Fostering creativity through servant leadership: Mediating role of knowledge sharing, thriving at work and burnout

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Abstract

Today, innovation and its association with leadership are dubiously one of the key challenges faced by the Pakistani banking sector. However, lack of investigation on this issue has led to examining the effect of servant leadership in fostering employee creativity through the mediating role of knowledge sharing, thriving at work and burnout. Further, the study framework was established from theories, namely the social exchange theory, social learning theory and conservation of resource theory. The purposive sampling technique was used to gather 286 useable responses. Findings obtained by using Smart PLS-SEM 3.0 which indicated a significant positive relationship of servant leadership with knowledge sharing, thriving at work, and employee creativity. The results also enlighten the positive relationship of knowledge sharing and thriving at work on employee creativity, and the significant negative relationship of servant leadership on burnout. Whereas, knowledge sharing and thriving at work mediates the relationship between servant leadership and employee creativity. Captivatingly, burnout remains insignificant between servant leadership and employee creativity. Thus, the study findings will redound to organizational benefits by enriching research on the area of servant leadership, which is in its infancy till now. However, the study will be useful for both organizations and employees to achieve desired outcomes.

Keywords: Servant leadership, knowledge sharing, thriving at work, burnout, employee creativity.

"Everyone talks about building a relationship with your customer. I think you build one with your employees first" (Angela Ahrendts - In place of senior vice president of retail and online stores Apple - Source: www.inc.com). *"It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first"* (Robert K. Greenleaf mentioned "Servant Leadership" first in an article published in 1977). Innovation and its relationship with leadership are arguably one of the key challenges confronted by the banking sector of Pakistan (Rashid et al., 2019). The continuously growing competition in the banking sector and rapidly growing change in culture, technology, and government policies have become a challenge for the organization to enhance their business performance (Sheikh et al., 2018). The most prominent reasons can be increasing management issues in this sector for instance, long working hours, job stress, lack of commitment, job dissatisfaction and high turnover, all these issues leads to implementation of servant leadership style to create an environment of knowledge sharing, learning that reduced exhaustion and will create cognitive process of employees more robust that will help them to get motivated and to achieve the organizational goals effectively (Eva et al., 2019).

Sustainability in behaviors and performance are the key concerns for organizations in Pakistan (Inam et al., 2018; Mohtashim Mehboob et al., 2019; Sheikh et al., 2019). As compared to the previous year (2016), when the growth was 15.83 trillion, in 2017, Pakistan's banking sector sustained its position with the totals growing asset of Rs 18.34 trillion. In 2018, it has declined to 3 percent (Arooj Asghar, 2018). Despite the recent indicator about the decline, the banking sector of Pakistan is facing a plethora of issues regarding employees work-related behaviors which include burnout (Najam, Ishaque, et al., 2018), motivation at workplace, knowledge sharing and innovation (Anwar ul Haq et al., 2018). Moreover, these issues and leadership are integrated with each other which requires more literature support (Ahmad et al., 2018; Iqbal et al., 2018; Shah et al., 2018). Combining all the issues, literature depicts that servant leadership helps to reduce these issues

(Imran, 2019). In the past decade, the influence of servant leadership on employee creativity has been given much attention by various studies (Newman et al., 2018; J. Yang et al., 2019; Yoshida et al., 2014) but the only handful of studies discussed this mechanism based on constructs like work-family conflicts (Yang et al., 2019) and trust (Karatepe et al., 2019) but there is a need to investigate, generalize and examine the relationship between servant leadership and knowledge sharing (Zhu et al., 2019). Therefore, the objectives of this study are to examine the mediating mechanisms of knowledge sharing, thriving at work, and burnout in the relationship between servant leadership and employee creativity.

Servant leadership talks about a bond that joins the leader and follower in which a leader gives priority to follower's interests so that he may grow and succeed in their career ladder of the organization. An employee's attachment to an organization is highly dependent on the behavior of a leader (Ramachandran & Krishnan, 2009). Servant leader shows altruistic behavior for the development and wellbeing of employees (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006). They also facilitate their follower to display serving behavior as well as knowledge sharing between their peers and subordinates, which in result increase the organizational performance. They also help employees to thrive at work because of personal and organizational growth which require potential, vitality and learning. A servant leader is like an exemplar for his employees and provides advice, feedback, and resources to them (Liden et al., 2008) and employees further serve their organization and stakeholders with the ability to devote. Although, exhaustion and frustration reduce with the implementation of servant leader style in organizations because this style is an enthusiast and motivates the employees to become a better part of the organization.

Several predictors of employee creative behavior have been identified (Diliello et al., 2011; Kim et al., 2009) but the association of creativity and leadership was analyzed by very limited studies and the topic have grown in recent years and several aspects to address the issue of employee creativity remained unanswered (Acar et al., 2019). In line with the explanation, a story of Art Barter who purchased a company named Datron World Communications for $10 million in 2004, and in just five amazing years, he transformed that into a $200 million company by the implementation of servant leadership style. In his company, servant leadership revealed the individual potential and created a sense of purpose. According to the report, voluntary turnover of employees from 2011-2016 remained only 5% and increased 17% trust of employees in leadership, and the company saved over $500K due to the progress and creativity of employees. In sum, the companies under the supervision of servant leadership are now operating at ultimate performance with glad, have involved employees who are more innovative and are thrilled and dynamic than ever before. Hence, servant leadership fuels the respecting of people help in the structuring of community and the exercise of truthfulness through the sharing of authority and position for the wellbeing of each employee working in any organization, however, it has found that the servant leader may be the soul of the organization.

The significance of this study is behind the rationale that servant leaders act as the stewards of the company (Dierendonck, 2011). The greatest sign of servant leadership is that when followers are possibly be trying to make themselves servants too (Sendjaya et al., 2008). With regard to theoretical significance, the study considered three important variables such as knowledge sharing, thriving at work, and burnout as a mediating mechanism. Three distinct theories including social exchange theory, social learning theory, conservation of resource theory were collectively utilized to explain what effect employee creativity in the context of Pakistan. Moreover, the managerial significance includes understanding and practically utilizing the mechanisms of the above-mentioned theories by the managers for a creative environment at the workplace and the using the inhibiting mechanism of servant leadership in reducing burnout.

Servant leadership has appeared as a leadership style that looks more significant and appropriate in the present environment than other value-loaded leadership methods. Today, most of the organizations that are focusing on the leadership methods highlight the wellbeing of employees relative to give regard to the manager are progressively appreciated (Dierendonck, 2011). Further, many practical observations and theoretical studies explain that servant leader effect on the followers thinking and reasoning style (Hunter et al., 2013), but the gaps in the literature on the connection between servant leadership and employee creativity are still lacking and the literature regarding servant leadership and its outcomes are still in its infancy stages (Yoshida et al., 2014).

Highlighting the gaps in the literature, the recommendation by recent study (Eva et al., 2018) clearly indicates to check the impact of servant leadership on knowledge sharing and burnout and likewise get recommendation to check the association of servant leadership and thriving at work from article by Jaiswal et al. (2017) because servant leadership plays a substantial part in addressing such issues that all are related to the psychological state of mind of the

employees. Further, a study by Eva et al. (2018) declares in the literature review that the articles were having poor conceptualization and measurement of the variable which decreases the credibility and validity of the hypothesis. Therefore, the current study is tending to scrutinize the mediation of knowledge sharing, thriving at work and burnout between servant leadership and employee creativity for further extension and addition in the literature. Moreover, it was found that based on two recent articles, Eva et al (2018) and Dhar and Jaiswal (2017) that the relationship of servant leadership, knowledge sharing, thriving at work, burnout and employee creativity needs further empirical testing. Therefore, this study will add a significant part in the literature by filling the gap by considering the influence of servant leadership on the above variables.

Concerning the practical gaps, the leaders and management may not have awareness about the positive aspects of servant leadership. That is why the current leadership styles may become a hindrance to achieving growth and sustainability. The employees' thriving at work is directly attached to organizational sustainability (Y. Yang et al., 2019). Mostly employees in banks have a tough job like service delivery, service recovery, structuring and maintaining customer relations, also tackle customers' sensitive demands on one hand, and manager's desire to grow productivity and performance on the other hand. All this stuff can create fatigue and tiredness in them (Singh et al., 1994). Introduction of the servant leadership model is a supportive tool which may reduce burnout because they work on the philosophy to give importance to each employee to develop their self-esteem, which may increase their commitment for organization (Aarum Andersen, 2009), and such devotion of leader brings a feeling of dedication in followers that reduce employees exhaustion and cynicism (Graham, 1991). However, the current study needs more empirical support and fill the above-mentioned research gaps with respect to the banking sector of Pakistan. The study is organized in five subsequent sections which start with an introduction that discusses the research gaps, significance, and support from previous literature. The subsequent sections include hypothesis development, methodology, analysis, and discussion.

Research objectives:

The study's purpose is to investigate the part played by Servant Leadership in enhancing Employee Creativity which is mediated by Knowledge Sharing, Burnout and Thriving at Work. Especially, the study has the subsequent objectives:

1. To examine the relationship between Servant Leadership and Employee Creativity.
2. To examine the relationship of Servant Leadership with Knowledge Sharing, Thriving at work and Burnout.
3. To examine the relationship of Knowledge Sharing, Thriving at work and Burnout with Employee Creativity.
4. To examine the mediating role of Knowledge Sharing, Thriving at work and Burnout on the relationship between Servant Leadership and Employee Creativity.

Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

The supportive leader offers help to followers, delights them equally and appreciated their contributions. According to Bryant (2003), knowledge enhancement in an organization can become possible by learning how leadership contributes to knowledge sharing. Leaders motivate workers to share knowledge by using charisma and individual care (Hakimi et al., 2010). In a study by Howell, Neufeld, and Avolio (2005), the leader develops team essence through inspirational motivation to inspire other group fellows by sharing knowledge with one another. Empowering leadership is the finest originator of knowledge sharing (Srivastava et al., 2006). Connelly and Kelloway (2003), found that the provision of the manager and social collaboration culture is positively connected to knowledge sharing. High-quality leader-member exchange relations also support to enhance knowledge sharing. So, group members are expected to collect appreciation for their new ideas, which encourages them to share their different knowledge with others (Uhl-Bien, 2011).

Servant-leadership is supporting their followers to help others and engaging them in knowledge-sharing between subordinates. Openly give value, provision, and support to employees is a key quality of servant leader (Russell, 2001; Sial et al., 2014). A servant leader can help in the development of communities to create a culture where knowledge sharing turns into the norm. Servant leaders can help the employees to focus on their work by removing the barriers and provide chances for improvement, further, where people have control over their jobs and they can feel free to describe the limitations of their own work (Parolini et al., 2009). So, based on the discussion directed above, the following hypothesis has been derived,

Hypothesis 1: *Servant leadership has a positive relationship with knowledge sharing*

Moreover, servant leaders support employees in their work and inspire them to support each other, also show more social acceptance in the presence of their supporters (Chen et al., 2015). Servant leader makes the efforts in improving the employees' maturity level. Since we believe that servant leadership encourages combined thriving at work. Like, such leaders cultivate their employees with chances to generate new abilities and capabilities and improve the usefulness of their work (Walumbwa et al., 2010), followers of such leaders feel liveliness (Spreitzer et al., 2005). Employees will thrive when they are supported by their leader to take more advantages and opportunities for growth (Spreitzer et al., 2012). Servant leader arranges required resources and develops skills of followers, so his work is in the best interests of their followers (Walumbwa et al., 2010). Generating a communal circumstance in which managers and employees work together to develop ability in followers to take problems they meet as a positive challenge then solve with new ideas accordingly (Spreitzer et al., 2012). So, servant leadership is found a strong antecedent of thriving at work**.** Since**,** based on given literature, the succeeding hypothesis has been postulated.
Hypothesis 2: Servant leadership has a positive relationship with thriving at work.

Servant leadership develops a genuine organizational resource that can reduce burnout. Servant leadership is built on the goal to communicate with each employee individually so to realize each person's talent and to develop the excellence in his followers by promoting inspiration, self-efficacy and work to grow a wish in followers to become servant leaders by themselves (Parolini, 2007). A servant leader is ideal, who delivers guidance, opinion, and resources to their followers. Additionally, it has also been exposed from various studies that followers get value from their leader through increased well-being, also it works as a shade for employee's happiness, psychological welfare, and fitness (Arnold et al., 2007). A service environment is built by the focus of servant leaders to place employee's needs ahead of their own which is based on faith and authority of employees. Employees working under servant leadership found interesting, excited to learn and dedicated to their job because employees realize that their leader is highly supportive in a stressful or in other psychological conditions. Thus, based on the discussion, the next hypothesis is;
Hypothesis 3: Servant leadership is negatively related to employee burnout

Close communication, encouragement, and support from leaders enhance employees' creativity. Leadership is substantial for the development of employee creativity (Hunter et al., 2007). Leaders can encourage several ways, for instance, providing structure, resources, and psychological settings to be engaged in creativity (Carmeli et al., 2010). The supportive leader raises the creativity of employees through generating emotional situations, boosting positive energy and also giving beneficial feedback (Atwater et al., 2009). A servant leader can better create a feeling of inner protection, belief, and justice in the work setting by focusing on followers' interest over his and organizational benefits (Schaubroeck et al., 2011) and such feelings would generate employee creativity (Kark & Carmeli, 2009). Managers' work on employee growth which produces passion that extends the range of thought and increases the chance of creativity (Fredrickson et al., 2005). A servant leader is observed as a group ideal because he shows a motivation to chase the goals of the team because his total sincerity is towards goal achievement (Haslam et al., 2001; Sluss et al., 2012). Servant leaders support followers to become a powerful individual (Giessner et al., 2008), improving their sense of pride, belief, and confidence which are substantial to nurture creativity. Since, based on given literature, the next hypothesis has been formulated;
Hypothesis 4: Servant leadership is positively related to employee creativity.

It is the requirement for employees to pay a lot of attention to share ideas in the development of employee creativity (Carmeli et al., 2013)**.** Information level which shares within the group was mostly assessed innovation over time, like an environment that highlighted open interaction and sharing of data and the availability of information connected in forecasting new thoughts (Troy et al., 2001; Sheikh et al., 2017). Employees with an increased level of knowledge sharing can convert their creative talents into creative results (Wang & Noe, 2010). It is essential for the effectiveness of new ideas to increase the level of knowledge in a certain area of interest (Dong et al., 2017). Exchange of varied data supports in improving the source of available proficiencies, abilities, and knowledge, it allows to develop and incorporate the resources to complete difficult responsibilities, for example, those of rising innovative products or processes (Gardner et al., 2012; Sheikh et al., 2017). Nowadays, the helpful involvement of knowledge sharing with employee creativity got some experimental establishment in an arrangement of different groups like research and development, manufacturing and management groups (Dong et al., 2017). So, based on overhead literature, the next hypothesis has been formulated;

Hypothesis 5: Knowledge sharing is positively related to employee creativity.

Recent literature has advocated that if employees in a job are thriving, it will give improvement and motivation to their work. Thriving is the main element of innovation in the workplace. Like, when people are learning and developing, it is helpful to identify problems as well as bringing new thoughts. Hennessey (2003), declares that learning at work is critical for constructing capabilities which is a basis for innovative behavior. When a person is skillful and he is willing to involve in a specific job, it creates positive energy (Dutton, 2003; Quinn et al., 2005), which is vital to perform tasks and to act creatively. According to Kark and Carmeli (2009), innovative work is not acknowledged easily, it demands supporting ideas that contain energy. Hence, based on given discussion, succeeding hypothesis has been postulated;
Hypothesis 6: Thriving at work is positively related to employee creativity.

A work setting that offered a lot of demands and quiet little resources can promote burnout in employees, and as a result, their creativity suffers. Employees withdraw from their jobs emotionally and cognitively, separate themselves from their work and its commitments and their performance decreases, as an outcome of burnout (Bakker et al., 2004). Increasingly stress pushes them towards burnout and reduces innovation (Litchfield et al., 2015). However, the burden of work in the job reduces creativity. Uncertainty about tasks when a manager is also unsupportive may decrease novelty (Leung et al., 2011). Little authority on work is another factor to enhance burnout which ultimately gives a reduction to new thoughts (Hecht et al., 2009). The stressful environment also decreases commitment, excitement, and motivation. Burnout is a strong negative antecedent to innovation. Since, based on the above discussion, the given hypothesis has been postulated;
Hypothesis 7: Burnout is negatively related to employee creativity.

Servant leadership is exceedingly wondering about his behavior and emphasis on his followers' interests (Barbuto, 2006). They also support their followers to help others and believe in engaging in knowledge-sharing between subordinates. Knowledge sharing also occurs when an employee is committed to engaging in spreading information to increase new thoughts (Mittal et al., 2015). Knowledge is the base of information and it improves skills, abilities, and performance so creativity requires the latest knowledge (Najam, Inam, et al., 2018). Employees believing in knowledge sharing can convert their creative talents into creative results (Wang & Noe, 2010). Therefore, based on the overhead discussion we can postulate the next hypothesis;
Hypothesis 8: Knowledge sharing significantly mediates the relationship between servant leadership and employee creativity.

Thriving dimensions (learning and vitality) show that people have emotional and energetic experiences if they feel thriving at work. (Spreitzer et al., 2005). Servant leaders do much work on supporting employees in their work and inspiring them to support each other too, also show more social acceptance in the presence of their supporters (Chen et al., 2015). When a person is skillful and he is willing to involve in a specific job, it creates positive energy (Quinn & Dutton, 2005), which is vital to perform tasks and to act creatively. According to Kark and Carmeli (2009), innovative work is not acknowledged easily, it demands supporting ideas that contain energy. So, based on the above discussion, the following hypothesis has been derived;
Hypothesis 9: Thriving at work significantly mediates the relationship between servant leadership and employee creativity.

Employees work under a servant leader also realize that their leader support reduces stress. Literature also found that in a work setting which offered a lot of demands and quiet little resources can promote burnout in employees, and as a result, their creativity suffers, because employees withdraw from their jobs emotionally and cognitively, separate themselves from their work and its commitments and their performance decreases, as an outcome of burnout (Bakker et al., 2004). If followers face workload and a lot of demands, it badly affects their creativity (Amabile et al., 2002). Increasingly stress pushes them towards burnout and it reduces innovation (Litchfield et al., 2015). Therefore, by making the root of a given discussion, the next hypothesis is derived,
Hypothesis 10: Burnout significantly mediates the relationship between servant leadership and employee creativity.

Theoretical Foundation

The conceptual framework is theoretically explained by the combination of three theories which are social exchange theory, social learning theory(Bandura, 1977), and conservation of resource theory. Social exchange theory (SET) explains the exchange of value between a leader and its members (Cropanzano et al., 2005; Lambe et al., 2001). SET explains the concept of how a servant leader encourages the subordinates to reciprocate in the form of knowledge sharing, thriving more for the accomplishment of tasks at work which will lead toward employee creativity. Additionally, social learning theory provides a strong base in the relationship between servant leadership and thriving at work. Smith and Berge (2009), suggests that follower has faith in the leader as a trustworthy exemplary in their organization and in this way, they try to imitate the behaviors. Similarly, employees thrive for work and try to fulfill the goals of their leader if they see their leader putting effort into their interest. Conservation of resources theory focuses on resources that are important to deal with emotional stress, which happens because of actual loss of resources like loss of job or danger of loss, also in a failure of getting gain from invested resources (Hobfoll et al., 2017). As servant leaders focus on follower's needs ahead of their own, it will increase the follower's trust which will reduce the stress level and decrease burnout, so, the above-mentioned theories become a base for the conceptual framework of this study.
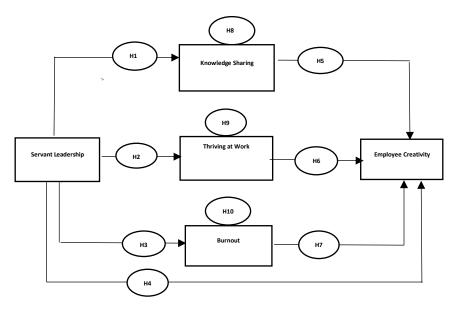

Figure 1. Research Framework

Research Methodology

To fulfill the objectives and purpose of this study which is to examine the mediating mechanisms of knowledge sharing, thriving at work and burnout in explaining employee creativity in the banking sector of Pakistan, we followed the realist approach of ontology, and objectivism epistemology to expectedly generalize the result to the study population. The theoretical stances are parallel to the positivist paradigm (Gray, 2014; Scotland, 2012).

The population consists of private banking sector employees working in Punjab Province of Pakistan. We selected different cities of Punjab; Multan, Khanewal, Bahawalpur, and Lahore to collect data. The self-administered questionnaire is selected as the main instrument for its number of pros e.g. speed, coverage of many respondents and cost-effectiveness. The explanatory research design was adopted. In this quantitative study, we used a one-time self-administered survey strategy. The unit of analysis was the middle-level banking employees because of the increasing competition between banks and a highly changing environment. In such conditions, the management requires a lot from employees. However, keeping the nature of the study in mind we used convenience sampling. This is a non-probability sampling technique in which the sample is selected based on convenience. Moreover, the useable data of 286 was obtained from the respondents which were greater than the required sample size of 74 as calculated by using G*Power 3.1.9.2 with an effect size of 0.15, and power of 0.95 (Erdfelder et al., 1996). The

obtained data was analyzed in Smart PLS to acquire and interpret the results. The questionnaire included 38 observed variables and 7 demographic variables with a total of 45 questions. The data used for research are collected from private banking sector employees working in Pakistan. 450 questionnaires were distributed, and 304 (67.5%) respondents returned the questionnaires, and 286 (63.5%) questionnaires were considered valid. Questionnaires were distributed and collected in the one-month period from November 2018, to December 2018.

In the survey, 24.5% of the participants in this survey were females. 58.5% of respondents were 26 to 35 years old. With regard to the highest academic qualification, most of the respondents 70.6% were holding a post-graduate degree. Out of 286 participants, 32.9% were having the work experience for more than three years. The designation is almost equally divided into two or three posts, hence, most of the participants (14.7%) were a branch manager. 30% of the participants are from Multan. Lastly, most of the respondents belong to Habib bank (31.1%) and Soneri bank (33.6%).

Measures

Respondents were requested to record their chosen answers based on the five-point Likert scale (1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree) for all the constructs. To measure servant leadership, a 7-item unidimensional scale was adopted which was built on a short scale established by Liden et al. (2008). The sample item includes "My leader\manager\supervisor can tell if something work-related is going wrong".

Knowledge sharing was measured by the adopted scale and has 8 items that were developed by Bartol et al. (2009). The sample item consists of "I readily pass along information that may be helpful to the work of the group". Thriving at work was measured by the adopted scale by Jiang (2017) which has two dimensions i.e. Vitality and Learning and has a total of 6 items (3 items of vitality and 3 items of learning). The sample is "I feel very energetic". Burnout was measured using an adapted scale of two reflective dimensions by Schaufeli et al. (2007) which consist of a total of 8 items i.e. Exhaustion and Cynicism The sample item includes "I find it hard to relax after a day's work". For employee creativity, the items were adopted and were measured from a scale introduced by Tierney et al. (1999). The sample is "I Tried out new ideas and approached problems".

Data Analysis and Results

The data analysis of this study is performed through SPSS for initial screening and for measurement and structural model assessment, Smart PLS-SEM is used. In the current study, there was not any aberrant values, missing values. Some of the outliers were removed. After that, the data seems more consistent and reliable while doing various analyses. Data fulfilled the criteria of skewness and kurtosis values.

According to the measurement model shown in Figure 2, the findings highlighted that out of 38 items, 6 were deleted as their loadings were less than the cutoff value of 0.50. Thus, the rest of the model left with 32 items which are within the range of 20% deletion of lower factor loadings and the rest of the loadings were retained ranging from 0.510 to 0.953.

The output revealed 43.85 % of total variance which is accounted for by a single factor, representing the absence of "common method bias" in this research. In line with the past literature, common method bias issue can see when a single factor describes more than 50% of the variance (Lowry et al., 2014).

Table 1. *Loadings, Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability and Average Variance Extracted*

Constructs		Items	Loadings	Cronbach Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE	Outer VIF
Burnout	Exhaustion	EX1	0.816	0.894	0.915	0.574	2.48
		EX2	0.883				3.52
		EX3	0.875				2.82
		EX4	0.804				2.31
	Cynicism	CY1	0.824				1.69
		CY2	0.915				1.70
		CY3	0.869				1.756
		CY4	0.848				1.71
	Employee	EC2	0.705	0.777	0.848	0.527	1.546
	Creativity	EC3	0.679				2.118
		EC4	0.790				2.827
		EC5	0.762				2.554
		EC6	0.688				2.285
	Knowledge	KS1	0.666	0.845	0.883	0.520	1.503
	Sharing	KS3	0.694				1.706
		KS4	0.654				1.738

		KS5	0.790			2.106
		KS6	0.761			2.098
		KS7	0.741			2.184
		KS8	0.730			1.75
	Servant	SL2	0.672	0.801	0.857	0.502	1.434
	Leadership	SL3	0.672			1.498
		SL4	0.709			1.543
		SL5	0.728			1.641
		SL6	0.750			1.637
		SL7	0.707			1.425
Thriving at	Thriving at	TWL1	0.864	0.854	0.892	0.580	2.302
Work	Work	TWL2	0.896			2.304
	(Learning)	TWL3	0.795			1.619
	Thriving at	TWV1	0.828			2.008
	work	TWV2	0.913			2.686
	(Vitality)	TWV3	0.838			2.127

This research considers discriminant validity to confirm the external consistency of the model. Though in Table 1, the square root of AVE of the constructs are explained: Burnout=0.747; Employee Creativity=0.726; Knowledge Sharing=0.721; Servant Leadership=0.707; Thriving at work=0.761
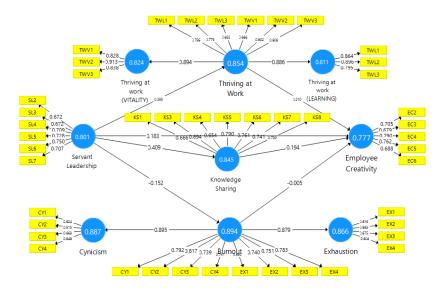

Figure 1. Measurement Model

Table 2. *Discriminant Validity Matrix, Means and Standard Deviations*

Constructs	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5
Burnout (1)	2.64	0.88	0.747				
Employee Creativity (2)	3.80	0.56	-0.097	0.726			
Knowledge Sharing (3)	3.84	0.65	-0.128	0.367	0.721		
Servant Leadership (4)	3.63	0.72	-0.173	0.346	0.408	0.707	
Thriving at Work (5)	3.95	0.69	-0.215	0.378	0.469	0.401	0.761

The square root of AVE is greater than the link between latent variables which is representing satisfactory discriminant validity (Fornell et al., 1981). After performing CFA in this study none of the variables was dropped even every few items have been deleted as per the recommendation (Hair et al., 2014) the entire variables retained at least two items as a condition not to be deleted. In the current study, two structural model assessments have been done, which are a direct relationship model and a mediation analysis model.

Figure 3 reveals the direct influence of every latent construct on employee creativity (dependent variable). It also displays the output results generated with the help of Smart PLS.
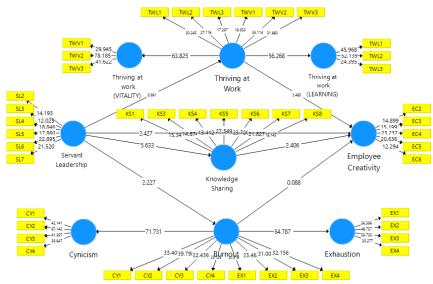
Figure 2. Structural Model Direct Relationship

At the outset, the results demonstrates a positive significant association between servant leadership and knowledge sharing (β=0.409, t=5.633, p<0.05) supporting hypothesis 1, a significant association among servant leadership and thriving at work (β=0.395, t=5.961, p>0.05) supporting hypothesis 2, the negative relationship between servant leadership and burnout (β=-0.152, t=2.227, p<0.026) which supports hypothesis 3, a positive significant association among servant leadership and employee creativity (β=0.183, t=2.427, p<0.015) supports hypothesis 4, a positive relationship between knowledge sharing and employee creativity (β=0.272, t=4.05, p < 0.01) which supports hypothesis 5, a positive relationship between thriving at work and employee creativity (β=0.210; t=2.485; p<0.013) which supports hypothesis 6, no significant relationship between Burnout and Employee Creativity (Beta= -0.005; T=0.088; P>0.05) which is not supported. These results are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. *Results and the Respective Decisions of Direct Effects and Mediating Effects.*

Direct Hypotheses	Beta	SD	T Stats	P Values
Knowledge Sharing→Employee Creativity	0.194	0.080	2.406	0.016
Servant Leadership→Burnout	-0.152	0.068	2.227	0.026
Servant Leadership→Employee Creativity	0.183	0.075	2.427	0.015
Burnout→Employee Creativity	-0.005	0.056	0.088	0.930
Servant Leadership→Knowledge Sharing	0.409	0.073	5.633	0.000
Servant Leadership→Thriving at Work	0.395	0.066	5.961	0.000
Thriving at Work→Employee Creativity	0.210	0.085	2.485	0.013
Servant Leadership→Employee Creativity	0.183	0.075	2.427	0.015
Servant Leadership→Burnout→Employee Creativity	0.001	0.009	0.080	0.937
Servant Leadership→Knowledge Sharing→ Employee Creativity	0.079	0.041	1.942	0.052
Servant Leadership→Thriving at Work→Employee Creativity	0.083	0.039	2.130	0.033

Table 3 shows the results of knowledge sharing, thriving at work and burnout as a mediation between servant leadership and employee creativity, however, the study found that servant leadership and employee creativity are fully mediated. On the other side, burnout found no mediation between servant leadership and employee creativity. Knowledge sharing and thriving at work are partially mediated between servant leadership and employee creativity.

The Q-Square of burnout shows the 0.012 predictive relevance, 0.101 for employee creativity, 0.077 for knowledge sharing and 0.084 for thriving at work, it proves the model has predictive relevance. Moreover, "if the Q2 value is greater than zero (0) the model has predictive relevance for the reflective endogenous latent variable" as recommended by (Hair et al., 2014).

Discussion

Through the effective implementation of the servant leadership style in the private banking sector of Pakistan, engagement of employees in knowledge sharing could upgrade. The results proved the strong and significant positive association of servant leadership and knowledge

sharing which is in line with the study done by (Correia de Sousa et al., 2010). Servant leader connection with knowledge sharing is in congruence with the SET (Blau, 1964). With a similar pattern, leaders and members share information and experiences as an exchange process. SL cultivate the abilities and capabilities of employees and improve the usefulness of their work (Walumbwa et al., 2010), followers of such leaders feel liveliness (Spreitzer et al., 2005). Employees will thrive when they are supported by their leader to take more advantages and opportunities for growth (Spreitzer et al., 2012). The results also proved that there is a strong and significant positive bond between servant leadership and thriving at work which is in line with the various studies and social learning theory (Chen et al., 2015; Liden et al., 2014).

People's efforts to defend and protect their belongings (Hobfoll, 2001). These beloved things contain personal reserves (personality features, physical and psychological energies) and organizational resources (boss support, rewards or recognition) Schaufeli & Bakker, (2004). As servant leaders focus on follower's needs ahead of their own, it will increase the follower's trust which will reduce the stress level and decrease burnout (Sluss et al., 2012). The study clearly explains that a servant leader's priority, because of his sincere nature is to give authority to the employee so he can sense like firm as his own. Once employees start to feel the organization as its own, they will start thinking critically and creatively for the advancement of the organization.

The knowledge sharing related to employee creativity is positive. It helps ideas to come, like how to decrease production costs and improve team as well as firm performance (Pérez-Luño et al., 2018). It is almost improbable that creativity will proceed in the nonexistence of knowledge sharing. The findings indicate when knowledge sharing is implemented in the private banking sector of Pakistan then the employees are more engaged in Employee Creativity. This corresponds to the previous study done by Dong et al. (2017).

According to the findings, if the burnout is considered in the private banking sector of Pakistan then it will have no effect on the creativity of employees, so in the private banking sector, findings oppose the CRT theory. The rationale behind the insignificant relationship of burnout and creativity in the banking sector of Pakistan is maybe due to the job specifications of employees which are highly defined and standard operating procedures which are very strict, employees must complete their daily routine tasks at any cost, so burnout in banks cannot play any role. In congruence with the findings of this study, when burnout decreases it increases creativity and vice versa (Litchfield et al., 2015).

Usually, the employees of the banking sector are Branch Service Officers (BSO)/Customer Service Officer (CSO)/Credit Officer/Trade Officer. Most of the time, their jobs are very well defined. Standard Operating Procedures and Job Specifications are clear and strict. Employees must follow the internal rules and banking policies and they are monitored by the supervisor. The situation, if employees are feeling burnout, it does not influence their work, because they are required to complete their tasks individually. Thus, even the existence of a servant leader, burnout is not playing any part between a servant leader and employee creativity in individual work. So, we can check in the future if burnout is playing a significant role between servant leadership and employee creativity in teams or group related work.

Conclusion

This empirical study analyzes the relationship between the variables such as servant leadership, knowledge sharing, thriving at work, burnout and employee creativity. This result shows that there exists a mediation of knowledge sharing and thriving at work, and in the relationship between servant leadership and employee creativity but burnout was found to be insignificant between them. After the examination of knowledge sharing, thriving at work and burnout in predicting servant leadership and employee creativity among the private banks, a comprehensive understanding of the influence of these factors is achieved.

Implications

The research findings have several implications specifically based on the mediating mechanisms. Firstly, the mediating mechanisms of knowledge sharing and thriving at work are in line with both the theories such as SET and SLT in such a way that when a leader makes decisions that are in the best interest of their followers, the followers try to imitate and feel obligated to reciprocate. In this process, they share knowledge and thrive for work. The mediating mechanisms of knowledge sharing and thriving at work are in line with the study conducted by Tuan (2016) and Jaiswal et al. (2017). Moreover, the mediating role of burnout corroborates with the conservation of resource theory and the study by Zhang et al. (2019).

Concerning managerial implications, the results of the study specify that firms may necessitate employing managers or supervisors who display servant leadership style for the

generation of knowledge sharing and thriving at work. This can be beneficial for getting a competitive advantage. Managers can transform himself into a servant leader only and if he efforts to give priority to help the employees. Organizations would benefit after taking advance steps to position servant leaders that can help to eliminate obstacles in a way of knowledge sharing and thriving at work which will ultimately upgrade employee creativity to assist the advancement of their organization. By making it certain that managers demonstrate servant leadership behaviors, firms become much capable in protecting employees' creative ideas because of strengthening knowledge sharing and thriving at work that could be specifically appropriate in firms where creativity is critical for organizational accomplishment. Application of servant leader style in banks make the manager aware of their employees' needs and hence would not devastate followers with extremely challenging tasks, he would be aware of in leadership training how to best manage employees to significantly increase their knowledge sharing and thriving. He would have their work preferences into account when allocating tasks. The banks could get value from these inferences through having an intellectually strong, knowledgeable, energetic workforce that is also highly engaged, creative, and performs well.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

This research is limited to some private banks in Pakistan. For better generalizability of the model, the research may extend it by increasing the number of samples and consider every geographical place of Pakistan or may extend it to other parts of Asia. Moreover, public banks can be included in the sample for increasing the quality of the results. The model may extend its contributions by checking any other leadership style with these medications. The study design was quantitative in nature which may increase the biasness of the respondents. So, to get quality results and a better understanding of the phenomenon, qualitative studies should be done. The results were obtained by considering the servant leadership only as IV, so future researchers can compare servant leadership with different leadership styles like transformational and ethical leadership. Moreover, trait, behavior and situational based theories of leadership should also be compared to better understand the effectiveness of this model. Also, the group-based study can be beneficial, and it can make burnout significant between servant leadership and employee creativity.

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