

The Relationship Between Servant Leadership and Work Engagement with Openness to Change Among Employees in South Jakarta

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ABSTRACT

The character of a leader is a form of noble behavior, in which this character has an influence on performance in followers or employees. One of the current modern styles of the character of a leader, known as servant leadership is known to increase work engagement in employees. In addition, it is also known that there is a relationship between work engagement and openness to change among employees in several previous studies. Besides that, a relationship has been found between other leadership styles, namely transformational leadership and openness to change in employees. So, to add to the renewal of previous research, this study aims to see whether there is a significant relationship between servant leadership and work engagement with openness to change among employees working in South Jakarta. The method used in this research is quantitative reasearch using three measuring instruments, namely Servant Leadership (SL-7) scale by Liden et al (2015) with a validity value of 0,579 – 0,779 and a reliability value of 0,686. Then, the the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) by Schaufeli et al (2002) with a validity value of around 0,867 – 0,898 and a reliability value of 0,884. Last, Opennes to Change (OC) scale by Miller et al. (1994) with validity value around 0,154 – 0,415 and reliability value of 0,323. Respondents who participated in this study amounted to 104 employees who work in South Jakarta with a purposive sampling technique, with 65 female employees and 39 male employees. The result show that there is a significant correlation between servant leadership, work engagement, and openness to change for employees working in South Jakarta with an R Square value of 0,145 with a probability value of 0,000 ($p > 0,001$) where H_a is accepted. In conclusion, servant leadership and work egagement among employees are positively and significantly related to openness to change among employees working in South Jakarta.

Keywords: Employee, Openness to Change, Servant Leadership, Work Engagement

INTRODUCTION

Character strength is defined as Values in Action (VIA), which is a psychological embodiment of values present in life, both for one's own benefit and for others, a theory proposed by Peterson and Seligman. They also explain that VIA consists of six virtues with 24 character strengths found within each virtue (Lavy & Benish-Weisman, 2021). One of these is the virtue of justice, with the character strength of leadership defined as the ability to inspire trust and confidence in others (John C. Maxwell in the book Introduction to Leadership by Kenneth Heis). Where the character of leadership is one of the metrics of noble behavior that can help us better understand how leaders can have a positive influence, which behaviors are most important, how these behaviors are perceived by employees, and the relationship between leadership character and employe performance (Thun & Kelloway, 2011).

A leader is also defined as a person who can be responsible for influencing one or more followers and providing them with direction to achieve the set goals (Sethuraman & Suresh, 2014b). J. Rodney Turner and Ralf Muller (in Sethuraman & Suresh, 2014b) state that the key elements for a successful organization are leadership style and competence. Knowing and understanding the various types of personalities of a leader is also known to be the foundation of a leadership style that can result in a high probability of success (Sethuraman & Suresh, 2014b). Therefore, the character and role of a leader here are very important and influential in achieving the goals set by the organization, the leader themselves, or the agreements between leaders and employees. Moreover, the style of various leaderships can also yield high success, especially in achieving the success of an organization. Where

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one of the modern styles of leadership today is known as servant leadership (Manik et al., 2022) or leadership that serves.

To achieve success in an organization, it is certainly not only based on the style of leadership (such as servant leadership), but employee engagement is also known to be one of the foundations of the success of an organization or company (Bhuvanaiah, 2014b). Employee engagement is defined as a positive fulfillment, a state of mind related to work, and characterized by enthusiasm, dedication, and absorption according to Schaufeli and Salanova (in Bhuvanaiah, 2014b). Where the definition of employee engagement is related to work engagement among employees, which means that thru this definition, work engagement implicitly also becomes one of the foundations of an organization's success. This is also supported by research findings that state that employee engagement is significantly related to the desired outcomes of the organization to achieve success both at the individual and organizational levels (Bhuvanaiah, 2014b).

As time goes by and with the development of the era, an organization or company will continue to implement changes to improve processes and work results better than before (Augustsson et al., 2017). To achieve sustainable business success, it is known that organizations strive to adapt to changes (Bhuvanaiah, 2014b). Therefore, to meet the demands of change, employee openness in realizing the change demands desired by the organization to achieve success and better work results is needed. Employee openness to change is defined as the support given by employees to face changes and the positive influence regarding the potential consequences of those changes on the organization, according to Miller et al. (in Axtell et al., 2002). In short, in this case, openness to change among employees is needed to support the renewal carried out by an organization or company in order to achieve a greater level of success.

To create success and achievement within an organization or company, it is not only based on the leadership style and employee involvement in their work. Rather, employee openness in facing changes implemented by the organization also serves as an additional foundation for the creation of that success, considering that it is thru this openness that the organization receives suggestions or support from employees. In previous research, it was stated that there is a significant positive relationship (de Clercq et al. (2014); Putra D. D (2021)), a positive effect (Zhou et al., 2022), and an influence (de Sousa & van Dierendonck, 2014) between the variables of servant leadership and work engagement. Meanwhile, no direct relationship was found between the variable of openness to change and the variable of work engagement. However, in the same study, the researchers stated that there is a positive relationship between psychological ownership, work engagement, knowledge creation, and openness to change (Chai et al., 2020). From several research results that have been conducted, it can be seen and concluded that there is a gap or disparity.

First, servant leadership and work engagement have been studied previously in various countries, including Indonesia, and have shown a positive relationship. Therefore, the aim of this research is to examine whether there is a relationship between servant leadership and work engagement with openness to change among employees working in South Jakarta, as an extension of previous research conducted in Indonesia that focused solely on the variables of servant leadership and work engagement among honorary employees in Mojokerto district (Putra D.D, 2021). Thus, the overall

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results of this research can later serve as a reference or an addition to the readers' knowledge to create success within an organization or company.

Literature Review on Servant Leadership, Work Engagement, and Openness to Change

Servant leadership is known as one of the modern styles of leadership (Manik et al., 2022), and this leadership style is classified as one of the positive leadership styles (Decuyper & Schaufeli, 2020b). Another definition of this leadership style is that it is characterized by leaders who serve by paying attention to the development and growth of their followers or employees (de Sousa & van Dierendonck, 2014) and was first introduced by Greenleaf in 1977. Furthermore, servant leadership aims to be a leader who focuses more on the psychological needs of their employees (Eva et al., 2019). It is further explained that servant leadership is a people-oriented leadership approach, manifested by prioritizing the needs and interests of individual employees and having the determination to serve others. Servant leadership is not just about being polite or friendly; it is about having a character deeply rooted within oneself and possessing strong psychological maturity. With this definition, someone who is unwilling to serve others is not worthy of being a servant leader. Additionally, within the framework of Social Exchange Theory as a supporting theory, servant leadership creates a transformative effect on its employees, such as changing the mindset and behavior of employees or followers (Eva et al., 2019). The SET theory also explains that servant leadership indeed has an influence on its followers or employees (Zhou et al., 2022).

According to Dierendonck and Nuijten (in de Sousa & van Dierendonck, 2014), servant leadership consists of eight dimensions, the first being empowerment (encouraging autonomous decision-making, sharing information, and leading and mentoring individuals to work innovatively). Second, humility (the humility possessed by leaders is demonstrated by prioritizing the interests of others, acknowledging their own mistakes, and being willing to continuously learn). Third, accountability (providing direction while considering a person's abilities, their specific needs, and the contributions they make). Fourth, stewardship (related to motivating others to take action by considering the common good and ensuring its benefits). Fifth, authenticity (can create an atmosphere of openness and positive cooperation to face change). Sixth, forgiveness (the ability to let go of past offenses, differences, and previous mistakes). Seventh, courage (Russell and Stone (in de Sousa & van Dierendonck, 2014) define it as a special form of proactive attitude in forming new approaches to face old problems and being able to go thru them faithfully to the values and beliefs that shape a person to act). Lastly, standing-back (Van Dierendonck defines it as the extent to which a leader prioritizes the interests of others, and importantly, by providing support and praise to them).

Where these eight dimensions will be evident in a leader who possesses servant leadership, and this leader will also pave the way for effective engagement and change (de Sousa & van Dierendonck, 2014). Globally, the servant leadership style supports employee development, which influences skill development, capability enhancement, and productivity (Zhou et al., 2022). As previously mentioned, servant leadership is a positive leadership style known to enhance work engagement among followers or employees (Zhou et al., 2022). Additionally, because this leadership style prioritizes serving employees' needs, it can be said to offer the work resources that employees require, ultimately increasing their work engagement (Coetzer et al., 2017d). Work engagement, or more commonly known as work

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engagement, is defined as a positive and satisfying state of mind related to work, characterized by energy (enthusiasm), dedication (to the organization), and full concentration possessed by an employee (Zhou et al., 2022). Schaufeli and Bakker (in de Clercq et al, 2014) explain that engagement itself is defined as a state of mind that is related to positive and satisfying work, characterized by vigor (enthusiastic behavior), dedication (having dedication or feeling enthusiastic and proud in working), and absorption (absorption or concentration when working).

Furthermore, vigor in work engagement is defined by a strong willingness to work until the employee chooses to persevere despite difficulties encountered while working. Continuing with dedication, which means being very involved in the job and feeling enthusiastic, inspired, a sense of pride, enjoying challenges, and always finding meaning in something. Lastly, absorption is defined as a state where employees are concentrated and feel happy in their work until they feel time passes quickly, and when employees stop working, they feel unhappy (Ariza-Montes et al., 2018). Additionally, to encourage work engagement among employees, it is said that leadership style is one of the drivers (Attridge, 2009), where servant leadership falls under the category of positive leadership styles, meaning that the presence of servant leadership can promote work engagement among employees. Employees who are positively engaged or, in other words, have this management style in their work can result in minimal resource wastage that the organization might need more (Zhou et al., 2022). When a company is led by someone with a servant leadership style, employee work engagement will increase as a way to reciprocate the organization that has treated its employees well. This is also in line with the SET theory, which states that the positive servant leadership style creates positive changes in employees' mindsets and behaviors. Additionally, this leadership style is said to play an important role in creating a supportive work environment (Zhou et al., 2022). Beside the encouragement of work engagement from servant leadership, it is explained that work engagement leads to the creation of openness to change. As time goes by and with the changing times, there will certainly be demands for changes within an organization, where to support these changes, the organization needs the openness of its employees (Augustsson et al., 2017). Someone who is very open is a creative person, has a sense of curiosity, and is artistically sensitive (Choi, 2011). Therefore, a person who is open to change or openness to change itself, according to Miller et al. (in Augustsson et al., 2017), is defined as the extent to which employees are willing to support the changes that occur and how positively employees influence the consequences of those changes. Where this character is also related to independence in thinking, acting, and a sense of readiness to change (Lavy & Benish-Weisman, 2021), and consists of values related to independent thinking, actions, and feelings according to Schwartz (in Lavy & Benish-Weisman, 2021). According to Lyns, Swindler, and Offner (in Jeong et al., 2016), it was found that employees' openness to change within the organization is a positive predictor of their intention to engage in that change, which certainly has a positive impact on employee work engagement.

Another definition expressed by Wanberg and Banas (in Park et al., 2014) is the psychological readiness of employees to accept organizational or environmental changes. From the perspective of servant leadership theory, specifically the dimension of authenticity, it is said that the servant leadership style can create an atmosphere of openness and positive cooperation to face change. In other words, the reflection of a servant leadership style can foster openness to change among employees. The importance of the leadership role in initiating change has been discussed, where Eisenbach, Watson,

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and Pillai (in Jeong et al., 2016) state that another leadership style, namely transformational leadership, is a good facilitator of the change process. However, no research has yet been found regarding whether servant leadership can also act as a facilitator of the change process or is related to creating openness to change among employees.

RESEARCH METHOD

Design

This research uses a quantitative research method, which according to Bhandari (2022) is a process of collecting and analyzing numerical data or figures. Research with this method can be used to make predictions, test cause-and-effect relationships, and generalize results to a broader population.

Participants

This study uses purposive sampling as the data collection technique. Where the criteria for the participants or respondents in this study are all employees working in South Jakarta, with a total of 104 respondents.

Instrument

Servant Leadership (SL-7) or Kepemimpinan yang Melayani. Consists of 7 items developed by Liden et al (2015), where this measurement tool is a shortened version of SL-28 also developed by Liden et al (2008), and has been adapted into Indonesian by researchers with the Indonesian Translators Association (HPI). This tool is used to assess the servant leadership style from the perspective of employees toward their leaders, and consists of a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). One example of an item on this measurement tool is "My leader prioritizes my career development." The reliability value is 0.686, which places the reliability of this measurement tool in the moderate category. Based on this reliability value, only 5 items are declared valid because they have a chronbach alpha if item deleted < 0.686. Work Engagement (UWES) or Employee Engagement. Consists of 17 original items, the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale which was first developed by Schaufeli et al in 2002. This measurement tool is used to determine work engagement among employees. And consists of three dimensions, namely vigor, dedication, and absorption. Rated on a 4-point Likert scale, from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). One example of an item on this measurement tool is "I feel full of enthusiasm (spirit) in working." This measurement tool has been adapted by a previous researcher, namely Putra, D. D (2021). And it has a reliability of 0.884 with a high reliability category, and only 15 valid items because they have a chronbach alpha if item deleted < 0.884.

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Openness to Change (OC) or Keterbukaan untuk Berubah. Consists of 5 items designed by Miller et al. (1994) to assess individuals' willingness to support organizational change and the positive impact on change. Rated using a five-point Likert scale, from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). One example of an item on this measurement tool is "I expect changes in my tasks as a result of team implementation," which has been adapted by the researcher with the Indonesian Translators Association (HPI). And it has a reliability of 0.323 with a low reliability category, and only 4 items are valid because they have a chronbach alpha if item deleted < 0.323.

Data Analysis Technique

Data was collected thru a Google Form that was opened from March 12-15, 2023, and processed using multiple regression tests to examine the direct relationships among the three variables, using the IBM SPSS Statistics 26 for Windows software.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table 1
Multiple Regression of Three Variables

R	R Square
0,381	0,145

Based on the results from IBM Statistics SPSS 26 For Windows in Table 1, it was found that the R value is 0.381 and the R² value is 0.145, indicating that there is a relationship between servant leadership and work engagement toward openness to change among employees in South Jakarta, with a low relationship category because the R value does not approach 1 (one). Where the contribution of the servant leadership and work engagement variables to openness to change is 14.5% and 85.5% is the contribution of other variables that the researcher does not know.

Table 2
Significance of the Three Variables

F	Sig.
8,591	0,000

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Based on Table 2 from IBM Statistics SPSS 26 for Windows, it was found that the F coefficient was 8.591 and the probability value was 0.000. Since the F coefficient value has a probability value below 0.001 ($p < 0.001$), the alternative hypothesis (H_a) is accepted, indicating a significant relationship between servant leadership and work engagement with openness to change among employees working in South Jakarta.

Table 3
Correlation between Each Variable

		SL	WE	OC
SL	Correlati on Coefficien t	1	0,542*	0,249*
	Sig.		0,000	0,011
W E	Correlati on Coefficien t	0,542*	1	0,378*
	Sig.	0,000		0,000
O C	Correlati on Coefficien t	0,249*	0,378*	1
	Sig.	0,011	0,000	

Based on the combined correlation results between each variable from IBM Statistics SPSS 26 for Windows in Table 3, it was found that servant leadership and work engagement are correlated, as they have a probability value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$). Additionally, servant leadership and openness to change are also correlated, with a probability value of 0.011 ($p < 0.05$). Lastly, work engagement and openness to change are also found to be correlated, with a probability value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$). Furthermore, a positive relationship was found between servant leadership and work engagement, work engagement and openness to change, and between servant leadership and openness to change. This is evident from the correlation coefficients in Table 3, which overall do not show any negative values (-). Based on these correlation values, it was also found that servant leadership and work engagement are quite strongly correlated, as they fall between 0.40 – 0.599, specifically 0.542. Another result shows that work engagement and openness to change are weakly correlated, as they fall between 0.20 – 0.399,

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specifically 0.378. Lastly, servant leadership and openness to change are also weakly correlated, as they fall between 0.20 – 0.399, specifically 0.249.

Table 4

Criteria for Respondents Based on Gender

Gender	Frequency (people)	Percentage (%)
Male	39	37,5%
Female	65	62,5%
Total	104	100%

Based on Table 4 for gender, the results show that the respondents are predominantly female employees, with 65 individuals or 62.5%, while there are only 39 male employees or 37.5%.

DISCUSSION

After obtaining all the results thru the data presented above, based on the research objective to see whether there is a correlation between servant leadership and work engagement with openness to change among employees working in South Jakarta, it has been answered. Where it is stated that there is a direct relationship or correlation between servant leadership and work engagement with openness to change, as well as by testing the correlation of each variable. This is consistent with the results of previous studies that have been conducted, where a significant positive relationship was found (de Clercq et al (2014); Putra D. D (2021)), a positive effect (Zhou et al., 2022), and an influence (de Sousa & van Dierendonck, 2014) between the variables of servant leadership and work engagement. And it represents an innovation, especially with the discovery of the relationship between servant leadership and openness to change, even showing a positive relationship, which means that when the servant leadership style in a company or organization is high, the openness to change among employees is also high. In previous research by Eisenbach, Watson, and Pillai (in Jeong et al., 2016), it was stated that the transformational leadership style is a good facilitator of the change process. Therefore, with the results of this study, in addition to transformational leadership, servant leadership is expected to have a relationship with openness to change among employees in South Jakarta.

This study also shows that there is a direct relationship between work engagement and openness to change, whereas previous research stated that there was no direct relationship between the two (Chai et al., 2020). The servant leadership style proves that, in addition to enhancing employee work engagement, it can also increase employees' openness to change, both of which are stated to create success for an organization or company (Bhuvanaiah, 2014b). This is also in line with (Augustsson et al., 2017) who state that there will certainly be demands for changes within an organization, where to support the implementation of these changes, the organization needs openness from its employees. Therefore, it is stated that the Alternative Hypothesis (Ha) in this study is accepted, leading to the rejection of the Null Hypothesis (H0).

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results obtained from the data above, the researcher can conclude that there is a relationship between servant leadership and work engagement with openness to change among employees working in South Jakarta. Additionally, further results also indicate a significant positive relationship both among the three variables and within each variable. More specifically, overall, if servant

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leadership is high, then work engagement and openness to change among employees will also be high. Similarly, when work engagement among employees is high, then openness to change among employees will also be high.

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