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Servant Leadership and Innovative Work Behavior: Self-Construal Moderates the Relationship

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Abstract

This study examines how self-construal (independent and interdependent) moderates the relationship between servant leadership (SL) and innovative work behaviour (IWB) in the Pakistani Banking Industry. A total of 250 structured questionnaires were sent to bankers as part of a cross-sectional survey—the study chose twenty-five banks for the current study. The technique of convenience sampling was employed. Employees and their supervisors or managers from various banks' departments participated in the survey, including sales, operations, human resources, information technology, and customer service. The percentage of successful respondents was 90%, with 76% of respondents being employees and 24% being their leaders or managers. To test hypotheses, the researchers used Smart PLS. The path coefficient analysis showed that interdependent self-construal strengthens the positive relationship between SL and IWB, indicating that employees prioritizing collective goals respond better to servant leadership in fostering innovation. A negative path coefficient showed that employees with higher

independent self-construal have a weaker SL-IWB relationship. These findings demonstrate the importance of aligning leadership styles with employees' self-construal to promote innovation, with servant leadership working best with interdependent employees. The study adds to the literature by confirming the moderating role of self-construal in the SL-IWB relationship and suggesting ways to improve innovation leadership.

Keywords: Servant leadership, innovative work behaviour, independent self-construal, interdependent self-construal

1. Introduction

Organizational survival and success depend on innovation in the 21st century, a time of intense competition and rapid modernization. Only companies that prioritize innovation can succeed in this environment. Dedication and commitment to work often lead to innovative behavior, which is essential in a dynamic business environment (Huang et al., 2021; Yang, 2024). Innovation, particularly Innovative Work Behavior (IWB), is the deliberate introduction, development, and implementation of new ideas to improve personal or organizational performance (De Jong, 2010). IWB encourages creativity and innovation by identifying problems, solving them, and applying new ideas (Monnot, 2016; Sabbir, 2021).

Leadership and innovation literature has identified several key issues. First, transformational leadership has been widely discussed for its role in encouraging innovative work behavior (Afsar et al., 2014; Khan et al., 2021). The mechanisms by which servant leadership styles affect employees' innovative behavior are still unknown (Wang et al., 2019). Servant leadership, unlike other leadership styles, views the leader as a servant to their followers, empowering and supporting employees' innovative efforts (Krog & Govender, 2015; Hsieh et al., 2021). This leadership style is recognized, but its full potential to promote innovation, mainly through psychological mechanisms like self-construal, is underexplored (Huang et al., 2021; Cai et al., 2018). Second, employees' self-concept, including their independent or relational self-construal, affects their willingness to innovate (Eisenbeiss et al., 2008; Sabbir, 2021). Self-construal shows how people view themselves as independent or relational (Kim & Fan, 2018). These perceptions strongly influence employees' leadership and innovation responses. Leaders who promote self-

construal among employees are more likely to inspire innovation (Hsieh et al., 2021; Yang, 2024).

Servant leadership theory illuminates leadership and innovation (Hsieh et al., 2021) (Hsieh et al., 2021). Servant leaders emphasize employee well-being and development, encouraging initiative and creative problem-solving (Hsieh et al., 2021; Khan, 2022). Nurturing psychological empowerment and job crafting, servant leaders foster innovation (Khan et al., 2022; Ekmekcioglu & Öner, 2024). Servant leadership boosts employees' psychological resources and self-efficacy, which leads to extra-role behavior, including innovation (Gelaidan et al., 2024; Zeng & Xu, 2020). However, more research is needed to understand how servant leadership fosters innovation and the psychological mechanisms that mediate this relationship (Panaccio et al., 2014; Hashmi & Siddiqui, 2023).

The psychological mechanism of self-construal moderates the relationship between servant leadership and innovative behavior (Huang et al., 2021; Hsieh, 2021). Self-construal affects leadership and work behaviour, including innovation (Monnot, 2016; Sabbir, 2021). Self-construal moderates the relationship between servant leadership and innovative work behavior, adding to the literature. This research illuminates organizational innovation's psychological processes by examining how servant leadership interacts with employees' self-construal to promote innovation (Hsieh et al., 2021; Sabbir, 2021).

This study also highlights the importance of understanding and aligning leadership styles with employees' psychological traits to foster innovation for banking leaders (Yang et al., 2024; Sharif, 2024). This study adds to the academic literature and leadership knowledge of fostering innovation in organizations by showing how servant leadership, particularly self-construal, promotes innovative work behavior. Leaders looking to boost team creativity and innovation will find the findings useful, as psychological and social factors drive employee innovation (Cai et al., 2018; Karatepe et al., 2020). Thus, this study advances the theoretical understanding of servant leadership and innovative work behaviour and provides practical guidance for leaders to foster innovation in their organizations. Self-construal as a moderating factor is a novel addition to the leadership and innovation literature, highlighting the complex relationship between leadership styles, psychological traits, and innovative outcomes (Iqbal et al., 2020; Opoku, 2019). Thus, the study aimed to find the impact of servant leadership on the innovative work

behavior of employees by investigating the banking sector of Pakistan, with the moderating effect of self-construal, i.e., independent self-construal and interdependent self-construal.

2. Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

2.1 Service Leadership

The concept of servant leadership was introduced by (Green Leaf, 1970) for the first time. A servant leader is a leader who is always ready to help juniors and use their skills and potential to optimal levels (Hashmi & Siddiqui, 2023; Khan et al., 2023). A leader who motivates and inspires his subordinates and tells them how to achieve (Simon et al., 2014). His responsibility is not limited. His responsibility is not only to subordinates' development but also for the benefit of the organization's stakeholders (Khan et al., 2021). A researcher agreed that the behavior of a servant leader's main emphasis was on the growth of his followers and leaders' reverences (Jeff & Hale, 2007). The difference between servant leadership and transformational leadership is that servant leaders involve their subordinates in motivation and morality, which is why it is distinct from transformational leadership (Graham, 1991; Wang et al., 2019). Servant leaders put the interests of their subordinates for the attainment of success in the organization first (Mattison & Irving, 2006).

Different researchers elaborated on the link between servant leadership and work engagement, such as (Dierendonck et al., 2014). Research papers of different researchers were chosen, not limited only to the participants, their families and friends loomed for this purpose. For processing results, they used convenience sampling and snowballing methods. Servant leadership strengthens the devoutness and spirituality of leaders, mutual power, humility of leaders, visions of leaders and followers, autonomy and development of subordinates according to common standards (Dierendonck et al., 2014). A leader who has the characteristics of servant leadership follows reconstruction to his employees for development and growth (Ehrhart, 2004). Graham (1995) also added that servant leadership (SL) accomplishes OCB among underlings. Servant leadership interprets ten characteristics: curing, attending, anticipation, encouragement, stewardship, observations of different concepts, community structuring, growth and development of subordinates, compassion and appreciation (Spear, 2004).

Literature on servant leadership suggests that the purpose of servant leadership is to put the interests of subordinates first and then locate their interests, the consequence of which is that

subordinates are encouraged to show a strong commitment towards their work with enhanced progress in their work, which gives an advantage to all stakeholders (Barbuto, 2006; Ehrhart, 2004; Neubert & Kacmar, 2008; Panaccio et al., 2014).

2.2 Innovative Work Behavior

Many researchers agree that employees are essential for fostering innovative work behaviour (IWB), which is crucial for organizational growth and competitive advantage. Human resources issues have always shaped workplace innovation (Isabel et al., 2014; Yang et al., 2024). HR practices, work settings and job characteristics have been tested in IWB, showing that they influence organizational innovation (Janssen, 2000; Collins & Smith, 2006). Innovative work behavior involves new ideas, modern approaches to tasks, and better ways to complete tasks (Collins & Smith, 2006). New ideas and practical implementation are both part of workplace innovation. While creativity and innovation seem similar, researchers have long debated their differences (Scott & Bruce, 1994; Huang et al., 2021). Creativity generates new ideas, while innovation improves organizational performance (Yuan & Woodman, 2010). King and Anderson (2002) argue that creativity is essential to innovation but only the first step in a process. Thus, innovative work behavior requires idea generation, promotion, and organizational implementation (De Jong & Den Hartog, 2010; Zeng & Xu, 2020).

Based on this, several studies have examined how work engagement affects innovation in manufacturing and pharmaceuticals (Ugwu et al., 2014). These cross-sectional studies used advanced methods like confirmatory factor analysis to examine how engaged employees lead to innovation (Yang et al., 2024). If given organizational support and resources, engaged employees are more likely to implement creative ideas (Baer, 2012). The study found that even highly engaged employees can fail to implement creative ideas due to networking and execution skills (Kim & Fan, 2018).

IWB models like Janssen's (2000) one-dimensional framework evolved. Krause (2004) proposed a two-dimensional model, while Reuvers et al. (2008) proposed a three-dimensional model, reflecting innovative work behavior complexity. Today's most popular framework includes four dimensions: idea creation, initiation, promotion, and implementation. These dimensions show how IWB employees generate, champion, and implement ideas (Cai et al., 2018). Servant leadership promotes IWB by encouraging creativity and innovation (Hashmi &

Siddiqui, 2023; Khan et al., 2022). Thus, innovative work behavior involves creating, promoting, and implementing ideas in an organization. Organizations can maximize employee innovation by understanding IWB factors like HR practices, leadership styles, and work engagement. New IWB models emphasize the need for a holistic approach to innovation, including idea generation and implementation support (Iqbal et al., 2020; Ekmekcioglu & Öner, 2024).

2.3 Service Leadership and Innovative Work Behavior

Serving and empowering employees is a key component of servant leadership, which has a significant impact on innovative work behavior. Creating a supportive and collaborative workplace where employees feel safe trying new things and taking risks is the goal of this leadership style (Krog & Govender, 2015; Hsieh et al., 2021). Service leaders encourage idea generation, experimentation, and implementation by fostering trust, empowerment, and open communication (Iqbal et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2019). Servant leadership also fosters psychological safety, which helps employees express and act on their creative ideas (Cai et al., 2018).

Psychological empowerment, job crafting, and workplace autonomy support servant leadership and innovative work behavior. By promoting employee well-being and professional growth, servant leadership boosts psychological empowerment and innovation (Khan et al., 2022; Zeng & Xu, 2020). Empowered workers are more likely to take charge and innovate. Job crafting—where employees reshape their roles to make their work more meaningful—drives innovation, and servant leaders encourage it. These leaders give employees decision-making power, encouraging creativity and innovation (Karatepe et al., 2020; Gelaidan et al., 2024). Ekmekcioglu and Öner (2024) found that servant leadership boosts employee motivation to innovate and fosters a supportive organizational culture that values creativity and innovation. When leaders prioritize subordinate development and foster a creative workplace, employees are more likely to innovate (Aboramadan et al., 2021; Opoku et al., 2019). Employee creativity and innovation are crucial to organizational success in high-performance and knowledge-intensive industries (Sharif et al., 2024). Servant leaders foster innovation in their organizations by creating an environment that rewards innovation.

Servant leadership promotes innovation by building trust and meaning at work (Monnot, 2016; Kim & Fan, 2018). These relational qualities strengthen leaders' and employees'

relationships, encouraging idea-sharing and innovation (Cai et al., 2018; Khan et al., 2022). Servant leadership's focus on employee development matches employees' need for meaningful work, which predicts innovation (Hashmi & Siddiqui, 2023; Karatepe et al., 2020). Servant leaders empower employees to feel valued and creatively contribute to the organization's goals by providing support and resources (Zhu & Zhang, 2020). Thus, the study proposes a research hypothesis:

H₁. Servant leadership significantly and positively influences innovative work behaviour.

2.4 Self-Construal

Self-construal is how people view themselves about others and society. It is a psychological construct that describes how people define themselves independently or interdependently (Huang et al., 2021). This construct explains the cultural differences between individualistic and collectivist societies, with independent self-construal dominating in individualistic cultures and interdependent in collectivist cultures (Yang et al., 2024; Kitayama, 2000). Independent self-construal emphasizes personal goals, self-reliance, and individual achievement, while interdependent self-construal emphasizes social harmony, group goals, and connectedness (Monnot, 2016; Sabbir, 2021). Self-construal significantly affects workplace performance, feelings, and thoughts. Employees may prioritize personal or collective goals in different workplace situations due to self-construal (Hsieh et al., 2021). Independent self-construal promotes personal success and innovation, while interdependent self-construal promotes collaboration and problem-solving (Kim & Fan, 2018). Markus and Kitayama (1991) proposed that people define themselves by their autonomy, personal traits, relationships and social roles. This distinction is crucial to understanding how employees interact with their roles and how servant leadership may affect people differently based on their self-construal (Hashmi & Siddiqui, 2023).

Recently, self-construal has been studied as a moderator of leadership, particularly servant leadership. Huang et al. (2021) found that self-construal can significantly impact leadership traits' ability to drive employee behavior, including innovation. Servant leadership may inspire independent self-construal and creativity, focusing on personal goals rather than team goals (Sabbir, 2021). In contrast, interdependent self-construal employees align their behaviors with

collective goals, fostering innovation through collaboration and shared responsibilities (Yang et al., 2024). This response diversity emphasizes the importance of self-construal in leadership research and practice.

Recent studies emphasize the need for a nuanced understanding of self-construal in organizations, especially regarding innovation and leadership. Self-construal interacts complexly with servant leadership, which prioritizes employee well-being and development (Cai et al., 2018; Wang, 2019). Independent self-construal may encourage employees to use servant leaders' autonomy to innovate (Erkutlu & Chafra, 2015), while interdependent self-construal promotes teamwork and collaborative innovation (Hashmi & Siddiqui, 2023). Recognizing the impact of self-construal on employee behavior can enhance leadership strategies for innovation and performance (Ekmekcioglu & Öner, 2024; Khan et al., 2021). Self-construal shapes how employees interact with leadership and contributes to organizational outcomes. Self-construal, whether viewed through the lens of personal autonomy or social interconnectedness, illuminates the psychological and behavioral drivers of employee performance, particularly servant leadership and innovative work behavior (Zhu & Zhang, 2020). Understanding these individual differences helps organizations create environments that encourage individual and collective innovation, creating more effective and adaptable workplace cultures (Gelaidan et al., 2024; Opoku, 2019).

Independent self-construal—viewing oneself as separate from others and focusing on personal goals and autonomy—is essential to innovative work behaviour (Sabbir, 2021). People with high independent self-construal value personal success and express themselves through creativity and innovation (Huang et al., 2021). Such people are motivated to propose new ideas and solve problems in ways that reflect their unique perspectives (Kim & Fan, 2018). Their value of personal autonomy encourages risk-taking and creative thinking, which are essential to organizational innovation (Iqbal et al., 2020). By focusing on personal goals and self-reliance, independent self-construal employees often challenge the status quo and seek innovative solutions to improve efficiency or create new opportunities (Yang et al., 2024). Self-efficacy, which drives innovation, is also increased by independent self-construal (Sabbir, 2021). This empowers them to try new things, test their ideas, and create innovative solutions without outside approval (Khan et al., 2022). Kim and Fan (2018) found that independent self-construal

improves self-leadership, where people guide their behavior toward innovative results. This self-driven approach allows employees to bring their insights and competencies to the forefront of organizational innovation (Hsieh et al., 2021).

Self-construal independence encourages experimentation and creativity, which improves work performance (Krog & Govender, 2015). Independent workers are less constrained by group norms and more willing to try new solutions (Monnot, 2016). In industries where innovation is crucial to staying competitive, employees can use their autonomy to generate new ideas (Wang et al., 2019). Servant leaders enable this innovation by providing the psychological safety needed for independent people to express their ideas (Zeng & Xu, 2020). Strong independent self-construal is associated with proactive problem-solving and innovation (Opoku et al., 2019). In environments that promote autonomy and creativity, employees with independent self-construal can thrive by taking initiative and introducing new ideas (Sharif et al., 2024). Thus, promoting independent thinking in the workplace can boost innovation, especially in knowledge-intensive industries (Khan et al., 2021). Based on the literature review, the study proposes a research hypothesis as follows:

H₂. Independent self-construal significantly and positively influences innovative work behaviour.

Interdependent self-construal encourages collaborative innovation, where employees work together to create and implement new ideas that benefit the group (Yang et al., 2024). Innovation is a shared responsibility where people solve problems and generate ideas (Hsieh et al., 2021). As employees with interdependent self-construal value group success over individual achievements, this collaboration-focused environment encourages innovation (Kim & Fan, 2018). Interdependent self-construal promotes teamwork, open communication, and shared knowledge, which is essential for innovation (Krog & Govender, 2015). Interdependent employees share ideas, support, and co-create solutions in team-focused organizations (Monnot, 2016). Organizations that use collective intelligence and group synergy to solve complex problems need this collaborative innovation approach (Sharif et al., 2024). Interdependent employees are more likely to seek consensus and build on each other's ideas when focusing on collective goals, which boosts the organization's innovation potential (Wang et al., 2019).

Strong organizational relationships fostered by interdependent self-construal also boost innovation (Gelaidan et al., 2024). Employees who see themselves as part of a larger social framework build trusting relationships with coworkers, which encourages information and idea sharing (Hashmi & Siddiqui, 2023). Trust and openness foster innovation by creating a psychologically safe space for employees to share new ideas without fear of judgment or rejection (Karatepe et al., 2020). Servant leaders who promote collaboration and mutual support boost the positive effects of interdependent self-construal on innovative work behavior (Zhu & Zhang, 2020). Interdependent self-construal increases the likelihood that employees will prioritize organizational goals over personal ones (Sabbir, 2021). They work together to improve the company rather than compete for recognition (Yang et al., 2024). Interdependent self-construal fosters a culture of shared innovation by promoting collaboration and group success, fostering creative solutions co-developed and implemented collectively (Ekmekcioglu & Öner, 2024). Based on the literature review, the study proposes a research hypothesis:

H₃. Interdependent self-construal significantly and positively influences innovative work behavior.

2.5 Moderation of Independent and Interdependent Self-Construal between servant Leadership and Innovative Work Behavior

Servant leadership, which empowers employees, builds trust, and promotes personal growth, positively impacts innovative work behaviour (IWB) in various contexts (Cai et al., 2018; Wang et al., 2019). However, self-construal and other psychological traits affect how much servant leadership promotes IWB (Hsieh et al., 2021; Sabbir, 2021). Self-construal: how people see themselves about others is independent or interdependent. These self-construals affect how employees respond to servant leadership and innovation. The relationship between servant leadership and IWB is moderated by both independent and interdependent self-construal (Kim & Fan, 2018).

Individuals with independent self-construal view themselves as autonomous and prioritize personal goals over collective goals (Sabbir, 2021; Hsieh et al., 2021). Such employees feel empowered by servant leadership, which can boost innovation. These individuals can be creative and risk-taking with autonomy and resources from servant leaders (Khan et al., 2021).

This environment lets independent self-construal use their strengths to generate ideas and solve problems creatively (Khan et al., 2022). Thus, independent self-construal boosts servant leadership's benefits to IWB by encouraging self-directed innovation (Zhu & Zhang, 2020). Independent self-construal moderates the servant leadership-IWB relationship by affecting employee perceptions of servant leaders' autonomy and support. For people with high independent self-construal, servant leaders' autonomy supports self-expression and personal success (Sabbir, 2021; Hsieh et al., 2021). Because they feel free to innovate, these employees are motivated to start and execute creative projects (Iqbal et al., 2020). Kim and Fan (2018) found that independent self-construal promotes proactive innovation, especially in servant leadership environments that foster personal growth and self-leadership.

Individuals with interdependent self-construal see themselves as part of a group and prioritize group goals over individual goals (Yang et al., 2024). Servant leadership gives these workers a sense of belonging and shared purpose, which can boost innovation. Servant leaders foster collaboration where interdependent self-construal employees feel valued and supported in their quest for group success (Zeng & Xu, 2020). The collective responsibility of employees drives innovative behaviours that benefit the organization (Monnot, 2016; Ekmekcioglu & Öner, 2024).

Interdependent self-construal moderates the servant leadership-IWB relationship by influencing how employees react to the leader's focus on team goals and well-being. Employees with high interdependent self-construal are more likely to innovate when they believe servant leadership supports collective goals (Yang et al., 2024; Wang, 2019). This alignment promotes collaborative innovation, where people come up with and implement ideas that benefit the whole team or organization (Cai et al., 2018; Hashmi & Siddiqui, 2023). Servant leadership boosts employee innovation through interdependent self-construal in an inclusive and collaborative culture.

In different ways, independent and interdependent self-construal moderate the relationship between servant leadership and IWB. Self-construal employees need autonomy and personal empowerment, which servant leadership provides by supporting and encouraging initiative (Khan et al., 2022). These individuals may engage in IWB if they feel their servant leader is letting them pursue their ideas and take risks (Kim & Fan, 2018). However, employees

with interdependent self-construal respond to servant leadership by focusing on collective innovation and group goals (Yang et al., 2024). Employee innovation depends on servant leadership and self-construal. Self-construal moderates leadership effects by influencing employee interpretation of leadership behaviors (Hsieh et al., 2021). Independent self-construal promotes autonomy and personal innovation, while interdependent self-construal promotes shared responsibility and collective creativity (Hashmi & Siddiqui, 2023). This moderating effect ensures that servant leadership's impact on IWB varies by employee self-construal type (Zeng & Xu, 2020). Thus, the study proposes research hypotheses.

H₄. Independent (a) and Interdependent (b) self-construal significantly moderate the relationship between servant leadership and innovative work behaviour.

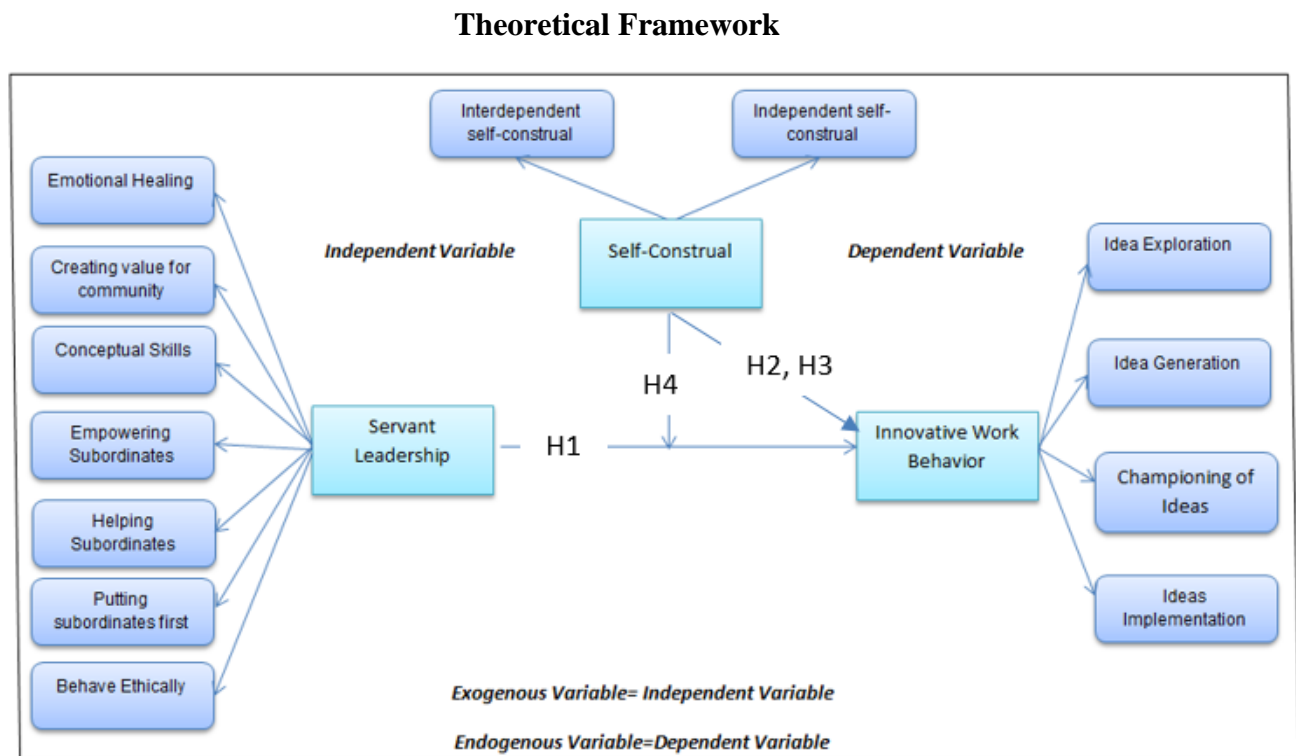


Figure 1. Theoretical Framework

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research design

The study used a quantitative research method employing a survey questionnaire.

3.2 Measurement constructs

The below section describes the scales and reliability of different variables:

Servant Leadership

The present research used 28 measurement items scale of Servant Leadership. The scale was taken from Liden et al. (2008). It comprises 4 items of each of seven dimensions. Seven dimensions are: 1) Emotional Healing 2) Creating Value for the Community 3) Conceptual Skills 4) Empowering Subordinates 5) Helping subordinates grow and succeed 6) Putting subordinates first, and 7) Behaving ethically). Liden et al. (2008) has theoretically identified and then validated this scale through exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). Respondents indicated the degree to which each item described their manager on a Likert Scale-5 of agreement 1) strongly disagree, 2) Disagree 3) neither agree nor disagree 4) Agree and 5) strongly agree

Innovative Work Behavior (IWB)

A 10-item scale was used for the measuring of IWB from the studies of (De Jong & Den Hartog, 2010). Leaders were asked to rate the frequency through which their subordinates show behaviour. Similarly, subordinates have to rate themselves also. The result was taken as two factors. First is Manager/Supervisor “Rating of Employee Innovative Behavior” and Second is the “Self-rating of innovative work Behavior” (Abraham et al., 2006)

Self-Construal

12-Item scale of (Gudykunst & Lee, 2003) was adopted to measure Independent and Interdependent Self-Construal. Likert Scale-5 was used for this purpose.

Reliability

This test is used to determine the constancy of factors. By using SPSS 20, the internal consistency of factors was determined. (Gliem & Gliem, 2003) elaborated on different situations for measuring the consistency of reliability. If the value of Cronbach Alpha is >0.9 it is “Excellent”, if > 0.8 it is “Good”, >0.7 is “Acceptable”, > 0.6 is “Questionable”, > 0.5 is “Poor” and < 0.5 is “Unacceptable”. We can see that in table 3 all reliability values bump into this condition (Rule of thumb). The pattern showed Interdependent self-construal and independent

self-construal acted as moderator and its effect on relationship between Servant Leadership – Innovative Work Behavior. For the investigation of moderator effect, we classified it in three stages:

1. We shall find the main effect of Servant Leadership → Innovative Work Behavior as shown in Figure 2.
2. After it, the moderator (Self-Construal) will be added to find this relationship. Then relationship between Servant Leadership → Innovative Work Behavior will be stated as a simple effect, moderated by variable M. P1 shows the strength Servant Leadership → Innovative Work Behavior relationship when moderator Self-construal has zero value. If the degree of moderator self-construal is increased or decreased by 1 unit, the simple effect is changed by p3.

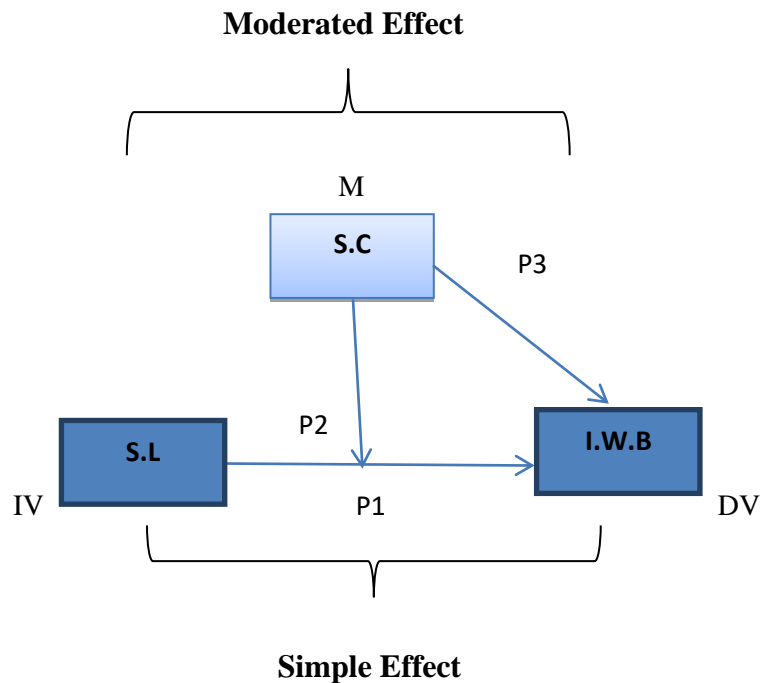


Figure 2: Moderated and Simple Effects

- To understand how moderating impacts are demonstrated, an interaction term is created, i.e. $S.L * S.C$. Moderator effect requires the feature of simple effect of independent variable, simple effect of moderator and interaction term. The path coefficient is shown as P3 which indicates how P1 changed when the moderator was added and changed by 1 unit (Joseph F.Hair, Jr & G.Tomas M. Hult, 2014)

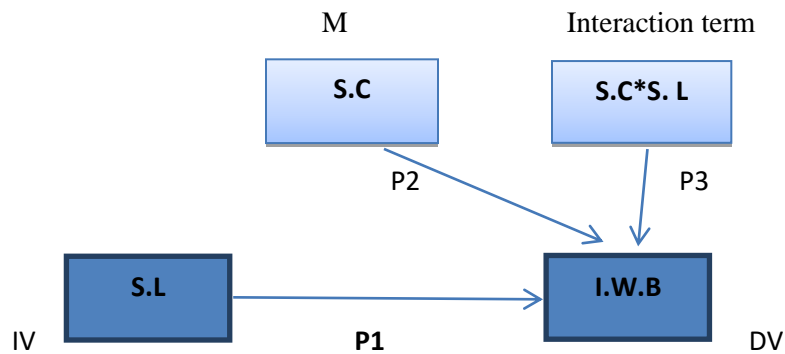


Figure 3: Mediator and the Interaction Term Effects

3.3 Creation of Interaction Term

In PLS-SEM, two approaches are used to create interaction terms. These approaches are:

- Two-stage approach.
- Product Indicator Approach

When the model is a formative measurement model then a two-stage approach is used. However, when the moderator has a reflective measurement model, the product indicator approach is used. Here, our research has a reflective measurement model so, we shall use a product indicator approach.

3.4 Assessment of Measurement Model

Table 1 shows factor loadings for servant leadership, innovative work behaviour (IWB), and self-construal items. Factor loadings show how strongly items relate to their latent constructs.

Hair et al. (2019) advocate that factor loadings above 0.70 indicate that items adequately represent the construct. In Table 1, all factor loadings are above 0.70, from 0.711 to 0.985, indicating strong construct convergent validity (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2019). This indicates that servant leadership, IWB, and self-construal items are well-aligned with their constructs and contribute significantly to the model.

Cronbach's alpha (α) measures internal consistency or reliability. An acceptable value above 0.70 indicates that construct items measure the same concept consistently (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). In Table 1, servant leadership Cronbach alpha is 0.942, indicating high reliability. The α values for IWB (0.821) and self-construal (0.833) indicate strong internal consistency among items. These results indicate that each construct's items consistently measure servant leadership, innovative behavior, and self-construal. Composite reliability (CR) measures the overall reliability of a construct's items. Like Cronbach's alpha, CR values above 0.70 are acceptable (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Servant Leadership, IWB, and Self-Construal all have CR values above 0.70: 0.708, 0.830, and 0.843. These findings strengthen measurement scale reliability. High CR values indicate that constructs are measured reliably across multiple items, confirming that the models are suitable for further analysis (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

The average variance extracted (AVE) compares construct variance to measurement error variance. Convergent validity is achieved when the construct explains more than half of the variance in the observed variables (Hair et al., 2019). In Table 1, all constructs have AVE values above 0.50, with servant leadership at 0.682, IWB at 0.612, and self-construal at 0.622. These values show that the constructs explain enough of the item variance, confirming convergent validity. This model's constructs have good convergent validity and reliability, making them suitable for research and model testing.

Table 1. Convergent validity and Reliability

Scales	Items	Factor Loadings	A	CR	AVE
Servant Leadership	SL1	0.812	0.942	0.708	0.682
	SL2	0.985			
	SL3	0.920			
	SL4	0.880			
	SL5	0.747			

	SL6	0.725			
	SL7	0.842			
	SL8	0.776			
	SL9	0.903			
	SL10	0.940			
	SL11	0.857			
	SL12	0.939			
	SL13	0.932			
	SL14	0.875			
	SL15	0.728			
	SL16	0.822			
	SL17	0.795			
	SL18	0.983			
	SL19	0.812			
	SL20	0.744			
	SL21	0.784			
	SL22	0.851			
	SL23	0.971			
	SL24	0.733			
	SL25	0.764			
	SL26	0.877			
	SL27	0.912			
	SL28	0.793			
Innovative Work Behavior	IWB1	0.711	0.821	0.830	0.612
	IWB2	0.743			
	IWB3	0.782			
	IWB4	0.790			
	IWB5	0.764			
	IWB6	0.841			
	IWB7	0.879			
	IWB8	0.792			
	IWB9	0.845			
	IWB10	0.754			

Self-Construal	SC1	0.721	0.833	0.843	0.622
	SC2	0.744			
	SC3	0.768			
	SC4	0.784			
	SC5	0.799			
	SC6	0.731			
	SC7	0.817			
	SC8	0.774			
	SC9	0.803			
	SC10	0.798			
	SC11	0.827			
	SC12	0.812			

Discriminant validity using the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) criterion is shown in Table 2. Discriminant validity guarantees that each construct measures a unique concept (Henseler et al., 2015). Guidelines recommend HTMT values below 0.90 for discriminant validity, but stricter analyses use 0.85 (Henseler et al., 2015). In the table, Servant Leadership and Innovative Work Behavior have an HTMT value of 0.65, well below the 0.85 threshold, indicating that they are distinct. Both Servant Leadership and Innovative Work Behavior have HTMT values of 0.58 and 0.71, respectively, meeting discriminant validity criteria.

Results show that these constructs measure different aspects of leadership, behavior, and self-perception with no significant overlap. The HTMT values show that the measurement model has strong discriminant validity, which is necessary to avoid measurement overlap in further analysis. The HTMT values show that this study's constructs meet discriminant validity requirements, allowing for reliable structural relationship interpretation in subsequent analyses (Henseler et al., 2015).

Table 2. Discriminant Validity

Constructs	Servant Leadership	\Innovative Work Behavior
Servant Leadership		

Innovative Work Behavior	0.65	
Self-Construal	0.58	0.71

3.5 Moderator Model for Independent Self-Construal

A concept to which a person classifies himself as independent or interdependent is called Self-Construal. Interdependent (self-construal) and independent (self-construal), both acted differently on the relationship between Servant Leadership and Innovative work behavior. Table 3 shows the moderator model for independent self-construal.

The direct relationship between S.L→I.W.B is 0.492. The interaction term value of the moderator is -0.115 which shows that the SL*SC called interaction term has a negative effect on Innovative Work Behavior. If independent self-construal is high, it indicates that the relationship between SL and IWB would decrease by the magnitude of the interaction term and the attained value was $0.492 - 0.115 = 0.377$. Hence, when independent self-construal becomes higher, SL turns out to be less essential for the explanation of IWB.

Now we shall check whether the moderator has a significant impact on the SL→IWB relationship. For this purpose, the bootstrapping procedure was used. And t value shall be determined. Here the t-value for the moderator was 2.431 at a 5% significance value. According to (Joseph F.Hair, Jr & G.Tomas M. Hult, 2014) rule of thumb is that the critical t-value for two-tailed at significance level 5% should be greater than 1.96, at 1%, it should be at 2.57 or higher and at 10% it should be 1.65 or higher.

Effect Size Test

The moderating effect of a variable can also be calculated by the value of f^2 .

Table 3. Independent self-construal Moderation

Moderation Testing (Independent Self-Construal)						
	<i>Sample Mean (M)</i>	<i>Original Path Coefficient</i>	<i>P- Value</i>	<i>T-Statistics</i>	<i>F value</i>	<i>Support</i>
Moderator	-0.141	-0.115	0.039	1.983	0.081	Yes

effect→IWB						
SC→IWB	0.144	0.143	0.000	2.694	0.059	Yes
SL→IWB	0.495	0.492	0.000	8.483	0.041	Yes

3.6 Moderator Model for Interdependent Self-Construal

Interdependent self-construal refers to a self-concept under which a person defines himself/herself with connectedness to others. Path analysis for independent self-construal is as under:

The results of this study indicated that when employees had strong interdependent self-construal, it strengthened the relationship between servant leadership and innovative work behaviour. The direct relationship between SL and IWB was 0.109. But when moderator SC was introduced then the obtained value was $0.109+0.111= 0.220$. It means that the relationship between SL and IWB was increased by the degree of interaction term. Figure 8 shows the path coefficient and value of the interaction term.

3.7 Moderation Effect of Interdependent Self-Construal

The value of Interdependent self-construal affects positively on the relationship between SL and IWB. The significance of moderation could be assessed by t-value and effect size f^2 . Table 4 shows the t-value and f^2 value of the moderator variable.

Table 4. Moderating Effects

Moderating effect testing						
	<i>Sample Mean (M)</i>	<i>Original Coefficient</i>	<i>Path</i>	<i>T-Statistics</i>	<i>F value</i>	<i>Support</i>
Moderator effect→IWB						
SC→IWB	0.137	0.111		2.177	0.074	Yes
SL→IWB	0.175	0.212		3.685	0.039	Yes
SL→IWB	0.227	0.109		1.964	0.023	Yes

4. Discussion

Table 3 shows that employees with higher independent self-construal have a weaker relationship between servant leadership and innovative work behaviour, with a significant negative path coefficient of -0.115 ($p = 0.039$). This supports Huang et al. (2021), who examined the complex relationship between leadership traits and self-construal and found that independent self-construal may not respond as strongly to leadership efforts that emphasize collaboration and communal goals. Sabbir (2021) found that independent self-construal can weaken employee cohesiveness, leading to weaker group-oriented outcomes like IWB. In Table 3, self-construal (SC) moderated IWB (path coefficient = 0.143, $p = 0.000$), supporting previous studies like Monnot (2016), which stressed the importance of relational and interdependent self-construal in promoting meaningfulness and engagement at work. Hsieh et al. (2021) found that self-construal shapes employee preferences and leadership-related behaviours, supporting its positive effect on IWB. In this study, SC's moderating effect on the SL-IWB relationship shows that servant leaders guide more connected, interdependent employees to innovate.

Interdependent self-construal strengthens the SL-IWB relationship, as shown in Table 4, by a path coefficient of 0.111 ($p = 0.074$). Yang et al. (2024) found that collectivist leaders encourage more innovative behaviour in collaborative, goal-oriented employees. The results show that servant leadership promotes innovation better when employees focus on interdependence and group goals. Zhu and Zhang (2020) found that servant leadership works best when employees focus on collective success rather than individual success. The significant positive relationship between SL and IWB (Table 4, path coefficient = 0.227, $p = 0.023$) supports the literature that links servant leadership to innovation. Khan et al. (2022) showed that servant leadership allows psychological empowerment and job crafting, resulting in innovative work. This supports Wang et al. (2019), who found that servant leadership's empowering and ethical approach boosts employee innovation. Servant leadership's focus on employee development matches employees' desire to succeed collectively, improving IWB.

The study also found that employees with higher interdependent self-construal have a stronger relationship between SL and IWB, as shown by the stronger moderating effect. Iqbal et al. (2020) found that servant leadership's emphasis on collaboration, ethics, and empowerment boosts innovation, especially in workplaces where employees prioritize group goals over individual goals. This also supports Cai et al. (2018), who found that servant leadership's impact

on innovation was greatest in interdependent cultures where employees had meaningful work and job autonomy. The negative path coefficient in Table 3 shows that independent self-construal has a weaker effect on moderating the SL-IWB relationship, contrary to Kim and Fan (2018), who suggested that self-leadership-driven independent individuals may still innovate. The current study suggests that servant leadership (SL) emphasizes collective success, which conflicts with independent self-construal focus on personal achievements and autonomy, which may demotivate independent individuals to innovate.

These findings add to the literature on self-construal moderating role in leadership innovation. Interdependent self-construal employees thrive under servant leadership, leading to more innovative work behaviour, according to the study. This supports Gelaidan et al. (2024), who found that servant leadership and collective-oriented constructs drive innovation. For leadership development, the findings suggest considering employee self-construal when implementing servant leadership strategies to maximize innovation.

5. Conclusion

The main aim of the present study was to investigate the correlation between employee innovative work behaviour, self-construal, and servant leadership. An important contribution of this study is the incorporation of self-construal, specifically independent and interdependent self-construal, as a moderating variable. This edition provides fresh perspectives on the current research for second language learning and innovative work behaviour. The present study focused on investigating the impact of servant leadership on innovative work behaviour, explicitly exploring how self-construal acts as a moderator in this association. More precisely, the researchers discovered that the relationship between servant leadership and innovative work behaviour, when influenced by interdependent self-construal, had a path coefficient of 0.227. This value is lower than what previous studies have reported.

The primary focus of this study was the banking sector in Pakistan. The employees in this sector demonstrate a tendency to prioritize collective objectives and exhibit a preference for collaborative work to achieve organizational targets. The results indicate that employees who have a strong sense of interdependent self-construal are more inclined to exhibit innovative behaviours when they are motivated by servant leaders. These employees are motivated to contribute to the organization's collective identity and mission, creating an environment where

imaginative thinking and collaborative innovation thrive. In contrast, the correlation between SL and IWB was less strong among individuals with a high independent self-construal, suggesting that they are less inclined to be driven by SL in promoting innovative work behaviours.

The study finds that when employees who rely on each other for success receive support and motivation from leaders who prioritize serving others, they are more likely to actively participate in promoting organizational innovation. This is achieved through cooperative work and aligning their actions with the goals of the team and the organization. For these employees, servant leadership catalyzes fostering innovative solutions and driving organizational objectives. Conversely, the less strong correlation between SL and employees with an independent self-construal implies that fostering innovation in this group necessitates employing distinct leadership strategies. Servant leadership helps teams with high interdependent self-construal turn ideas into actionable solutions that can be integrated into organizational processes, which is the key to innovative work behaviour.

6. Limitations and Future Directions

In research work, virtually every kind of research has its limitations. Therefore, the limitations in this research are no exception. Firstly, the application of the present study was limited to the Pakistani commercial banking sector only. Future researchers may endeavour to compare one sector with other or different sectors within the country. Moreover, the present study is based on cross-sectional data. However, it is suggested that in-depth analysis data with a longitudinal / time-spaced nature may be used in future studies for better evaluation and results. Convenience sampling may be replaced by one of the probability sampling techniques to improve the generalizability. Additionally, it is suggested that similar studies should be conducted in different cultures and countries to observe the differences in the results.

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