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Servant Leadership as a Driver of Organizational Change: The Mediating Role of Emotional Intelligence in Reducing Resistance

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Abstract

This study explores the strategic role of servant leadership in facilitating organizational change by enhancing employees' emotional intelligence. It aims to understand how servant leaders can reduce resistance to change by fostering emotional resilience and adaptability among team members. The research draws on data collected from 205 employees in the hospitality sector who experienced significant organizational transitions. Structural equation modeling (Smart PLS 4.0) was employed to examine the proposed relationships. The results indicate that servant leadership does not directly reduce resistance to change but does so indirectly by strengthening employees' emotional intelligence. This mediating effect highlights the importance of emotional competencies in navigating change. This paper adds to the limited body of research linking servant leadership and emotional intelligence in the context of change management, emphasizing the indirect pathway through which leadership impacts employee attitudes.

Keywords: servant leadership, emotional intelligence, resistance to change, organizational transformation, hospitality sector