin 1995) but little bit research is done to find the way by which employee satisfaction is promoted through organizational processes. Perie et al., (1997) revealed that it is necessary to identify the factors which are responsible for teacher job satisfaction. It will in turn improve the information base which is required to support a successful educational system. That is why research have been conducted to elaborate the mechanisms which result in teachers’ job satisfaction. According to Bogler (2001) and Miears (2004), leadership behaviour of the principals is one of the factors that exert strong positive influence on job satisfaction. The relative influence of different leadership approaches on job satisfaction has been examined (Akdogan, 2002; Griffith, 2004).
Stockard and Lehman, 2004). Servant leadership is one of these leadership approaches which influences job satisfaction.

There are relatively rare research studies in literature which examined the impact of servant leadership on job satisfaction up till now (like Girard, 2000; Laub 1999; Thompson, 2003; Hebert, 2003; Miears, 2004; Irving, 2005; Drury, 2004; Yusuf Cerit, 2009). Furthermore, no such research studies have been conducted in the case of Azad Jammu & Kashmir. Therefore, this study was aimed to investigate the impact of servant leadership behaviour of educational leaders on teachers’ job satisfaction.

**Background and educational system in Azad Jammu & Kashmir**

The region of All Jammu & Kashmir is a disputed state between the countries of India and Pakistan. The region of Azad Jammu & Kashmir (AJ & K) is under the control of Pakistan which is located in the north-east of Pakistan and the west of Indian-occupied Kashmir. The total area of AJ & K is 5,134 square miles (13297 square kilometers) with an estimated population of 4.09 millions (Azad Kashmir, 2014., Malik, S. I. 2002). The government of AJ&K is parliamentary in nature having its own official flag. This state is full of natural beauty with mountainous ranges, beautiful valleys and speedy flowing streams and rivers.

The educational set up in AJ & K is designed in a similar way as in Pakistan, into primary level, middle level, secondary level, higher secondary level and university level.

In this way, the social and cultural context of this educational set up has a close resemblance with the Pakistani one. Public sector schools are based on top-down bureaucratic model controlled through centralized decision making. This entire region has been governed by military dictators for several years which underpin the concepts of autocracy and dictatorship in all spheres of life. The educational leadership is not an exception in this case. To some extent, the reflection of this autocratic style of educational leaders is still observed in education sector. However, during the last decade, some policy measures have been introduced to change this centralized education system into a more decentralized one. On the basis of this system
some steps have been taken to transfer the responsibilities from provincial to district level in this region (Shah, 2003). Some new posts have been established at the district level to bring a change in the administrative structure of education system. At the district level, Executive District Officer (Education) is responsible for the policy formulation and education development. Some powers have been delegated to these education officers for their schools in their respective districts. Under these reforms, more effective management and leadership is required at different educational levels in Pakistan which is capable enough to facilitate this educational change and play an effective role towards educational sector improvement.

Literature Review

Operative schools have the major and key characteristic of effective leadership (Al-Jammal and Ghamrawi, 2013; Ghamrawi, 2011). Teacher satisfaction and retention has been considered to be possible through effective leadership (Ghamrawi and Al- Jammal, 2013). Unfortunately, the traditional schooling system put emphasis on management instead of leadership (Al-Jammal and Ghamrawi, 2013). Leadership which is responsible for developing trust in subordinates possess the ability to promote effectiveness in them (Ghamrawi, 2011).

The emergence of the notion of servant leadership points out a vital change towards the identification of power in education leadership study. The concept of servant leadership points out the model transformation in leadership from authority-based / power-based approach towards empowerment (Dambe and Moorad, 2008). According to Dennis and Bocarnea (2005) empowerment is a way of creating successful leaders at different levels of the organization. Nowadays, the competitive advantage is achieved not only through the use of technology but there are also many other factors like commitment and abilities of staff, creativity, innovation which may exert influence on its achievement (Gresov&Drazin, 2007). According to Luqman et al., (2012) educational leaders should exhibit the characteristics of ‘Servant Leader’ in order to meet the challenges of the 21st century.
Different scholars defined the concept of servant leadership in their own ways after the proposition of servant leadership theory by Robert Greenleaf (1977). Greenleaf (1977) identified servant leader as a servant by nature, “the real man, not bestowed, not assumed, and not to be taken away” (p.21).

Ehrhart (2004) termed servant leadership as a form of leadership that focuses on personal integrity and interests of followers. Servant leaders are concerned with serving the needs and wants of others, particularly the least privileged in society. In the view of servant leaders, the need to serve others is the fundamental key to effective leadership (Greenleaf, 1977; Luthans and Avolio, 2003; Ehrhart, 2004). In the words of Adamson (2009), servant leadership is concerned with people. Therefore, servant leadership is a style which exhibits the potential to bring positive change in the whole society (stramba, 2002).

Similarly, Miears (2004) investigated that servant leadership style is one of the main leadership style which has considerable influence upon teachers’ job satisfaction. Various researchers (like Girard, 2000; Laub 1999; Thompson, 2003; Hebert, 2003, Miears, 2004; Irving, 2005) had investigated the relationship between servant leadership behaviour and job satisfaction.

Various studies (like Evans & Johnson, 1990; Lee, 1983; Perie et al., 1997; Ma & MacMilan, 1999) found that teachers’ job satisfaction is influenced by conducive school climate for working and administrative support provided to teachers, respect given to teachers from principals and open communication between teachers and principals. However, some researchers (like Perie et al., 1997; Lawson, 2004; Evans, 2001; Pearson & Moomaw, 2005) revealed that teachers’ job satisfaction was associated with their participation in decision making about education and also to the autonomy given to them, which is important in improving teachers’ job satisfaction. Factors are linked with different aspects of servant leadership like developing employees and a care for follower leadership, valuing employees, meeting the needs of employees (Stone et al., 2003; Laub, 1999; Drury, 2004).
Theoretical Framework

On the basis of literature review, it was hypothesized that servant leadership qualities of educational administrators positively affect teachers’ job satisfaction. This relationship was identified in the form of the following null and alternative hypothesis:

H0: Servant leadership does not influence teachers’ job satisfaction.
H1: Servant leadership has strong influence on teachers’ job satisfaction.

Methodology

Sampling

Simple random sampling technique was used to select the subjects from the population. A sample of seventy one faculty members including both male (n= 50) and female (n=21) is randomly selected from different business schools of Kotli Azad Kashmir. Majority of respondents of this survey belonged to the age group of 31 to 50. Similarly, majority of respondents of this survey belong to teaching profession from a quite long time i.e. from 1 to 15 years.

Instrument

In order to investigate servant leadership behaviour of the school principals the servant leadership survey (SLS) instrument developed by Van Dierendonck & Nuijten (2011) was used in the research study. The scale consists of 30 items measuring eight interrelated factors namely: empowerment, standing back, accountability, forgiveness, authenticity, humility, stewardship. All these factors are measured on 5-point likert scale ranging from ‘1’ strongly disagree to ‘5’ strongly agree.

However, teachers’ job satisfaction was measured by the instruments of Ho and Au (2006) and Lester (1987). The scale developed by Ho and Au (2006) is based upon five items. Five-point likert scale ranging from ‘1’ strongly disagree to ‘5’ strongly agree is used to measure these items. Whereas, the scale developed by Lester (1987) is based upon nine dimensions of teachers’ job satisfaction. Five – point likert scale in which ‘1’ depicting strongly disagree to ‘5’ depicting strongly agree is used to measure these dimensions. These
dimensions include: supervision, colleagues, working conditions, pay, responsibility, work itself, advancement, security, recognition.

**Data Analysis**

After the collection of data, both the descriptive and inferential statistics were used for the analysis of data. Data was analyzed in the SPSS version 20. The reliability of the items was measured by Cronbach alpha coefficient. The regression technique allows the researcher to investigate the effect of predictor variable on a dependent variable (Zikmund, 2000). Therefore, linear regression technique was used to test the relationship between servant leadership and teachers’ empowerment.

**Reliability**

The reliability of the items was measured by Cronbach alpha coefficient. According to Nunnally (1994), the minimum cronbach alpha of 0.6 is sufficient for the conduction of research. The cronbach alpha values for both instruments of servant leadership and teachers’ job satisfaction are 0.821 and 0.856 respectively. These values are above than the generally accepted level of cronbach’s alpha which is 0.7. Therefore, both the instruments were found to be reliable enough to be used in the research study.

**Correlation**

Correlation analysis is carried out to analyze the strength of relationship between the construct of servant leadership and teachers’ job satisfaction.

**Table 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SL</th>
<th>JS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JS Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.523**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).**

1037
The result of correlation analysis of variables reveals that there is a strong and positive correlation between servant leadership behaviour and teachers’ job satisfaction.

For analyzing the change in dependent variable i.e. teachers’ job satisfaction due to change in independent variable i.e. servant leadership, a linear regression analysis was carried out which depicted the following results:

**Table 3**

**Model Summary**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R Square</th>
<th>Adjusted R Square</th>
<th>Std. Error of the Estimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>13.10574</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Predictors: (Constant), SL

**Table 4**

**ANOVA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regression</td>
<td>4459.836</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4459.836</td>
<td>25.965</td>
<td>.000 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residual</td>
<td>11851.460</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>171.760</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>16311.296</td>
<td>70</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Dependent Variable: JS
b. Predictors: (Constant), SL

**Table 5**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Collinearity Statistics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Std Error</td>
<td>Beta</td>
<td></td>
<td>Tolerance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SL</td>
<td>922</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>0.523</td>
<td>0.006</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Dependent Variable: JS
Results in table (3) revealed the overall significance of the model on the basis of the value of R square. The value of R square is .027 which indicates that the 27% of the variation in teachers’ job satisfaction is due to the servant leadership. However, the results in table (4) represent the overall variance of the regression equation. Similarly, table (5) depicts that the coefficient of servant leadership is 0.92 which means that one point increase in servant leadership will result in average increase of 0.92 points in teachers’ job satisfaction. The value of variable inflation factor (VIF) is lower than 10 which is an indication that there is no problem of multicollinearity in the data. Therefore, it is proved by these statistical results that servant leadership is significantly and positively related with teachers’ job satisfaction.

**Hypothesis testing**

The hypothesis of the study was tested on the basis of guidelines established by Hair et al. (1998).

H0: Servant leadership does not influence teachers’ job satisfaction.
H1: Servant leadership has strong influence on teachers’ job satisfaction.

The results in table (5) depict that the value of t is greater than 2; therefore as a rule of thumb we reject H0. The value of the coefficient of servant leadership is 0.92 which means that one point increase in servant leadership will result in average increase of 0.92 points in teachers’ job satisfaction. However, the positive sign of coefficient reveals that servant leadership has a positive influence on teachers’ job satisfaction.

**Discussion**

In this study, the relationship between servant leadership dimensions and teachers job satisfaction revealed that all the dimensions of servant leadership i.e. empowerment, standing back (Stb), accountability (Acc), forgiveness (For), courage (Co), authenticity (Au), humility (Hu), and stewardship (Ste) have significant relationship with teachers’ job satisfaction.
The findings of study reveal that higher autonomy at job result in higher level of job satisfaction. Teachers’ become more satisfied when they are given adequate opportunities to participate in decision making process. The behaviour of the educational leader as a servant leader exert positive influence on teachers’ job satisfaction by means of delegating authority, sharing information and acting as an open channel of communication with others. This finding of the study is consistent with most of the past research studies on the relationship between empowerment and teachers’ job satisfaction (Perie et al., 1997; Lawson, 2004; Evans, 2001; Pearson & Moomaw, 2005).

Furthermore, educational leaders as servant leaders value their employees by giving priority to their interests first. They exhibit a potential to support them in different ways for their development. The ultimate result is that teachers become more satisfied through the compassionate behaviors of educational leaders. These findings are consistent with the previous studies on the servant leadership (Stone et al., 2003; Laub, 1999; Drury, 2004).

In consistent with the findings of different researchers (Farling et al., 1999; Stone et al., 2004; Sergiovanni, 2006; Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, 2010; Lian and Kiang, 2011; Ferch and Spears, 2011, Taylor et al., 2007), this study also proves that educational leaders show trust in their capabilities and providing boundaries to them within which they are free to achieve their goals. They let go the mistakes of followers by understanding their feelings and emotions.

Likewise, the results of the study reveal that the concept of servant leadership enables the principals to become more focused towards the needs of followers and achievement of organizational targets through new approaches. Furthermore, the principals express their internal feelings, thoughts and commitments accurately. In this way they are capable enough to fulfill the needs of followers with integrity, devotion and fair treatment.

In consistent with the findings of previous researchers (like Evans & Johnson, 1990; Lee, 1983; Perie et al., 1997; Ma & MacMilan, 1999), this study also proves that teachers’ job satisfaction is influenced by conducive climate for working and administrative support provided to teachers, respect given to teachers from...
administrators and open communication between teachers and educational leaders.

Moreover, educational leaders as servant leaders exhibit the capacity of acting as a role model of others instead of just becoming their caretakers only. When they willingly take the responsibility for the whole society instead of just keeping focus on their self-interest then the ultimate result is increase in their level of job satisfaction.

**Conclusion**

The current study was conducted to examine the impact of servant leadership qualities of educational administrators on teachers’ job satisfaction by using correlation analysis and a simple regression technique. The results of this study supported the hypothesis and verified that there is a positive significant impact of servant leadership behaviour on teachers’ job satisfaction. Those educational administrators who had higher servant leadership qualities impacted positively on the job satisfaction of teachers. The regression coefficient of servant leadership is 0.92 which means that one point increase in servant leadership will result in an average increase of 0.92 points in teachers’ job satisfaction.

The empirical data of this study can be helpful for scholars and practitioners who are responsible for developing more cost effective leadership-training programs. It exhibits the potential to provide support for the current struggle in conducting research on the application of servant leadership concept within the educational institutions.

Research study may be helpful in designing a framework for teaching the concept of servant leadership to those who aim to be educational leaders in future. On the basis of this study a proper course work could be designed which reflects the practical implication of the concept of servant leadership in the educational field.

However, this research study has certain limitations as well. Firstly, the analysis is done on the basis of self-report survey.
in which both the predictor and criterion variable were analyzed through the data answered by same respondent. It may result in common method bias in the dataset. Yet, it might be quite difficult to obtain the data from independent sources for both variables as the perception of both servant leadership and teachers’ job satisfaction can only be taken from the same respondent. While dealing with the issue of common method bias, Conway and Lance (2010) reported that self reports are suitable for examining the processes of job satisfaction and many other work behaviors. It is quite natural to examine these perceptions through self reports.

Secondly, the results of this study are specifically applicable to the education sector of Azad Jammu & Kashmir. Future research can be conducted to generalize the relationship of these variables in other organizational settings as well.

Thirdly, this research study is cross-sectional in nature. Therefore, longitudinal studies are required to be conducted in future for examining the casual impact of study variables in long run.
References


Griffith, J. (2004). Relation of Principal Transformational Leadership to School Staff Job Satisfaction, Staff Turnover, and School


Stockard, J. and Lehman, M.B. (2004). Influences on the satisfaction and Retention of Ist Year Teachers: The importance of


