

Influence Of Servant Leadership On Faculty Retention In Private Higher Education Institutes (Heis): A Reflective Formative Approach

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Abstract: The private higher education institutes are challenged for their resilience, sustainability, and competitive edge in the globalized knowledge-based economy in the 21st century. Faculty retention plays an important role as a catalyst for addressing the current mega developmental phenomenon faced by higher education institutes in developing countries. This study intends to explore the influence of servant leadership practice on faculty retention towards minimizing the high faculty turnover in private higher education institutes. The study employed a cross-sectional research design vis-à-vis the survey method. A sample of 341 faculty members from ten private higher education institutes in Lahore, Pakistan was selected through a proportionate random sampling technique. A close-ended questionnaire based on a seven-point Likert scale was administered as a research instrument. The study was conducted under the domain of Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) theory. This study also explains the evaluation of the higher-order reflective-formative construct of servant leadership and faculty retention through partial least squares structural modeling (PLS-SEM). The results revealed that servant leadership has a statistically significant influence on faculty retention in private higher education institutes in Pakistan. Thereby, we also provide a guideline to scholars, researchers, and academicians in need, when evaluating higher-order constructs. Further, up to the best of the authors' knowledge, this is the first systematic study on faculty retention conducted in the backdrop of servant leadership in an eastern context, particularly in Pakistan.

Keywords: Servant leadership; Faculty retention; Reflective-formative constructs; Higher education institutes; sustainability

INTRODUCTION

In the 21st century, the importance of a knowledge-based economy is coherent around the globe. Globalization has created a hyperactive and dynamic business and socio-economic environment in national and global markets [1-2]. The emphasis on managing future scenarios in sustainable quality education needs to be transformed from simple education deliverance towards the advancement of entrepreneurship as higher education institutions are contributors to socio-economic growth [3]. According to Chonghui [4] academicians, who are the key role player in higher education core business i.e., teaching and learning, research, community engagement, etc., need a conducive and supportive work environment for them to bloom in their profession, otherwise, this leads towards the employee turnover or low retention issues [5]. Higher education institutions demand skilled and highly qualified academicians to retain the girth and width regarding quality and stability parameters. In the current scenario, especially the educational institutes, i.e., schools, colleges, and universities are facing the issue of low academic staff retention [6]. To increase the efficiency, productivity and retention of employees' care should be taken through leadership. Cliek & Hassan [7-8] believes that a supportive, ethical, and empowered work climate increases the employees' trust and commitment to their organizations. Traditionally, Pakistan has been a conservative country with a patriarchal family structure, where ethnicity and kinship ties are considered valuable to people's social and economic identities. According to a consensus Sheikh [9] Pakistan is the sixth most highly populated country in the world and is predicted with a population of 342 million by 2050. The service sector of Pakistan is a major driver of its economic growth which shares 57.7% of its GDP [10]. Higher education has been a matter of concern, since the independence of Pakistan in 1947, by the government, educationists, policymakers, and the public [11]. To address the various challenges faced by the higher education sector. Formerly, the "University Grant Commission" (UGC) and currently the "Higher Education Commission" (HEC) is responsible to facilitate the quality of tertiary education in Pakistan. HEC machinery works in alliance with its "Vision, 2025" that higher education is to play a central role in the country's development, with the belief that through quality education, the country can achieve the millennium goals of socio-economic development. For the effectiveness of HEC policies, the most valuable machinery is the academic staff, as the paradigm is shifted towards the retention of human knowledge capital from just the recruitment of skilled faculty. The universities have become repositories of skilled intellectuals, hence, the challenge and competition for highly qualified academicians have been increased. Moreover, the number of highly qualified staff is less, and alternative job opportunities are available to these highly skilled staff as the number of private institutions and universities have increased over the past years. [12]. Further, explored by Butt et al. [13] the sustainable competitive advantage has been lowered in the private higher education sector in Pakistan with the increasing faculty turnover and retention. In private sector universities, all appointments are contractual and permanent appointments are conditional on a probationary efficiency period of one to three years. In the

above-mentioned scenario, ensuring the retention of the academic workforce is crucial and losing a human resource is a very steeply-priced consequence for higher education institutions [14].

LITERATURE REVIEW

Servant Leadership: Leaders are the weapons in keeping the treasured talent longer. The quality of the relationship an employee has with their immediate leader stretches the employees' stay in the organization for longer times [15]. Sharif & Scandura [16] concluded that employees who perceive their leaders as competent and ethically sound, perform better. They have a strong sense of community service and are more engaged in citizenship behavior results in job satisfaction for their employees.

Many leadership theorists have discussed the impact of a leader's behavior on subordinates' performance, motivation, and job satisfaction. Servant leadership however remains experiential and needs to be moved into the realm of a scientific method or theory for implementation in the organizations. This will be made possible by expanding the body of research on its effectiveness in the business and academic arena, as suggested by Greenleaf [17].

Yukl [18] reports that servant leadership is a 'relation-based' approach that can trigger more positive results in the form of reduced employee turnover as well as improved employee performance. In this regard, it becomes unimaginable to subside the significance of practicing servant leadership in the education industry. Elliott [19], in his work with community colleges, suggests that employees engaged with servant leaders have a very satisfying work experience. Mahazan et al. [20] found the servant leadership style as a criterion that a leader needs in this new era to be an effective leader.

A leader is the first reflection in the eyes of employees. Subordinates, normally look at their leader's behavior and style. The supervisor is crucial in staff retention; it's been argued that employees leave managers, not organizations [8]. It is important to note that during the last decade servant leadership has gained momentum, not only among academia but within the managerial circles, consultants, and corporate leaders, the possible benefits of servant leadership behaviors are more trusted to improve employee satisfaction, trust, and loyalty to the supervisors [21]. Servant leadership in tandem with technology-based HR, management policies, retention of millennial employees, and job satisfaction are interconnected to each other to curb the issue of retention and talent these days [21]. Hence, the primary area of concern of today's academic leaders should be to operationalize the principles of servant leadership in their mission.

In sum, servant leadership is more of a leadership style that aims at serving and motivating employees and valuing them as an asset to any organization by engaging them in decision-making and by bestowing autonomy on them. Similarly, servant leaders are touchier about the professional, spiritual, and personal growth of their employees. Hence, it is only because of its impact on employee growth, empowerment, and autonomy that the servant leadership model is viewed as the only option to provide an appropriate response to the challenges related to job

satisfaction and retention issues. Although the area has been explored by several researcher's essential research is scarce in the field of educational research in the Pakistani local context.

Faculty Retention: According to, Tamba [22] employee retention is a practice of holding, encouraging, and motivating employees to make them highly committed to the organization for a prolonged period or until the fulfillment of any particular job contract. The concept of "retention" is continuously gaining popularity because of the increased job opportunities aligned with the new trends in globalization [23]. Further, Aleem & Bowra [24] noted that retention is also advantageous for the cognitive competitive edge of organizations.

Wiggins [25] reported that within the next few years more choices will be available for millennial generation employees and one out of four employees will quit their jobs for joining new organizations. Within the higher education context, the importance of meeting the professional needs of academic staff has been recognized and studies have been analyzing the conditions and factors concerned with faculty retention among higher education institutes [26-27] [13-14]. The rising awareness of voluntary move out of the skilled intellectual human capital from higher education institutes leaves grave implications on the institution. As reported by Yimer [28] in a Southeast Asian University academic staff turnover is at an alarming rate, according to the researcher the work environment, management, leadership, and remuneration are the most prevalent causes of the high staff turnover. Ramasamy & Abudullah [29] investigated a cross-sectional survey of academicians in private universities in Malaysia and revealed a high turnover rate of 18%, their findings revealed that perceived alternative job options, job security, and work overload enhance the turnover intention among academic staff in private universities of Malaysia. Further, as indicated by Erasmus et. al. [30] in South Africa, HEIs are losing staff to other HEIs, which offer better rewards and benefits, a retention strategy must be established to assist the human resource management to set up retention tools including, personal goals, organizational goals, mentoring, coaching, facilitation, training and lastly the adjustments for the remunerations. Bakar [31] reported that workplace diversity, workplace recognition, rewards, and work-life balance have a positive influence on female lecturers' retention in private higher institutions in Perak, Malaysia.

This study is inspired by the complex and multifaceted dimensions of faculty retention and intends to investigate the influence of the evolving perception of servant leadership on faculty retention through faculty's perception [32] in the academic arena [33-34] [21] [8] which can provide a steppingstone for a more satisfied, empowered and committed faculty. As discussed, above the faculty, retention issue is global in higher education institutions, and many factors influence academic staff retention, remedial to these issues, leadership practices, human resource innovation-led policies and job satisfaction are at par with controlling the faculty retention issues in the 21st century [8].

PROBLEM STATEMENT

The private higher education sector in Pakistan shares education deliverance in alliance with the public sector, to reduce the increasing pressure on higher educational public institutes for producing talented graduates for the fulfillment of the nation's dramatically and dynamically

changing business and socio-economic environment [35-37] but the number of private higher education institutes have now surpassed the public sector higher education institutions [13]. Further, reported [12-13] [36] that the rapid growth of private sector universities in Pakistan is an emerging phenomenon that has led to many challenges especially the high turnover rate of the faculty in the higher education private sector which has changed the paradigm shift from education deliverance more towards commercialization within the private higher education sector of Pakistan, by providing more opportunities for the highly skilled faculty to keep changing the higher education institutes according to their convenience and choice. The academic staff retention of Pakistan's higher education institutes has dramatically increased in the last decade [38].

Research Gap: The review of previous research articles has revealed that the literature regarding the relationship between “servant leadership and faculty retention” is scarce in the non-western context, particularly in the Pakistani context. Non-western regions are lagging in terms of empowering their employees in the field of education which can set transparent performances and objectives and have failed to provide goal-oriented missions and visions to their employees [8]. Whereas, in the Western context the model of servant leadership and faculty retention has been adequately studied in the educational sector [40] [33-34]. To the best of the authors' knowledge, this is the first systematic study to address and examine faculty retention issues in the backdrop of servant leadership in private higher education institutes in Pakistan.

Study Objectives: The main objectives of this study are to investigate the influence of servant leadership practice on faculty retention in private higher education institutions (HEIs) in Pakistan. Specifically, to investigate;

1. Any significant difference among the demographic variables in private higher education institutions (HEIs) of Pakistan.
2. The influence of servant leadership on faculty retention in the private higher education institutions (HEIs) of Pakistan.

RESEARCH METHOD

Hypotheses of the Study: Followings are the hypotheses of this study

H₁: There is a statistically significant difference in faculty's demographic variables in the private higher education institutes (HEIs) of Pakistan.

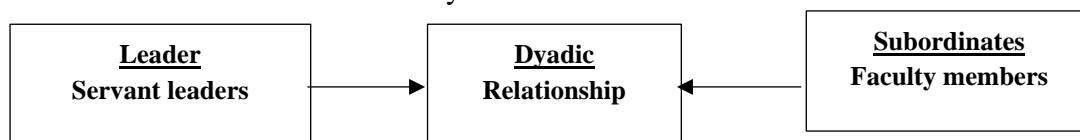
H₂: There is a statistically significant influence of servant leadership on faculty retention at private higher education institutions (HEIs) in Pakistan.

Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) Theory: The Leader-Member Exchange Theory (LMX), also known as Vertical Dyad Linkage Theory, describes how leaders sustain their position in

alliances and how they develop relationships with other Subordinates that can promote the growth and development or can hinder it. The LMX model assumes that leadership consists of several dyadic (two-way) relationships that connect the leader to the subordinates. The worth of the relationship is measured by means of the level of trust, respect, support, and loyalty. Leader-Member Exchange is a high-quality relationship based on mutual trust, liking, professional respect, and loyalty [39]. One of the early findings of the LMX theory is that leaders develop relationships of varying quality with their subordinates and such differentiation characterizes a wide majority of the workgroups studied [39]. LMX theory reveals some characteristics of servant leadership, particularly in the high-quality exchange context. According to LMX theory leaders develop trust and mutually valuable and beneficial relationships with subordinates, just as servant leaders develop, supportive and trust-based relationships with their employees and colleagues Greenleaf [41]. LMX theory is in alignment with the leader’s characteristics in the relationship with employees.

Figure 1

Theoretical Framework of the study

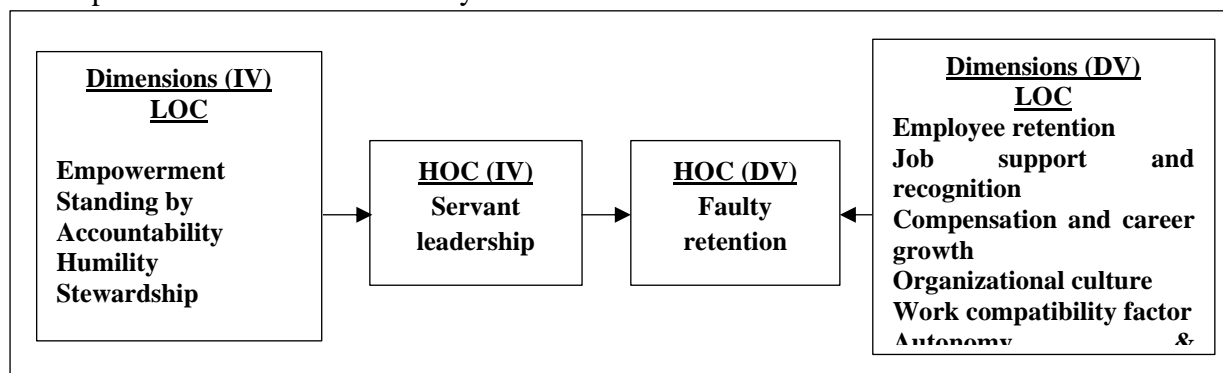


Unit of Study: The full-time faculty members who have at least one year of teaching experience and are not involved in any other administrative work at their department, under the supervision of the same head of the department/chairperson/dean, of the current institution, are considered as the unit of study.

In figure 2, a reflective-formative higher-order construct also serves as a dependent construct in a path model. When using a reflective-formative higher-order construct, PLS-SEM regresses the higher-order constructs (HOC) on its lower-order constructs (LOC). Since all indicators of the lower-order constructs are repeated to identify the higher-order construct, the higher-order construct’s variance R2 will be fully explained by the lower-order components [42].

Figure 2

Conceptual Framework of the Study



Population and sampling procedures: The location of this study was Lahore city, Pakistan. It was due to the enormous number of private higher education institutes in Lahore city, Pakistan. Private higher education institutes are scattered all over Pakistan. Lahore the capital city of Punjab province, Pakistan, has 21 private higher education institutes. Further, Lahore has a multicultural academic population of students and teachers from all over Pakistan, who approach Lahore city for their academic endeavors. Having high multicultural academic diversity, Lahore city was the focus of this study. Since this study focused on private higher education institutes in Lahore, the public entity was not included in this study. The target population of this study comprises all full-time teaching faculty which refers to individual academics who are focused on teaching in private higher education institutes only, with no other part-time administrative jobs in their departments, keeping in view the financial constraints, logistics, and time frame, out of 21 private higher education institutes present in Lahore city, only ten private higher education institutes were randomly selected. The total number of full-time faculty members in ten HEIs was 3211, out of which 341 (10% of the population) faculty members were selected on a proportionate random sampling technique. Further, as a rule of thumb, any number between 200-250 is considered good, and a large sample size provides enough statistical power for multivariate statistical analysis [43-45].

Instrumentation and pilot testing: The self-administered questionnaire for this study consists of three sections as below. Section A of the research instrument provides information about the respondents' personal profile, i.e., gender, age, education, service category, number of years worked with the current institution, and teaching experience.

Table 1

Sections of the research instrument

Sections	Measuring Scales	Scales adapted
Section A	Demographic variables	
Section B	Servant Leadership Scale (SES)	Dierendonck & Nuijten [46].
Section C	Faculty Retention Scale (FRS)	Kundt, [47] & Kumar,[48].

Pilot testing: Prior to the distribution of the amended and improved version of the research instrument to the respondents, a pilot test was conducted for this study. Whitehead [49] recommended 25 to 100 respondents for the pilot testing which might not also be statistically chosen.

Table 2

Reliability Scores of the constructs with pilot testing

Variable	Variable	Cronbach Alpha
Servant leadership	30	0.93
Faculty retention	33	0.89

RESULTS

Statistical Techniques and Data Analysis: For the descriptive analysis of demographic variables, the Statistical Package for Social Science (IBM SPSS ver 23) was used. For inferential statistics, Partial least Squares (Smart PLS ver 3.2.8) was utilized, this includes factor analysis, reliability analysis, and bivariate analysis. SEM seeks to explain the relationships among multiple latent variables [51] and is applied in multivariate analysis for hypothesis testing [50]. As mentioned below in table 3, it is revealed that there is a statistically significant difference among the demographic variables of the faculty members of private (HEIs) in Pakistan, whereas work experience has shown an insignificant measure (Sig = 0.120; $p < 0.05$).

Table 3

Statistical differences among the demographic variables of the respondents

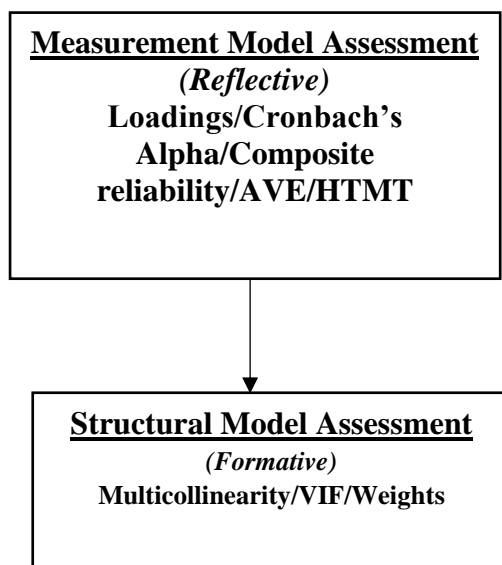
Demographic Variables	Mean Square	F	Sig
Age	.067	39.457	.000
Qualification	.178	163.034	.000
Designation	.223	75.963	.000
Work experience	.159	12.860	.120
Nature of employment	.086	1.956	.000

PLS-SEM Data Analysis: PLS-SEM estimates and interprets the conceptual model in two steps, firstly it assesses the measurement model followed by a structural model [52-53]. The validity and reliability of measurement model constructs will be measured first. However, the significance of relationships between the latent constructs, predictive accuracy, effect size, and predictive relevance of the model will be measured in the structural model assessment [42]. The measurement model refers to the relationships among the empirically observable indicators. Whereas the structural model refers to the interrelationships between latent variables [54].

Measurement Model Assessment: The current assessment examines servant leadership as a single construct made up of eight first-order dimensions, i. e., empowerment, accountability, standing back, humility, authenticity, and stewardship. As shown in Table 4, below, the eight dimensions reflect the 2nd-order constructs. Similarly, table 5, for the construct of faculty retention was formed of first-order constructs: employee retention, job support, recognition, compensation and career growth, organizational culture, work compatibility factors, autonomy, and independence.

Figure 3

A Schematic flow of PLS-SEM analysis for a reflective-formative model



Summary of Measurement Model (Reflective)

Construct Validity: Construct validity is an extent of a measure fit of the instrument from the results obtained, from the theories it is designed [45]. Construct validity is a measure to approve the related hypotheses generated from a theory based on concepts. It infers that the empirical evidence produced by a measure is consistent with the theoretical concepts. In this study, the construct validity was further assessed by two checks which were convergent and discriminant validity [51]. However, prior to the assessment of construct validity, the outer loadings of each indicator must be checked [56]. The higher the outer loadings of a construct, the stronger the correlation between the items to its construct. As a rule of thumb, it indicated that the standardized outer loadings should be 0.708 or higher [42].

Convergent Validity: Based on the reference by Hair et. al. [45] the valuation of convergent validity was executed with the support of factor loadings (FL), Cronbach's alpha (α), composite reliability (CR), and average variance extracted (AVE). An estimation of convergent validity may be carried out using the average variance extracted (AVE). The AVE contended by Fornell and Larcker is 0.50. [62]. In PLS, the AVE was used to assess the convergent validity. AVE criterion is defined as the grand mean value of the squared loadings of the indicators associated with the construct. An AVE value of at least 0.5 and higher indicates that a construct can explain more than half of the variance of its indicators on average, therefore it is considered sufficient [42] [53]. All the constructs have AVE over this minimum level as illustrated below in Tables 4 and 5 Convergent validity is the degree to which two different indicators measuring the same construct are highly correlated [53]. The composite reliability is used to examine the reliability of a construct comprising more than one indicator. Through evaluating the Cronbach-alpha and composite reliability (CR) of the predictor, the reliability and consistency of the constructs were measured. Tables 4 and 5 represent the significant values of Cronbach's alpha which is between 0.60 to 0.90. As mentioned by Hair et al. [56] the composite reliability (CR) values should be within the range of 0.7 to 0.9 [52-53].

Construct Reliability: In this study, the reliability of the measurement items of servant leadership and faculty retention constructs were assessed through the composite reliability (CR), which is an estimate of a construct's internal consistency [52]. The estimation of the individual reliability of the items depends on a typical factor loading test. As a common rule of thumb, it is to set 0.50 as a minimum factor loading value [57]. Tables 4 and 5 include basic factor loadings for each measuring element's first/lower-order (LOC) constructs. The t-test is at level $p > 0.001$ of all loads. All loads surpassed this minimum value however, measuring scale items ER5, ER 6, ER 7, ER 10, ER11, JSR4, and CCG1 were dropped from the scale due to low factor loadings. It is common to delete the items from the questionnaire with low factor loading [57]. Through evaluating the Cronbach-alpha and composite reliability (CR) of the predictor, the reliability and consistency of the constructs were measured. Table 4 and 5 represent the basic factor loadings for each measuring item of the measurement model constructs. All loads surpassed this minimum value of 0.5, however, scale items ER5, ER 6, ER 7, ER 10, ER11, JSR1, and CCG1 were dropped due to their low factor loadings. The Thresh hold values in table 4 and 5 are as, $FL > 0.5$, $CR > 0.6$, $AVE > 0.5$.

Table 4

Assessment of Measurement Constructs for Servant Leadership (reflective)

Dimensions	Items	Factor loadings	Cronbach' Alpha	CR	AVE
Empowerment	EMP1	0.838	0.930	0.944	0.706
	EMP2	0.827			
	EMP3	0.844			
	EMP4	0.867			
	EMP5	0.898			
	EMP6	0.839			
	EMP7	0.765			
Standing by	SB1	0.870	0.790	0.877	0.704
	SB2	0.847			
	SB3	0.798			
Accountability	ACC1	0.875	0.752	0.847	0.653
	ACC2	0.865			
	ACC3	0.666			
Humility	HUM1	0.829	0.879	0.916	0.733
	HUM2	0.872			
	HUM3	0.865			
	HUM4	0.857			
Stewardship	STEW1	0.883	0.830	0.880	0.595
	STEW2	0.901			
	STEW3	0.866			

Table 5

Assessment of Measurement Constructs for Faculty Retention (reflective)

Dimensions	Items	Factor loadings	Cronbach Alpha	CR	AVE	Items dropped
Employee Retention	ER1	0.753	0.780	0.843	0.543	ER5 ER6 ER7 ER10 ER11
	ER2	0.675				
	ER3	0.681				
	ER4	0.841				
	ER8	0.619				
	ER9	0.707				
Job support and recognition	JSR1	0.707	0.602	0.798	0.562	JSR4
	JSR2	0.552				
	JSR3	0.561				
	JSR5	0.558				
	JSR6	0.603				
	JSR7	0.616				
Compensation & career growth	CCG2	0.805	0.861	0.903	0.654	CCG1
	CCG3	0.871				
	CCG4	0.878				
	CCG5	0.868				
	CCG6	0.584				
Organizational Culture	OC1	0.624	0.641	0.764	0.521	OC3
	OC2	0.757				
	OC4	0.775				
Autonomy & Independence	AI1	0.774	0.215	0.718	0.718	
	AI2	0.722				

Discriminant validity (Disc -V), HTMT: Discriminant validity is referred to as the degree to which a construct truly differentiates from other constructs, in terms of correlation with other constructs and to what extent indicators of a construct represent it Hair et al [58]. In this study, for the assessment of discriminant validity, Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) criterion was followed. Moreover, instead of using traditional methods for discriminant validity assessment, such as cross-loadings and Fornell-Larcker the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) criterion should be applied [58-59] hence, in this study, the criterion to check discriminant validity is HTMT, [58] They recommended two cut-off values of 0.85 and 0.90 for HTMT criterion to assess discriminant validity. In this study, a 0.90 level (i.e., HTMT .90) was followed to establish the discriminant validity. Finally, as seen in Table 5 the effects of the HTMT ratio indicate that the HTMT values dropped below the 0.85 or 0.90 threshold level.

Assessment of formative Second-Order Constructs (formative): In this study, hierarchical second-order composites are assessed by using the double-stage approach [60]. Table 7 shows the correlation weights of the first-order composite.

Table 6

Discriminant validity – Hetrotrait-Monotrait (HTMT)

	SL	FR
Servant leadership	1	0.564
Faculty retention		1

Assessment of Multicollinearity: Collinearity is usually indicated by formative constructs; high correlation can be problematic for such models [51] [55]. Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) is used to assess the collinearity between the formative indicators/constructs of the latent variables. For the formative type second-order latent variable, the inner VIF values should be examined to determine collinearity issues. Thus, the collinearity was evaluated for the latent variables as predictors of Servant leadership (SL) and Faculty Retention (FR). The issue of multicollinearity can be encountered in research [51]. The issue of multicollinearity occurs when an independent construct correlates with the set of other independent constructs. Henceforth, it was important to investigate the multicollinearity issue of independent constructs. In this study to better explain the variance in the dependent construct, the multicollinearity of independent constructs will be assessed through the tolerance and VIF values. The tolerance value of 0.20 or lower and the VIF value of 5 and higher indicate the multicollinearity issues [51]. Hair et al. [56] have mentioned that the VIF's threshold value should be less than 5. Table 7 reveals that the values of VIF for all the predictors for the latent variables are less than 5. Thus, collinearity is not an issue between the latent formative variables. All weights shown in table 7, are significant at 0.001, the variation inflation factor (VIF) for the constructs was less than 5 and the tolerance was greater than 0.2.

Table 7

Multicollinearity Assessment

	Dimension	Weight	VIF	Tolerance
Servant Leadership	EMP	0.465	3.175	0.315
	STEW	0.223	3.011	0.332
	SB	0.155	2.106	0.475
	HUM	0.139	2.205	0.454
	ACC	0.339	2.947	0.339
Faculty Retention	ER	0.215	2.550	0.392
	AI	0.128	1.812	0.664
	CCG	0.141	1.505	0.471
	JSR	0.130	2.014	0.497
	OC	0.115	1.795	0.557
	WCF	0.623	1.554	0.644

Structural Model Assessment: Next, the structural model predictability is computed by means of explained variance (R^2) values for the dependent latent constructs. Ringle [61] suggested the values of 0.67, 0.33, and 0.19 as a measure for (R^2) to be considered substantial, moderate, and weak respectively.

Table 8R² Values of Endogenous Latent Constructs

Exogenous Variable	Endogenous variable	(R ²) Values	Variance Explained
Employee retention			
Autonomy & Independence			
Compensation & Career Growth	Faculty Retention	0.827	Substantial
Job Support & recognition			
Organizational culture			
Work compatibility factor			

Table 9

Path Coefficient and Hypothesis Testing

Path	Beta	Std Error	t-values	p-values	Conclusion
SL->FR	0.179	0.044	4.025	0.000	Accepted

DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

By considering excessive time consumption, logistics, and financial constraints, this study is delimited to the private higher education institutions of Lahore city, Pakistan. The Lahore city of Pakistan has 21 private universities with a total number of 5160 full-time faculty members. There may be other interfering variables, influencing faculty retention besides servant leadership in private higher education institutes (HEIs) in Lahore city, Pakistan, but this study is delimited to investigate the influence of servant leadership practice only on faculty retention in higher education institutes in Pakistan.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study is conducted in the private higher education sector of Pakistan. The main hypothesis of this study was to explore the influence of servant leadership style on faculty retention in private higher education institutes (HEIs) in Pakistan. In general, it can be suggested that servant leaders are influential in retaining faculty for longer in their private higher education institutes. The results of the study are in alliance with the previous research [41] [33-34] [8]. Whereas the scope of the study for its potential applied contribution is the generalizability to the private sector academia in Pakistan and developing countries. The study has limitations in sample collection from private universities in Lahore only and does not consider the public universities. The hypotheses evaluation considering the p-values, t-statistics, and path

coefficients are significant enough to range the results to all of Pakistan and developing countries where private universities are outstripping the public universities.

Moreover, a comparison of results with public universities is highly sought before making general conclusions regarding its application to all developing countries. It is also critical to identify other factors involved in faculty retention in private sector universities and devise a strategy to retain the faculty for a longer period in private higher education institutes, with a primary focus on the quality of education and lesser as the revenue-generating entities in the private service sector. Furthermore, servant leaders sacrifice their own needs to fulfill the employees' needs. They also authorize employees in decisions making and empowering future leaders is one of the aims of servant leaders.

FUTURE RESEARCH

This study has some limitations that can serve as recommendations for future research. Firstly, further research is needed to investigate the servant leadership practice in other geographical regions besides private HEIs of Lahore city, only. The study can further be extended by increasing the sample size, covering private universities from other provinces as well, and excluding the cultural bias in the current sample. Next, the respondents from other service sectors may also be investigated for their staff retention in their organizations. This research is only based on a close-ended questionnaire, for increased response accuracy, face-to-face interviews allow the interviewer further clarity and accuracy of the results. Respondents may misinterpret some keywords which can lead to inaccuracy of the results. Furthermore, conducting interviews can offer deeper insights into what the faculty of private higher education institutes (HEIs) are looking for in their jobs and why they leave the higher education institutes.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

The first author of the article has conceptualized the research theme, constructed the research framework, developed the methodology and executed it, compiled the data for basic analysis, and prepared the draft. The second author has major contribution toward data analysis and interpretation, using sophisticated and advanced statistical techniques, and has reviewed and edited the article. The third author revised and interpreted the results for their accuracy and appropriateness and proofread the article. The fourth author has reviewed and proofread the article for its academic expression, the fifth author has technically reviewed the article. All authors have read and agreed to the submission version of the article.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors have declared no conflict of interest.

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