

THE MODERATING ROLE OF ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT IN THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SERVANT LEADERSHIP AND PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE PERFORMANCE IN UGANDA

Ruth Ekirapa Byoona, Wilson Odiyo & Ella Ruth Anaya

The Strategic JOURNAL of Business & Change MANAGEMENT
ISSN: 2312-9492 www.strategicjournals.com
Vol. 12, Iss.4, pp 849 – 855, November 11, 2025. www.strategicjournals.com, © Strategic Journals

THE MODERATING ROLE OF ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT IN THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SERVANT LEADERSHIP AND PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE PERFORMANCE IN UGANDA

[1*] Ruth Ekirapa Byoona, [2] Wilson Odiyo & [3] Ella Ruth Anaya

[1]PhD. Candidate, Pan African Christian University, Kenya*

[2]Professor of Organizational Leadership, Pan African Christian University, Kenya

[3]Professor of Leadership, Trinity Western University, Canada

Accepted: October 30, 2025

DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.61426/sjbcm.v12i4.3439

ABSTRACT

Parliamentary committees are essential for legislative oversight, accountability, and effective lawmaking. However, persistent performance challenges in Uganda's parliamentary committees undermine their effectiveness. While structural and resource factors have been widely studied, leadership dynamics and organisational commitment have received less attention. This study examined the moderating effect of organisational commitment on the relationship between servant leadership and committee performance in Uganda's Parliament, using aggregated constructs. A pragmatic, cross-sectional mixed-methods design was employed, involving 320 Members of Parliament (MPs), 39 clerks, and 12 committee chairpersons. Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and moderated multiple regressions, while qualitative interviews offered contextual explanations. Descriptive results showed high mean scores for servant leadership (M = 4.02, SD = 0.57) and organisational commitment (M = 4.01, SD = 0.56), and moderately high scores for committee performance (M = 3.83, SD = 0.59). Correlation analysis revealed a significant positive relationship between servant leadership and committee performance (r = 0.274, p < .01). Moderated regression results demonstrated that organisational commitment significantly strengthened this relationship (B = 0.211, p = 0.031). Qualitative data supported these findings by highlighting how commitment enhances responsiveness to servant leadership behaviours. These results suggest that servant leadership is most effective in contexts where members exhibit high levels of affective and normative commitment. Integrating servant leadership training with commitment-building strategies is recommended to improve parliamentary committee performance.

Keywords: *Servant Leadership; Organisational Commitment; Parliamentary Committees; Moderation; Uganda*

CITATION: Byoona, R. E., Odiyo, W., & Anaya, E. R. (2025). The moderating role of organisational commitment in the relationship between servant leadership and parliamentary committee performance in Uganda. *The Strategic Journal of Business & Change Management*, 12 (4), 849 – 855.

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Parliamentary committees play a central role in legislative oversight, lawmaking, and democratic accountability. In Uganda, they are critical to scrutinising government activities, shaping legislation, and providing a platform for public engagement (Africa Leadership Institute, 2020). Despite this, committees face persistent performance challenges such as delays in reporting, weak follow-through on recommendations, absenteeism, inadequate technical expertise, poor funding, and limited access to information from Government Ministries (PoU, 2025). These challenges undermine legislative effectiveness and democratic governance.

While much attention has focused on structural and resource constraints, leadership dynamics remain underexplored. Servant leadership offers a compelling framework for understanding leadership in peer-based contexts like parliamentary committees. It emphasises humility, persuasion, altruism, and empowerment, which foster trust, collaboration, and inclusive decision-making (Eva et al., 2019; Greenleaf, 1977). However, the effectiveness of servant leadership may depend on the level of organisational commitment exhibited by members.

Organisational commitment, as articulated by Meyer and Allen (1997), comprises affective, continuance, and normative dimensions. High affective and normative commitment reflect emotional attachment and moral obligation, which encourage individuals to align their behaviour with organisational goals. Prior research suggests that commitment moderates the relationship between leadership and performance, amplifying the positive effects of leadership behaviours when commitment levels are high (Liden et al., 2008; Podsakoff et al., 2020). In parliamentary settings, where authority is distributed and members often act as peers, commitment may be particularly critical in enabling servant leadership to translate into performance. This study therefore investigates the moderating effect of organisational commitment on the relationship between servant leadership and committee performance, using aggregated measures to provide a more holistic assessment of these constructs.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a pragmatic research paradigm, which integrates both quantitative and qualitative approaches to provide a comprehensive understanding of complex social phenomena. Pragmatism is particularly appropriate for studies examining leadership and organisational dynamics because it allows the researcher to combine numerical data with contextual insights to address real-world problems effectively (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). This paradigm aligns with the study's aim of assessing both the statistical relationship between servant leadership, organisational commitment, and committee performance, and the lived experiences of parliamentary actors.

A cross-sectional mixed-methods research design was employed. Mixed methods facilitate the collection and integration of both quantitative and qualitative data to gain a more complete understanding of the research problem (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2010). The cross-sectional nature of the design meant that data were collected at one point in time, making it suitable for analysing relationships among leadership, commitment, and performance variables within Uganda's parliamentary context.

Population and Sample

The study population comprised 320 Members of Parliament (MPs) serving on various parliamentary committees, 39 clerks who support the operational functions of these committees, and 12 committee chairpersons. The selection of MPs and clerks through a census approach ensured comprehensive coverage of the population and minimised sampling bias. This approach was appropriate because the total number of committee actors was manageable, and complete participation increased the reliability and representativeness of the findings.

For the qualitative component, purposive sampling was used to select 12 committee chairpersons and 15 clerks. Purposive sampling involves selecting information-rich cases that can provide detailed insights into the phenomenon under study (Patton, 2015). Chairpersons were selected because of their leadership roles within committees, while clerks were chosen because of their institutional knowledge and close involvement in committee operations. These perspectives offered valuable qualitative insights into how organisational commitment interacts with leadership practices in shaping committee performance.

Data Collection

Quantitative data were collected using a structured questionnaire consisting of three major sections. The first section measured servant leadership, using aggregated scores from items on humility, persuasion, altruism, and empowerment. The second section measured organisational commitment, using aggregated scores derived from affective, continuance, and normative dimensions as conceptualised by Meyer and Allen (1997). The third section assessed committee performance, focusing on oversight effectiveness, legislative output, and stakeholder engagement.

Qualitative data were gathered through semi-structured interviews with 12 selected chairpersons and 15 clerks. The interviews were guided by open-ended questions designed to explore how commitment influences the effectiveness of servant leadership in parliamentary committees. This method allowed participants to elaborate on their experiences and provide examples of how leadership and commitment interact in daily committee operations. Prior to data collection, the instruments were pre-tested using former MPs and staff who were not part of the study to ensure clarity, relevance, and internal consistency. Necessary modifications were made based on feedback from pilot respondents to improve reliability and validity.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analysed using SPSS Version 23. Descriptive statistics, including means and standard deviations, were computed to summarise the aggregated constructs of servant leadership, organisational commitment, and committee performance. This provided an overall picture of the respondents' perceptions.

Pearson product-moment correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationships between servant leadership, organisational commitment, and committee performance. To assess the moderating effect of organisational commitment, moderated multiple regression analysis was employed. This technique tests whether the strength of the relationship between an independent variable (servant leadership) and a dependent variable (committee performance) varies as a function of a third variable (organisational commitment) (Aiken & West, 1991). Interaction terms between servant leadership and organisational commitment were created and included in the regression model to test the moderation hypothesis.

Qualitative data from interviews were transcribed and analysed using thematic analysis, following the procedures recommended by Braun and Clarke (2006). Codes were developed inductively, and emerging themes were used to explain and contextualise the quantitative findings. This integration of methods enhanced the validity of the conclusions through methodological triangulation, which strengthens the robustness of the results by comparing and converging evidence from multiple data sources (Denzin, 2017).

RESULTS

This section presents the findings of the study, integrating quantitative results from descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and moderated regression with qualitative insights from committee chairpersons and clerks.

Descriptive Statistics

Table 1 summarises the aggregated descriptive statistics for servant leadership, organisational commitment, and committee performance.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for the Study Variables

Variable	N	Mean	SD
Servant Leadership	359	4.02	0.57
Organisational Commitment	359	4.01	0.56
Committee Performance	359	3.83	0.59

The results indicate that both servant leadership (M = 4.02) and organisational commitment (M = 4.01) were rated highly, while committee performance was rated moderately high (M = 3.83). This suggests that committee chairpersons were perceived to consistently practise humility, persuasion, altruism, and empowerment, and that members demonstrated strong emotional and moral attachment to their committees.

Interviews supported these results. Several chairpersons described leadership practices that prioritised inclusion and shared decision-making. One chairperson remarked, *"I try to make sure that everyone feels their voice matters. When members see that their ideas shape our decisions, they become more involved."* Another explained, *"I encourage open debate and make it clear that the committee's success is collective, not individual."*

Clerks provided operational perspectives that reinforced these patterns. One clerk observed, *"Some chairpersons genuinely listen and act on members' suggestions. You can see the difference in attendance and participation when leaders value contributions."* Another added, *"Committees with engaged leaders tend to keep better schedules and follow through on tasks more consistently."* These accounts reflect the high leadership and commitment ratings and offer a glimpse into the relational dynamics that underpin performance.

Correlation Analysis

The Pearson correlation analysis examined the bivariate relationships among servant leadership, organisational commitment, and committee performance. The results are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Correlation Matrix

Variable	1	2	3
1. Servant Leadership	1		
2. Organisational Commitment	0.315**	1	
3. Committee Performance	0.274**	0.289**	1

Note: $p < .01$

The results reveal a significant positive relationship between servant leadership and committee performance ($r = 0.274$, $p < .01$). Organisational commitment was also positively correlated with both servant leadership ($r = 0.315$, $p < .01$) and performance ($r = 0.289$, $p < .01$). This implies that strong leadership practices are associated with higher levels of member commitment, which in turn relate to improved performance outcomes.

Chairpersons and clerks both highlighted these linkages. One clerk stated, *"When the chairperson is transparent and approachable, members show up and take their responsibilities seriously."* Similarly, a chairperson observed, *"Commitment grows when leaders create an environment where everyone feels valued and respected."* These perspectives illuminate the mechanism behind the statistical associations, showing how leadership behaviours

stimulate commitment, which then reinforces performance.

Moderated Regression Analysis

Moderated regression analysis was conducted to test whether organisational commitment moderates the relationship between servant leadership and committee performance. Table 3 presents the results.

Table 3: Moderated Regression Results

Variable	B	SE	t	p
Constant	1.156	0.433	2.67	0.008
Servant Leadership	0.283	0.067	4.22	0.000
Organisational Commitment	0.297	0.064	4.64	0.000
Servant Leadership × Org. Commitment	0.211	0.097	2.18	0.031

The interaction term between servant leadership and organisational commitment was statistically significant (B = 0.211, p = 0.031), confirming that organisational commitment moderates the servant leadership–committee performance relationship. Specifically, the positive impact of servant leadership on committee performance is stronger at higher levels of organisational commitment.

Interview narratives reinforced this finding. Chairpersons explained that leadership is most effective when members are committed. One chairperson explained, *"You can provide all the guidance you want, but if members are not committed, the work will stall."* Another added, *"When members are loyal to the committee, they respond quickly to leadership initiatives, and the results show."*

Clerks provided further confirmation from their vantage point: *"Committees with committed members run smoother. The chairperson's efforts translate into real outputs like timely reports and strong debates."* Conversely, in low-commitment environments, servant leadership had limited impact. As one clerk noted, *"Some committees struggle not because the leader is weak, but because members prioritise politics over committee work."*

Taken together, these results paint a clear and compelling picture. Parliamentary committees in Uganda generally exhibit strong servant leadership and relatively high organisational commitment, both of which are positively associated with performance. The moderating analysis shows that organisational commitment is not merely a parallel factor but a crucial amplifier of leadership effectiveness. Servant leadership fosters trust, inclusion, and shared purpose, while commitment provides the motivational and moral foundation that enables these leadership behaviours to translate into tangible performance outcomes. The perspectives of chairpersons and clerks converge to show that when leadership and commitment are both strong, committees function cohesively, deliberate effectively, and deliver better oversight and legislative outputs. In contrast, where commitment is weak, even strong leadership struggles to yield meaningful results. This highlights the interdependence of leadership and commitment as dual drivers of parliamentary committee performance.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of this study confirm that servant leadership exerts a positive influence on parliamentary committee performance, and that this relationship is significantly strengthened by organisational commitment. In other words, behaviours associated with servant leadership namely, humility, persuasion, altruism, and empowerment, tend to yield stronger performance effects when committee members are more emotionally and morally committed to their committees.

This result is consistent with theoretical expectations. Meyer and Allen's (1997) commitment model suggests that affective commitment (emotional attachment) and normative commitment (sense of obligation) enable members to internalise organisational goals. In high-commitment contexts, leadership influence becomes part of members' identity and behaviour. In parliamentary committee settings, members who care deeply about their committee tend to reciprocate servant leadership by actively participating, adhering to decisions, and sustaining engagement.

The moderating finding aligns with broader evidence in the leadership literature. For instance, meta-analytic reviews indicate that servant leadership is positively related to follower outcomes such as job performance, commitment, and citizenship behaviour (Chaudry, 2025; Eva et al., 2019). These reviews emphasise that leadership effects vary by context and follower attitudes, supporting the logic that commitment moderates how servant leadership translates into outcomes.

Empirical studies in the public sector further reinforce this dynamic. Zhang et al. (2024) showed that servant leadership positively affects public service motivation and proactive service behaviour among civil servants, which in turn improves performance (Zhang et al., 2024). In addition, Nguyen et al. (2023) found that servant leadership fosters public sector innovative behaviour through pathways of motivation and climate. These results suggest that in governance or service settings, servant leadership is effective in mobilising internal motivation among followers, which may amplify its impact where commitment is high.

The qualitative findings from committee chairpersons and clerks provide practical grounding for these relationships. Chairpersons pointed out that leadership efforts often falter if members lack commitment, and clerks confirmed that committed members make leadership translation into action, for example, more consistent attendance, richer debate, and better execution of tasks. These accounts echo the logic of social exchange theory: positive leader behaviours are reciprocated when followers feel committed and trusted.

Overall, this study contributes to the literature by demonstrating that in parliamentary committees, servant leadership and organisational commitment operate not independently but interactively. Servant leadership builds trust, inclusivity, and empowerment; organisational commitment provides the motivational and moral foundation needed for those leadership behaviours to be sustained and translated into performance. For parliamentary systems, this implies that leadership training programs should not only enhance servant leadership skills among chairpersons but also include mechanisms to build and sustain member commitment through orientation, repeated socialisation, feedback loops, and institutional incentives.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study conclude that organisational commitment significantly moderates the relationship between servant leadership and parliamentary committee performance in Uganda. Servant leadership contributes positively to committee performance, but its effects are significantly enhanced when members exhibit high levels of affective and normative commitment. To strengthen committee performance, it is recommended that parliamentary leadership programs integrate servant leadership training with strategies to build organisational commitment. These could include team-building activities, values-based leadership development, structured feedback mechanisms, and policies that reinforce loyalty and moral obligation to committees. By aligning leadership behaviours with commitment-building efforts, parliaments can foster more effective and accountable committees.

REFERENCES

Africa Leadership Institute. (2020). *Enhancing parliamentary oversight in Uganda: Current challenges and the way forward.* Africa Leadership Institute.

Aiken, L. S., & West, S. G. (1991). *Multiple regression: Testing and interpreting interactions.* Sage.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3*(2), 77–101.

Chaudhry, A., Cao, X., & Vidyarth, P. R. (2015). A meta-analytic review of servant leadership: Construct, correlates, and the process. *Academy of Management Proceedings, 2015*(1), 17643–17643. https://doi.org/10.5465/AMBPP.2015.17643abstract

Creswell, J. W., & Plano Clark, V. L. (2018). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research* (3rd ed.). Sage.

Denzin, N. K. (2017). *The research act: A theoretical introduction to sociological methods* (4th ed.). Routledge.

Eva, N., Robin, M., Sendjaya, S., van Dierendonck, D., & Liden, R. C. (2019). Servant leadership: A systematic review and call for future research. *The Leadership Quarterly, 30*(1), 111–132. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2018.07.004

Greenleaf, R. K. (1977). *Servant leadership: A journey into the nature of legitimate power and greatness.* Paulist Press.

Liden, R. C., Wayne, S. J., Zhao, H., & Henderson, D. (2008). Servant leadership: Development of a multidimensional measure and multi-level assessment. *The Leadership Quarterly, 19*(2), 161–177.

Meyer, J. P., & Allen, N. J. (1997). *Commitment in the workplace: Theory, research, and application.* Sage.

Nguyen, N. T. H., Nguyen, D., Vo, N., & Tuan, L. T. (2023). Fostering public sector employees' innovative behavior: The roles of servant leadership, public service motivation, and learning goal orientation. *Administration and Society, 55*(1), 30–63. https://doi.org/10.1177/00953997221100623

Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods: Integrating theory and practice* (4th ed.). Sage.

Podsakoff, N. P., Podsakoff, P. M., & MacKenzie, S. B. (2020). Organizational commitment and performance: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 105*(12), 1409–1427.

Parliament of Uganda. (2025). *Strategic Plan for FY 2025/2026–FY 2029/2030*. Parliamentary Printing and Publishing.

Teddlie, C., & Tashakkori, A. (2019). Overview of contemporary issues in mixed methods research. In A. Tashakkori & C. Teddlie (Eds.), *SAGE handbook of mixed methods in social & behavioral research* (3rd ed., pp. 3–50). SAGE.

Teddlie, C., & Tashakkori, A. (2010). Overview of contemporary issues in mixed methods research. *SAGE handbook of mixed methods in social & behavioral research*, 1–41.

Zhang, Y., Yin, Y., & Su, W. (2024). The impact of servant leadership on proactive service behavior: A moderated mediation model. *BMC Psychology, 12*, 178. https://doi.org/10.1186/s40359-024-01669-x