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Article

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Effect of Workplace Spirituality and Servant Leadership on Service Quality in Higher Education: A Mediation Model of Job Satisfaction

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This study aimed to assess the impact of workplace spirituality and servant leadership on service quality in higher education.

Design/methodology/approach: This was done by examining the function of job satisfaction as a mediator in this relationship. The study was carried out in a tertiary educational institution in Bali, Indonesia, and the data was analysed using PLS-based SEM (Structural Equation Model).

Findings: The study findings indicate that (1) workplace spirituality and servant leadership in higher education have an impact on job satisfaction, (2) workplace spirituality and servant leadership do not have a direct effect on service quality in higher education, and (3) job satisfaction acts as a mediator between workplace spirituality, servant leadership, and service quality in higher education.

Research limitations/implications: Research was carried out using scientific procedures and methods, but in its implementation, some limitations provide room for improvement in the future. Other variables that are decisive to service quality in education should be involved in future studies.

Originality/value: Based on the findings, this study introduces a novel paradigm offering theoretical and practical advancements in ensuring quality of service in higher education. Additionally, it suggests fostering spirituality in the workplace and adopting servant leadership to guarantee lecturers' contentment to enhance the quality of service in higher education.

Keywords: Workplace spirituality, Servant leadership, Service quality

I. Introduction

One of the determinants of good quality education is service quality. In improving the quality of service, various factors could be decisive. These factors could be internal, namely coming from internal organisations,

such as leadership, staff capabilities, and applied bureaucratic systems, as well as external, such as policies that are applied in the organisation and community acceptance (Abbas, 2020; Annamdevula, 2016); and also physical, such as the availability of service facilities and infrastructure and the availability of the budget, as well as psychological characteristics, such as job satisfaction, work motivation, and spirituality (Abbas, 2020; Cronin & Taylor, 1992; Farradinna, 2016).

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Leadership could be a factor affecting service quality (Chen et al., 2017; Koyuncu et al., 2014; Putri et al., 2021). Among these types of leadership, servant leadership is a type that correlates with service quality. Besides leadership, workplace spirituality is another factor that could influence service quality (Castro-González, 2021; Gunawan, 2019; Lee et al., 2014; Milliman et al., 2018a; Rachman et al., 2014). Conversely, job satisfaction is a contributing element to service quality (Chao, 2016; Kadir, 2017; Milana, 2018; Shen, 2018; Won, 2020; Zhan, 2016).

There was a demonstrable association between servant leadership, workplace spirituality, job satisfaction and service quality. Prior studies have established correlations between those variables its impact on the quality of service (Chen et al., 2017; Koyuncu et al., 2014; Putri et al., 2021; Castro-González, 2021; Gunawan, 2019; Lee et al., 2014; Milliman et al., 2018a; Rachman et al., 2014). Contrary to those study, there was no evident correlation discovered between the variables and service quality (Ferdinandito & Haryani, n.d.; Qiu et al., 2018; Yuan et al., 2020, Milliman et.al., 2018).

The inconsistency of the results of those studies builds a gap that needs to be clarified scientifically. The aim of this study was to assess the impact of servant leadership and workplace spirituality on service quality in higher education, with job satisfaction acting as the intermediary variable. This study provides a valuable understanding of the significance of psychological and spiritual factors in improving the quality of educational services.

II. Literature Review

A. Workplace Spirituality and Job Satisfaction

Workplace Spirituality (WPS) encompasses employees' personal values and views regarding their employment (Milliman et al., 2018a). The notion of WPS addresses the necessity of persons who identify as spiritual beings, emphasising the importance

of meeting their inner requirements for spiritual nutrition inside the workplace (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000). WPS is founded upon individuals' personal values and decisions, as well as their perspectives of their work as employees (Bella et al., 2021; Dubey et al., 2020; Garg et al., 2019; Sony, 2019). These individuals derive self-identification and a sense of life purpose through their work experience and have cultivated a feeling of interconnectedness with others. (Ashmos and Duchon, 2000; Milliman et al., 2018).

The relationship between workplace spirituality and job satisfaction can significantly impact one's level of contentment in their work environment due to the strong correlation between the two variables. Empirically, this aligns with previous research results (Bella et al., 2021; Dubey et al., 2020; Garg et al., 2019; Sony, 2019).

H1: Workplace spirituality positively affects job satisfaction.

B. Servant Leadership and Job Satisfaction

Effective leadership is crucial for maintaining a high performance standard within an organisation, as it directly impacts the decision-making and actions that facilitate transformative changes in the workplace (Greenleaf, 1979). Servant leaders prioritise the organisation's and individuals' requirements over their personal needs and aspirations. Prioritising the interests of the leader's followers over the leader's own interests will lead to increased job satisfaction among the followers in the workplace (Al-Asadi et al., 2019).

Job satisfaction is an important emotional concept in the workplace that has a major impact on several elements of individual performance-related behaviour (Al-Asadi et al., 2019; Moras & Kashyap, 2021; Makhamreh, 2022).

Based on empirical evidence, the correlation between servant leadership and job satisfaction is consistent with prior research findings (Al-Asadi et al., 2019; Bilge et al., 2021; Hashim et al., 2017;

Slack et al., 2020). These studies illustrate that servant leadership exerts a favourable and noteworthy impact on job satisfaction across several industries, including education.

H2: Servant leadership positively affects job satisfaction.

C. Workplace Spirituality and Service Quality

Workplace spirituality encompasses a philosophical and personal perspective on the significance of employment in relation to one's personal values and spiritual convictions (Milliman et al., 2018a). Workplace spirituality is an exciting research topic in the digitalisation era, which offers a fast-paced lifestyle with high social demands, diverse sources of information, and high work targets (Paul et al., 2020). Concerning the dimension of workplace spirituality in empowering employees' inner self at work, workplace spirituality empirically influences service quality (Castro-González, 2021; Gunawan, 2019; Lee et al., 2014; Milliman et al., 2018a; Rachman et al., 2014). A work environment with a high level of spirituality positively correlates with service quality (Castro-González, 2021; Gunawan, 2019; Lee et al., 2014; Milliman et al., 2018a; Rachman et al., 2014). Furthermore, Workplace spirituality could connect workers' physical and spiritual dimensions as whole human beings.

H3: Workplace spirituality positively affects service quality.

D. Servant Leadership and Service Quality

Servant leadership is based on the value of serving, which puts morals, good relations, and spirituality toward followers as a fundamental value that is upheld in influencing organisational members to achieve the vision (Sendjaya, 2015). Applying these values forms an excellent emotional connection within the

organisation, encouraging more comfortable working conditions, collaboration, and sustainable results (Goleman et al., 2013).

Based on empirical evidence, a clear association was observed between servant leadership and the quality of service provided. Past research has shown discoveries on the impact of servant leadership on service quality (Chen et al., 2017; Koyuncu et al., 2014; Putri et al., 2021). Servant leadership enhances service quality by empowering people to enhance their self-efficacy and fostering self-confidence in learning and problem-solving.

H4: Servant leadership positively affects service quality.

E. Job Satisfaction and Service Quality

Once an individual's social and emotional requirements are met, they will feel compelled to give feedback to the organisation that fulfilled those needs (Zhan, 2016). According to Ouchi (1982), employees who work with high satisfaction will feel happy and have high work discipline, thereby increasing work results. While quality is essential for an organisation to succeed (Lee et al., 2022). Service quality is typically defined as the perceived difference between the expectations of consumers and the actual service delivered (Ohet al., 2020). This is referred to as reciprocal social exchange. Employees who have their needs fulfilled will feel comfortable and safe emotionally so they can listen to customer needs and demonstrate good service quality. Several related studies have shown the effect of job satisfaction towards service quality (Chao, 2016; Kadir, 2017; Milana, 2018; Shen, 2018; Won, 2020; Zhan, 2016).

H5: Job satisfaction positively affects service quality.

F. Mediating Role of Job Satisfaction

As previously elucidated, job satisfaction pertains

to the emotional framework within the workplace that plays a crucial role in considerably impacting many facets of behaviour associated with individual performance (Al-Asadi et al., 2019). Milliman et al. (2018) provided empirical evidence of the relationship between workplace spirituality, employee engagement, work attitudes, such as employee intention to continue working or stay, and service quality. This research finding demonstrates that workplace spirituality, when considered a standalone factor, does not directly affect employee service performance. However, its influence is greatly enhanced when engagement is included as an additional factor. Shen (2018) also investigated the mediation role of job satisfaction between training and service quality. It is found that the service quality is influenced by direct and indirect training methods, with job satisfaction acting as a mediator. Frinaldi et al. (2021), Jawaad et al. (2019), and Saadiq et al. (2022) also found that job satisfaction has a mediation role in the relationship between variables and service quality.

H6: Workplace spirituality positively affects service quality mediated by job satisfaction.

H7: Servant leadership positively affects service quality mediated by job satisfaction.

III. Methodology

This study employed quantitative methodology, specifically the ex post facto research design, and utilised exploratory factor analysis (EFA). The study assessed the correlation between workplace Spirituality, Servant Leadership, Job Satisfaction, and Service Quality variables. The acquired data were analysed with PLS-based SEM (Structural Equation Modelling).

The population comprised 108 lecturers at Politeknik Pariwisata Bali, a polytechnic institution in Bali, Indonesia. The study employed the proportionate random sampling method to calculate the sample size. The sampling applied the Slovin method,

considering a 5% margin of error and a 95% confidence level, adjusted by the Warwick and Lininger calculation. (Warwick & Lininger, 1975), the total number of samples was determined, which was 101 lecturers.

A. Data Collection

The data were gathered via a Likert-scale questionnaire as the primary tool. The questionnaire was created as a digital survey, disseminated, and completed online. The questionnaire was developed based on the theory of Workplace Spirituality (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000; Bella et al., 2018; Kotze et al., 2022; Kumar, 2018; Petchsawang & Duchon, 2009), Servant Leadership (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006; Greenleaf, 1979; Patterson, 2003; Qiu et al., 2018; Sendjaya, 2015), Job Satisfaction (Adams, 1963; Dawis & Lofquist, 1967; Hasibuan, 2010; Porter, 1961; Weiss et al., 1967), and Service Quality (Abbas, 2020; Abdullah, 2006; Cronin et al., S., 1992; Parasuraman et al., 1992; Teeroovengadum et al., 2016).

IV. Results

A. Outer Model Analysis

The Inner Model analysis aims to evaluate the validity of the indicators utilised to generate the latent variable. The metrics comprising Workplace Spirituality, Servant Leadership, Job Satisfaction, and Service Quality all exhibit loading factors over 0.50.

All the indicators comprising this variable exhibit statistical significance, as indicated by the t-value above 1.96 with p-values of $0.000 < 0.05$, and the factor loading values surpassing 0.70 in significance. This indicates that the variables produced have fulfilled the specified criteria.

B. Discriminant Validity Analysis

This test is conducted to verify the validity of a notion based on discriminant validity. The discriminant validity of reflective indicators can be assessed by examining the cross-loading of the construct or latent variable. The cross-loading values of indicators for the constructs of Servant Leadership, Workplace Spirituality, Work Motivation, Job Satisfaction, and Service Quality are presented in Table 1.

The discriminant validity has been effectively demonstrated as all indicators exhibit higher cross-loadings on their respective variables compared to other constructs. Servant Leadership has a minimum construct of 0.808, Workplace Spirituality has a minimum construct of 0.890, Work Motivation has a minimum construct of 0.917, and Job Satisfaction has a minimum construct of 0.843. Service Quality

has a minimum construct of 0.729.

The validity of created structures can be assessed using Discriminant Validity (DV), Average Variance Extracts (AVE), Composite Reliability (CR), typically used for reflection indicators to measure internal consistency, and Cronbach's Alpha (Watkins, 2018). The AVE, CR, and Cronbach's Alpha are presented in Table 2.

The Workplace Spirituality, Servant Leadership, Job Satisfaction, and Quality of Service variables are classified as excellent since their Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values exceed 0.50. All variables have Cronbach's Alpha values exceeding 0.9 and surpassing the threshold of 0.70. Additionally, they possess rho A values greater than 0.9 and CR values exceeding 0.60. Therefore, it can be inferred that all variables fulfil the criteria and are considered valid and reliable.

Table 1. Cross loading value of the indicator towards variables

Latent Variables	Measured Variables	Workplace Spirituality	Servant Leadership	Job Satisfaction	Service Quality
Workplace Spirituality	Personal	0.976	0.327	0.556	0.558
	Interpersonal	0.982	0.335	0.549	0.515
	Personal-Organisation	0.961	0.321	0.558	0.539
Servant Leadership	Healing	0.296	0.948	0.390	0.313
	Transforming	0.251	0.961	0.388	0.263
	Spirituality	0.360	0.973	0.385	0.276
	Collaboration	0.389	0.966	0.397	0.271
Job Satisfaction	Sense of Achievement	0.551	0.359	0.970	0.841
	Self Development	0.605	0.472	0.969	0.818
	Value Alignment	0.577	0.381	0.967	0.852
	Facility	0.440	0.354	0.903	0.758
	Communica-tion	0.527	0.358	0.950	0.813
Service Quality	Teacher's Profile	0.513	0.331	0.813	0.926
	Curriculum	0.510	0.146	0.749	0.929
	Infrastructure and Facilities	0.513	0.179	0.823	0.926
	Management and Support Staff	0.557	0.292	0.801	0.908
	Employment Quality	0.545	0.321	0.767	0.895
	Safety and Security	0.527	0.293	0.815	0.941
	Students' Skills Development	0.498	0.277	0.784	0.937
	Personal Development	0.421	0.321	0.790	0.928

C. Inner Model Analysis

The evaluation of the inner model encompasses assessing the appropriateness of the model (Goodness of Fit) and examining the impact of exogenous variables on endogenous variables through hypothesis testing. The inner model derived from the R-squared value is displayed in Table 3.

Table 3 displays an R-squared value of 0.376 for the Job Satisfaction measure, indicating a modest level of correlation. The R² score for Service Quality is 0.748, indicating a strong relationship. This result represents the model's appropriateness (Goodness of Fit) and the evaluation of how exogenous variables influence endogenous variables through hypothesis testing.

D. Path Coefficients/ Direct Effect Test

The direct effect between the independent and

dependent variables was examined using the Structural Equation Modelling technique with Partial Least Squares (SEM PLS) with SmartPLS 3.2.9 for Windows software. The results obtained include the loading factor (Original Sample), Sample Mean, Standard Deviation, T Statistics, and P Values, which are presented in Table 4.

E. Indirect Effect Analysis

The indirect effect between variables was tested using SmartPLS 3.2.9 for Windows software by looking at the total effect on bootstrapping, as shown in Table 5.

Table 2. Average variance extracts (AVE), composite reliability (CR), and Cronbach's alpha

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	CR	AVE
Workplace Spirituality	0.972	0.972	0.981	0.946
Servant Leadership	0.973	0.974	0.980	0.926
Job Satisfaction	0.974	0.977	0.980	0.906
Service Quality	0.975	0.976	0.979	0.854

Table 3. R-Squared value

Variable	R Square	R Square Adjusted	Information
Job Satisfaction	0.376	0.364	Moderate
Service Quality	0.748	0.741	Strong

Table 4. Path coefficients/direct effect test

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics	P Values	Information
Workplace Spirituality -> Job Satisfaction	0.489	0.479	0.082	5.953	0.000	Significant
Workplace Spirituality -> Service Quality	0.106	0.105	0.104	1.019	0.309	Not Significant
Servant Leadership -> Job Satisfaction	0.241	0.246	0.078	3.081	0.002	Significant
Servant Leadership -> Service Quality	-0.080	-0.081	0.081	0.992	0.322	Not Significant
Job Satisfaction -> Service Quality	0.831	0.835	0.075	11.027	0.000	Significant

Table 5. Results of indirect influence analysis

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics	P Values	Information
Workplace Spirituality -> Job Satisfaction -> Service Quality	0.406	0.400	0.081	5.010	0.000	Significant
Servant leadership -> Job Satisfaction -> Service Quality	0.200	0.204	0.066	3.027	0.003	Significant

V. Discussion

The analytical result indicates a clear correlation between servant leadership and job satisfaction. Empirically, the study conducted supports the correlation between servant leadership and job satisfaction (Al-Asadi et al., 2019; Bilge et al., 2021; Hashim et al., 2020; Slack et al., 2020). Additionally, this study discovered a strong relationship between workplace spirituality and job satisfaction. This aligns with the previous study (Bella et al., 2021; Dubey et al., 2020; Garg et al., 2019; Habeeb & U., 2020; Sony, 2019). The studies discovered a positive relationship between workplace spirituality and job satisfaction.

The data also demonstrates a strong relationship between servant leadership and job satisfaction. Therefore, servant leadership does not directly impact the quality of service. The data indicates that servant leadership does not substantially impact service quality, as the nature of services in higher education differs from those in other industries (Surman & Tóth, 2019). This aligns with the previous research (Ferdinandito & Haryani, n.d.; Qiu et al., 2018; Ye et al., 2019; Yuan et al., 2020). The relationship between servant leadership and service quality is influenced by additional factors, such as organisational commitment and performance, either through mediation or moderation (Ferdinandito & Haryani, n.d.), self-efficacy (Qiu et al., 2018), organisational identification and vitality (Yuan et al., 2020), harmonious passion and customer orientation (Ye et al., 2019).

This study further illustrates the strong relationship between workplace spirituality and job satisfaction.

Therefore, workplace spirituality does not have a direct impact on service excellence. This aligns with Milliman et al. (2018), who conducted their research to empirically determine the joint effects of workplace spirituality and engagement on employee work attitudes (e.g., employee intention to continue working/intention to stay and service quality).

The research findings and data analysis demonstrate a clear correlation between job satisfaction and service quality. This is consistent with a prior study that discovered a correlation between job satisfaction and the quality of service provided. Job satisfaction directly impacts service quality, as indicated by prior research (Chao, 2016; Kadir, 2017; Milana, 2018; Pongton & Suntrayuth, 2019; Won, 2020).

The study findings indicate an indirect correlation between servant leadership and service quality, mediated by job satisfaction. Hence, the practice of servant leadership has a clear and substantial indirect impact on service quality by means of enhancing job satisfaction. The inclusion of the job satisfaction factors in mediating the relationship between servant leadership and service quality is attributed to the intricate nature of the components of job happiness. Furthermore, as previously explained, job satisfaction is a crucial emotional concept in the workplace that significantly impacts various areas of behaviour pertaining to individual performance (Al-Asadi et al., 2019). Organisations derive advantages from this phenomenon when contented employees surpass the established benchmarks by going beyond what is required. Therefore, job satisfaction may serve as a viable mediator to strengthen the impact of workplace spirituality on service quality.

Furthermore, workplace spirituality (WPS) proves

advantageous in the realm of emotional labour within service-oriented organisations due to its ability to foster a favourable ethical climate and uphold principles that encourage emotional work (S. Lee et al., 2014). Therefore, WPS has a beneficial impact on fostering positive relationships among employees, organisations, and customers. This is achieved through the values of respect, humanism, and integrity, as well as establishing an ethical climate that is evident in employee satisfaction and commitment, organisational performance, and long-term viability. As a result, this leads to increased satisfaction and loyalty.

This study presents a newly validated model that examines the impact of Servant Leadership and Workplace Spirituality on Service Quality in higher education, with Job Satisfaction acting as a mediator. It highlights the importance of psychological and spiritual components in improving the quality of educational services. Furthermore, it advocates for a novel methodology in educational administration, given that workplace spirituality has traditionally not been a focal point. Therefore, in improving the quality of service in higher education, it could be suggested to pay attention to the job satisfaction of service actors through improving the quality of leaders, cultivating the meaning of work, increasing work motivation, and other efforts.

VI. Conclusions

The analytical findings indicate that servant leadership and workplace spirituality have a substantial impact on service quality. This impact is mediated by job satisfaction. This mediating role could show that in realising good service quality, lecturers as service actors must feel contented in the relationship between themselves and their work (manifested in job satisfaction). Hence, to enhance the quality of service in higher education, it is advisable to focus on the job satisfaction of service personnel by enhancing the competence of leaders,

fostering a sense of purpose in their work, boosting work motivation, and implementing other relevant initiatives.

This study introduces a recently verified model that investigates the influence of servant leadership and workplace spirituality on service quality in higher education. Job Satisfaction serves as a mediator in this context. It emphasises the significance of psychological and spiritual factors in enhancing the quality of educational services. Moreover, it promotes a new approach to educational leadership, considering that workplace spirituality has not historically been emphasised.

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