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Identifying Dimensions and Components of Servant Leadership with an Organizational Resilience Approach in the General Department of Education of Khorasan Province

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ABSTRACT

Objective: The purpose of this research was to identify the dimensions and components of servant leadership with an organizational resilience approach in the General Department of Education of Khorasan province.

Methods: The methodology of this research is of a mixed type. The statistical population in the qualitative section includes the managers and deputies of the General Department of Education of the province, university professors and experts in the relevant field (15 people). Due to the qualitative nature of the first part of the study, the purposeful sampling method was used; The statistical population in the quantitative part included all the employees of the General Department of Education of Khorasan Razavi (350 people). The statistical sample was considered to be 186 people by referring to Morgan's table, and according to the dropout phenomenon, 220 questionnaires were distributed among the statistical sample. Descriptive and inferential methods were used to analyze the data, and structural equations were used to examine the research questions and fit the model to the data. Excel, SPSS version 24, PLS software were used to analyze and draw the data.

Results: The research results showed that servant leadership has four dimensions (social love, altruism, insight and empowerment) and twenty-four components.

Conclusions: As a result, operational definitions should be made to apply the dimensions of servant leadership in the form of organizational resilience so that employees and teachers feel the need to pay attention to the dimensions of servant leadership more objectively.

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Introduction

Most scholars specializing in resilience emphasize the significance of positive self-assessment, considering it a pivotal and indispensable element in emotional and social adjustment. Initially, psychologists like Herbert Mobed and Charles Cooley, influenced by sociologists, highlighted the value of positive resilience. However, in subsequent years, neo-Freudians such as Sullivan and Morney introduced the concept of self in personality theories. Over time, psychologists integrated these theories with empirical studies, establishing a reciprocal relationship between resilience, positive self-evaluation, happiness, and self-worth. Regarded as a fundamental human requirement, resilience is identified as a crucial necessity following physiological, safety, and love needs. Moreover, resilience plays a vital role in various domains, including mental health, social well-being, and professional performance, as it can both influence and be influenced by achievements in different areas (Raetze et al., 2021). As stated by Winston and Patterson (2006), despite the longstanding preeminence of leadership concepts, a universally high standard of leadership remains elusive. Emphasizing the central importance of service provision in leadership, it is crucial to acknowledge that power, historically intertwined with leadership, must be utilized exclusively for service delivery. Servant leadership upholds the principle of egalitarianism and prioritizes the personal growth of organizational members.

According to the developments that have taken place in the workplace today, the existing leadership models are no longer responsive to the appropriate requirements of this period, and the need for a leadership model based on human and moral relationships, including the leadership methods that exist in the spiritual and Islamic religious discourse, is felt. Among the leadership models, it seems that the servant leadership model, which is rooted in the teachings of Islam and in the theory of human relations in management, is very compatible with the current conditions and situations and can provide suitable solutions to solve the problems faced by the organization. ((Eva et al., 2019). Servant leadership is a new leadership style based on ethical and humanitarian principles, which may be beneficial for organizational leaders in terms of improving the performance of organization members through the cultivation of their attitudes, ideas and behaviors such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, organizational creativity (Coetzer et al., 2017). Servant leadership, with the aim of improving leadership in the organization,

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emphasizes on serving others and sacrifices personal interests for the interests of others so that people enjoy more authority and health (Mittal & Dorfman, 2012).

Today's world is affected by decisions made by people in very complex situations with high uncertainty. The chaos resulting from these decisions has caused the uncertainty in the phenomena to reach a very high level (Berglund & Mäkinen, 2019). Today, organizational resilience is a kind of foresight towards facing uncertainty and trying to implement changes in the organization (Barasa et al., 2018). Today, according to the development of the concept of resilience, there is a correct understanding of this concept in different fields. The result of a systematic review shows that there is no standard tool in the way of measuring organizational resilience in hospitals despite the existence of many tools. Resilience goes beyond the individual level and is also considered at the organizational and community level. Organizational resilience is defined as the organization's ability to adapt to unforeseen conditions and adaptability to critical situations (Putra, 2018).

Resilience is a successful adaptation that manifests itself in adversity and debilitating stress. Resilience is a structural dynamic that requires a complex interaction between risk and protective factors. Resilience is the capacity to withstand stress and disaster. Psychologists have always tried to increase this human ability to adapt and overcome danger and difficulties. Individuals and communities can rebuild their lives even after devastating calamities (Cristian, 2018). Resilience is the ability to implement adaptation in the field of social sciences and the process of resilience and reaction to adversity (García-Izquierdo et al., 2018). Organizational resilience is defined as the organization's ability to predict, avoid and adjust positively against environmental disturbances and changes. This ability is a combination of organizational capacity to restore efficiency after a disruption and build the necessary capabilities before responding to a crisis (Burnard et al., 2018). The term organizational resilience emerged as an important concept in crisis management literature and refers to the capacity of organizations to adapt to disruptions and exploit opportunities in a changing environment (Parsons, 2010).

Ebrahimi and Noornejad Vanoush (2022) proposed a model aimed at enhancing the resilience capacity of small and medium enterprises through an interpretive structural approach. They identified various factors influencing organizational resilience development, including shared vision, organizational knowledge management, human resource empowerment, and flexible organic structure. These factors represent the softer and behavioral aspects of organizational

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resilience capacity development. Conversely, factors such as technology, financial resources, alliances and outsourcing, and redundancy of resources can be viewed as the organizational and hard aspects (resource-oriented) impacting organizational resilience development.

The interplay of these factors contributes to enhancing production and supply agility, fostering innovation and creativity, leveraging environmental opportunities, promoting organizational flexibility, and ultimately bolstering organizational resilience capacity. Melián-Alzola et al. (2020) highlighted the significance of organizational resilience in the context of hotels, emphasizing its role in ensuring the survival and competitiveness of such establishments. The predictors of hotel resilience are closely tied to strategic decisions and responses to environmental changes, with hotel resilience exerting a direct influence on organizational performance.

Resilience, as defined, denotes a system's ability to endure, absorb, and mitigate the impacts of risks, thereby restoring its functionality to the desired level within an acceptable timeframe. In societal contexts, resilience stands out as a critical factor in mitigating casualties resulting from natural disasters. However, failures in specific network areas can compromise the overall network capacity, leading to substantial losses (Ramandi & Kashani, 2018). Findings from Iran underscore the detrimental effects of neglecting resilience concepts on key components of the service delivery chain, including employee presence, infrastructure safety, incident management, support systems, capacity, and external factors (Khademi JolgehneJad et al., 2019). Based on this, the researchers aimed to explore the dimensions and components of servant leadership within an organizational resilience framework within the General Department of Education of Khorasan province.

Material and Methods

Given the intention of this study was to explore the dimensions and elements of servant leadership within an organizational resilience framework at the General Department of Education and Culture of Razavi Khorasan Province, the dimensions and elements of servant leadership and organizational resilience were identified by the researcher. Subsequently, a qualitative approach along with the Delphi research method were employed to present these factors to a panel of experts who were tasked with discerning the most crucial elements while eliminating less significant ones. Furthermore, the experts were requested to pinpoint any important factors not previously

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mentioned in the model. Following this, an initial questionnaire was formulated based on these findings, which was then revised and presented to the experts. Ultimately, the key dimensions and components of servant leadership and organizational resilience were determined. The questionnaire designed according to the Delphi methodology was then assessed among members of the statistical community, with approach A being slightly implemented.

The qualitative segment of the statistical population was categorized into scientific experts and executive experts, comprising managers, deputies of the General Department of Education, university professors, and field experts, totaling 15 individuals. Due to the qualitative nature of the initial phase, a purposive sampling technique was utilized to select experts based on criteria such as executive proficiency, teaching experience, and possession of reputable publications. In the quantitative phase, the statistical population encompassed all employees of the General Directorate of Education of Khorasan Razavi, amounting to 350 individuals. Referring to Morgan's table, the statistical sample size was determined to be 186 individuals, with 220 questionnaires distributed to account for potential dropouts.

Data analysis involved the use of descriptive and inferential methods. Descriptively, variables and questionnaire items were utilized to depict the study population through diagrams, frequency reports, central tendencies, and dispersion indicators. The Delphi method was employed to extract dimensions and components in the qualitative segment, while inferentially, data distribution was examined using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test to ensure normality assumptions were met, followed by the application of suitable statistical techniques. Ultimately, structural equations were utilized to address the primary research question and align the model with the data, employing Excel, SPSS version 24, and PLS software for data analysis and visualization.

Results

According to the descriptive statistics of the qualitative part, the number of male participants in the expert group is 13 and female participants are 2. Of these, 2 people are under 40 years old, 8 people are between 40 and 50 years old, and 5 people are over 50 years old. In terms of education, 5 people have master's degree and 10 people have doctorate. In terms of work experience, 2 people have less than 10 years of work experience, 9 people have work experience between 10 and 15 years, and 4 people have more than 15 years of work experience. In the quantitative part, in terms

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of gender distribution of the respondents, 68.3% (equivalent to 127 people) are male and 31.7% (equivalent to 59 people) are female. In terms of age distribution of the respondents, 47.3% (equivalent to 88 people) are under 40 years old and 38.7% (equivalent to 72 people) between 41 and 45 years old, 0.14% (equivalent to 26 people) between 46 and They are 50 years old. In terms of education distribution of the respondents, 0.64% (equivalent to 119 people) have bachelor's degrees, 33.3% (equivalent to 62 people) have master's degrees, and 2.7% (equivalent to 5 people) have doctorates.

The first step Delphi method

In the first stage of the Delphi project, a questionnaire including the dimensions, components and indicators suggested by the researchers to identify the dimensions of servant leadership with an organizational resilience approach was provided to the group of experts to give their opinion on the importance of the presence of the mentioned items. . The members of the expert group were asked to present their agreement and disagreement with these issues raised in the research model. In the following, those dimensions that had a positive score higher than 0.7 remained in the study and were entered into the study for the second stage of Delphi.

The second stage Delphi method

In the first stage of the study, the items were extracted from the review of related texts, after the important dimensions required for the design of the model were determined from the experts' point of view, in the second stage of the Delphi design, the aim was to examine the dimensions and components proposed for each of the research variables and according to the opinions and views of the responding experts, the required dimensions should be planned and explained. In the second stage, a questionnaire with a 5-point Likert scale from very agree to very disagree was considered. The results of these answers indicated that only one question was not approved and the rest entered the third stage of Delphi.

The third stage of Delphi

In this research, in order to check the validity, content validity has been used, to check the content validity in a quantitative way, two coefficients of the content validity ratio and the content validity index are used (Polit & Beck, 2006) to measure the content validity of the questionnaire among 15 experts were divided. To calculate the content validity ratio, the questionnaire was divided into the

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content validity ratio section, and experts and informants scored the obtained components based on a three-point Likert scale (necessary - useful but unnecessary - unnecessary). Also, to calculate the content validity index from Waltz and Basel's method, a quadruple questionnaire (not relevant - relatively relevant - relevant - completely relevant) was distributed, and the following results were obtained.

Table 1. Content validity of third-stage Delphi codes based on criteria

Dimension	Components	N	@	CVR	CVI
Situational awareness or situational awareness	Roles and responsibilities	3	0.72	0.84	0.91
	Understanding and analyzing risks and their consequences	4	0.78	0.77	0.92
	The amount of communication and calls	3	0.81	0.79	0.98
	Insurance awareness and situational awareness	2	0.79	0.80	0.93
	Priorities to return to normal	3	0.75	0.78	0.91
	Monitoring and reporting of the internal and external situation	3	0.77	0.81	0.90
	Conscious decision making	2	0.79	0.80	0.93
Key vulnerabilities	Planning strategies	6	0.81	0.76	0.91
	Participation in exercises and maneuvers	3	0.79	0.798	0.944
	Internal capabilities and capacities of the organization	3	0.80	0.80	0.92
	Corporate Communications	3	0.98	0.76	0.91
	Robust processes for identifying and analyzing vulnerabilities	3	0.79	0.76	0.93
	Participation and presence in the organization	3	0.78	0.75	0.91
Adaptability capacity	Silo mentality	3	0.77	0.73	0.90
	Communication and relationships	3	0.81	0.75	0.93
	Strategic attitude and foresight	3	0.95	0.78	0.97
	Information and awareness	6	0.74	0.76	0.90
	Leadership, management and administration structure	5	0.71	0.75	0.94
	creativity and innovation	3	0.79	0.80	0.90
	Advanced and responsible decision making	3	0.79	0.90	0.90
Servant Leadership	Social love	6	0.79	0.80	0.95
	Altruism	6	0.81	0.75	0.91
	Intuition	6	0.71	0.79	0.94
	Empowerment	6	0.75	0.77	0.96

According to table 1, Cronbach's alpha (@), content validity ratio (CVR) and content validity index (CVI) are more than 0.7, which indicates the validity and reliability of the questionnaire. After removing the rejected questions, 91 questions were confirmed, the questionnaire of which

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was designed and prepared for the quantitative part, duplicated, completed, collected and analyzed by the statistical community.

Research question 1: What are the dimensions of servant leadership with an organizational resilience approach in the General Department of Education of Razavi Khorasan Province?

Servant leadership has four dimensions. The factor analysis performed shows the amount of each factor and the value of T (table 2).

Table 2. The dimensions of the model

Dimensions	Factor loading	T value	P	Result
Social love is one of the dimensions of servant leadership	0.85	25.84	0.001	Confirmed
Altruism is one of the dimensions of servant leadership	0.85	30.85	0.001	Confirmed
Vision is one of the dimensions of servant leadership	0.69	12.09	0.001	Confirmed
Empowerment is one of the dimensions of servant leadership	0.67	10.38	0.001	Confirmed

The factor load shows the ability to measure the variable by the dimension, and the range of this coefficient is between 0 and 1. The closer this amount is to 1, the stronger the ability to measure. The t values between 1.96 and 2.57 indicate a significant effect with more than 95% confidence between the relevant variables. t values equal to and greater than 2.57 indicate a significant effect with more than 99% confidence among the relevant variables. According to the table 2, all the identified dimensions have the ability to measure the variable of servant leadership.

Research question 2: What are the components of servant leadership with an organizational resilience approach in the General Department of Education of Razavi Khorasan Province?

Servant leadership has twenty-four components. The factor analysis performed shows the amount of each factor and the value of T.

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Table 3. The components of the model

Components	Factor loading	T value	P	Result
Trusted people	0.58	6.62	0.001	Confirmed
Development of leadership skills	0.70	16.01	0.001	Confirmed
Encouraging and encouraging people in the organization	0.59	10.15	0.001	Confirmed
Compassion and compassion for people in the organization	0.62	11.07	0.001	Confirmed
Giving importance to managers by people	0.75	16.17	0.001	Confirmed
Being worried about the affairs by managers	0.64	11.15	0.001	Confirmed
Leadership with excellence and virtues	0.49	5.49	0.001	Confirmed
being humble	0.58	8.17	0.001	Confirmed
Compassion and compassion for people in the organization	0.64	8.38	0.001	Confirmed
Lack of self-praise and pride	0.69	15.12	0.001	Confirmed
Follow up on employee comments	0.73	12.30	0.001	Confirmed
Maneuvering on one's morals, perfections and virtues	0.57	11.26	0.001	Confirmed
Paying attention to the views and opinions of people in the organization	0.59	4.23	0.001	Confirmed
Empowering employees by giving work opportunities	0.58	4.55	0.001	Confirmed
Cooperation between people to find a common point of view	0.81	25.40	0.001	Confirmed
The presence of explicit and clear instructions about duties	0.77	19.58	0.001	Confirmed
The behavior of managers and employees mixed with a kind of humility	0.76	19.43	0.001	Confirmed
Paying attention to the views and opinions of employees in determining the goals and decisions of the organization	0.50	5.48	0.001	Confirmed
Development of leadership skills	0.52	10.35	0.001	Confirmed
Leadership with excellence and virtues	0.81	11.26	0.001	Confirmed
Consulting in organization affairs by managers with organization people	0.89	11.36	0.001	Confirmed
Non-interference in all employee affairs by managers	0.41	10.71	0.001	Confirmed
Empowering employees by giving work opportunities	0.54	10.90	0.001	Confirmed
Delegation of authority	0.46	10.78	0.001	Confirmed

The factor load shows the ability to measure the variable by the dimension, and the range of this coefficient is between 0 and 1. The closer this amount is to 1, the stronger the ability to measure. The t values between 1.96 and 2.57 indicate a significant effect with more than 95% confidence between the relevant variables. t values equal to and greater than 2.57 indicate a significant effect with more than 99% confidence among the relevant variables. According to the table 3, all the identified dimensions have the ability to measure the components of servant leadership.

Discussion

The outcomes of the study on the primary inquiry concerning the dimensions of servant leadership within an organizational resilience framework at the General Department of Education in Razavi Khorasan province reveal that servant leadership encompasses four dimensions: social love, altruism, insight, and empowerment. These findings are consistent with those of Winston and Patterson (2006), Kaffash and Zameni (2018) and Ahmadloo et al. (2018).

Upon examination of the theoretical underpinnings of the study and the findings of previous scholars, it appears that servant leadership originates from an innate inclination towards task

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execution. Various crucial factors influence its implementation and orientation. Servant leadership manifests when leaders strive to assume a servant role among their subordinates. The primary impetus behind servant leadership lies in the aspiration to leverage the capabilities of others. In the realm of management, the principal driving force for managers is the eagerness to serve and carry out activities within the organization. Servant leaders are essentially those who depend on their subordinates and prioritize organizational matters, offering an optimal approach and alignment for engaging individuals within an organization. According to Greenleaf, there is no predefined model for this managerial style, and a servant leader demonstrates a strong inclination towards attracting individuals and delving into the core of their issues. Servant leadership concentrates on addressing critical needs both externally and internally within the organization (Ammeter et al., 2004). What sets Greenleaf's theory of servant leadership apart is his vision of establishing a servant society as the ultimate and ideal objective, a society where every member reaps the benefits of such a communal structure. Greenleaf asserts that the realization of this vision is contingent upon having servant leaders across the various organizations dispersed throughout society. The servant leadership approach has the potential to address numerous challenges encountered by organizations in the 21st century. In this leadership style, rather than followers serving the leader, leaders serve their followers by fostering skill development among employees, resolving issues and barriers, nurturing creativity and innovation, and empowering staff. Servant leadership not only refrains from portraying organizational members as less capable than their managers but also instills in employees the same values upheld by organizational leaders.

The members of the organization exhibit equal dignity and actively engage in both management and organizational decision-making processes. The application of servant leadership principles serves as a valuable tool for establishing organizations suitable for the demands of the 21st century. Any potential transformation within the realm of education must commence with a re-evaluation of educational management practices. In the context of education and training, the initiation of any shifts towards change and improvement should specifically target the leadership styles adopted by managers. Within educational and training institutions, managers can enhance intra-organizational communication, leadership capabilities, and consequently, organizational quality through a deeper understanding of the organization and its members.

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Research findings pertaining to the components of servant leadership alongside an organizational resilience approach within the General Department of Education of Khorasan Razavi Province unveiled twenty-four key components. These components include valuing trustworthy individuals, fostering leadership development, providing support and motivation to organizational members, demonstrating empathy and care towards individuals within the organization, acknowledging the significance of managers to employees, showcasing managerial concern for organizational affairs, embodying leadership with integrity and moral excellence, practicing humility, avoiding self-centeredness and arrogance, prioritizing employee opinions, abstaining from unethical behaviors and self-centeredness, considering the perspectives and ideas of organizational members, empowering employees through job opportunities, fostering collaboration to reach a consensus, establishing clear directives on responsibilities, exemplifying managerial behavior with a blend of humility and modesty when interacting with employees, considering employee perspectives in setting organizational goals and making decisions, enhancing leadership abilities, practicing leadership with excellence and moral virtues, engaging in consultations with organizational members on organizational matters, refraining from undue interference in employee affairs, and empowering employees through delegation of authority. These research outcomes align with the studies conducted by Ahmadloo et al. (2018) and Rahimian et al. (2018).

By scrutinizing the theoretical underpinnings of the study and the findings of fellow researchers, it appears that servant leadership is applicable not only in large enterprises but across all organizational hierarchies. It has even been suggested for utilization by parents. Servant leadership offers a viable option for balancing authority and answerability, potentially enhancing the status of numerous individuals within the organization. A total of 9 essential traits and 11 indispensable characteristics of servant leadership were delineated, establishing the fundamental framework of this leadership model. This framework is significant as it furnishes a groundwork for comprehending, implementing, exploring, and evolving the concept of servant leadership. The cognitive attributes of leaders serve as the cornerstone of the servant leadership model.

Many scholars argue that the attributes of servant leadership stem from the personal principles and convictions of leaders. The variable of values stands as the independent element within the leadership framework, whereas servant leadership represents the dependent variable. Furthermore, the descriptive traits function as the dependent variable of servant leadership, influencing its

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efficacy. Moreover, the required attributes impact the transmission of values to the necessary traits. Servant leadership constitutes a manageable factor that impacts organizations. The outcome of servant leadership ultimately emerges as an independent variable influencing subsequent dependent variables like organizational performance. While intervening variables and moderators like organizational culture and individual attitudes may influence the efficacy of servant leadership, organizational communication systems, for instance, can streamline the service delivery process. A servant leader empathizes with their followers, placing themselves in their subordinates' shoes. Empathy serves as a deliberate response enabling leaders to grasp the shortcomings and challenges faced by followers, persistently striving to address those issues. Servant leaders acknowledge their followers' vulnerabilities and consistently endeavor to remedy these shortcomings. By fostering empathy, a servant leader steers their followers' morale towards excellence, thereby boosting team members' spirits and fostering their willingness to collaborate (Washington et al., 2006). Encouragement stands out as a fundamental skill of servant leadership. Such leaders are risk-takers who chart a course that followers willingly traverse, convinced that the leader's direction is correct, perhaps even superior to their own proposals. Leading through encouragement and persuasion embodies a transformative quality, eschewing coercion in pursuit of desired outcomes. Servant leaders eschew dominance, opting instead to impart their sagacity and acumen, fostering comprehension through encouragement and persuasion. A servant leader harbors a constructive outlook aimed at nurturing and enhancing their staff. The servant leader posits that his followers represent valuable assets within the organization, fostering them comprehensively and consistently offering optimal support, including essential training for current roles and practical guidance for advancing to higher positions (Gregory Stone et al., 2004).

Numerous organizations operate under a patriarchal leadership paradigm, a factor that hinders their evolution into authentic servant-based entities. Lab explicates three leadership styles, asserting that servant leadership views itself as the custodian of the organization and its members, prioritizing the needs of followers over personal interests, and engaging with staff as collaborative partners. Conversely, autocratic leadership embodies a dictatorial approach, prioritizing personal needs and treating employees as subordinates. In contrast, patriarchal leadership adopts a parental stance, typically prioritizing organizational needs and regarding employees as dependents. This

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form of leadership, whether positive or negative, often retains a paternalistic nature. Lab's objective is to highlight that numerous organizations identifying as service-oriented actually mirror a positive iteration of patriarchal structures.

Education, as a governmental offshoot social institution, necessitated governmental oversight to supervise the activities of educators, trainers, and educational staff for guidance. Consequently, governmental enactment of laws and regulations for educational institutions mandated oversight by a designated individual to ensure adherence to these standards beyond the educators themselves. Within the educational realm, considering management as a foundational element for instigating organizational transformations to foster coherence, its responsibilities can be viewed as complementary to primary organizational tenets for program implementation. Drawing from research outcomes delineating the facets of servant leadership within the General Department of Education in Razavi Khorasan province, employing operational definitions is recommended to integrate servant leadership dimensions (social compassion, altruism, discernment, and empowerment) into organizational resilience frameworks, enabling employees and educators to objectively focus on these leadership dimensions.

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Data availability statement

The original contributions presented in the study are included in the article/supplementary material, further inquiries can be directed to the corresponding author.

Ethics statement

The studies involving human participants were reviewed and approved by ethics committee of Islamic Azad University.

Author contributions

All authors contributed to the study conception and design, material preparation, data collection and analysis. The author contributed to the article and approved the submitted version.

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Conflict of interest

The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

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