

JOB DEMANDS, MENTAL HEALTH, AND PERFORMANCE: THE MEDIATING INFLUENCE OF SERVANT LEADERSHIP DURING A CRISIS

Jose Luis DANIEL

College of Business, Texas A&M University, Kingsville, USA
Jose.daniel@tamuk.edu

Ruth CHATELAIN-JARDON

College of Business, Texas A&M University, Kingsville, USA
rchatelain@tamuk.edu

Song XIAOCHUAN

College of Business, Texas A&M University, Kingsville, USA
Xiaochuan.song@tamuk.edu

Kathleen REES

College of Business, Texas A&M University, Kingsville, USA
Kathleen.rees@tamuk.edu

Abstract

The purpose of this research is to study the moderating effect of servant leadership in the relationships among job demands, mental health, and job performance during the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. Data from 302 individuals who have been working from home were collected from the United States. Partial least squares was used as the statistical analysis technique. The first analysis examined the direct effect of job demands on individual performance and mental health. The results show that the job demands variable is positively and significantly associated with individual performance and mental health. When the servant leadership variable was introduced as a moderator, high job demands lead to low levels of individual performance when the servant leadership level is low; however, individual performance is also high when the servant leadership level is high. Similarly, when the servant leadership level is low, high job demands lead to low levels of mental health, whereas employees present high levels of mental health when the servant leadership level is high. Therefore, it could be concluded that adopting a servant leadership approach during a crisis could help positively influence employee performance and mental health. Discussions, limitations, and implications are also presented in this study.

Keywords: Servant Leadership, Mental Health, Productivity, Job Demands

1. INTRODUCTION

The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic has impacted the world in different ways. Many governments have implemented several restrictions to reduce people's mobility and minimize the spread of the disease. As a result, many organizations have allowed employees to work from home. For many, this was a transformation to virtual work environments, where employees and supervisors communicate, interact, and conduct their activities using technology (Carnevale & Hatak, 2020). This new norm has presented several challenges for supervisors and employees regarding productivity, commitment, and leadership (Barrero *et al.*, 2020). Along these lines, the leadership role many managers and supervisors utilize during this time is vital to an organization's survival. Bartsch *et al.* (2020) noted that while working in a digital context presents leadership challenges, the COVID-19 pandemic has triggered the need to behave and lead in new and unique ways. Although there have been articles about leadership in organizations during crisis and non-crisis contexts (Hasel, 2013; Pearson & Clair, 1998; Collins & Feeney, 2000), the COVID-19 pandemic presents a unique context to study the influence of leadership on employee outcomes and mental health. For many, home office could create uncertainty, stress, and fear that could negatively influence job performance and mental health. Therefore, it is expected that the leadership style adopted by supervisors and managers during this pandemic

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could ease the challenges and difficulties that employees encounter and, consequently, positively affect job performance and mental health.

This research aims to study the moderating effect of servant leadership on the relationships among job demands, job performance, and mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic. Townsend and Stockton (2020) noted that during a phenomenon like the pandemic, the basic principles implied in servant leadership could become more than relevant. The present research contributes to academia by studying servant leadership as a potential factor in alleviating mental health and boosting job performance. For practitioners, this research provides new information to managers and supervisors about the importance of adopting a leadership style that could impact subordinates and work units. Organizations could financially benefit from this research workers present higher levels of productivity and good mental health.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Job demands and job performance

The relationship between job demands and job performance could be explained by the activation theory (Gardner, 1986), which states that there is a characteristic activation level defined as neural activity in every human being that allows the central nervous system to operate efficiently. Due to job demands, an individual could have an experienced activation level that could move to the positive or negative side of the characteristic level (Gardner, 1986). Therefore, low job demands would suggest low activation levels, while high job demands would suggest high activation levels. This approach indicates a nonlinear relationship between both constructs. In the case of home office, some individuals may find it challenging, depending on the job demands or variations. These variations also relate to situational constraints that could negatively influence job performance (Gilboa *et al.*, 2008). A situational constraint could be understood as a condition in which an employee has minimum control, thereby limiting an employee's work (Gilboa *et al.*, 2008; Jex, 1998). In this case, the COVID-19 pandemic could be considered a situational constraint since it has forced thousands of employees from diverse industries to conduct their work activities from home. For instance, Kazekami (2020) found that working from home for too many hours could lead to a decrease in an employee's productivity and performance. Ralph *et al.* (2020) noted that working from home could constitute a challenge for many employees since they could face many distractions. In their study about the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on developers' well-being and productivity, they found that the pandemic has had a negative effect on the performance of software developers. On the other hand, it has also been noted that working from home brings some advantages to employees. Ipsen *et al.* (2021) studied people's experiences of working from home during the COVID-19 pandemic, and the participants reported positive experiences in areas such as work-life balance, improved work efficiency, and greater work control. In addition, Kohont and Ignjatovic (2022) analyzed working-from-home arrangements and found advantages, such as a more flexible schedule, less stress, a healthier work environment, and increased efficiency. Finally, Choukir *et al.* (2022) studied the attitudes and perceptions of working from home and found a positive relationship between employee attitude and job performance. Therefore, it is expected that the relationship between job demands and individual performance for individuals working from home would present a nonlinear relationship, and the result of this relationship could take a positive or negative association.

H1: There will be a significant relationship between job demands and individual performance.

2.2. Job demands and mental health

The relationship between job demands and mental health could also present a nonlinear trajectory. For many, working from home has demanded more time, technological skills, and communication for supervisors and subordinates. This new way of conducting work-related activities could be associated with more stress, anxiety, and mental health problems (Indiana, 2020). A recent study conducted by McKinsey and Company in November noted that employees' mental health had become one of the primary challenges during this pandemic (Ellingrud *et al.*, 2020). Gonzalez-Mule and Cockburn (2020) reported that having stressful job demands would lead to the deterioration of the employees' mental health. Consequently, deteriorated mental health could harm the

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productivity of the individual and that of the organization as a whole. In an 11-year follow-up study, Dalgard *et al.* (2009) found that highly demanding jobs combined with low-control circumstances negatively affect employees' mental health. Huang *et al.* (2012) reported on high-demand jobs–burnout–poor mental health relationship, as well as the perceived reverse effect. In the same vein, Kim *et al.* (2016) found that employees' mental health is more vulnerable to highly demanding jobs. On the other hand, it has been noted that working from home during the pandemic presents some advantages. Pierce *et al.* (2020) noted that for some individuals with high economic security, not commuting to work, spending more time with the family, and changes to education and work duties could represent less stress and higher levels of mental health and well-being. In addition, Purwanto *et al.* (2020) studied the advantages and disadvantages of working from home for individuals in an elementary school. They found advantages such as not following a strict schedule and less stress due to traffic avoidance. Finally, Kitagawa *et al.* (2021) studied the effects of working from home on productivity and mental health in manufacturing companies. Factors such as focus on work, less fatigue, zero commuting, and having extra time for sleep were found to have a strong relationship with better mental health. This finding suggests that individuals who were working from home found better and quieter work environments. Therefore, it is expected that the relationship between job demands and mental health for individuals working from home would present a nonlinear relationship, and the result of this relationship could take a positive or negative association. The proposed model of the relationship of the direct effect of job demands (not including the moderating effect) is presented in Figure 1.

H2: There will be a significant relationship between job demands and mental health.

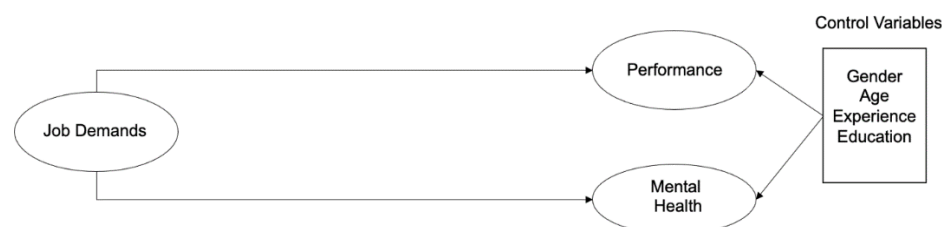


FIGURE 1 – MODEL NO MODERATOR

2.3. Servant leadership and moderating effect

The COVID-19 pandemic has become a severe challenge to many governments and organizations around the world. In the United States, the disease constitutes one of the major crises in the country's history. The global pandemic has impacted all country's economic levels and presented numerous challenges for organizations and employees conducting home office. One relevant issue relates to the type of leadership that managers and supervisors have adopted in this environment, as well as its impact on the organization and the subordinates. Among the numerous leadership styles presented in the literature (Goleman, 2000; Mosadegh & Yarmohammadian, 2006; Lok & Crawford, 1999), servant leadership offers unique characteristics that could be effective in times of crisis (Gandolfi & Stone, 2016, 2018).

The concept of servant leadership has been proposed as a unique leadership style that plays an important role in different institutions (Baggett, 1997; Turner, 2000; Russell & Stone, 2002; Luthans & Avolio, 2003; Reinke, 2004). Greenleaf (1977) noted that servant leadership emphasizes going beyond self-interest as one of the core elements. It is a style that focuses on serving, interacting, and helping others (Stone *et al.*, 2004; Patterson, 2003). This leadership style is frequently associated with figures such as Mother Theresa, Mohandas Gandhi, and Martin Luther King Jr. (Keith, 2008). Other scholars have connected this leadership style to Christian principles and Jesus Christ's teachings about serving others (Winston, 2004; Parris & Peachey, 2013; Sendjaya & Sarros, 2002).

Several attributes, such as listening, persuasion, communication, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people, and building a community, have been assigned to individuals who use this style (Spears, 1996, 1995; Russell & Stone, 2002). Servant leadership helps boost trust, which could increase the levels of service in the leader–follower relationship. One of the basic principles of the servant leadership theory is the desire to serve first and put other people's interests above one's own, which could be critical during a crisis (Spears, 1996),

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especially since it could create an environment characterized by service that could positively influence the way subordinates conduct their activities and, eventually, their productivity (Liden *et al.*, 2015). Along these lines, servant leadership could also create a safe emotional environment for subordinates (Schaubroeck *et al.*, 2011; Russell, 2001; Joseph & Winston, 2005). In difficult times, servant leaders develop a desire to help improve their subordinates' mental well-being (Oner, 2012). According to Van Dierendonck and Patterson (2015), compassionate love is another characteristic presented by servant leaders since they are constantly concerned about their subordinates' needs. This love could be related to selfless behavior, leading to more robust personal emotional stability (Drambrun & Richard, 2011; Underwood, 2008). Therefore, it is expected that servant leadership could function as a moderator between daily work activities and job performance and mental health. More specifically, the use or adoption of servant leadership could ease their work activities' complexity and positively affect job performance during a crisis such as the COVID -19 pandemic. Similarly, a leadership approach based on serving others could facilitate the completion of demanding work duties and positively influence employees' mental health. Therefore:

H3: Servant leadership will positively moderate the relationship between job demands and job performance.

H4: Servant leadership will positively moderate the relationship between job demands and mental health.

The proposed model, including the moderating variable, is presented in Figure 2.

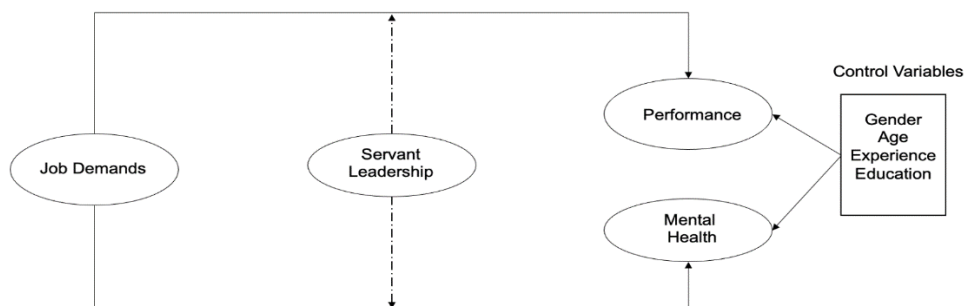


FIGURE 2 – PROPOSED MODEL WITH MODERATOR

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Sample size and data collection

Data were collected in the US using Amazon Mechanical Turk. This data collection method has been noted to be reliable (Buhrmester *et al.*, 2016; Paolacci *et al.*, 2010). The sample size consisted of 302 individuals who have been conducting home office and work in different industries. The data were collected during the COVID-19 pandemic (September 2021).

3.2. Measures

The variable job demands was measured using six indicators from Wood *et al.* (2011). The respondents answered questions such as “I do not have enough time to carry out my work,” “I cannot meet all the conflicting demands made on my time at work,” and “I never finish work, feeling I have completed everything I should.” For this section, individuals answered using a scale of 1 for “strongly disagree,” 2 for “disagree,” 3 for “slightly disagree,” 4 for “slightly agree,” 5 for “agree,” and 6 for “strongly agree.” Servant leadership was measured using the seven-element (SL-7) scale from Liden *et al.* (2015). Some of the items included were “My leader can tell if something work-related is going wrong,” “My leader makes my career development a priority,” and “I would seek help from my leader if I had a personal problem.” Individuals were asked to answer using a scale of 1 for “strongly disagree,” 2 for “disagree,” 3 for “slightly disagree,” 4 for “slightly agree,” 5 for “agree,” and 6 for strongly agree.”

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Job performance was assessed using a scale from Mott *et al.* (1972). Some of the questions included were “How does the quality of your products or services compare to your colleagues’ output?” and “How quickly do you adjust to work changes compared to your colleagues?” Finally, mental health was measured using 14 indicators from the Mental Health Continuum Short Form (Keyes *et al.*, 2008, 2009). This scale measures positive mental health and represents different feelings of well-being. Some of the questions included in the survey were “In the past month, how often did you feel happy?” and “In the past month, how often did you feel interested in life?” For this section, the respondents were asked to answer using a scale of 1 for “never,” 2 for “once or twice a month,” 3 for “about once a week,” 4 for “two or three times a week,” 5 for “almost every day,” and 6 for “every day.”

The statistical analysis used was partial least squares (PLS) regression. Some of the highlights of PLS are that it does not require the data to be normally distributed and it allows a small sample size for the analysis. PLS regression was conducted using the WarpPLS software (Kock, 2012). In addition to the latent variables, gender, age, experience, and education were included as control variables. The objective of including control variables is to enhance the estimates of the relationships of the variables involved (Spector & Brannick, 2011). Age and experience were included since they could influence individual performance and mental health. Individuals with more experience could have a better understanding of productivity at work and their mental well-being. Similarly, people with higher education could better assess their work duties. Gender was included since there could be significant differences in terms of mental well-being. For instance, it has been noted that women with no social support for life events are more vulnerable than men without support (Afifi, 2007).

TABLE 1 -FACTOR LOADINGS FOR JOB DEMANDS MENTAL HEALTH, PERFORMANCE, AND SERVANT LEADERSHIP

<i>Job Demands</i>	(.934)
I do not have enough time to carry out my work.	.872
I cannot meet all the conflicting demands made on my time at work.	.896
I never finish work feeling I have completed everything I should.	.865
I am asked to do work without adequate resources to complete it.	.861
I cannot follow best practice in the time available.	.876
I am required to do the basic tasks which prevent me completing more important ones.	.832
<i>Mental Health</i>	(.954)
In the past month, how often did you feel Happy?	.820
In the past month, how often did you feel Interested in life.	.806
In the past month, how often did you feel satisfied?	.822
In the past month, how often did you feel that you liked most parts of your personality?	.816
In the past month, how often did you feel good at managing the responsibilities of your daily life?	.807
In the past month, how often did you feel that you had warm and trusting relationships with others?	.737
In the past month, how often did you feel that you have experiences that challenged you to grow and become a better person?	.799
In the past month, how often did you feel confident to think or express your own ideas and opinions?	.694
In the past month, how often did you feel that your life has a sense of direction or meaning to it?	.830
In the past month, how often did you feel that you had something important to contribute to society?	.783
In the past month, how often did you feel that you belonged to a community (like a social group, your neighborhood, your city)?	.822
In the past month, how often did you feel that our society is becoming a better place for people?	.781
In the past month, how often did you feel that people are basically good?	.778
In the past month, how often did you feel that the way our society works makes sense to you?	.772
<i>Performance</i>	(.915)
Which of the following selections best describes how your supervisor rated you on your last formal performance evaluation?	.730
How does your level of productivity compare to that of your colleagues’ productivity levels?	.763
How does the quality of your products or services compare to your colleagues’ output?	.814
How efficiently do you work compared to your colleagues? In other words, how well do you use available resources (money, people, equipment, etc.)?	.725
Compared to your colleagues, how good are you at preventing or minimizing potential work problems before they occur?	.771
Compared to your colleagues, how effective are you with keeping up with changes that could affect the way you work?	.783
How quickly do you adjust to work changes compared to your colleagues?	.793
How well would you rate yourself compared to your colleagues in adjusting to new work changes?	.772
How well do you handle workplace emergencies (such as crisis deadlines, unexpected personnel issues, resource allocation problems, etc.) compared to your colleagues?	.793
<i>Servant Leadership</i>	(.876)
My leader can tell if something work-related is going wrong.	.671
My leader makes my career development a priority.	.796
I would seek help from my leader if I had a personal problem.	.801
My leader emphasizes the importance of giving back to the community.	.777
My leader puts my best interests ahead of his/her own.	.811
My leader gives me the freedom to handle difficult situations in the way that I feel is best.	.764
My leader would NOT compromise ethical principles in order to achieve success.	.675

Cronbach’s Alpha is presented in parenthesis.

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3.3. Model assessment

Preliminary results included the analysis of convergent and discriminant validity for all latent variables. Convergent validity is evident when different measures of the same construct present a high correlation (Price, 1997). The analysis for convergent validity involved factor loading estimation for all indicators. The suggested threshold is a minimum of 0.5 (Hair *et al.*, 2010), and all indicators met this requirement (Table 1). Discriminant validity was conducted to confirm that different constructs measure the same phenomenon (Kline, 2009). Discriminant validity assessment implied evaluating the average variance extracted (AVE). Fornier and Larcker (1981) suggested that the square root of the AVE value should be greater than the other correlations involved in the analysis. Table 2 presents the AVE results for this analysis. All variables in parenthesis present a value higher than the other variables involved. Thus, it can be said that the model presents acceptable values in terms of convergent and discriminant validity.

TABLE 2- CORRELATIONS AMONG VARIABLES FOR THE AVERAGE VARIANCE EXTRACTED (AVES)

	JD	MH	PERF	SL	GENDER	AGE	EXP	EDU	SL*JD
1. JD	(0.867)								
2.MH	0.349***	(0.791)							
3.PERF	0.277***	0.728***	(0.772)						
4.SL	0.467***	0.694***	0.672***	(0.759)					
5.GEN	0.018	0.029	0.017	-0.052	(1.000)				
6.AGE	-0.003	-0.004	-0.032	-0.050	0.003	(1.000)			
7.EXP	-0.030	-0.066	-0.007	-0.060	0.082	0.275***	(1.000)		
8.EDU	0.223***	0.370***	0.199***	0.267***	0.065	0.041	-0.001	(1.000)	
9.SL*JD	-0.034	0.064	0.144	-0.110	0.133*	-0.078	0.020	-0.080	(1.000)

JD= Job Demands; MH= Mental Health; PERF= Performance; SL= Servant Leadership; GEN= gender; AGE; EXP= Experience; EDU= Education; SL*JD: Servant leadership * job demands
Notes: ***, **, * indicate significant level at .1%, 1% and 5% respectively

In addition to the validity analysis, a reliability assessment was conducted. This analysis is determined by Cronbach's alpha coefficient with a minimum acceptable threshold of 0.7 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Table 3 presents the value for this analysis, and all variables met the minimum threshold. Finally, a multicollinearity test was performed to analyze the variance inflation factor (VIF). Petter *et al.* (2007) noted that the recommended threshold for this value is 3.3 or lower. Table 4 presents the values for the VIF collinearity test, and all values had scores lower than the proposed threshold. In addition, Kock and Lynn (2012) found that a full VIF analysis also addresses the common method bias. The proposed acceptable threshold is a value of up to 3.3 as well. Therefore, it could be concluded that common method bias is not an issue in this analysis.

TABLE 3 - CRONBACH'S ALPHA VALUES

Cronbach's Alpha			
JD	MH	PERF	SL
0.934	0.954	0.915	0.876

JD= Job Demands; MH= Mental Health; PERF= Performance; SL= Servant Leadership

TABLE 4 - FULL COLLINEARITY VALUES

Full collinearity VIF's								
JD	MH	PERF	SL	GENDER	AGE	EXP	EDU	SL*JD
1.308	2.832	2.593	2.705	1.038	1.100	1.102	1.206	1.148

JD= Job Demands; MH= Mental Health; PERF= Performance; SL= Servant Leadership; GEN= gender; AGE; EXP= Experience; EDU= Education; SL*JD: Servant leadership * job demands

4. RESULTS

Figure 3 presents the results of the PLS regression analysis before including the moderating effect. Hypothesis 1 stated that job demands would present a significant association between job demands and individual performance. The results show a positive and significant association between both constructs ($\beta=0.435$; $p<0.001$). Therefore, Hypothesis 1 is supported. Hypothesis 2 also predicted a significant association between

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job demands and mental health. The results show a positive and significant relationship between both constructs ($\beta=0.396$; $p<0.001$). Therefore, Hypothesis 2 is supported.

When servant leadership was included as a moderator, the previous relationships continued showing positive and significant associations for individual performance ($\beta=0.411$; $p<0.001$) and mental health ($\beta=0.389$; $p<0.001$). Concerning Hypotheses 3 and 4, they predicted that servant leadership significantly moderates the relationship between job demands and mental health and job performance. The results show that the moderating effect is positive and significant for individual performance ($\beta=0.155$; $p<0.001$) and mental health ($\beta=0.141$; $p<0.001$). Therefore, Hypotheses 3 and 4 are supported. Figure 4 presents the results when servant leadership was included as a moderator.

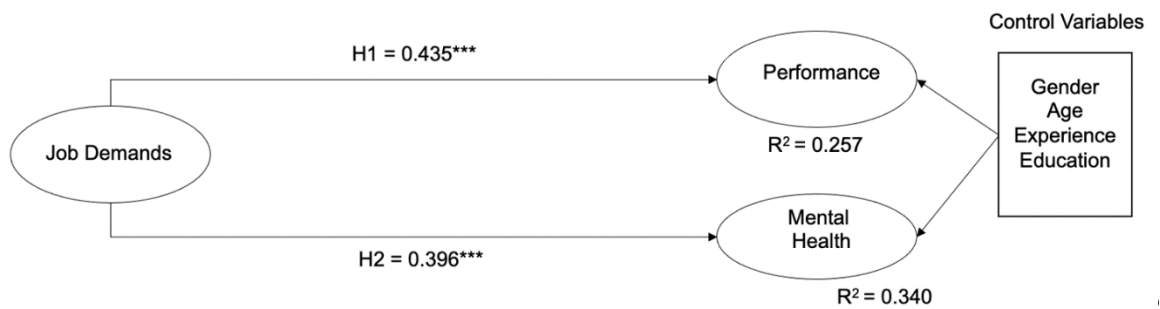


FIGURE 3 – RESULTS NO MODERATOR

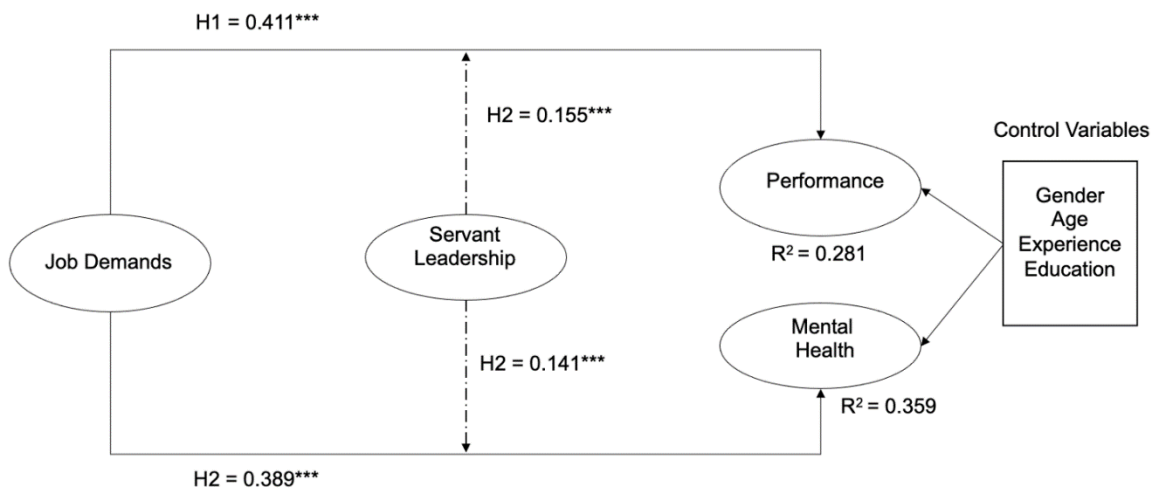


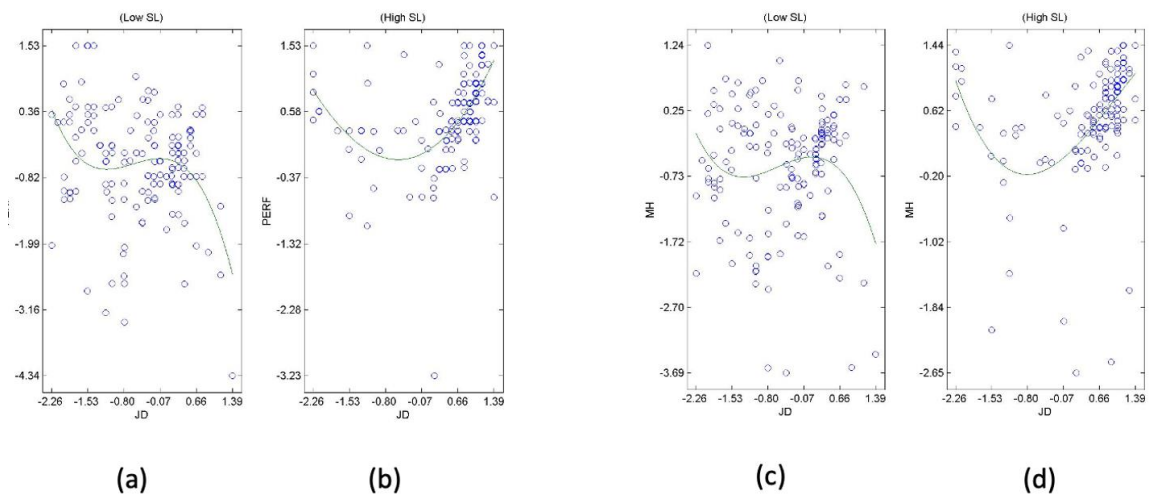
FIGURE 4 – RESULTS WITH MODERATOR

5. DISCUSSIONS

This research aims to study the moderating effect that servant leadership may have on job demands–mental health and job demands–job performance relationships during the COVID-19 pandemic. The first part of the methodology involved the direct analysis of the variables without the moderating variable. The results show that the variable job demands has a positive association with job performance. Similarly, job demands show a positive association with mental health, suggesting that high levels of work duties lead to feelings of happiness and satisfaction. These results could imply that the relationship between these variables may be related to the Yerkes–Dodson law and follow an inverted U shape. The positive association could represent the first part of the Inverse U curve. Previous studies have shown that increased stress (in many modalities) leads to increased performance as long as the increase in stress is not excessive (Johnston *et al.*, 2012; Chatelain-Jardon *et al.*, 2018, etc.). The same explanation could be applied to the increased job demands–increase in mental health since an employee would feel more satisfied when a challenging situation is successfully overcome. Concerning the moderating effect of servant leadership, the results unveil important information about this type

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of this leadership during a time of crisis like the COVID-19 pandemic. The findings of the present research suggest that when the moderating effect of servant leadership is introduced to the job demands–job performance relationship, this association presents two different forms: a downward pattern when the influence of the moderator is low and a U form when the influence is high. This association is interpreted as follows. When there are low levels of servant leadership, high demands will eventually lead to decreased performance. When there are high levels of servant leadership, high demands will lead to high levels of individual performance. These phenomena are illustrated in Figures 5(a) and (b), with the higher number of responses concentrated on the right side of the U curve when servant leadership is high. Concerning the scenario in which the moderating effect of servant leadership is introduced to the job demands–mental health relationship, the findings suggest the same interpretation as the relationships described above. When employees perceive low levels of servant leadership at work, an increase in job demand will lead to a decrease in mental health. On the contrary, high levels of servant leadership at work positively influence employees’ mental health when job demands are high. This association is illustrated in Figures 5 (c) and (d).



Note: JD= Job Demands; PERF = Performance; SL = Servant Leadership; MH = Mental Health

FIGURE 5 – DATA PLOTS OF LEVELS OF SERVANT LEADERSHIP, JOB DEMANDS, MENTAL HEALTH AND PERFORMANCE

6. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The objective of this research was to study the moderating effect that servant leadership may have on the job demands–job performance and job demands–mental health relationships during the COVID-19 pandemic. It was expected that the adoption of servant leadership by supervisors and managers during this pandemic could ease the challenges and difficulties encountered by the employees and would, therefore, positively affect job performance and mental health. The results found in the present research support the situational contingency approach of leadership in which a leadership style is adopted depending on a specific situation, in this case, the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the influence of the moderating effect changes directions based on the intensity of the presence of servant leadership. This is when the level of servant leadership varies in the workplace. The adoption of a leadership approach characterized by love, service, humility, and trust could positively influence not only job performance but, more importantly, employees’ mental health, especially when higher job demands exist. This could be more evident when individuals conduct home office.

The implications of these findings could be immense. Practitioners would benefit from increased job performance and employees’ good mental health through a relatively simple change: the adoption of a servant leadership style. One of the most serious problems organizations face is increased healthcare costs (Winslow, 2002). Workers presenting mental health issues, such as depression, present low levels of productivity and high turnover intentions (Goetzel *et al.*, 2002). Organizations could provide supervisors and managers with specific training to adopt or incorporate this leadership style. Blanchard and Hodges (2003) and Maxwell (2005) proposed that some practices, such as willingness to be the last and the least, listening to others with openness

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and empathy, involving followers in decision-making, and conducting compassionate acts regularly, could help establish foundations of servant leadership. McGee-Cooper and Trammell (2001) also proposed the following principles that managers and supervisors can adopt to boost a unique culture characterized by service:

1. Listen without judgement: This first principle emphasizes the importance of listening and empathy between the leader and the follower. If a subordinate has an issue, it is important to listen and ask him/her how the leader could help.
2. Be authentic: This principle addresses accountability and being able to admit mistakes, which does not involve showing weakness but rather, being open to suggestions.
3. Build community: This principle involves showing appreciation and thanking people working with you. In addition, it is vital to conduct social meetings to build a network of friends, including family members.
4. Share power: In this principle, it is very important to delegate meaningful activities to challenge subordinates.
5. Develop people: This principle involves mentoring others in case the leader is not able to work. Allow subordinates to attend meetings they do not attend normally, introduce them to other leaders, and remark on their skills.
6. Co-create shared vision: This last principle involves inviting others to develop the vision of the organization. This also implies listening to subordinates during the growth of the organization.

For academia, this research unveils information about the effects and implications of a leadership style during a crisis such as the COVID-19 pandemic. First, since this leadership style could help boost the productivity and mental health of individuals, future research could try to measure the quantitative implications of adopting a leadership style characterized by love and service. This could provide a more accurate assessment of the monetary implications of using servant leadership. Second, this research presents the results of servant leadership during a crisis such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Future research could study the implications of different leadership styles in challenging situations.

It is important to remark that this research does not state that servant leadership is the only leadership style that could be adopted in a demanding situation. While this research presents results that could lead to new research lines, it also presents some limitations. First, more variables, such as job satisfaction or organizational commitment, could be incorporated when challenging situations could affect the relationship between employees and organizations. Second, while the individuals who participated in this research reflect different industries, the sample size is not a reflection of a whole population. Considerations should be taken when generalizing the results presented.

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