



The Influence of Servant Leadership and Employee Innovative Performance: The Role of Competence and Public Service Innovation

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Abstract. This study aims to analyze the influence of Servant Leadership on employee innovative performance, employee competence, and public service innovation at the Yogyakarta City Ministry of Religious Affairs Office. It also examines the role of employee competence and public service innovation as mediating variables. The study used a quantitative approach with inferential data analysis to examine the direct and indirect relationships between the variables. The results indicate that Servant Leadership has a positive and significant effect on employee innovative performance, employee competence, and public service innovation. Furthermore, employee innovative performance has been shown to have a significant positive effect on public service innovation and improved employee competence. Further findings indicate that employee competence acts as a significant mediator in the relationship between Servant Leadership and innovative performance, while public service innovation acts as a partial mediator in the same relationship. Overall, this study confirms that the implementation of Servant Leadership can strengthen competence, enhance public service innovation, and encourage employee innovative performance.

Keywords: servant leadership, employee innovative performance, competence, public service innovation.

1. Introduction

The Yogyakarta City Ministry of Religious Affairs government agency was established with the aim of providing optimal service performance to the public. To achieve this goal, it is necessary to optimize the role of the basic components of the government agency. The most important components of an agency are servant leadership, innovative performance, competence, and service innovation [1].

(Placeholder1).

Human Resources (HR) are a vital asset in every organization, including the government sector. These resources must be managed, trained, and maintained to develop for the future, as they can be a determining factor. Public organizations place a top priority on providing high-quality services to the public [2].

Improving the competence and quality of services in the public sector creates an effective and responsive government system that meets the needs of the community in the context of decentralization in Indonesia. Human resource management in government, particularly the quality of public services, is inseparable from the competence of the officials on duty. Competence encompasses the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required by government officials to carry out their duties effectively and efficiently [3].

Today's society is experiencing very dynamic developments. People are increasingly aware of their rights and obligations as citizens in social, national, and state life. They are becoming more critical, daring to express their demands, desires, and aspirations to the government and exercising control over every action taken by the government.

Servant Leadership is a leadership style that serves the needs and prioritizes followers to achieve common goals that will put aside personal needs to help followers grow professionally and personally [3].

Innovative performance can be implemented to realize optimal public services in utilizing digital technology and creating an innovative work environment in serving the community. Currently, public services have become a widespread and centralized issue in the development of development in Indonesia.

Employee competence is an important part in providing skills, behavior, public knowledge, and empathy to the general public. Good public service depends on the condition of the bureaucracy in a country.

Public service innovation to implement innovative policies and services so that the public can feel the presence of a government that has carried out its duties and functions well.

2. Literature Review

- 2.1 Human Resources are the most important asset in an organization because the success of achieving goals depends heavily on the abilities, motivation, and behavior of the individuals working within it. According to modern management theory, HR is viewed as human capital, possessing the ability to think, expertise, creativity, and the capacity to innovate [4]. HR is not merely viewed as a workforce, but as a strategic factor determining an organization's competitiveness. HR management functions to manage human potential through planning, development, assessment, reward, and control. The primary goal is to ensure the organization has competent, motivated, and highly committed employees. HR is a strategic organizational asset that must be developed through appropriate leadership, psychological empowerment, creating meaningful work, strengthening organizational culture, and increasing employee self-efficacy. These theories explain how internal and external factors shape employee behavior, thus influencing innovation and service quality.
- 2.2 Self-Determination Theory is a motivational theory that explains that people are motivated and develop optimally when their basic psychological needs, namely autonomy, competence, and relatedness, are met. Self-determination arises when an individual is influenced by motivation that arises from within themselves (intrinsic motivation) rather than motivation that arises from outside themselves or the environment (external motivation). Self-determination is a person's belief that they have freedom, autonomy, and control over how they perform their work. Self-determination relates to control over how employees perform their work. Intrinsic motivation is crucial for determining direction and behavior. This intrinsic motivation, also known as intrinsic motivation, emerges, and individuals are free to engage in a sense of enjoyment rather than simply seeking rewards or coercive satisfaction.
- 2.3 Servant leadership is understood as a leadership style that emphasizes the leader as a servant, prioritizing the development and well-being of followers,

as well as team empowerment over domination or control [5]. This style is highly relevant in the public sector context because public leaders not only direct bureaucratic structures but also foster a culture of service and innovation among employees. Previous research, for example, found that servant leadership is positively correlated with employee innovative behavior in government agencies [4].

- 2.4 Furthermore, servant leadership also impacts the quality of public services through employee self-efficacy, where servant leaders enhance employees' perceptions of their own competence and responsibility for service [6].
- 2.5 Employee innovative work behavior relates to the extent to which employees generate, promote, and implement new ideas that benefit the organization. In public services, innovation not only means increasing internal efficiency but also transforming public services to be more responsive to public needs. Public service management theory suggests that public service innovation is highly dependent on leadership support and employee competence. Servant leadership creates a conducive psychological climate (empowerment and trust), while employee competence enables these ideas to be translated into concrete actions [7].

3. Methodology

This research uses a quantitative approach, testing a specific theory by examining the relationships between variables. This research method is an explanatory survey. Explanatory surveys aim to explain the relationship between two or more phenomena or variables.

The research was conducted at the Kementerian Agama affairs office in city Yogyakarta. The research period was planned to last approximately 3 months. The sample population was 133 ministry employees.

The dependent (endogenous) variable is Employee Innovative Performance (Y), while the independent (exogenous) variable is Servant Leadership (X). The mediating variables consist of Competence (M1) and Public Service Innovation (M2), which are suspected to mediate the relationship between Servant Leadership and Employee Innovative Performance. The subjects of this study were the

Ministry of Religious Affairs in Yogyakarta.

4. Results & Discussion

4.1 The Influence of Servant Leadership on Employee Innovative Performance

The analysis shows that Servant Leadership has a positive and significant effect on employee innovative performance. This means that the higher the level of servant leadership behavior displayed by leaders, the higher the employee's ability to generate innovative ideas, methods, and work approaches [3].

4.2 The Influence of Servant Leadership on Employee Competence

The study found that Servant Leadership has a positive and significant effect on employee competence. Leaders who prioritize service, empowerment, and development of subordinates significantly contribute to improving employee knowledge, skills, and professional attitudes [3].

4.3 The Influence of Servant Leadership on Public Service Innovation

The test results show that Servant Leadership has a significant effect on public service innovation. Leaders who support, facilitate, and inspire subordinates have been shown to encourage organizations to provide services that are faster, more responsive, and more adaptive to community needs [8].

4.4 The Influence of Employee Innovative Performance on Public Service Innovation

Employee innovative performance has been shown to have a significant positive effect on public service innovation [2]. Employees who are creative and proactive in creating work innovations can improve service quality, process effectiveness, and customer satisfaction.

4.5 The Influence of Employee Innovative Performance on Employee Competence

Data analysis shows that employee innovative performance has a significant influence on improving employee competency [3]. Employee innovation further hones their knowledge, work methods, and problem-solving skills.

4.6 The Role of Employee Competence as a Mediating Variable Between

Servant Leadership and Innovative Performance

Research demonstrates that employee competency acts as a significant mediator in the relationship between Servant Leadership and innovative performance. This means that servant leadership not only directly improves innovative performance but also indirectly through increased competency [9].

4.7 The Role of Public Service Innovation as a Mediating Variable Between Servant Leadership and Innovative Performance

The results of the study indicate that public service innovation acts as a partial mediator in the relationship between Servant Leadership and employee innovative performance. Servant leadership influences increased public service innovation, which ultimately drives employee innovative performance [4].

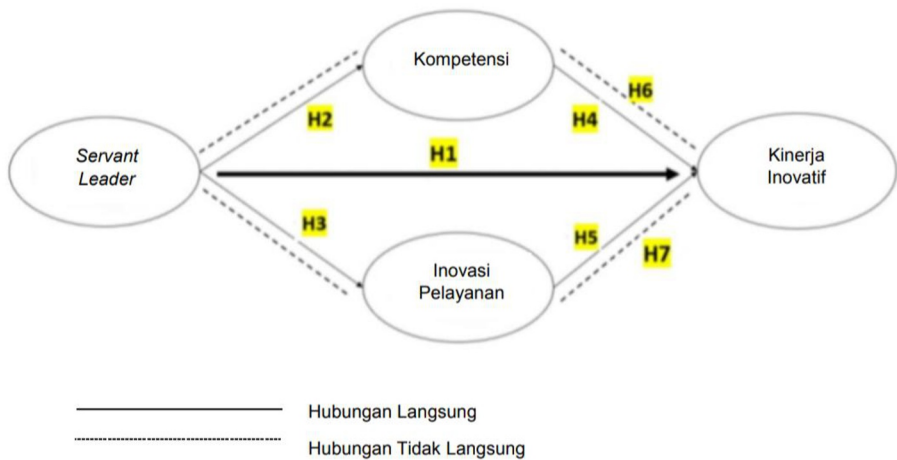


Fig. 1. Conceptual framework

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework is developed based on the integration of previous research and theoretical discussions related to leadership and the performance of public sector organizations. This conceptual study proposes that Servant Leadership has a positive influence on employee innovative performance, employee competence, and public service innovation at the Yogyakarta City Ministry of Religious Affairs

Office. This model also explains the indirect relationship, where employee competence and public service innovation act as variables that strengthen the relationship between Servant Leadership and employee innovative performance..

5. Conclusion

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that: Servant leadership has been proven to be a key factor in improving innovative performance, employee competency, and public service innovation at the Yogyakarta City Ministry of Religious Affairs Office. Employee innovative performance plays a crucial role in improving competency and encouraging public service innovation. Employee competency plays a mediating role linking servant leadership style and innovative performance, making competency development a key organizational strategy [10]. Public service innovation also mediates the relationship between servant leadership and innovative performance, indicating that a servant leadership style can foster a culture of innovation in public service. Overall, this study confirms that servant leadership is an effective leadership approach in improving both human resource quality and public service quality in government institutions.

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