Why is the Influence of Servant Leadership on Affective Commitment to Change Insignificant? Proposing Objective Workplace Spirituality as the Mediator

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Abstract

Leadership is known as a determinant in the change process. However, researches on the relationship between servant leadership and affective commitment to change have not been conclusive. The aim of this conceptual paper is twofold. First, to conceptually investigate why servant leadership's influence on affective commitment to change is insignificant. Second, to propose a construct to mediate said inconclusive relationship. Using the affective theory of social exchange, this paper argues that the study method, the type of exchange structure, and the need for mediation are the three main reasons for the research gap. This paper proposes objective workplace spirituality as the mediator to bridge the gap. It is the first conceptual study that contributes to servant leadership theory by providing insight into the need for objective workplace spirituality before their influence can take place. Practical implications such as no discrimination policy are provided in this paper as well.

Keywords: servant leadership; objective workplace spirituality; commitment to change; affective commitment to change; affective theory of social exchange.

1. Introduction

In this disruptive era, organizations need to have the ability to quickly and constantly adapt to change. Research shows that an employee's commitment to change (CTC) is the most influential factor for the success of organizational change (Abrell-Vogel & Rowold, 2014). CTC is the bridge between the applied work processes, business models, and new approaches to achieve the desired business performance. CTC reflects the level of an organization member's mindset, attitude, and commitment to change (Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999; Coetsee, 1999; Conner, 1992).

Meanwhile, leadership is known to be one of the major determinants of success in implementing change. Without strong leadership, an organization will have difficulty maneuvering towards the desired direction (Hao & Yazdanifard, 2015). Based on the norm of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960) of social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), we tend to have an obligation to repay in kind the good deed others have done for us. In the same line of thought, a strong leadership should generate social-emotional resources in the form of approval and support or even commitment to the changes they initiated. However, the influence of leadership has not been conclusive. Past research found that leadership significantly influences CTC (Herold et al., 2008). Others found it insignificant (Gile, 2011; Mangundjaya, 2013; Radian &

Mangundjaya, 2019; Schulkers, 2017). Meanwhile, some researchers found a significant but weak relationship between leadership and CTC (Gowdy, 2015; Kool & van Dierendonck, 2012).

Very limited research has been done to answer this research gap; why does leadership not directly and significantly influence CTC? In this literature review, the affect theory of social exchange (ATOSE) (Lawler, 2001) will be used to analyze and explain why leadership does not directly influence CTC significantly, particularly the affective dimension. Among several leadership styles, servant leadership (SL) is selected because of its emphasis on the followers. Moreover, SL is also found to have a very strong influence in the affective dimension, especially its emotional healing dimension, which relates strongly to the affective site of employees (Liden et al., 2008). However, there is a research gap, where several researchers found that SL does not influence the affective commitment to change (ACTC) significantly (Gile, 2011; Schulkers, 2017). This literature review proposes workplace spirituality as a mediator to bridge the relationship gap between SL and ACTC.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Commitment to Change (CTC)

In recent years, CTC has gained broader attention compared to other change constructs (Choi, 2011). In

his book Leading Change, John Kotter stated that more than 70% of the needed change would fail. The reasons vary, from failure to start even when they see the need for change, failure to complete the needed change even though they have put their best efforts to completion but going over the allocated budget. Past studies found that the number one cause of failure in implementing change is the lack of CTC from the people involved (Conner & Patterson, 1982). CTC generally reflects the degree of employee attachment to implementing the dynamic processes of changes in work procedures, program policies, budget, technology, etc. (Neubert & Wu, 2009). CTC reflects the employees' internalization of the change program that consists of a three-step process: Awareness, followed by acceptance, and lastly by a need for change initiatives (Conner, 1992). CTC reflects a condition where employees are aware of the change's existence, have the skills to implement and are empowered to implement the change, are motivated through appropriate appreciation, and share the vision for change through example (Coetsee, 1999).

In line with the organizational commitment construct theory, Herscovitch & Meyer (2002) introduced a new commitment construct that specifically focuses on organizational change. They called the new construct the commitment to change (CTC). CTC is defined as a mindset that binds someone to a set of actions that is considered necessary for implementing a change initiative (Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002). They also identified three dimensions of CTC: affective (the desire to support the change), normative (the responsibility to support the change), and continuance (the fear of cost for the change failure). Choi (2011) added that CTC reflects an intentional, proactive behavior to support and work for the change initiative's success. Each dimension of CTC has been empirically found to have a connection with at least one of the following supporting change behaviors: compliance, cooperation, and championing (Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002; Meyer et al., 2007). Moreover, CTC's affective and normative dimensions have been proven to have a strong positive effect on discretionary behavior, while the continuance dimension has the reverse impact (Bouckenooghe et al., 2014). Some scholars also use discretionary behavior as the definition for organizational citizenship behavior, meaning they are doing tasks beyond what is stated in the job contract (Organ et al., 2006). CTC reflects a kind of attachment to get involved in the change initiatives that result in awareness of change and a combination of factors that motivate change involvement (Jaros, 2010). The involvement can be in the form of purpose alignment,

affective self-interest to the change's course, and mental and physical capability to work hard for the sake of the change initiatives. The outcome of CTC will drive behaviors that support the change.

2.2. Affective Commitment to Change (ACTC)

ACTC exists only when employees personally desire to support the change (Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002). Past studies found that ACTC is the most expected dimension of CTC since it has the strongest impact on the employees' commitment to change (Bouckenooghe et al., 2014). Another research also found that ACTC is the most influential dimension of CTC that supports change initiative behaviors (Schulkers, 2017). Furthermore, ACTC also has the most impact on discretionary behaviors that will make a difference in the change initiative's success (Morin et al., 2016). ACTC reflects the acknowledgement of the importance and value of the change and is densely related to the desire and willingness to take whatever actions necessary to make it happen (Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002). An employee with high ACTC will get themselves involved in the change initiatives and processes, involved in discretionary behaviors that support the change initiatives, and change the context surrounding the change initiatives (Bouckenooghe, 2012).

To have a high ACTC, the most important factor for the organization to have is its employees' trust (Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002). The employees must trust that the change initiatives will add value to them. Having the trust will motivate employees to commit themselves to the change. The need to have ACTC has become greater whenever an organization has to undergo a long change process. They will need the strong commitment of their employees and the attitude to be able to self-empower, take the initiative to motivate others, and proactively anticipate all obstacles that might occur during the change process (Brown & Eisenhardt, 1997). Other factors that influence ACTC can also be explained using the self-determination theory (SDT) (Ryan & Deci, 2000). According to SDT, an employee has three basic psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. If all three needs are satisfied, an employee will have the internal drive to do all of his tasks without any control needed independently. The reverse also holds whenever any of the three needs are not satisfied. The fulfillment of those three basic psychological needs has become very important in the current change context that tends to be volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA) (Gagne´ & Deci, 2005).

2.3. Servant Leadership (SL)

AS stated before, leadership is the most important element needed in the change management process to mobilize the organization toward the desired change destination (Kotter & Cohen, 2012). Without effective leadership, organizational change will not prevail as expected (Ajmal et al., 2012; Kotter, 1990). Leadership is defined as the process to influence others so that they will understand what is supposed to be done, how to do it, and the process to facilitate individual and group effort to achieve the common goal (Yukl, 1993, p. 7). However, others argue that the determinant of employee willingness to follow their leader is on their perception of whether or not their leader cares for them. Leader effectiveness is mainly determined by the quality of the relationship between the leader and their members, which will help the leader to be able to influence their members better (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995; Martin, 2013). This is in line with the SL theory, which states that the most effective leaders are servants of their people. They get results for their organization when they give their attention to their people's needs wholeheartedly (Burkus, 2010).

According to Robert Greenleaf, the first to coin servant leadership, SL is a management technique and a lifestyle. A servant leader starts with the awareness of being a servant first, which begins with the natural desire first to serve (Greenleaf, 2016). It is more of being than doing. Its emphasis is more on identity rather than what is being done. That is why the term being used is servant leadership, not servant leadership. The awareness of being a servant in the leadership position has become the basis for leadership action, oriented toward the followers (Sendjaya & Sarros, 2002). Servant leaders will use all of the resources necessary to serve the needs of their followers to maximize their potentials intentionally (van Dierendonck, 2011). This finding does not mean that the leader will spoil them, but a servant leader will provide directions, give challenges and responsibilities while at the same time provide feedback, and give both physical and emotional resources, such as empathizing when the followers face difficulties. A servant leader will build an environment and organizational climate that makes the follower feel empowered and important. The fundamental difference between SL and other leadership styles is on the purpose of leadership. In contrast, other leadership styles tend to focus their purpose on the organization's benefit, SL will focus on sincere care to serve the followers (Gregory Stone et al., 2004).
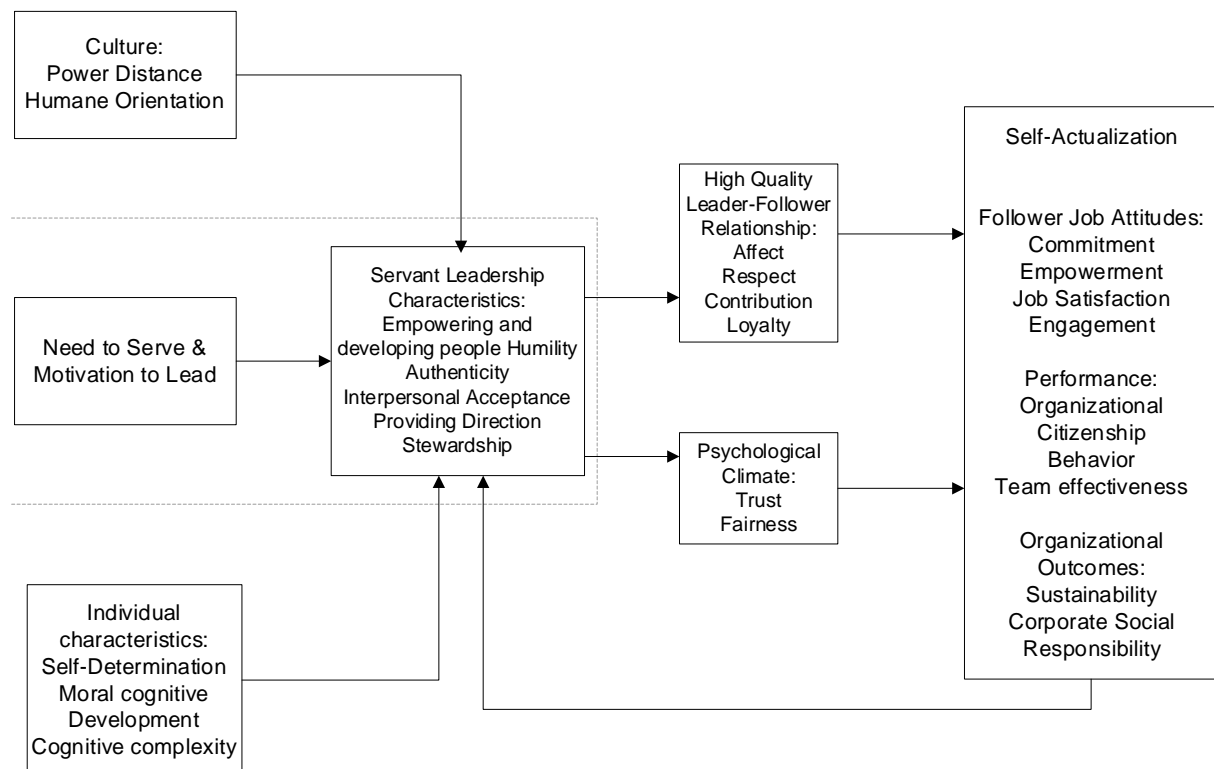

Figure 1. A Conceptual Model of Servant Leadership

Note. Reprinted from: "Servant leadership: A review and synthesis.", by Dirk van Dierendonck, *Journal of Management*, *37*(4), 1228–1261. © The Author(s) 2011.

A theoretical model of SL (see figure 1) combines several SL perspectives and research results yet differentiates antecedents, behavior, mediating processes, and outcomes (van Dierendonck, 2011), which will help us understand SL theory holistically. This conceptual model emphasizes that SL is a combination between the motivation to lead and the need to serve. This model also acknowledges individual characteristics and cultural aspects as determinants of SL. This model also proposes two mediating variables: the first is the servant leader and follower relationship, and the second is the psychological climate, where these variables will mediate the relationship of SL and its outcome. There are three dimensions of follower outcomes: personal growth in terms of self-actualization; becoming healthier, wiser, free, and more autonomous in terms of positive job attitudes; and becoming servants themselves in terms of organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) and collaborative teamwork. On the organizational outcomes, SL will bring sustainability and corporate social responsibility. This model also stresses the importance of the process's iteration process or reciprocal nature from the follower back to the leader.

2.4. Leadership Influence on Affective Commitment to Change (ACTC)

A leader can influence ACTC by allowing an employee to anticipate the benefits of the change initiatives and experience the positive results of the previous change effort (Shin et al., 2012). Whenever employees perceive that there are increased benefits due to change, their ACTC will also increase (Michel et al., 2013). A leader can influence how employees perceive change by changing the context of how employees find the meaning of the change initiative. The leader can influence certain conditions of change aspects by paying attention to their employees' need and creating an environment that is safe for an employee to express their fears, which will allow an employee to experience ACTC. Another thing to do to generate influence is by involving the employee in the decision-making process and highlighting things that become the employees' concerns (Pardo-del-Val et al., 2012). High-intensity communication has also been found to have a strong relationship with ACTC (Bouckenooghe, 2012; Rafferty et al., 2013). A leader needs to design his or her way of communicating with the follower to reduce the employees' concern since concerns negatively correlate with ACTC (Battistelli et al., 2014). Having all of the above in mind, a leader who meets and relates daily with their followers will have more opportunities to influence their followers'

change perception, making them commit to the change initiative.

A leader can also influence ACTC by treating their employees fairly in daily operations and during the change process. Past research found that unfair treatment of employees will drain their emotions and reduce ACTC (Bernerth et al., 2011). Another research found that fair treatment and a positive relationship between leaders and followers correlate positively with ACTC (Kool & van Dierendonck, 2012). Furthermore, another finding stated that reducing unfair treatment and conflicts between leaders and followers is critical to building a positive attitude toward change (Bouckenooghe, De Clercq, et al., 2014). Another research has found that psychological empowerment and organizational trust correlate positively with ACTC (Mangundjaya, 2015). A leader can sustain and even increase the level of ACTC in the long run by improving the perceived needs and legitimacy of the current change effort (Morin et al., 2016).

Based on the above research findings, leadership should have a key role in developing and sustaining their employees' ACTC. The follower orientation of SL will open doors for a strong relationship between leaders and followers in the organization and will strongly influence their ACTC. SL, with all of its leadership traits (listening, empathy, emotional healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight. stewardship, commitment to the growth of people, and building community) (Greenleaf, 2016) should be the most impactful leadership style on ACTC. However, the impact of leadership, especially SL, on ACTC remains inconclusive.

2.5. Affect Theory of Social Exchange (ATOSE)

According to "social exchange theory" (SET), a joint activity of two or more actors will result in something that the other actor will appreciate. The exchange is meant to benefit each individual involved through the behaviors or goods exchange that each one cannot accomplish alone (Homans, 1958; Molm, 2003). ATOSE adds to SET by inserting emotions as part of the exchange (Lawler, 2001). By having emotions in the exchange process, ATOSE enlarges the scope of SET in 2 areas. First, the result of the exchange, reward or punishment, will have a different emotional response, both in form and intensity. Whenever the exchange works smoothly, the actor will experience a positive emotion, while the reverse is also true (Lawler & Yoon, 1996). The emotions we experience daily without realizing are embedded in our daily social exchange, it includes positive emotions

such as happiness, joy, pride, and thanksgiving, also negative emotions such as sadness, shame, and anger. Second, social exchange is a typical joint activity, but the nature and level of jointness vary. The inter-dependencies within the structure of exchange will determine the attachment for the exchange activity. Lawler (2001) also argues that depending on the exchange structure, emotions or feelings from the exchange will influence how actors perceive their shared activity, relationship, and/or their common group affiliations. The higher the interdependencies, the higher the emotions elicited by the actors involved and it should make the relational or group context stronger. Emotions, in this case, influence the "objectification" of relations and groups (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Collins, 1981).

ATOSE shows how the exchange conditions drive the relationship between individuals and groups through the emotional process. This theory emphasizes the jointness of the activity involved in the social exchange. The jointness process to emotions is the basis for explaining how and why the structure of different exchanges will produce different emotions and solidarity. Exchange structure can increase or decrease the perceived shared responsibility. Social exchange theory categorizes four types of exchange structure, and each one highlights a unique joint activity. The four-exchange structures are the following:

- Productive exchange is an exchange of coordinated efforts or resources to achieve a common benefit. In this case, both actors have to contribute for them to benefit.
- Negotiated exchange is a bilateral requesting-and-accepting interaction to come to an explicit agreement and condition of the exchange.
- Reciprocal exchange, the actors' contributions to the exchange are performed independently, non-negotiated and non-binding. Actors initiate exchanges by acting beneficially for another without knowing whether, when, or to what degree the other will reciprocate. The exchange is implicit.
- Generalized exchange is a type of exchange where rewards that an actor receives from others do not depend on the resources provided by that actor (Molm & Cook, 1995; Molm, 1994, 2003).

Lawler (2001) summarized the theoretical arguments of ATOSE in these five principles:
- The emotions resulted from the exchange are automatic. Therefore, actors are motivated to reproduce positive emotions and avoid negative feelings in the future.

- Actors involved in cognitive-interpretive processes make an effort to understand what produces their feelings in the social situation. ATOSE predicts that actors will associate their exchange-based emotions to social units, relationships, networks, groups. The association will extend to the level that takes them together around a shared effort, renders their efforts or contributions identical (inseparable), creates a feeling of shared responsibility for success or failure at the exchange.
- Exchange structures (negotiated, reciprocal, productive, generalized) determine how individual contributions to the task are inseparable and the extent to which exchange fosters a sense of shared responsibility. ATOSE predicts that productive structures produce stronger social-unit attributions of emotions than negotiated or reciprocal structures, producing stronger social-unit attributions than generalized structures of exchange.
- Exchange structures have an effect on relational or group cohesion through these emotional associations and resulting emotional attachments. Affective attachments are the proximal cause of behavior directed toward the common good, and affective detachments are the proximal cause of individually oriented behavior. ATOSE predicts that a productive exchange produces the strongest affective attachments, while a generalized exchange produces the weakest, and negotiated and reciprocal exchange is in between.
- Through the emotional/affective processes of the theory, networks can develop group properties. ATOSE predicts that all things being equal, networks of negotiated and reciprocal exchange will tend to promote stronger relational ties within, whereas productive or generalized exchange will promote stronger network or group-level ties (p.347-348).

ATOSE provides implications for the role of emotions in the production of group cohesiveness because any social interaction requires a joint activity. If the interaction is successful, it will produce a positive result for actors, i.e., they will feel good. This will encourage each actor to interact with others in the future, expecting another desirable result (Lawler, 2001). With repetition, their relationship to each other or a larger group becomes important as an object outside themselves (Berger & Luckmann, 1966) and also become a goal for the emotions experienced in interaction.

2.6. The Research Gap

Theoretically, leadership has a direct and significant influence on ACTC. Based on the norm of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960) of SET (Blau, 1964), a good and strong leadership that cares for their employees should provide a psychological obligation for the employee to return it by supporting the change initiative championed by the leader. Past studies found that transformational leadership significantly affects ACTC (Herold et al., 2008; Luu & Phan, 2020). However, several researchers found that some leadership styles, like servant leadership, change leadership, and transformational leadership, do not influence ACTC (Radian & Mangundjaya, 2019, Mangundjaya, 2013, Schulkers, 2017). Gile (2011) also found an insignificant influence of SL on systemic change, in particular on the response for change interventions in schools.

3.   Discussion

ATOSE and SL theory will be used as the ground theory to analyze why leadership, especially SL, on ACTC is insignificant in some research. The three most probable reasons could be proposed as the cause of the insignificant relationship.

1. All of the empirical research on leadership and ACTC relationships that produce insignificant relation (Gile, 2011; Mangundjaya, 2013, 2015; Radian & Mangundjaya, 2019; Schulkers, 2017) were explored using a cross-sectional study method. In the cross-sectional study method, all of the data were collected in a specific period. According to ATOSE, the formation of relationship cohesiveness and network solidarity is an interactive process of actors involved. SL theory also mentioned that the relationship of the leader and follower is reciprocal in nature. Both theories implied that the relationship process takes time to take effect. There is no information from the above research concerning the time and frequency of the leaders and their followers before the research data was collected. Based on the ATOSE and SL theory, there is an open possibility that there was not enough time for the relationship between SL and ACTC to be iterated to get the desired outcome. In examining the impact of SL, it has become very important to control the minimum time and interaction frequency required for the leaders and followers in their relationship, in the research design method.

2. ATOSE argues that the type of social exchange structure (productive, negotiated, reciprocal or generalized) will determine how much individual contribution is inseparable and the extent to which the exchange fosters a sense of shared responsibility. However, the above studies (Gile, 2011; Mangundjaya, 2013, 2015; Radian & Mangundjaya, 2019; Schulkers, 2017) did not specify the type of exchange structure that occurred in the population used as the sample for the SL and ACTC relationship research. There is an open possibility that the insignificant relationship between SL and ACTC was due to the type of exchange was not the productive exchange type, even though the leader has implemented servant leadership.

3. ATOSE predicts that actors will give emotional attributions based on their exchange with their social units, up to the level that the exchange brings them together around a common effort, extends their individual efforts or contributions identical (inseparable), and creates a sense of shared responsibility for success or failure at the exchange (Lawler, 2001). While the relation between SL and ACTC tends to be visible in the dyadic relationship between leader and follower, ATOSE argues that social exchange between followers in a group or network also determines the shared responsibility for the success or failure in the network or group. Moreover, the SL conceptual model also argues that the outcome of SL is mediated by a psychological climate that consists of trust and fairness/justice dimensions. In this case, SL could not influence ACTC directly, but there is a need for a condition or climate that needs to be formed before the impact of SL on ACTC could be realized. Based on ATOSE and the SL model, the author proposes that the SL does not directly influence ACTC but is mediated by culture formed due to the social exchange between the leader and the follower and among followers.

3.1. Proposition: Objective Workplace Spirituality (OWS) Mediates the Relationship between Servant Leadership (SL) and Affective Commitment to Change (ACTC)

Based on the analysis above, the author would like to propose a novel conceptual proposition, Objective Workplace Spirituality (OWS) as the mediator for SL and ACTC relationships to fill the research gap. OWS is a synthesis of the existing concept of workplace spirituality (WS) and inserting

trust and justice dimensions into it. WS is not in the context of any religious practice or theology (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000). If religion is more understood as an organized belief system, WS works to find meaning and feeling as part of the working community (Duchon & Plowman, 2005). WS is the acknowledgment that a human being has an inner life that nurtures and is being nurtured by meaningful work in the community context (Poole, 2009). A leader who develops WS understands that human beings need to find meaning in their workplace and need to be connected with others as part of the community. He or she will get the benefit in the form of loyalty, commitment, greater retention, connection to work and others, superior ethics, virtue development, increased performance, productivity, and creativity of their follower (Bandsuch & Cavanagh, 2005). Past researches found positive impacts of WS on many aspects of the organization, starting from improving intrinsic motivation and pro-environmental behavior (Afsar et al., 2015). For example, job satisfaction, job involvement, organizational commitment (Ashraf et al., 2014; Bandsuch & Cavanagh, 2005; Belwalkar et al., 2018; Hassan et al., 2016; Pawar, 2009), Employee well-being (Pawar, 2016), and organizational citizenship behavior (Charoensukmongkol et al., 2015; Jena & Pradhan, 2018). However, very little research has connected the influence between WS and ACTC.

WS can be seen as an element of organizational culture that will impact employees and their behavior (Daniel, 2010). WS contributes significantly to the development of a special environment that is part of organizational culture (Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2003). WS is about taking the opportunity to demonstrate many aspects of the employees' humanity. It has three main dimensions, the meaning of work (MW), sense of community (SC), and alignment to organizational value (AOV) (Milliman et al., 2003). MW will occur when employees understand that their work has meaning and it becomes part of their life purpose. SC will be developed when employees belong to one another and become part of the community at work. AOV happens when individuals experience a strong sense of alignment between their values and their organization's mission and purpose (Milliman et al., 2003). In this conceptual study, the author proposes to add the trust and justice dimension into workplace spirituality since these two dimensions were found to mediate the relationship of SL and ACTC (Kool & van Dierendonck, 2012; Mangundjaya, 2015). Inserting the trust and justice dimension to WS will make the new OWS more relevant to be used as the mediator for SL and ACTC as it will fit the conceptual model of SL. The justice dimension used will be procedural justice, justice in the decision-making process, and justice in policymaking. Meanwhile, the trust dimension deals with the willingness to be vulnerable to the other party and regarding the person as dependable (Kool & van Dierendonck, 2012).

3.2. Practical Implication

To make their members commit to the change initiatives, servant leaders need to realize that their SL alone is not enough. An OWS needs to be in place first. Servant leaders need to prepare an OWS to help their followers find justice, trust, the meaning of work, a sense of community, and alignment with organizational values. The conceptual model proposed in this study offered the following five important practical implications for servant leaders in leading the change initiatives. First, organizational policies that provide an
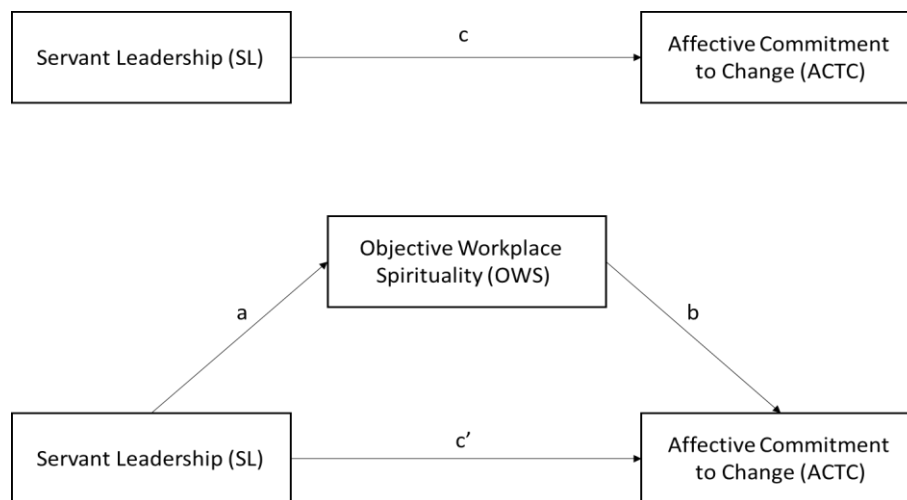

Figure 2. Conceptual Model OWS as the Mediating Variable of the Relationships between SL and ACTC

opportunity for employees to make decisions and at the same time give enough room for mistakes and then learning from them will increase their trust. Early, authentic, and clear communications concerning the time, risk of not changing, and the benefit of the change initiatives from the leaders will also increase the trust of their employees and in the end will increase their commitment to change. Second, fair remuneration and career system and a no-discrimination policy should be in place to increase the level of the justice dimension of OWS. Third, a company-wide human development program on self-identity, life, and work meaning will help increase the meaning of work dimension of OWS. Fourth, a company social responsibility program that involves employees and forming a company sports team will also increase the sense of community dimension of OWS. Fifth, an internal campaign on vision, mission, and company core values that consistently conducted will help the alignment of organizational values of OWS. In line with exercising their SL, servant leaders that have these programs and activities in place will have a better opportunity to influence the expected outcome significantly, that is the ACTC. However, caution needs to be made in applying OWS in certain types of organizations. Not all types of organizations will provide flexibility for the servant leaders to build OWS. For example, a military organization will have certain rules and regulations that are so rigid that it will not tolerate any values that are different from those established.

4. Conclusion

The paper aims to answer the inconclusive nature of the relationship between SL and CTC. Using the ATOSE and SL theory, three possible reasons for the research gap were identified: the use of cross-sectional study method to analyze the SL and ACTC relationship, the undefined exchange structure, and the missing mediation variable in the SL and ACTC relationship. A new construct, OWS, is proposed to be the mediator for the SL and ACTC relationship. Several practical implications of building an OWS will be necessary for a leader to get their followers to be committed to supporting the change initiatives.

As a conceptual paper that analyzes the theory, investigates the research gap, and provides a proposition to bridge the gap, this paper has limitations for its lack of empirical evidence from the analysis and the proposition provided. Based on the inherent limitations, the effectiveness of OWS as the mediator of SL and ACTC should be examined through further

empirical research. Furthermore, it is suggested to make sure that the length of time and frequency of relatedness between leaders and followers are well defined to make sure enough time for the reciprocal activity to take effect. A longitudinal study would be an option to investigate the reciprocal nature of the SL model and the ATOSE. The exchange structure would also be an interesting subject for the next research project, one on how these four different types of exchange play a role as a moderator in the relation of SL and ACTC.

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