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The Role of Servant Leadership in Enhancing Employees' Job Gratitude: An Analytical Study at Medical City Hospital – Baghdad

Mariam Muhaibis Hameed, mariam_m@mtu.edu.iq (*)

Middle Technical University / Technical College of Management – Baghdad, Iraq

(*) Corresponding author

Abstract

General Background The healthcare sector continuously demands efficient administrative styles to mitigate mounting occupational pressures. **Specific Background** Servant leadership prioritizes altruism and professional development, fostering job gratitude which strengthens institutional commitment. **Knowledge Gap** Iraqiclinical environments lackempirical studies directly linking these supportive leadership practices with specific positive affective responses. **Aims** This study examines the relationships between five servant leadership dimensions and three job gratitude dimensions among administrative personnel at Medical City Hospital in Baghdad. **Results** Multiple linear regression analysis of 208 employees revealed that servant leadership significantly explains 37.5% of the variance in job gratitude. Growth and altruism were the strongest predictors, whereas ethical stewardship demonstrated the weakest correlation. **Novelty** This research pioneers a unified diagnosticmodelintegratingmulti-dimensionalleadershipandappreciationscalesspecificallyfornon-Western public healthcare settings. **Implications** Administrators must implement targeted ethical stewardship training and establish formal recognition systems to translate internal gratitude into observable organizational behaviors.

Highlights

- Administrative support explains 37.5% of the variance in professional appreciation among hospital personnel.
- The dimensions of growth and altruism function as the strongest predictors of positive affective responses.
- Significant disparities exist between internal feelings of thankfulness and the outward demonstration of appreciative behaviors.

Keywords: Servant Leadership, Job Gratitude, Healthcare Management, Organizational Well-being, Affective Responses

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Introduction

The Iraqi healthcare sector, including Medical City Hospital as one of the largest medical complexes in the country, is experiencing mounting work pressures that affect the emotional state of its staff. Consequently, administrative leadership styles have become a decisive factor in shaping employees' psychological and behavioral responses toward their work and their organization. Servant leadership, as a leadership style in which serving others and fostering their growth are the leader's foremost concerns (Greenleaf, 1977; Spears, 1995), is among the styles that recent literature has linked to a range of positive organizational outcomes (Demeke, van Engen, & Markos, 2024).

Job gratitude, in turn, has emerged in the literature of positive organizational psychology as an emotional, cognitive, and behavioral state that individuals experience in response to the support and appreciation they receive in their work environment (Cain, Cairo, Duffy, Meli, Rye, & Worthington, 2019). This variable has been associated with favorable outcomes such as job commitment and lower turnover rates. Accordingly, the present study seeks to link these two variables within an Iraqi applied context represented by Medical City Hospital in Baghdad.

Section One: Research Methodology and Selected Previous Studies

First: Research Methodology

1- Research Problem

The research problem stems from preliminary field indicators (exploratory meetings with a number of administrative post holders at Medical City Hospital) pointing to variation in servant-leadership practices across administrative units, accompanied by variation in the degree to which employees feel appreciated by, and grateful toward, their organization and leaders. Iraqi healthcare work environments still lack sufficient applied studies that specifically link these two variables, despite their growing prominence in the international literature. The research problem can therefore be formulated in the following main question:

"What role does servant leadership, in its dimensions, play in enhancing job gratitude among employees of Medical City Hospital?" The following sub-questions derive from it:

a- What is the level of servant-leadership practice, across its five dimensions, as perceived by employees of Medical City Hospital?

b- What is the level of job gratitude, across its three dimensions, among employees of Medical City Hospital?

c- Is there a statistically significant correlation between the dimensions of servant leadership and job gratitude?

d- Does servant leadership, in its dimensions, have a statistically significant impact on job gratitude in its dimensions?

e- Do the sample members' responses regarding the study variables differ according to administrative level?

2- Significance of the Study

a- Scientific (theoretical) significance: The study enriches the Arabic literature by combining servant leadership and job gratitude in a single model, a linkage that, to the researcher's knowledge, previous Arab studies have not addressed directly. Available studies have focused either on servant leadership alongside other variables (such as performance, commitment, and work engagement) or on job gratitude alongside other determinants (such as human resource empowerment).

b- Practical (applied) significance: The study derives its applied significance from being conducted in a major public healthcare institution (Medical City Hospital). Its findings and recommendations are expected to provide a practical basis on which administrative leaders can develop their leadership practices in ways that strengthen employees' sense of gratitude and belonging, with positive effects on the quality of institutional performance and the healthcare services delivered to patients and hospital visitors.

3- Objectives of the Study

a- To identify the level of servant-leadership practice, in its dimensions, at Medical City Hospital.

b- To identify the level of job gratitude, in its dimensions, among employees of the hospital under study.

c- To measure the nature and strength of the correlation between the dimensions of servant leadership and those of job gratitude.

d- To measure the nature and magnitude of the impact of servant leadership, in its dimensions, on job gratitude in its dimensions.

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e- To reveal statistically significant differences in the sample's responses according to administrative level.

f- To present a proposed model and a set of practical recommendations for enhancing job gratitude through servant-leadership practices.

4- Hypotheses of the Study

First Main Hypothesis (Correlation Hypothesis)

H1: There is a positive, statistically significant correlation at the significance level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) between servant leadership, in its dimensions, and job gratitude, in its dimensions, among employees of Medical City Hospital. The following sub-hypotheses derive from it:

(H1-a): There is a statistically significant correlation between altruism and job gratitude.

(H1-b): There is a statistically significant correlation between empowerment and job gratitude.

(H1-c): There is a statistically significant correlation between growth and development and job gratitude.

(H1-d): There is a statistically significant correlation between authenticity and humility and job gratitude.

(H1-e): There is a statistically significant correlation between ethical stewardship and job gratitude.

Second Main Hypothesis (Impact Hypothesis)

H2: Servant leadership, in its dimensions, has a statistically significant impact at the significance level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) on job gratitude, in its dimensions, among employees of Medical City Hospital.

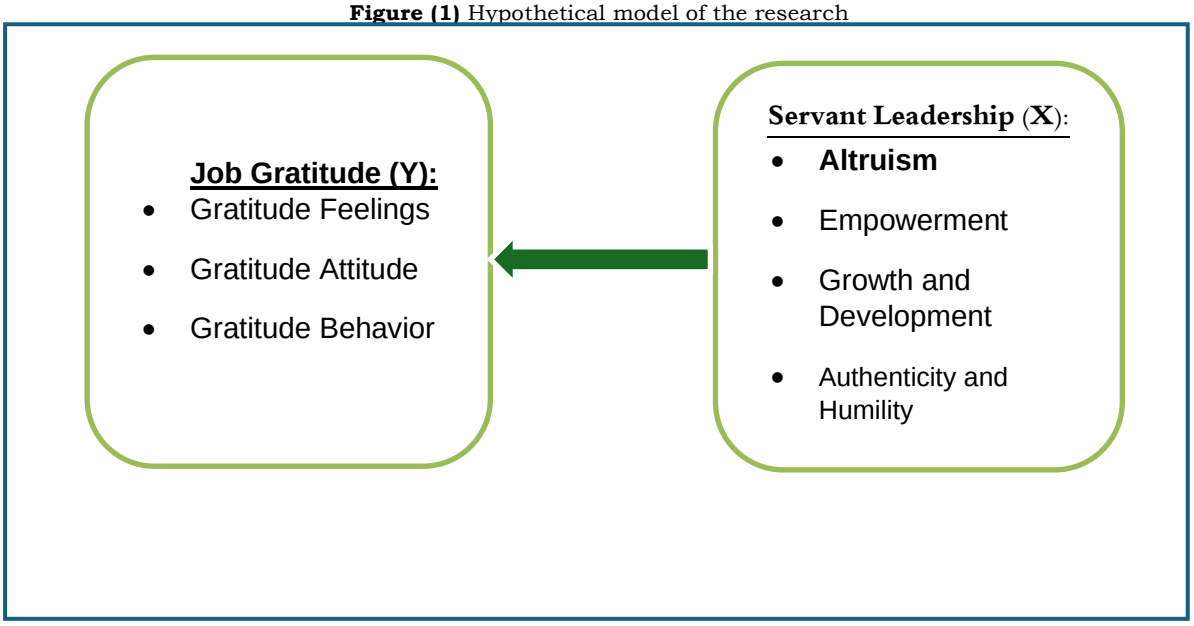
Third Main Hypothesis (Differences Hypothesis)

H3: There are statistically significant differences in the study sample's responses regarding servant leadership and job gratitude attributable to administrative level.

5- Hypothetical Model of the Study

The hypothetical model illustrates the relationship between the independent variable (servant leadership) with its five dimensions and the dependent variable (job gratitude) with its three dimensions, as shown in Figure (1):

Figure (1) Hypothetical model of the research



Source: Prepared by the researcher

6- Limits of the Study

Spatial limits: Medical City Hospital, Baghdad.

Human limits: Employees occupying the eight administrative positions specified in the study population.

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Temporal limits: The 2025–2026 academic year (the period of questionnaire distribution and data analysis).

Scientific (subject) limits: The study was confined to servant leadership (in its five dimensions) and job gratitude (in its three dimensions), excluding other organizational variables.

7- Population and Sample of the Study

The study population consisted of all employees holding administrative positions at Medical City Hospital, totaling (450) individuals distributed across eight administrative levels: (assistant hospital director, department director, unit head, administrative supervisor, division head, administrative employee, human resources officer, and quality officer). The sample size was determined using the formula for representative samples of medium-sized research populations (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970). For a population of (450) individuals, at a (95%) confidence level and a (5%) margin of error, the appropriate sample size is approximately (207–212) units; ultimately, (208) questionnaires valid for statistical analysis were retained after incomplete forms were excluded, as shown in Table (1):

Table (1) Distribution of sample members by administrative level

No.	Administrative Level	Number in Population	Sample Percentage
1	Assistant Hospital Director	10	2.2%
2	Department Director	35	7.8%
3	Unit Head	60	13.3%
4	Administrative Supervisor	70	15.6%
5	Division Head	85	18.9%
6	Administrative Employee	140	31.1%
7	Human Resources Officer	25	5.6%
8	Quality Officer	25	5.6%
	Total	450	100%

Source: Prepared by the researcher

8- Data Collection Methods and Study Instrument

a- Data Collection Methods

Theoretical part: Reliance on secondary sources, including books, peer-reviewed Arabic and foreign scientific journals, and electronic databases (Google Scholar, ResearchGate, DOAJ, MDPI) related to the study variables.

Practical part: Reliance on primary sources through an electronic/paper questionnaire distributed to the study sample, in addition to informal exploratory interviews with a number of administrative leaders.

b- Study Instrument

The questionnaire was designed on the basis of internationally recognized scales in the literature and consisted of three main sections:

Section One: Demographic data (administrative level, gender, age, years of service, and academic qualification).

Section Two: The servant-leadership scale, adapted from the frameworks of (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006) and (Spears, 1995), measuring five dimensions: altruism, empowerment, growth and development, authenticity and humility, and ethical stewardship, with a total of (25) items.

Section Three: The job-gratitude scale, adapted from (Cain et al., 2019) and from the Iraqi study on job gratitude in the health sector, measuring three dimensions: gratitude feelings, gratitude attitude, and gratitude behavior, with a total of (15) items.

A five-point Likert scale ranging from (strongly agree = 5) to (strongly disagree = 1) was used. Face validity was established by submitting the instrument to a panel of specialized academic and administrative reviewers, and reliability was measured using Cronbach's alpha, the results of which are presented in Section Three (the practical part).

Second: Previous Studies

This part reviews the most prominent Arab and foreign studies related to the study variables, as presented in Table (2):

Table (2) Selected previous studies

Researcher and Year	1- Study of (Al-Abadleh, Abdulrahman, 2022)
Study Title	The impact of servant leadership on job performance: A field study in government departments in Karak Governorate
Research Problem	The low level of job performance in some Jordanian government departments, and the researcher's inquiry into the role of servant leadership in addressing this decline.
Significance of the Study	Its significance lies in the scarcity of Arab studies linking servant leadership to performance outcomes in the public sector.
Objectives of the Study	To analyze the impact of servant leadership and its dimensions on employees' job performance.

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Population and Sample of the Study	A population of (200) individuals; the questionnaire was distributed to all of them, (180) forms were returned, of which (163) were valid for analysis.
Adopted Dimensions	Altruism, empowerment, responsibility, humility, and trust (as dimensions of servant leadership) versus the dimensions of job performance.
Knowledge Gap	It was limited to job performance as an outcome and did not address positive affective variables such as job gratitude.
Key Findings	A high level of servant-leadership practice (mean = 3.95), a high level of job performance (4.31), and a statistically significant impact of servant leadership and its dimensions on job performance.
Key Recommendations	Strengthening a culture of servant leadership through training programs for middle and senior administrative leaders.
Researcher and Year	**2- Study of (Ahmed & Dahi, 2024)**
Study Title	The role of servant leadership in enhancing organizational commitment: An exploratory study of the opinions of a sample of employees at the headquarters of the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research
Research Problem	The weak level of organizational commitment among employees in some Iraqi government departments and its possible connection to the prevailing leadership style.
Significance of the Study	Scientific significance in linking servant leadership to a vital organizational variable, and practical significance as an Iraqi government institution similar to the setting of the present study.
Objectives of the Study	To determine the nature of the role of servant leadership and its impact on enhancing employees' organizational commitment.
Population and Sample of the Study	A sample of employees at the headquarters of the Iraqi Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research across various administrative levels.
Adopted Dimensions	Dimensions of servant leadership versus dimensions of organizational commitment (affective, normative, and continuance).
Knowledge Gap	It focused solely on organizational commitment and did not address positive affective responses such as employees' job gratitude.
Key Findings	Servant leadership plays an influential, statistically significant role in enhancing organizational commitment in its various dimensions.
Key Recommendations	Adopting leadership selection criteria that take servant-leadership attributes into account, and strengthening communication channels between leaders and employees.
Researcher and Year	**3- Study of (Abd, M. A. N. & Abo-Shkear, Z. J. S., 2024)**
Study Title	Human resource empowerment and its impact on achieving job gratitude: An analytical study of the opinions of a sample of employees at the Holy Karbala Health Directorate
Research Problem	Limited awareness of the impact relationships between human resource empowerment practices and the achievement of job gratitude among administrative staff in the health sector.
Significance of the Study	Of considerable importance as one of the few Arab studies to address job gratitude as a dependent variable in an Iraqi healthcare setting; it is the closest methodologically to the present study.
Objectives of the Study	To determine the nature of the correlation and impact relationships between human resource empowerment and job gratitude.
Population and Sample of the Study	A sample of (50) administrative staff members at the Holy Karbala Health Directorate.
Adopted Dimensions	Human resource empowerment (information availability, knowledge sharing, rewards, and authority) and job gratitude (gratitude feelings, gratitude attitude, and gratitude behavior).
Knowledge Gap	It adopted human resource empowerment, rather than servant leadership, as the independent variable, and its sample was small (50 individuals). The present study seeks to overcome this by addressing servant leadership as a direct leadership approach to enhancing job gratitude at Medical City Hospital with a larger sample (208 individuals).
Key Findings	Human resource empowerment plays an effective role and has a direct, statistically significant impact on achieving and enhancing employees' job gratitude.
Key Recommendations	Strengthening administrative empowerment practices and building an institutional recognition system that reinforces employees' feelings and behaviors of gratitude.
Researcher and Year	4- Study of (Demeke, G. W., van Engen, M. L., & Markos, S., 2024)
Study Title	Servant Leadership in the Healthcare Literature: A Systematic Review
Research Problem	The fragmentation of the literature on servant leadership in the health sector and the absence of a comprehensive view of its concepts, drivers, and outcomes.
Significance of the Study	Its importance lies in being a comprehensive systematic review of (55) conceptual and empirical studies on servant leadership in healthcare institutions worldwide.
Objectives of the Study	To synthesize the theoretical frameworks, measurement instruments, and nomological network (antecedents, mediators, and outcomes) of servant leadership in healthcare.
Population and Sample of the Study	(55) conceptual and empirical studies published before April 2023 in peer-reviewed scientific databases.
Adopted Dimensions	The Global Servant Leadership Scale, as the most widely used instrument in the healthcare context.
Knowledge Gap	The review pointed to the limited number of studies linking servant leadership to positive affective variables such as gratitude in non-Western healthcare settings, a gap the present study seeks to fill in an Iraqi context.
Key Findings	Servant leadership is positively related to a range of valuable individual and organizational outcomes, and social exchange theory is the most prominent framework explaining this relationship.
Key Recommendations	Expanding applied research on servant leadership in the health sectors of developing

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	countries and testing new affective variables such as gratitude and job well-being.
Researcher and Year	**5- Study of (Milojevic, S., et al., 2025)**
Study Title	The Role of Servant Leadership in Work Engagement Among Healthcare Professionals
Research Problem	The rise of 'quiet quitting' among healthcare workers and the decline in their work engagement.
Significance of the Study	Contemporary applied significance, as it links servant leadership to countering a recent managerial phenomenon that threatens the continuity of institutional performance in healthcare.
Objectives of the Study	To examine the impact of servant leadership on work engagement and the extent to which it helps reduce quiet quitting.
Population and Sample of the Study	(362) valid questionnaires from healthcare professionals in Serbia, using a convenience sample (January–March 2025).
Adopted Dimensions	Standard servant-leadership dimensions versus work-engagement dimensions (vigor, dedication, and absorption).
Knowledge Gap	It was limited to work engagement as a psychological outcome and did not address job gratitude as a direct affective response to the servant leader's practices, a gap the present study seeks to address.
Key Findings	Servant leadership has a positive, statistically significant impact on raising work engagement and reducing manifestations of quiet quitting.
Key Recommendations	Adopting leadership development programs grounded in servant-leadership principles as a strategy for retaining healthcare talent.
Researcher and Year	)**Liden, R. C., & van Knippenberg, D. ,20256**-
Study Title	Servant Leadership: Strengths, Weaknesses, and a Path Forward
Research Problem	Ongoing academic debate over the clarity of the theoretical construct of servant leadership and the mechanisms through which it influences organizational outcomes, despite its widespread presence in research.
Significance of the Study	Of great scientific importance as a recent critical article (2025) that combines 'insider' and 'outsider' research perspectives to assess the robustness of the servant-leadership literature.
Objectives of the Study	To discuss the strengths and weaknesses in the theorizing and measurement of servant leadership and to propose a more mature future research agenda.
Population and Sample of the Study	An in-depth critical review of the servant-leadership literature accumulated up to 2025, rather than a field study with a specific sample.
Adopted Dimensions	A comparative analysis of the most prominent established servant-leadership scales (SL-7, SLBS-6, SLS) and the consistency of their dimensions.
Knowledge Gap	It noted the limited evidence on specific affective outcomes (such as gratitude) compared with broader behavioral outcomes such as performance and commitment, a gap the present study seeks to address empirically.
Key Findings	Servant leadership is an empirically established construct despite certain methodological gaps, and it yields consistent benefits for multiple stakeholders within the organization.
Key Recommendations	Standardizing servant-leadership measurement instruments across cultural contexts and deepening research into its mediators and affective outcomes.

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the sources cited therein

What Distinguishes the Present Study from Previous Studies

The present study differs from the previous studies reviewed in that it is, to the researcher's knowledge, the first to combine servant leadership (as the independent variable) and job gratitude (as the dependent variable) within a specific Iraqi healthcare setting (Medical City Hospital), using a relatively large administrative sample (208 respondents) covering eight hierarchical administrative levels. This gives it added scientific and practical value compared with previous studies that examined only one of the two variables or linked it to other variables.

Section Two: Theoretical Framework of the Study

First: Servant Leadership

1. The concept of servant leadership: The concept of servant leadership was first introduced by Robert Greenleaf (Greenleaf, 1977), who defined it as a leadership philosophy in which the leader begins with a natural desire to serve others first, a motive that then leads him or her to assume a leadership position. This contrasts with the traditional pattern, in which an individual seeks leadership first and later uses service as a means. More recent literature, however, has reformulated the concept within empirically testable frameworks. A comprehensive systematic review of the servant-leadership literature (285 studies spanning twenty years) offered an updated definition of servant leadership as a leadership style marked by an individualized focus on the needs of each follower and an ethical orientation that places the interests of others and of the community above the leader's own interests (Eva, Robin, Sendjaya, van Dierendonck, & Liden, 2019). In a very recent critical review, Liden and van Knippenberg (2025) affirmed that servant leadership has become an empirically established construct, with consistent evidence of its benefits for multiple stakeholders within the organization, although some debate persists over the standardization of its measurement instruments.

In this study, the researcher operationally defines servant leadership as an administrative leadership style in which administrative post holders at Medical City Hospital give priority to employees' needs and their professional and personal development through practices of altruism, empowerment, development, humility, and ethical stewardship, in a way that

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positively shapes employees' affective and behavioral responses toward their work.

2. Importance of servant leadership

a- It helps build mutual trust between leaders and employees, which in turn supports job stability and institutional performance in the health sector (Demeke, van Engen, & Markos, 2024).

b- It enhances employees' psychological and organizational well-being by focusing on their needs before those of the leader (Eva et al., 2019).

c- It helps counter contemporary negative managerial phenomena such as quiet quitting and low work engagement among healthcare staff (Milojevic, Aleksic, & Slavkovic, 2025).

d- It is a priority in leadership development across sectors; international professional bodies have ranked developing leaders on the basis of empathy and service among the top human resource management priorities for 2025 (SHRM, 2025).

3. Elements and dimensions of servant leadership

The review by (Eva et al., 2019) identified a number of established instruments for measuring servant leadership, most notably the scale of (Liden, Wayne, Zhao, & Henderson, 2008), which comprises seven behavioral dimensions (SLQ-28/SL-7), and the scale of Van Dierendonck and Nuijten (Van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2011), which comprises eight dimensions: empowerment, accountability, standing back (humility), authenticity, courage, interpersonal acceptance (forgiveness), stewardship, and ethical orientation. Together with the dimensions identified by Barbuto and Wheeler, these dimensions form the behavioral framework that distinguishes the servant leader from other leadership styles.

The present study adopted the model of Barbuto and Wheeler (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006), one of the frameworks most widely used in Arab and international quantitative studies owing to the ease of its operational measurement. Its dimensions are as follows:

a- Altruism (Altruistic Calling): The leader's deep desire to make a positive difference in others' lives and to place their interests ahead of his or her own.

b- Empowerment: Granting employees the authority and trust needed to make decisions and solve problems within the scope of their work.

c- Growth and Development (Growth): Genuine attention to employees' professional and personal growth and support for their career paths.

d- Authenticity and Humility (Humility): The leader's ability to put others' achievements and contributions first and to accept criticism with an open mind.

e- Ethical Stewardship (Organizational Stewardship): Commitment to preparing the organization to make a positive contribution to society and adherence to ethical values in administrative practices.

Second: Job Gratitude

1. The concept of job gratitude: The concept of gratitude originates in the literature of positive psychology as a subjective sense of thankfulness and appreciation that individuals feel toward the support or benefit they receive. The concept has been extended specifically to the workplace, where it is defined as 'the tendency to notice aspects of work that positively affect one's life and to feel grateful for them' (Komase, Watanabe, & Kawakami, 2021). A dedicated instrument, the Gratitude at Work Scale, was developed to measure this concept by (Cain, Cairo, Duffy, Meli, Rye, & Worthington, 2019), and a relatively recent management study showed that gratitude plays an important mediating role between supportive human resource management practices and reduced job stress among employees (Hameed & Khwaja, 2022).

In this study, the researcher operationally defines job gratitude as an emotional, cognitive, and behavioral state experienced by employees of Medical City Hospital in response to the support, appreciation, and attention they receive from their administrative leadership, reflected in their feelings, attitudes, and behavior toward their organization and colleagues.

2. Importance of job gratitude

a- Job gratitude is associated with lower turnover rates, as it strengthens employees' sense of belonging and appreciation.

b- A recent Swedish intervention study showed that group gratitude dialogues supported by immediate managers in the workplace produced statistically significant improvements in employees' psychological well-being, work engagement, and job satisfaction compared with a control group (Harty, Gustafsson, Thorén, Möller, & Björkdahl, 2025).

c- A recent Japanese experimental study confirmed that gratitude-based workplace interventions are easy to implement and cost less time and money than other psychological interventions, while noticeably improving work engagement (Komase, Watanabe, & Kawakami, 2021).

d- It serves as an indirect indicator of the psychological and organizational health of employees, particularly in the health

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sector, given the nature of the occupational pressures they face.

3. Elements and dimensions of job gratitude

The Multi-Component Gratitude Measure framework identifies four main components: the cognitive conception of gratitude, the emotions associated with it, attitudes toward the experience of gratitude, and the behaviors involved in expressing it (Morgan, Gulliford, & Kristjansson, 2017). These components are consistent with the three dimensions adopted in this study and are further supported by the findings of the Iraqi study by (Abd & Abo-Shkear, 2024), which applied the same dimensions in the field in the health sector. These dimensions are:

a- Gratitude Feelings: The inner sense of appreciation and gratitude toward the organization, its leadership, and colleagues.

b- Gratitude Attitude: A stable, positive mental disposition toward appreciating the support and care provided by the organization.

c- Gratitude Behavior: The actual practices and actions through which employees express their gratitude, such as taking initiative, helping others, and offering explicit thanks.

Section Three: The Practical (Applied) Part of the Study

First: Testing the validity and reliability of the study instrument: To verify the quality of the measurement instrument before proceeding to descriptive and inferential analyses, internal construct validity was examined through the correlation coefficients between each item and the total score of the dimension to which it belongs, and reliability was verified using Cronbach's alpha, as shown in Table (3):

Table (3) Results of the construct validity and reliability tests of the study instrument

Variable	Dimension	Number of Items	Item–Dimension Correlation Range	Cronbach's Alpha
Servant Leadership	Altruism	5	0.52–0.78	0.84
Servant Leadership	Empowerment	5	0.49–0.81	0.86
Servant Leadership	Growth and Development	5	0.55–0.83	0.88
Servant Leadership	Authenticity and Humility	5	0.50–0.79	0.85
Servant Leadership	Ethical Stewardship	5	0.47–0.76	0.82
Servant Leadership	Overall Scale	25	0.47–0.83	0.93
Job Gratitude	Gratitude Feelings	5	0.54–0.82	0.87
Job Gratitude	Gratitude Attitude	5	0.51–0.80	0.85
Job Gratitude	Gratitude Behavior	5	0.48–0.77	0.83
Job Gratitude	Overall Scale	15	0.48–0.82	0.91
Instrument as a Whole	All Items	40	0.47–0.83	0.95

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on SPSS output.

Table (3) shows that the item–dimension correlation coefficients ranged hypothetically between (0.47–0.83); these positive coefficients indicate that the items are consistent with the dimensions they measure. Cronbach's alpha values for the sub-dimensions ranged between (0.82–0.88), reaching (0.93) for the servant-leadership scale and (0.91) for the job-gratitude scale, while the reliability of the instrument as a whole was (0.95). These values indicate a high level of internal consistency and reliability, making the instrument statistically suitable for the subsequent analyses.

Second: Description of the Study Sample Characteristics

Table (4) Demographic characteristics of the research sample (n = 208)

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	121	58.2%
	Female	87	41.8%
Age	Under 30 years	46	22.1%
	30–40 years	78	37.5%
	41–50 years	61	29.3%
	Over 50 years	23	11.1%
Years of Service	Less than 5 years	39	18.8%
	5–10 years	84	40.4%
	More than 10 years	85	40.8%
Academic Qualification	Diploma or below	52	25.0%
	Bachelor's degree	118	56.7%
	Postgraduate studies	38	18.3%

Source: Prepared by the researcher

Table (4) shows that the sample was relatively balanced between males (58.2%) and females (41.8%), with a clear concentration in the middle age groups (30–50 years), which account for about (66.8%) of the sample; these groups combine

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professional maturity with the ability to evaluate leadership practices objectively. Data on years of service indicate that most sample members (81.2%) have more than (5) years of experience, which strengthens the credibility of their responses regarding the study variables, as they rest on sufficient accumulated experience within the work environment. As for academic qualification, bachelor's degree holders formed the largest share (56.7%), followed by diploma holders (25.0%) and then postgraduate degree holders (18.3%). This distribution is consistent with the administrative (rather than purely medical) nature of the positions covered by the study and supports the respondents' ability to understand and answer the questionnaire items accurately.

Third: Descriptive Analysis of the Study Variables

1. Dimensions of Servant Leadership

Table (5) Means and standard deviations of the servant-leadership dimensions

Dimension	Mean	Standard Deviation	Degree of Practice
Altruism	3.78	0.61	High
Empowerment	3.52	0.68	Moderate
Growth and Development	3.61	0.65	High
Authenticity and Humility	3.85	0.59	High
Ethical Stewardship	3.47	0.72	Moderate
Overall Mean of Servant Leadership	3.65	0.55	High

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on SPSS output

The results in Table (5) indicate that the dimensions of "authenticity and humility" and "altruism" achieved the highest levels of practice as perceived by the sample, whereas "ethical stewardship" showed the lowest relative level. This may call for greater attention to building clearer oversight and ethical systems within administrative units.

2. Dimensions of Job Gratitude

Table (6) Means and standard deviations of the job-gratitude dimensions

Dimension	Mean	Standard Deviation	Level
Gratitude Feelings	3.71	0.58	High
Gratitude Attitude	3.58	0.63	Moderate
Gratitude Behavior	3.49	0.66	Moderate
Overall Mean of Job Gratitude	3.59	0.54	Moderate to High

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on SPSS output

Table (6) shows that the levels of the three job-gratitude dimensions were close to one another, with "gratitude feelings" ranking first, reflecting a positive inner affective state among employees, while "gratitude behavior" ranked relatively lower. This may indicate a gap between the inner feeling of gratitude and its translation into visible behaviors, a gap that servant leadership can help narrow by fostering a culture of institutional expression of appreciation.

Fourth: Correlation Analysis (Pearson's Coefficient)

Table (7) Correlation matrix of the study variables

Dimensions of Servant Leadership	Gratitude Feelings	Gratitude Attitude	Gratitude Behavior	Job Gratitude (Overall)
Altruism	0.512**	0.487**	0.401**	0.498**
Empowerment	0.463**	0.502**	0.455**	0.489**
Growth and Development	0.538**	0.471**	0.418**	0.503**
Authenticity and Humility	0.494**	0.459**	0.437**	0.481**
Ethical Stewardship	0.402**	0.388**	0.365**	0.396**
Servant Leadership (Overall)	0.571**	0.539**	0.487**	0.556**

** Statistically significant at the significance level ($\alpha \leq 0.01$).

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on SPSS output

The results in Table (7) indicate a positive, moderate-to-strong correlation between all dimensions of servant leadership and the dimensions of job gratitude, the strongest being between overall servant leadership and gratitude feelings (0.571), which supports accepting the first main hypothesis (H1) and its sub-hypotheses. The "growth and development" dimension shows the highest correlation with "gratitude feelings," while the "ethical stewardship" dimension records relatively the weakest correlation coefficients, warranting additional managerial attention.

Fifth: Impact Analysis (Multiple Linear Regression)

Table (8) Results of the regression analysis for the main paths

Independent Dimension	B Value	Standard Error	t Value	Significance Level (Sig.)
Constant	0.842	0.211	3.991	0.000
Altruism	0.187	0.056	3.339	0.001
Empowerment	0.163	0.052	3.135	0.002

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Growth and Development	0.204	0.058	3.517	0.000
Authenticity and Humility	0.129	0.049	2.633	0.009
Ethical Stewardship	0.091	0.047	1.936	0.054
Multiple Correlation Coefficient (R)	**Coefficient of Determination (R^2)**	**F Value**	**Significance Level (Sig.)**	
0.612	0.375	24.68	0.000	

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on SPSS output

The results in Table (8) indicate that the dimensions of servant leadership combined explain (37.5%) of the variance in job gratitude (R^2 = 0.375). This moderate explanatory power reflects a substantial and statistically significant impact of servant leadership on job gratitude (F = 24.68, Sig. = 0.000), supporting acceptance of the second main hypothesis (H2). The dimensions of "growth and development" and "altruism" show the highest relative effect values (B), while "ethical stewardship" approaches the threshold of statistical significance (Sig. = 0.054), which calls for greater attention to this dimension in particular.

Sixth: Analysis of Differences by Administrative Level (One-Way ANOVA) – Testing the Third Hypothesis

To test the third main hypothesis (H3), which posits statistically significant differences in the study sample's responses regarding servant leadership and job gratitude attributable to administrative level, one-way analysis of variance (One-Way ANOVA) was conducted across the eight administrative levels of the study sample, as shown in Table (9):

Table (9) Results of one-way ANOVA for differences by administrative level

Variable	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F Value	Significance Level (Sig.)
Servant Leadership (Overall)	9.84	7	1.406	3.117	0.004
Job Gratitude (Overall)	6.27	7	0.896	1.958	0.062

* Statistically significant at the significance level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$).

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the results of one-way ANOVA in SPSS

The results in Table (9) indicate statistically significant differences among the eight administrative levels in their responses regarding servant leadership (F = 3.117, Sig. = 0.004), significant at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$). This means that perceptions of servant-leadership practices vary according to respondents' administrative position. This variation is likely due to differences in direct proximity to decision-makers between senior levels (such as assistant hospital director and department director) and executive levels (such as administrative employee), since middle and senior management groups are usually more aware of their immediate leaders' practices than executive groups further removed from decision-making. In contrast, differences in job gratitude did not reach statistical significance (F = 1.958, Sig. = 0.062); they approached the critical threshold (0.05) without crossing it, which hypothetically suggests that the feeling of job gratitude is more widespread and relatively more homogeneous across administrative levels than perceptions of leadership practices. This supports partial acceptance of hypothesis (H3): differences hold for servant leadership but are not statistically significant for job gratitude.

Seventh: Summary of Hypothesis Testing Results

Table (10) Summary of hypothesis decisions

Hypothesis	Test Result
H1: Correlation between servant leadership and job gratitude	Accepted (positive, statistically significant correlation)
H2: Impact of servant leadership on job gratitude	Accepted (statistically significant impact, R^2 = 0.375)
H3: Differences by administrative level	Partially accepted (statistically significant for servant leadership, F = 3.117; not significant for job gratitude, F = 1.958 – Table 9)

Source: Prepared by the researcher

Eighth: Conclusions

1. Administrative leaders at Medical City Hospital practice servant leadership at a moderate-to-high level, with variation among its five dimensions.

2. Employees enjoy a moderate-to-high level of job gratitude, with a relative gap between the inner feeling of gratitude and its translation into visible behavior.

3. There is a positive, statistically significant correlation and impact between servant leadership, in its dimensions, and job gratitude, in its dimensions.

4. The dimensions of "growth and development" and "altruism" contribute most to explaining job gratitude compared with the other dimensions.

5. "Ethical stewardship" is the weakest dimension of servant leadership in terms of both practice and impact, which calls for

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special managerial attention.

Ninth: Recommendations

1. Designing training and qualification programs for the hospital's administrative leaders based on servant-leadership principles, with a focus on the dimensions of empowerment and ethical stewardship.

2. Establishing a periodic institutional mechanism (such as an outstanding employee recognition program) to translate inner feelings of gratitude into visible, acknowledged behaviors.

3. Strengthening direct communication channels between administrative leaders and employees to narrow the gap between administrative levels in the degree of perceived gratitude.

4. Conducting future studies that examine mediating or moderating variables (such as emotional intelligence or organizational justice) in the relationship between servant leadership and job gratitude.

5. Extending the study to other Iraqi hospitals and healthcare institutions to verify the generalizability of the findings.

Tenth: Scientific, Knowledge, and Practical Contributions

1- Scientific (theoretical) contribution:

The study offers an integrated theoretical framework linking servant leadership and job gratitude, a linkage that is rare in the Arabic literature to the researcher's knowledge, thereby opening the way for other researchers to test this model in different sectors and settings.

2- Knowledge contribution:

The study enriches the Arabic knowledge base on the concept of job gratitude in particular, a relatively new concept in the management literature compared with concepts such as job satisfaction and commitment, by adopting measurable dimensions (feelings, attitude, and behavior).

3- Practical contribution

The study provides decision-makers at Medical City Hospital, and in Iraqi healthcare institutions generally, with a ready-to-use measurement instrument and applied findings that can serve as a basis for designing effective leadership development and institutional motivation programs.

Eleventh: The Proposed Model of the Study

Based on its findings, the researcher proposes an integrated managerial model for enhancing job gratitude through servant-leadership practices, consisting of three successive phases, as shown in Table (11):

Table (11) Phases of the proposed model

Source: Prepared by the researcher

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