

## Servant leadership and its impact on organizational citizenship behavior: Exploring the mediating role of job satisfaction

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### ABSTRACT

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This research aims to recognize the impact of servant leadership on organizational citizenship behavior in Jordanian Islamic Banks where job satisfaction is a mediating variable. The research sample is selected from three Jordanian Islamic Banks operating in Jordan. The sample selected 168 people for the current research based on a random sample technique. The results indicate that there is a positive correlation between servant leadership and organizational citizenship behavior. There is also a significant impact of the servant leadership on the organizational citizenship behavior and a significant impact of servant leadership on the organizational citizenship behavior through job satisfaction at the Jordanian Islamic Banks.

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## 1. Introduction

The idea of servant leadership was crystallized when Greenleaf read Hermann Hess's short novel, *Journey to the East*. Greenleaf concluded that the main meaning of the novel is that the great leader is seen first as a servant of others and that this simple fact is the key to his greatness. In 1970, Greenleaf wrote a small article entitled “The Servant as a Leader”, which introduced the term “servant leadership”. Since then, this modest article has captured the imagination of hundreds of thousands of readers around the world. In that article, Greenleaf described some characteristics and activities of the servant leadership, with examples showing that individual efforts, inspired by the vision and the ethics of the server, can make a big difference in the quality of society. The supreme goal of the servant leader is the well-being of the organization and the service of its staff by a leadership approach that goes beyond self-interest or preoccupation to serve the needs of others, helping them develop and provide them with the opportunities to earn materially and morally (Daft & Noe, 2001). In other words, the servant leadership focuses on how to meet the needs of the subordinates and their social development and build a friendly relationship with them, and enable them to perform their work and help them demonstrate their abilities and use their skills in the best way.

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## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. *Servant Leadership*

Servant Leadership is a term developed by Robert Green (Greenleaf, 2008). It is a leadership style in which the leader transcends the reconciliation of personality and favors the service of others. He helps them achieve growth and development and gives them the opportunity to achieve what they desire physically and sensibly. Servant leadership is not just an interesting idea, but it is essential to the world, something that the world really needs. The concept of servant leadership must move from an interesting idea in the public imagination to the realization that this is the only way we can move forward. Servant leadership as a concept can be found in several centuries, even though the form we know today has existed since the 1970s. (Spears & Lawrence, 2004) To ensure credibility, many characteristics are related to this type, such as Transformational Leadership, Idealism and Heroism which are widely used. Servant leadership is a combination of the words "leader" and "server" which have been recognized as conflicting concepts and can be defined as the focus of the leader of the voluntary work of others with altruistic ethics, and creates the potential of subordinates, teamwork and team spirit. One of these is the "innate sense of the leader that he wants to serve others by making rational decisions that make individuals want or aspire to lead" (Greenleaf, 2008). The role of the server leader is to provide an opportunity to practice creativity and help members grow. Kim et al. (2014) defined servant leadership as "the leadership that focuses on volunteerism, in which altruistic ethicists volunteer to serve workers". Spears and Lawrence (2004) defined the servant leadership as "a new type of leadership model, a model that places the service of others as a first priority; a holistic approach to action; a sense of community; power-sharing in decision-making". The Servant leadership is working to develop the potential of workers and increase as well as providing them with the necessary information to achieve organizational objectives. According to Daft, power was not the main purpose and the purpose of the commander. Instead, the basic components of power are shared. The responsibilities of the servant leader were relationships and individuals. The principles of servant leadership included pre-self-service, listening as a means of affirmation, creating trust and nurturing subordinates. The servant leader did not seek to promote his own interests; he promoted subordinates and encouraged them to grow as people and become leaders (Daft, 2005). Liden et al. (2008) propose seven dimensions for the servant leadership: helping subordinates grow and succeed in conceptual skills, empowerment, putting subordinates first, stewardship, behaving ethically, emotional healing, and creating value for the community.

### 2.2. *Organizational Citizenship Behavior*

One of the main components of social life includes human behaviors that need to share many relevant concepts, so the definition of organizational citizenship behavior is different. Although the definition of Organ's (1988) is considered the first, however, he reviewed the administrative literature of Podsakoff et al. (2000) which shows that there are more than thirty different definitions. Smith, Organ and Near (1983) explained the concept of organizational citizenship as an employee's discretionary behavior that has no direct impact on formal reward mechanisms and aims to improve organizational performance. Greenberg and Baron (2003) agree with the Smith et al. (1983), where organizational citizenship is seen as an informal, individual behavior that involves a greater effort than is formally expected to enhance organizational productivity and employee satisfaction. George and Brief (1992) describe the behavior of citizenship as the employee's sense of deliberate participation in organizational activities without anticipating any kind of benefits. Schanke (1991) defines the behavior of organizational citizenship as multi-level practical initiatives directed at individual, collective and organizational levels. When looking at the context of organizational citizenship behavior from a broader perspective, Van Dyne, Graham, and Dienesch (1994) conceptualized the concept from a holistic perspective in which many positive behaviors, including behaviors in roles and behaviors outside of the role and political behaviors within the same environment, interact. Finally, as a result of a variety of different perspectives, Organ (1990) changes the concept of "organizational citizenship behavior" by referring to the positive role of social and psychological perspectives through the performance of work. Despite the multiplicity of concepts, all relevant concepts can be seen as having the same logic used to emphasize the adverse effects of existing behaviors (Gürbüz, 2006; Podsakoff et al., 2000).

### 2.3. *Job Satisfaction*

Job satisfaction gives an impression of the attitude of employees towards their work. In other words, it describes the level of employee satisfaction in fulfilling their wishes and needs at work. Expression of job satisfaction as an intangible variable or expression of emotional feelings. In other words, it depends on the internal expression and the position of the individual employee in relation to a particular job. Staff satisfaction is high whenever the job provides the expected psychological or physiological needs. Satisfaction, however, is low if the job does not meet psychological or physiological needs (Cook, 2008). Spector (1997) showed the degree of job satisfaction of the people they love. Mankoe (2002) explained that job satisfaction is a set of feelings that employees feel about their work. Job satisfaction also refers to positive or negative attitudes towards employment in an attempt to show employee satisfaction (Greenberg & Baron, 2003). According to Robbins (2001), a satisfied employee shows high performance standards, a low absenteeism rate and a desire to remain within his organization. On the contrary, when an employee is dissatisfied with his job, he shows his discontent by looking for opportunities to leave the organization, complaining about inappropriate working conditions by criticizing managers, and insisting on showing negative behaviors through poor performance and increased absenteeism (Greenberg & Baron, 2003; Robbins, 2001). Bateman and

Organ (1983) suggest that the theoretical basis for the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational citizenship derives from the theory of social exchange (Blau's 1964), which assumes that if organizational officials provide appropriate working conditions according to their own wishes to show appreciation and satisfaction, they seek opportunities Similarly by doing their best for the well-being of the organization is going on. However, staff may fail to respond positively to this work-related solution due to lack of capacity or opportunity. If this is the case, the behavior of organizational citizenship is a way for employees show reciprocity in a calm manner (Organ, 1990).

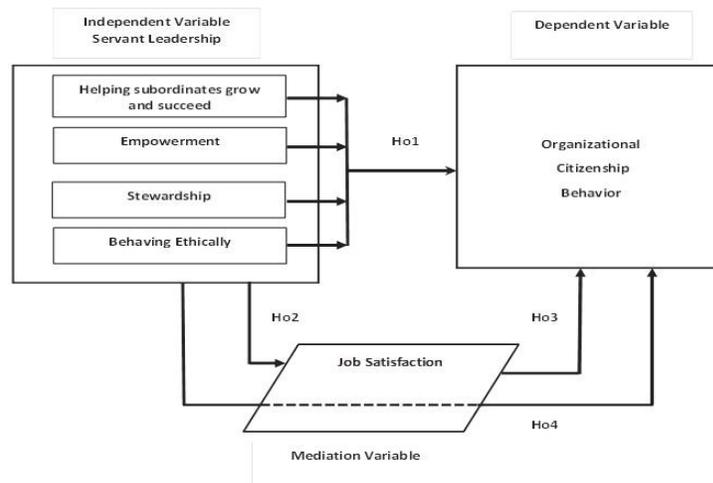
### 3. Problem Definition

The research was conducted to address certain key issues about servant leadership in the Jordanian Islamic Banks. It would be worth examining the impact of dimensions of servant leadership (helping subordinates grow and succeed, empowerment, stewardship, and behaving ethically) on the organizational citizenship behavior, the job satisfaction as a mediating variable. Other questions include the following:

1. Is there any impact of servant leadership dimensions on the organizational citizenship behavior?
2. Is the impact of servant leadership dimensions on the organizational citizenship behavior at the same level?
3. Is there any impact of servant leadership on the job satisfaction?
4. Is there any impact of job satisfaction on the organizational citizenship behavior?
5. Is there any impact of servant leadership dimensions on the organizational citizenship behavior through job satisfaction as a mediating variable?

### 4. Suggested model

A model consists of three types of variables, the independent variable (servant leadership), the dependent variable (organizational citizenship behavior) and the mediator variable (job satisfaction) as shown in Fig. 1.



**Fig. 1.** The proposed model

### 5. Research Hypotheses

In order to achieve the research objectives, the following main hypotheses and their sub-hypotheses are developed for testing:

$H_{01}$ : There is no significant impact of servant leadership dimensions on organizational citizenship behavior.

The  $H_{01}$  hypothesis included four sub hypotheses:

$H_{01-a}$ : There is no significant impact of helping subordinates grow and succeed on organizational citizenship behavior.

$H_{01-b}$ : There is no significant impact of empowerment on organizational citizenship behavior.

H<sub>01-c</sub>: There is no significant impact of stewardship on organizational citizenship behavior.

H<sub>01-d</sub>: There is no significant impact of behaving ethically on organizational citizenship behavior.

H<sub>02</sub>: There is no significant impact of servant leadership on job satisfaction.

H<sub>03</sub>: There is no significant impact of job satisfaction on organizational citizenship behavior.

H<sub>04</sub>: There is no significant impact of servant leadership on organizational citizenship behavior by mediating job satisfaction.

## 6. Methodology

### 6.1. Data and Sample

To gather the necessary data for this study, a random sample of (182) employees was selected from the population of Islamic banks. Of the (172) questionnaires returned, (4) were rejected due to incomplete responses and (168) responses were used for data analyses. It should be noted that every questionnaire was personally handed and instructions were given to each employee before completing the questionnaire. In terms of demographic findings, (76.2%) of respondents were males, and the remaining (23.8%) were females. In terms of the age group of respondents, it is interesting to note that (3.6%) of them are less than (30) years, whereas (4.2%) fell into the (30-35) age group, whereas (31%) fell into the (36-40) age group, whereas (24.4%) fell into the (40-45) age group, whereas (26.8%) fell into the (45-50) age group, only (10.1%) are above this group. As for the educational levels of these employees, the (10.7%) were Diploma certificate holders the (47.6%) were Bachelor certificate holders, and (41.7%) were Higher Education certificate holders. In terms of the Experience years of respondents, (6%) of them have less than (5) years, whereas (12.5%) have (6 - 10) Experience years, whereas (22.6%) have (11 - 15) years of experience, whereas (58.9%) have more. See Table 1.

**Table 1**  
Characteristics of the Sample (N=168)

Items	frequency	Percent
Gender:		
Male	128	76.2
Female	40	23.8
Age:		
Less than 30 year	6	3.6
30 – 35 Years	7	4.2
36 – 40 Years	52	31
41 – 45 Years	41	24.4
46 – 50 Years	45	26.4
50 and more	17	10.1
Educational Level:		
Diploma	18	10.7
Bachelor	80	47.6
Higher Education	70	41.7
Experience Years:		
Less than 5 years	10	6
6 – 10 Years	21	12.5
11 – 15 Years	28	22.6
16 and more	99	58.9

### 6.2. Measures

The serving leadership was measured based on several studies (e.g. Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2011; Liden et al., 2008; Greenleaf, 2010). The organizational citizenship behavior was measured with the Organizational citizenship behavior scale, developed by Podsakoff and Mackenzie (1989). The survey was a modified version of the measure used and validated by Podsakoff & et al (1990). The job satisfaction variable was measured on the basis of study Bez (2010). Table 2 shows the Cronbach's alpha for scale reliability obtained for our sample. Reliability from our sample showed a reasonable level of reliability ( $\alpha > 0.70$ ) (Sekran & Bougie, 2010).

**Table 2**  
Reliability of Questionnaires Dimensions

No.	Variable	Dimensions	Cronbach's alpha Value
1	Servant Leadership	1 helping subordinates grow and succeed	83%
		2 empowerment	79%
		3 stewardship	86%
		4 behaving ethically	83%
2	Organizational Citizenship Behavior		82%
3	Job Satisfaction		87%
	All Questionnaires		92%

## 7. Results and Discussions

In this section the study was divided into four hypotheses and they were examined using Simple Regression and Multiple Regression Analysis. The fourth hypothesis was tested through Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis.

H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant impact of servant leadership dimensions on organizational citizenship behavior.

A simple linear regression test has been conducted to investigate H<sub>01</sub> and the results of the test are shown in Table 3. From the table, (R) value represents correlation and is (49.8%), which indicates that the relationship between two variables is generally considered a good relationship. The (R<sup>2</sup>) value indicates how much of the total variation in the organizational citizenship behavior can be explained by servant leadership. In this case, (24.5%) can be explained; while the remaining proportion (75.5%) can be explained by other variables are not included in the regression model. ANOVA table provides F-test to determine whether the model is a good fit for the data. According to this p-value, it is. Since F = 66.499, (p ≤ 0.05), which indicates that, overall, the regression model is statistically significant (a good fit for the relationship between servant leadership on organizational citizenship behavior). The coefficients provide the necessary information to predict the organizational citizenship behavior from servant leadership, as well as they determine whether the servant leadership contributes statistically significantly to the model. Besides, Beta values for servant leadership has reached (0.498) which indicates that predicting (49.5%) of the organizational citizenship behavior from servant leadership. In other word, the results can be interpreted as (For every unit increase in servant leadership, there is a (49.8%) unit increases in the predicted the organizational citizenship behavior). Based on these results, we accept the alternative hypothesis and null hypothesis should be rejected.

**Table 3**

Simple linear regression analysis to ensure the impact of servant leadership on organizational citizenship behavior

Dependent Variable	Model Summary			ANOVA			Coefficient		
	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adj R <sup>2</sup>	F	df	Sig.	β	t	Sig.
Organizational Citizenship Behavior	0.498	0.245	0.241	66.499	1	0.000	0.498	8.155	0.000

This H<sub>01</sub> hypothesis included three sub hypotheses:

H<sub>01-a</sub>: There is no significant impact of helping subordinates grow and succeed on organizational citizenship behavior.

H<sub>01-b</sub>: There is no significant impact of empowerment on organizational citizenship behavior.

H<sub>01-c</sub>: There is no significant impact of stewardship on organizational citizenship behavior.

H<sub>01-d</sub>: There is no significant impact of behaving ethically on organizational citizenship behavior.

To test these hypotheses, the researchers used the multiple regression analysis to ensure the impact of servant leadership on the organizational citizenship behavior.

Table 4 shows the impact of servant leadership (helping subordinates grow and succeed, empowerment, stewardship, and behaving ethically) on the organizational citizenship behavior. The regression model achieves a high degree of fit, (R) value represents correlation and is (55.9%), which indicates that the relationship between two variables is generally considered a good relationship. The (adjusted R<sup>2</sup>) value (0.299), which asserted that (29.9%) of the explained variation in organizational citizenship behavior can be accounted servant leadership (helping subordinates grow and succeed, empowerment, stewardship, and behaving ethically). On the other hand, Table 4 for the executive data set indicated the slope value of (0.487), (0.210), (0.190) and (0.284) for the regression line. This suggested that for a one unit increase in servant leadership (helping subordinates grow and succeed, empowerment, stewardship, and behaving ethically) an increase in organizational citizenship behavior is expected.

**Table 4**

Multiple Regression Analysis to Ensure Impact of Servant Leadership on the Organizational Citizenship Behavior

Dependent Variable	(R)	(R <sup>2</sup> )	Adj (R <sup>2</sup> )	F	Sig*	β	T	Sig*	
Organizational Citizenship Behavior	0.559	0.312	0.299	22.944	0.000	helping subordinates grow and succeed	0.487	5.978	0.000
						empowerment	0.210	2.871	0.000
						stewardship	0.190	2.275	0.024
						behaving ethically	0.284	3.893	0.000

\* The impact is significant at level ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ )

In addition, Table 4 shows that the analysis of variance of the fitted regression equation is significant with F value of (22.944). This is an indication that the model is a good one. Since the p-value is ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ), which shows a statistically significant relationship between the variables at (0.95) confidence level. The results also indicate that in servant leadership (helping

subordinates grow and succeed, empowerment, stewardship, and behaving ethically) actually impact organizational citizenship behavior with a coefficient of (0.48.7) for helping subordinates grow and succeed, (0.21) for empowerment, (19%) for stewardship, and (0.28.4) for behaving ethically. Thus, servant (helping subordinates grow and succeed, empowerment, stewardship, and behaving ethically) actually impact organizational citizenship behavior. Accept the alternative hypothesis and rejected the null hypothesis.

H<sub>02</sub>: There is no significant impact of servant leadership on job satisfaction.

A Simple linear regression test is conducted to investigate H<sub>02</sub> hypothesis. Results of the test are shown in Table 5. From the table, (R) value represents simple correlation and is (71.9%), which indicates that the relationship between two variables is generally considered a good relationship. The (R<sup>2</sup>) value indicates how much of the total variation in the job satisfaction can be explained by servant leadership. In this case, (50.6%) can be explained; while the remaining proportion (49.4%) can be explained by other variables are not included in the regression model. ANOVA table provides an F-test to determine whether the model is a good fit for the data. According to this p-value, it is. Since  $F = 209.734$ ,  $p \leq 0.05$ , which indicates that, overall, the regression model statistically significant (a good fit for the relationship between servant leadership on job satisfaction). The Coefficients table provides the necessary information to predict the job satisfaction from servant leadership, as well as determine whether servant leadership contributes statistically significantly to the model. Besides, Beta values for servant leadership has reached (0.719) which indicate that predicting (49.5%) of the job satisfaction from servant leadership. In other word, the results can be interpreted as (For every unit increase in servant leadership, there is a (71.9%) unit increases in the predicted the job satisfaction). Based on these results, accept the alternative hypothesis and null hypothesis should be rejected.

**Table 5**

Simple linear regression analysis to ensure the impact of servant leadership on job satisfaction

Dependent Variable	Model Summary			ANOVA			Coefficient		
	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adj R <sup>2</sup>	F	df	Sig.	$\beta$	t	Sig.
job satisfaction	0.719	0.506	0.503	209.734	1	0.000	0.719	14.482	0.000

H<sub>03</sub>: There is no significant impact of job satisfaction on organizational citizenship behavior.

A Simple linear regression test is conducted to investigate H<sub>03</sub> hypothesis. Results of the test are shown in Table 6. From the table, (R) value represents simple correlation and is (67.9%), which indicates that the relationship between two variables is generally considered a good relationship. The (R<sup>2</sup>) value indicates how much of the total variation in the organizational citizenship behavior can be explained by job satisfaction. In this case, (46.4%) can be explained; while the remaining proportion (53.6%) can be explained by other variables are not included in the regression model. ANOVA table provides an F-test to determine whether the model is a good fit for the data. According to this p-value, it is. Since  $F = 177.672$ ,  $(p \leq 0.05)$ , which indicates that, overall, the regression model statistically significant (a good fit for the relationship between job satisfaction on organizational citizenship behavior). The Coefficients table provides the necessary information to predict the organizational citizenship behavior from job satisfaction, as well as determine whether job satisfaction contributes statistically significantly to the model. Besides, Beta values for job satisfaction has reached (0.679) which indicate that predicting (49.5%) of the organizational citizenship behavior from servant leadership. In other word, the results can be interpreted as (For every unit increase in job satisfaction, there is a (67.9%) unit increases in the predicted the organizational citizenship behavior). Based on these results, accept the alternative hypothesis and null hypothesis should be rejected.

**Table 6**

Simple linear regression analysis to ensure the impact of job satisfaction on organizational citizenship behavior

Dependent Variable	Model Summary			ANOVA			Coefficient		
	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adj R <sup>2</sup>	F	df	Sig.	$\beta$	t	Sig.
organizational citizenship behavior	0.679	0.464	0.462	177.672	1	0.000	0.679	13.320	0.000

H<sub>04</sub>: There is no significant impact of servant leadership on organizational citizenship behavior by mediating job satisfaction. In order to examine the mediation impact of job satisfaction, regression analysis was applied including Baron and Kenny's (1986) method.

Baron and Kenny (1986) proposed an approach to test the mediation impact consisting of several steps of regression analyses, in which the significance of the coefficients is examined at each step. In connection with the above, the results of testing the fourth main hypothesis are demonstrated in Table 6 below:

**Table 6**

Hierarchical Multiple Regression analysis to ensure the mediating impact of Job Satisfaction on the relationship between Servant Leadership and Organizational Citizenship Behavior

Variables	Step 1 Organizational Citi- zanship Behavior	Step 2 Job Satisfaction	Step 3 Organizational Citizenship Be- havior	Step 4 Organizational Citizenship Be- havior
(Constant)	0.611	0.400	0.315	0.667
Servant Leadership	0.498	0.719		0.021
Job Satisfaction			0.679	0.665
R	0.498	0.719	0.679	0.682
R <sup>2</sup>	0.245	0.506	0.464	0.465
adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.241	0.503	0.462	0.459
F-value	66.499	209.734	177.672	88.180
Sig.	0.000**	0.000**	0.000**	0.000**

Note: \*\*p < 0.01; \*p < 0.05.

With reference to Table 6, step 1 results show that Servant Leadership had a significant impact on Organizational Citizenship Behavior. Additionally, step 2 results indicate that Servant Leadership had a significant impact on Job Satisfaction. On top of that, step 3 results have signposted that Job Satisfaction had a significant impact on Organizational Citizenship Behavior too, reflected by the values of both; standardized coefficients ( $\beta$ ) and significance levels ( $\alpha$ ). Along with Baron and Kenny's (1986) method, mediation exists when the impact of Servant Leadership on Organizational Citizenship Behavior decreases while the impact of Job Satisfaction is controlled for. Straightforwardly, the impact of Servant Leadership on Organizational Citizenship Behavior in step (1) shall be compared with the impact in step (4) using Job Satisfaction as a mediator. If the impact decreases, but remains significant compared to step (1), then partial mediation exists, whereas if the impact decreases to the limit it becomes insignificant, then full mediation impact exists. Based on the results shown in Table 6 above, step (4) results showed that ( $\beta$ ) value had decreased compared to the one obtained in step (1), but still significant, therefore a partial mediation impact exists taking into account that the value of the indirect impact was ( $0.719 \times 0.679 = 0.488$ ). In order to test the significance of the indirect impact, the Sobel test was used (Sobel, 1982). Results have shown that the Sobel test statistic for the indirect impact was 9.831 with a significance level less than 0.05, implying that the indirect partial mediating impact is significant and this subsequently supports the fourth hypothesis (H<sub>4</sub>). From the above results, we can say that the objectives of the study have been achieved, for the first goal; the results indicate that there is a good level of servant leadership in Islamic banks of Jordan. As for the second objective, it became clear that all the dimensions of servant leadership had a positive impact in achieving the organizational citizenship behavior among employees. The third objective is to study the impact of job satisfaction on organizational citizenship behavior, the results indicate that there was a good level of impact. Finally, for the fourth objective and the indirect impact of servant leadership on organizational citizenship behavior through job satisfaction, the results have indicated that there was a good level of indirect impact.

## 8. Conclusion

The research has been accomplished under the theoretical framework developed based on the previous studies. The statistical analysis has shown that helping subordinates grow and succeed, empowerment, stewardship, and behaving ethically are significant dimensions that have maintained positive impacts on organizational citizenship behavior of the employees in the Islamic banks in Jordan. The most important findings of the study that more dimensions of servant leadership had some impacts on the organizational citizenship behavior are, respectively: helping subordinates grow and succeed, behaving ethically, empowerment, and stewardship. An assessment of the validity of the findings presented in this study would be especially valuable. Like other empirical studies, the study can be strengthened by increasing the sample size and including participants in other geographical areas. With an increased sample size, a more detailed empirical analysis, among the independent variables and the variables that have multiple categories can be performed. Potential correlations between some independent variables (e.g. Moral leadership, Emotional Intelligence) need to be reported in future studies.

## 9. Limitations and Future Research

As with any study, our study has several limitations. The first limitation of this study is that of the data collected which was self-reported, thus, common method bias may be present. Second, the sample size was small, because the number of Islamic banks in Jordan was only three banks. Third, the study was conducted for Islamic banks in the Jordan, so that the results cannot be generalized to all commercial banks in Jordan.

This study also suggests more research is needed to examine the relationship between servant leadership and other variables, such as organizational commitment. Therefore, the recommendation is for further studies to be applied to other regions and an environment is needed:

- In other private sector organizations in Jordan.

- Nonprofit and government organizations in Jordan.

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