

# Do Servant Leadership and Mindfulness Affect Work-Life Balance? Exploration from the Service Sector

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## Abstract

It is vital to have a healthy work-life balance to protect the well-being of employees and to mitigate burnout and sustain engagement. Researchers have identified multiple predictors of work-life balance to enhance employee satisfaction, but the present study explores the interconnected effect of servant leadership and mindfulness on work-life balance of employees. The study surveyed 400 employees serving in the Indian banking and information technology (IT) service sector. The data were analysed using PLS SEM 4, and the bootstrapping method was employed to assess the significance of the relationships across the variables. The findings suggest that the two variables are contributing factors to work-life balance wherein mindfulness exerts a more direct influence, and their implementation together could assist in raising levels of employee satisfaction and productivity. Further, the study carries significant implications for organisations, as it highlights how cultivating servant leadership and mindfulness practices can foster healthier work-life balance, thereby enhancing employee well-being, retention, and sustainable performance. The paper also outlines implications, limitations, and directions for future research.

**Keywords:** Servant Leadership, Mindfulness, Work-Life Balance, Exploration

## Introduction

Work-life balance (WLB) is the equilibrium between a person's work and personal life that can be managed to provide well-being and productivity (Bulger, 2024). WLB can be thought of as time management, but it also implies that work does not detract from personal and family time (Bansal et al., 2025). The idea underpinning WLB is to protect against stress and burnout, and have employees who are productive in their work lives while also leading happy and healthy personal lives (Tamunomiebi & Oyibo, 2020). As work becomes busier, more demanding, and more competitive, WLB becomes more important for happiness and productive work efforts (Thilagavathy & Geetha, 2021). The growth of the service sector, especially in information technology (IT) and banking, has led to workplaces with long working hours, demands, and an expectation of constant connection (Bansal et al., 2025). This creates difficulty in segmenting personal time and professional time. The stress of this environment can lead to burnout, job dissatisfaction, and mental health issues. For employees working in IT and banking, achieving WLB is essential for their mental health and physical health, as well as a job that they see as meeting their long-term goals and satisfaction, motivation, and productivity (OlumuyiwaAkinrole, 2015). This is where leadership style and mindfulness practices have received

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more attention as contributors to WLB, working to help employees deal with the demands of their personal and professional lives (Yadav & Dabhade, 2014).

One such leadership style that has been recognised for its ability to create a positive impact on employees' well-being and WLB is servant leadership (Punia, 2005; Lamprinou et al., 2021; Sani & Adisa, 2024). A servant leader prioritises staff well-being and growth. Servant leaders are attentive, supportive, and understanding of their team members (Canavesi & Minelli, 2022). Employee happiness and well-being increase with the servant leadership's supportive and collaborative atmosphere (Canavesi & Minelli, 2022). Research shows that servant leadership promotes positivity, reduces stress, and helps people manage work and life (Spears, 2025). Servant leadership has been linked to increased return on assets (Peterson et al., 2012), improved organisational performance (Mcquade et al., 2021), and high-morale work cultures (Leonard & Green, 2019). Trust, which increases employee and customer performance, is fostered by servant leadership (Del Baldo, 2018). This ability to create equilibrium is undeniably important in sectors such as IT and banking, where high-pressure demand often creates an imbalance between work and life.

Similarly, mindfulness (the act of being present in the moment without judgement) also has an enormous and growing body of evidence that indicates an extensive range of benefits for employee well-being (Mitsea et al., 2023; Bansal et al., 2025). In particular, in the service industry where employees are required to continually manage different, yet simultaneous, tasks with different clients, mindfulness practices will encourage reducing stress and freeing up cognition and emotional processing, and help to ensure employees feel more regulated and present (Bansal et al., 2025). Mindfulness has been correlated with improved mental health and well-being, which means, better master of the pressures of work without negatively impacting their personal life. This might be very beneficial in high-stress industries such as IT and banking. Each sector relies on its staff, and mindfulness may help people manage WLB and resilience to work problems (Bansal et al., 2025). Despite the popularity of servant leadership and mindfulness, the relationship between them and workers' WLB remains understudied, particularly in IT and banking. Servant leadership and mindfulness have been studied

separately, but not how they affect WLB. Thus, the literature on servant leadership and mindfulness in IT and banking provides wonderful opportunities to learn how they enhance employee welfare and WLB.

This study intends to address the gap by investigating the role of servant leadership and mindfulness in enabling WLB for employees within the IT and banking industries. The results of this inquiry advance a theoretical understanding of the simultaneous interaction of these two elements for achieving WLB and provides practical information for organisations seeking to increase employee satisfaction, decrease burnout, and create a healthier work culture. Exploring the relationships among servant leadership, mindfulness, and WLB provides valuable insights for enhancing leadership practices and employee well-being programmes in service-oriented professions. The upcoming sections of this article unfold as follows: literature review, research methodology, data analysis and implications, and future research of the study.

## Literature Review

### Mindfulness

The term 'mindfulness' refers to an open and non-judgemental awareness of one's present-moment experience (Brown & Ryan, 2003; Bansal & Punia, 2023). Participating in mindfulness activities allows workers to focus on the present moment, corresponding with the concept of flow, when people are completely absorbed and attentive to all stimuli (Reb et al., 2015; Shapiro et al., 2024). Researchers explained how mindfulness is connected to flow, showing that mindfulness helps decrease misunderstandings among people and conflicts while improving the engagement of workers and the overall quality of their work (Reina & Kudesia, 2020; Kabat-Zinn, 2023). Further, Brown and Ryan (2003) and Brown et al. (2007), in their study, suggested salient attributes that distinguish mindfulness. Initially, the receptive state of mind enables a more direct perception of the thoughts, emotions, or surroundings that are present at any given moment. This clarity facilitates unimpeded access to one's intellectual, emotional, and physical/intuitive knowledge. Second, the mindful model perceives stimuli as empirical facts. It is possible to postpone the engagement of conceptual thought and judgement until

one voluntarily does so. Niemiec et al. (2008) have noted that this enables personal beliefs and prejudices to lessen their influence on cognitive processes. Third, a mindful mind is present-oriented; however, it facilitates the achievement of future objectives with greater efficiency (Brown et al., 2007). Fourth, mindfulness is an inherent capacity; however, its stability and intensity are contingent upon contexts and individuals (Brown and Ryan, 2003). It is a way of intentionally experiencing the current situation in a ‘non-judgemental’ and ‘non-reactive’ manner (Kabat-Zinn, 2003; Choi et al., 2022; Bansal et al., 2025). Rooted in Buddhist philosophy, mindfulness traditionally emphasises being fully present in the here and now (Brown et al., 2007). However, contemporary scholars have reinterpreted mindfulness as a process of mental elaboration and sense-making, distinguishing it from its original Buddhist roots (Chiesa, 2012; Siegling & Petrides, 2014; Purser, 2018). Consequently, several assessment tools have emerged in recent years, reflecting diverse but related conceptualisations of mindfulness, many of which still draw from its Buddhist origins (Siegling & Petrides, 2014; Zheng et al., 2023). For instance, some academics regard mindfulness as a one-dimensional concept characterised by attention to and awareness of present-moment experience (Brown & Ryan, 2003). Others perceive mindfulness as a bi-dimensional construct that differentiates between attentional and affective elements (Bishop et al., 2004; Cardaciotto et al., 2008). Others have also defined mindfulness as multiple dimensions that include observing, behaving with awareness, describing the present-moment experience, and being non-judgemental and non-reactive (Baer et al., 2006). According to modern scientists’ adapted study, a variety of perspectives have been discovered on mindfulness, such as mindfulness as a (meditation) practice, mindfulness as a way of being, mindfulness as a state, mindfulness as an ability, and mindfulness as a trait. Attention, awareness, intention, attitudes such as openness and acceptance, cognitions such as judgements, and actions such as absent-minded acts have all been identified as components of mindfulness (Baer et al., 2006; Bishop et al., 2004; Brown et al., 2007; Bansal & Punia, 2023). The current study emphasised three important dimensions of mindfulness.

*Attention:* Attention in mindfulness is the ability to intentionally direct focus and sustain attention on present-moment experiences, which can involve the internals of

experiences (for example, thoughts and feelings) or the externals of experiences (for example, surroundings and actions). This component primarily focuses on attentional control, specifically the ability to observe your experiences without distraction from external or internal events. Mindfully attending to experiences can help gently unhook from thinking patterns that occur automatically and help individuals be more aware of what they are currently doing and feeling (Brown & Ryan, 2003).

- *Awareness:* Awareness is simply keeping track of experiences, both internally and externally knowing what is occurring in the present, moment to moment. Awareness can also be a broader state involved in noticing experiences (for example, sensations in one’s body, emotions, thoughts, and the environment, among others) as a whole per se, rather than being very strictly focused on one of them or all of them (Shapiro et al., 2024).
- *Acceptance:* Acceptance involves using an open, non-attack perspective, as well as being compassionate towards one’s experiences (whether they be positive or negative) in relation to thoughts and feelings (Bishop et al., 2004).

## Servant Leadership

When conceptualising servant leadership, Greenleaf (1977) claimed that servant leadership “begins with the inherent desire to serve, to serve first”. As the core of servant leadership, the author emphasised “reaching beyond self-interest”. Servant leaders prioritise the needs of their followers and encourage them to add value to the larger community (Liden et al., 2008; Lamprinou et al., 2021). According to Reed et al. (2011), a servant leader prioritises stakeholders’ interests over personal gains, viewing leadership as a service to individuals, organisations, and communities rather than a means to power or prestige. Although Greenleaf formally introduced the concept in 1977, Brewer (2010) noted its philosophical roots span thousands of years. Unlike traditional systems where individuals serve leaders, the “inverted pyramid” model, which is considered the essence of servant leadership, considers leaders servants of their followers (Spears, 1996). Grounded in morality, honesty, and trust (Van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2011; Khan et al., 2022), servant leaders lead by example (Demeke et al., 2024; Girdhar et al., 2025), foster respect and trust,

and help employees realise their potential (Pawar et al., 2020). This style enhances organisational performance, motivation, commitment, trust, effectiveness, financial results, and empowerment (Amah, 2018; Spears, 2025). Under the direction and coaching of servant leaders, followers not only want to imitate their excellent leadership traits but also acquire the self-assurance to influence their peers and even superiors (Liden et al., 2015; Bavik, 2020; McQuade et al., 2021). Numerous researchers attribute the features of servant leadership to value for people, personal development, relationships, trust, desire to learn from others, honesty, trustworthiness, empowerment, supervision, credibility, guidance, humility, and interpersonal acceptance (Liden et al., 2008; Rachmawati & Lantu, 2014; Van Dierendonck & Patterson, 2015). Similarly, Bass (2000) observed several conceptually similar characteristics of transformational leadership and servant leadership, including trust, influence, and vision. In light of the profound societal and organisational transformations over recent decades, servant leadership is increasingly being recognised as a potentially vital approach to corporate leadership in the future (Ghalavi et al., 2020). The current study recognises five sub-dimensions of servant leadership:

- *Behaving Ethically*: The ‘Behaving Ethically’ dimension of servant leadership encompasses a leader’s obligation to do what is right, fair, and honest regardless of the difficulty and unpopularity of doing so. Within servant leadership, behaving ethically is much more than just adhering to rules or avoiding unethical actions. It sets an example of morality for those they lead and provides an environment of integrity and trust (Liden et al., 2008).
- *Empowerment*: Empowerment entails encouraging and aiding others, especially direct followers, in the discovery and resolution of problems, as well as determining the best time and manner for completing job duties (Liden et al., 2008). Empowerment is designed to foster confidence and proactive behaviour in followers, as well as a feeling of personal authority (Van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2011). The key issue in empowerment is the servant leader’s belief in each individual’s inherent worth; it is concentrated on the recognition, appreciation, and

manifestation of each person’s talents and potential for future progress (Greenleaf, 1998).

- *Emotional Healing*: It involves knowing when and how to support the healing process. It highlights a leader’s capacity to nurture spiritual healing after hardship and defeat (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006). Servant leaders are sensitive to other people’s emotions and are consequently considered very empathetic (Liden et al., 2008). Servant leaders create an environment in which followers may openly discuss their concerns, whether they are personal or professional.
- *Pioneering*: It refers to opening up, preparing, initiating, or participating in development. Leaders must be risk-takers who forge new roads, form fresh approaches to old issues, and have strong values and convictions that guide their activities (Russell & Stone, 2002).
- *Wisdom*: Wisdom is the capacity to recognise clues from the environment and to be conscious of the potential repercussions and implications of one’s observations (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006). Wisdom enables a servant leader to identify trends or patterns as they develop, thereby allowing the leader to navigate the present and the future.
- *Relationship Building*: The relationship-building aspect of servant leadership captures a leader’s conscious actions to build strong, positive, and trust-laden relationships with others, specifically team members, peers, and stakeholders. This includes the concept of servant leadership, whereby serving others is prioritised over leading others (Liden et al., 2008).

## Work-Life Balance

The discipline of applied psychology has extensively explored the importance of WLB (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006; Wepfer et al., 2018; Bulger, 2024). WLB is defined as “an individual’s assessment of the extent to which their life roles are harmonious”, as per Russo et al. (2016). In other words, Haar (2013) defined WLB as “the degree to which an individual is capable of effectively managing the various facets of their life, such as work, family, and

other significant responsibilities”. Research has revealed that the implementation of WLB practices has a significant impact on the reduction of work-life conflict, which in turn significantly reduces workplace distractions (Marques & Berry, 2021; Brough et al., 2022). The challenge of fulfilling roles and coping with demands both at work and at home has a lasting impact on employee well-being, job satisfaction, and performance, making WLB an essential aspect of a healthy work environment (Haar et al., 2014; Permarupan et al., 2020; Tamunomiebi & Oyibo, 2020). Research has suggested that employees may experience a greater sense of control when they maintain a harmonious WLB. This advantage is primarily due to the positive correlation between a healthier work-family relationship and fewer distractions in the workplace (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006).

## **Mindfulness and WLB**

Mindfulness practice develops cognitive-emotional borders (Michel et al., 2014) by returning employees’ awareness to the present time when their attention drifts towards work-related matters (Bishop et al., 2004). For instance, the mindfulness practice of breathing helps employees stay grounded in the moment. Given this, employees also learn to notice when they are beginning to ruminate on work-related issues and then keep themselves from engaging in it (Bishop et al., 2004; Shahbaz & Parker, 2022). This cognitive-emotional segmentation framework encourages detachment, increases satisfaction with balance, and lowers WFC (work-family conflict) (Michel et al., 2014). Psychological conflict involves the situation where employees are “mentally distracted or preoccupied in one role while physically present in another” (van Steenbergen et al., 2007). Therefore, when employees ruminate about work when they are at home, they are experiencing psychological WFC (Carlson & Frone, 2003). Mindfulness is a self-regulation of attention to help the employees be present in the moment and stave off thinking too much about their thoughts and emotions (Bishop et al., 2004). Therefore, mindfulness practitioners can sharpen WFC by reducing work-related preoccupation, maintaining their focus on current roles, and disengaging from work thoughts upon leaving work (Rehman et al., 2023). Strain-based conflict occurs

when “strain experienced in one role intrudes on and interferes with participation in another role” (Carlson & Frone, 2003). Quality of family life can be undermined when work roles create stress and emotional depletion that interfere with family life, leading an employee to experience strain-based work-family conflict.

Mindfulness practice teaches those who engage in it a profound change in perspective, sometimes referred to as ‘reperceiving’ (Shapiro et al., 2024) or ‘decentred perspective’ (Bishop et al., 2004), to change subjective meaning about distressing thoughts and emotions and perceive thoughts and emotions as fleeting (Bishop et al., 2004). They have learned to shift to objective witnessing of their thoughts and emotions. Emotional distress does not feel quite as distressing (Bishop et al., 2004). In addition, mindfulness practices give energy (Allen & Kiburz, 2012; Brown & Ryan, 2003; Sharma & Kumar, 2022) and renew energy to engage in family roles. Mindfulness training should reduce WFC. According to Kiburz et al. (2017), MBIs reduce WFC and workers are satisfied with their WLB if they can manage their various job and family responsibilities (Valcour, 2007; Sawal, 2023). Mindfulness helps you be present. It helps focus on family with fewer job distractions. An accepting orientation – the second element of mindfulness (Bishop et al., 2004) – should promote inhibition of work-related stressors and the experience of family roles. In this way, employees will appreciate their success in integrating work and family roles and will have positive feelings about WLB, evidenced by studies showing that trait mindfulness predicts job-family balance (Allen & Kiburz, 2012).

## **Servant Leadership and WLB**

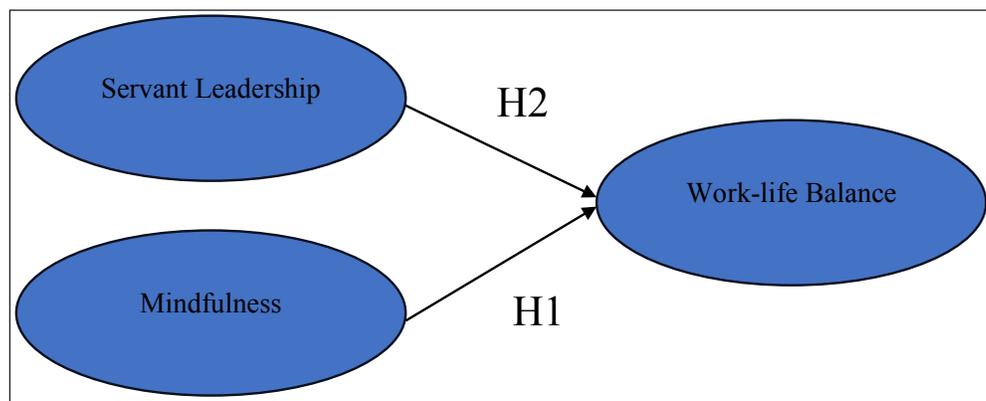
Servant leadership has been shown to foster a sense of empowerment and control among employees by promoting autonomy in decision-making processes (Khan et al., 2022; Russell, 2001), prioritising employee well-being (Kaltainen & Hakanen, 2022), and supporting individual autonomy (Bou Reslan et al., 2021; Yagil & Oren, 2021). These practices help create a work environment that contributes to a positive WLB. Empirical studies have demonstrated

that servant leadership enhances WLB by promoting employee identification with their leaders and fostering positive spillovers from work to family life (Wang et al., 2017; Haar et al., 2017). Furthermore, research by Russo, Shteigman and Carmeli (2016) highlighted that workplace factors, including leadership practices, play a crucial role in shaping WLB outcomes. Further, employees may not always have direct contact with organisational leaders; the influence of servant leadership is often felt through organisational values, which are reflected in policies and practices. These practices, in turn, are linked to improved WLB outcomes

(for example, McCarthy et al., 2013). Building on these insights, we propose that servant leaders play a key role in fostering a supportive work environment by shaping organisational policies and practices that prioritise employee WLB and well-being (Kenion, 2024). Thus, we hypothesise the following:

## Research Framework

The proposed Research Model represents all the variables that will be used in this particular research study.



Source: The author(s).

**Fig. 1: Proposed Research Model**

## Research Methodology

### Sample and Procedure

This study focused on the employees from the banking and IT sectors using cross-sectional surveys, as both sectors are characterised by high-pressure, client-oriented work environments with increasing turnover trends, and these sectors demand strong ethical standards, emotional stability, a peaceful mindset, and dynamic leadership to maintain workforce stability and engagement. The data was gathered from 400 service employees in the northern region of India through a self-structured questionnaire. This study employed SmartPLS 4 for data analysis and hypothesis testing. The data collection was started by obtaining consent from the managers of the selected service organisations. Depending on each organisation's preference, the study employed either online or offline methods to gather data. The online approach involved contacting employees via email, while the offline method

included visiting organisations in person to administer the questionnaire. To enhance participation and address the challenge of reaching employees with demanding schedules, researchers also utilised snowball sampling, encouraging initial respondents to refer other potential participants. Following the acquisition of informed consent from employees through clear communication regarding the survey's purpose, researchers solicited their insights on servant leadership, mindfulness, and WLB by distributing a total of 500 questionnaires to the staff. Out of 500 questionnaires, 400 were returned, resulting in a response rate of 80%. The investigation rigorously follows all ethical standards and ensures the confidentiality of the data provided by participants. The research employed G\*Power software to determine the minimal sample size. An effect size of 0.15 and an alpha level of 0.05 requires a minimum sample size of 200 respondents to obtain 0.80 power. Our sample size of 400 responders surpasses this threshold, supporting our statistical analyses.

## Instrument Development

The study employed a quantitative research design to collect data from service sector employees, and the research instrument was structured into two main parts, i.e., Part A (participants' demographic information and travel patterns), while Part B was aimed at collecting responses on mindfulness, servant leadership, and WLB, which were collected on a five-point Likert scale, with 1 denoting strongly disagree and 5 denoting strongly agree. Servant leadership was explored on six dimensions adapted from Latif and Marimon (2019), i.e., empowerment (five items), pioneering (five items), emotional healing (three items), behaving ethically (three items), relationship building (three items), and wisdom (three items) into a 22-item scale. For mindfulness, the instrument was divided into three dimensions adapted from Zheng et al. (2023), i.e., acceptance (four items), awareness (five items), and attention (three items). WLB has been measured on a four-item scale adapted from Hayman (2005).

## Data Analysis

The study used Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) for data analysis with SmartPLS

version 4.1 (Ringle et al., 2024). PLS-SEM, a non-parametric technique, is a strong statistical method that works well for exploratory research with complex models and small sample sizes in management research (Hair et al., 2019). The study examined the multivariate normality of the data using the Web Power software. The p-values for both skewness and kurtosis were investigated to be less than 0.05. This result confirms the lack of multivariate normality in the data, ensuring PLS-SEM, a suitable non-parametric approach for data analysis (Hair et al., 2019). Further, a full collinearity assessment was also performed using the procedure outlined in Kock and Lynn (2012) to rule out the occurrence of common method bias (CMB). All inner variance inflation factor (VIF) values were less than 3.3, indicating that the data collected was free of a CMB (Kock, 2015).

## Results

### Sample Profile

The demographic profile of respondents has been analysed using descriptive frequency analysis, as illustrated in Table 1. The table outlines the details of different demographics analysed in the study, encompassing gender, age, education, work experience, tenure in organisation, and type of organisation.

**Table 1: Sample Profile**

Demographics	Category	Frequency	%
Gender	Male	225	56.49
	Female	175	43.51
Age (in years)	20–30 years	96	23.96
	31–40 years	120	29.90
	41–50 years	103	25.98
	Above 51 years	81	20.16
Marital Status	Married	216	53.89
	Unmarried	143	35.93
	Separated	41	10.18
Education	High-school	38	9.5
	Diploma	85	21.19
	Graduation	143	35.71
	Post-graduation	90	22.61
	Others (above post-graduation)	44	10.95
Year of Experience	Below 5 years	59	14.87
	6–10 years	87	21.89

Demographics	Category	Frequency	%
	11–15 years	104	25.77
	16–20 years	72	17.91
	Above 21 years	78	19.57
Tenure in Organisation	Below 5 years	147	36.75
	6–10 years	122	30.59
	Above 10 years	131	32.66
Type of Organisation	Banking	285	71.25
	IT	115	28.75

Source: The author(s).

### Assessment of Measurement Model (First Order and Second Order)

The first step in evaluating PLS-SEM results involves assessing the measurement models (Hair et al., 2017). The measurement model was evaluated by examining indicator loadings, internal consistency reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity of first-order (ACC, ATT, AW, BE, RB, WLB, EH, EMP, PIO, WIS) and second-order constructs (servant leadership, mindfulness, and WLB).

To assess construct reliabilities in the present reflective model, outer loadings were checked for all indicators, aiming for a value exceeding 0.70. However, items having factor loadings of 0.40 to 0.70 must be treated with caution. Poor factor loadings (<0.60) led to the removal of one empowerment and one awareness indicator from the

current model. Except for these two, all other indications were kept. As shown in Table 2, all factor loadings exceed the threshold; thus, there is no issue with construct reliabilities. Next, to check the internal consistency reliability Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha$ ) and composite reliability (Rho\_a, Rho\_c) values of all the reflective constructs used in the study were assessed. All three of  $\alpha$ , Rho\_a, and Rho\_c values were above the 0.7 threshold (Hair et al., 2019), as shown in Table 2, which showed that the measurement model was reliable for each construct. Moreover, convergent validity refers to the extent to which a measure correlates positively with alternative measures of the same variable (Hair et al., 2019). As shown in Table 2, all of the AVE values were above 0.50 (Hair et al., 2019), which meant that the constructs explained more than half of the variation in their indicators. Therefore, convergent validity is established.

**Table 2: Construct's Reliability and Validity**

Constructs	Indicators	Loadings	Cronbach's Alpha	Rho_a	Composite Reliability	AVE
<b>First-Order Constructs</b>						
Attention	Att1	0.840	0.786	0.786	0.875	0.701
	Att2	0.868				
	Att3	0.803				
Awareness	Awr2	0.658	0.729	0.728	0.822	0.501
	Awr3	0.695				
	Awr4	0.731				
	Awr5	0.712				
	Awr6	0.664				
Acceptance	Acc1	0.611	0.750	0.761	0.843	0.577
	Acc2	0.788				
	Acc3	0.801				
	Acc4	0.840				

Constructs	Indicators	Loadings	Cronbach's Alpha	Rho_a	Composite Reliability	AVE
Behaving Ethically	BE1	0.603	0.710	0.745	0.852	0.647
	BE2	0.895				
	BE3	0.880				
Relationship Building	RB1	0.749	0.732	0.731	0.850	0.655
	RB2	0.895				
	RB3	0.776				
Emotional Healing	EH1	0.741	0.716	0.723	0.841	0.638
	EH2	0.823				
	EH3	0.829				
Empowerment	EMP2	0.645	0.760	0.763	0.839	0.512
	EMP3	0.749				
	EMP4	0.735				
	EMP5	0.743				
	EMP6	0.699				
Pioneering	PIO1	0.647	0.807	0.813	0.867	0.568
	PIO2	0.799				
	PIO3	0.788				
	PIO4	0.718				
	PIO5	0.803				
Wisdom	WIS1	0.722	0.719	0.725	0.843	0.643
	WIS2	0.854				
	WIS3	0.824				
Work-Life Balance	WLB1	0.868	0.818	0.819	0.880	0.648
	WLB2	0.811				
	WLB3	0.740				
	WLB4	0.796				
<b>Second-Order Constructs</b>						
Mindfulness	Attention	0.852	0.818	0.765	0.830	0.622
	Awareness	0.688				
	Acceptance	0.816				
Servant Leadership	Behaving Ethically	0.651	0.889	0.895	0.909	0.627
	Relationship Building	0.776				
	Emotional Healing	0.845				
	Empowerment	0.776				
	Pioneering	0.844				
	Wisdom	0.841				

Source: The author(s).

### Discriminant Validity (First and Second Orders)

The next important step was to check the discriminant validity using the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio (Henseler et al., 2015). Discriminant validity is the degree to which a construct is empirically distinct from the other latent variables in the model. Table 3 illustrates

discriminant validity among first-order (ACC, ATT, AW, BE, RB, WLB, EH, EMP, PIO, WIS) and Table 4 among second-order constructs (servant leadership, mindfulness, and WLB) using the HTMT criterion. The HTMT ratios were below the essential threshold of 0.85. These results, given in Tables 3 and 4, indicated that the model had no concerns with discriminant validity.

**Table 3: Discriminant Validity Using HTMT Criterion (First Order)**

	<i>Acc</i>	<i>Att</i>	<i>Awr</i>	<i>BE</i>	<i>RB</i>	<i>WLB</i>	<i>EH</i>	<i>EMP</i>	<i>PIO</i>	<i>WIS</i>
Acc										
Att	0.618									
Awr	0.664	0.482								
BE	0.545	0.290	0.501							
RB	0.514	0.276	0.369	0.545						
WLB	0.529	0.682	0.359	0.321	0.346					
EH	0.692	0.374	0.552	0.793	0.799	0.451				
EMP	0.502	0.281	0.276	0.517	0.763	0.369	0.687			
PIO	0.655	0.374	0.426	0.646	0.685	0.470	0.787	0.770		
WIS	0.623	0.275	0.352	0.568	0.762	0.452	0.800	0.798	0.788	

Note(s): Acc = Acceptance, Att = Attention, Awr = Awareness, BE = Behaving Ethically, WLB = Work-Life Balance, EH = Emotional Healing, EMP = Empowerment, PIO = Pioneering, WIS = Wisdom.

Source: The author(s).

**Table 4: Discriminant Validity Using HTMT Criterion (Second Order)**

	<i>MIN</i>	<i>SL</i>	<i>WLB</i>
MIN			
SL	0.663		
WLB	0.686	0.467	

Note(s): MIN = Mindfulness, SL = Servant Leadership, WLB = Work-Life Balance.

Source: The author(s).

### Structural Model Assessment

Once the measurement model was deemed satisfactory, the next step in evaluating the PLS-SEM results was to assess the structural model. We first examined the inner VIF values to address potential multicollinearity concerns. All inner VIF values were less than 3, indicating no major multicollinearity issues with the model’s variables (Hair et al., 2019). Then, we checked the R<sup>2</sup> value of the endogenous construct. R<sup>2</sup> represents the explanatory power of the model, indicating how well the model explains the changes in each endogenous construct (Shmueli & Koppius, 2011). The value of R<sup>2</sup> for WLB was 0.329. These results can be interpreted as 32.9% variance is explained by the combined effect of Servant Leadership and Mindfulness. The standardised root mean square residual (SRMR) is a widely used statistic in PLS-SEM for evaluating model fit, with values less than 0.08 indicating a satisfactory fit (Henseler et al., 2013; Hu & Bentler, 1998). The current model’s SRMR score was 0.079, suggesting an excellent model fit. The results are reported in Table 5. We further evaluated hypotheses by

employing the consistent PLS algorithm in SmartPLS 4. We conducted bootstrapping using 5,000 subsamples to evaluate the significance of the path coefficients. Table 5 and Fig. 2 demonstrate support for our study’s hypothesised relationship.

*H1: Employee Mindfulness is positively correlated to Work-Life Balance.*

The analysis shows a statistically significant positive relationship between employee mindfulness and WLB. The coefficient of 0.471 suggests a moderate to strong positive effect, indicating that increased mindfulness is associated with improved WLB. In other words, being more mindful in the workplace will translate into a more balanced effort to integrate work and personal life. This finding aligns with existing literature indicating that mindfulness helps individuals cope with stress more effectively, enhances focus, and improves overall well-being, all of which contribute to a better integration of work and personal life. The large t-value of 8.653 suggests the relationship is not due to chance, and the fact that p = .000 (less than the usual cutoff of 0.05) gives credence

to the conclusion that mindfulness has a meaningful and reliable influence on WLB. Considering the positive and significant relationship in this study, it is safe to assume that organisations will benefit from encouraging mindfulness practices to help their employees to better integrate their work-related and personal lives to foster employee satisfaction and overall productivity. The observed strong effect of mindfulness may be a result of its influence on individual and team coping with work demands, emotional regulation, and concentration to enhance balance between work life and life outside of work.

*H2: Servant Leadership is positively correlated to Work-Life Balance.*

The relationship between servant leadership and WLB is also statistically significant, with a coefficient of 0.174 and a t-value of 3.102, accompanied by a p-value of 0.002. While the impact is positive, it is weaker than that of mindfulness. Servant leadership includes empathy, ethical

behaviour, and the best interests of employees. Servant leadership is likely going to create an environment where employees will feel they are supported and valued, which may make it easier for them to maintain a healthy WLB.

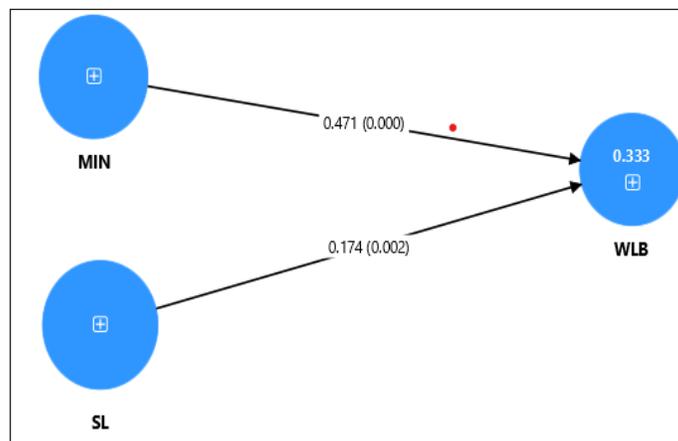
The results support moderate evidence that servant leadership can contribute to WLB; however, the effect is less strong than mindfulness, indicating that while servant leadership might aid in WLB, it is an indirect influence, whereas mindfulness is a direct and personal influence on employee’s ability to manage stress associated with work and a sense of well-being. It seems probable that servant leadership can create a supportive climate with a potential for WLB; however, the direct practices and strategies that were more closely linked to helping employees manage their own work-life integration (for example, mindfulness) may have a bigger impact. Regardless, servant leadership can be an important strategy for organisations, especially when used in combination with other organisational strategies, such as mindfulness programmes.

**Table 5: Structural Model Assessment**

Relationships	Std Beta	p-Value	t-value	BC 95% CI	Significance	VIF
Direct Effects						
<b>H1</b> MIN -> WLB	0.471	0.000	8.653	[0.369; 0.586]	Yes	1.350
<b>H2</b> SL -> WLB	0.174	0.002	3.102	[0.050; 0.271]	Yes	1.350
<b>Endogenous Variables</b>		R-square		Q <sup>2</sup> _predict		
WLB		0.333		0.317		
Model Fit (SRMR)					0.079	

Note(s): MIN = Mindfulness, SL = Servant Leadership, WLB = Work-Life Balance.

Source: The author(s).



Source: The author(s).

**Fig. 2: Results of Structural Model**

## Implications

### Theoretical Implications

The framework discussed in the study on the influence of servant leadership and mindfulness on WLB provides valuable contributions to the understanding of leadership impact on employee welfare and employee well-being. Servant leadership emphasises serving the team, which enhances feeling empowered, engaged, and well, and, with the use of empathy and support, developing a positive workplace for WLB. Mindfulness concentrates on feeling one's emotions in real time, or in the moment, to engage in emotional self-regulation and reduce stress through techniques to facilitate balance in one's life. Taken together, this study approaches WLB through the lens of servant leadership, creating a supportive workplace and mindfulness, creating the structure for employees to handle work-life stressors.

### Theories Aligned with the Present Framework:

- *Conservation of Resources Theory*

According to Hobfoll's Conservation of Resources (COR) theory, individuals strive to acquire, safeguard, and hold onto resources. Individual employees serve as resources in this scenario by reducing stress and conserving cognitive and emotional processing. Servant leadership provides social resources by creating a supportive work environment, whereas mindfulness provides personal resources to help employees cope with stress and conserve cognitive and emotional processing. These create the balance to support employees to cope with stressors at work and return home to achieve WLB.

- *Self-Determination Theory*

Deci and Ryan's Self-Determination Theory (SDT) centres on intrinsic motivation, identifying autonomy, competence, and relatedness as fundamental psychological needs. Servant leadership supports relatedness by developing a supportive work environment, whereas mindfulness supports autonomy by supporting self-regulation with emotional awareness. When employees have their needs met, they are able to achieve a better WLB and higher well-being. Both COR and SDT stress how servant leadership and mindfulness positively impact WLB. Future research could use either

or both frameworks to investigate individual well-being and workplace harmony.

### Practical Implications

- *Prioritise Mindfulness Programmes*

Since mindfulness tends to have a more significant and substantial impact on WLB and employee and organisational well-being than servant leadership, organisations should invest time and effort into establishing mindfulness-based programming. These mindfulness-based initiatives could include meditation, mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR), and other mindfulness-based interventions that help decrease stress, assist with focus, and support one's mental state. Further, regular mindfulness training may make it possible for employees to better manage the pressures of work, and although distress on employees may continue to grow, it can make it easier to balance personal lives as enthusiasts can continue to develop charitable and altruistic habits. Considering mindfulness is essential for wellness, organisations could look to integrate mindfulness-based campaigns within their employee wellness programmes. This may include any combination of mindfulness workshops, providing resources that provide access to guided meditation apps, or even providing spaces for committed employees to continue on their own established mindfulness practices (Bansal et al., 2025). Organisations should incorporate mindfulness into the daily workflow of the workplaces. If it is acceptable to have a small mindfulness undertone, then employing them on a regular basis is essential. For example, conducting mindfulness as a ritual before a meeting or integrating mindfulness during a break should simply be a normal part of work to promote mental health and positive WLB.

- *Aid Servant Leadership Undertone*

Although the impact of servant leadership on WLB is weaker than mindfulness, it can only have a positive effect. Service organisations wanting to promote WLB need to invest in leadership training in duty-based leadership, but with a strong emphasis on servant, empathetic, supportive, inclusive, and well-being-based leadership. Leaders must be trained to lead people with a servant leadership approach focused on helping society and others based on the necessity of individuals.

- *Integrate Mindfulness with Servant Leadership for Maximum Benefits*

As both mindfulness and servant leadership demonstrate positive contributions in developing WLB, organisations can increase benefits by combining the two. Leaders, such as servant leaders, can utilise servant leadership principles in developing an environment that promotes the practice of mindfulness among employees. Leadership support can enhance the effectiveness of mindfulness programmes because employees are more inclined to participate in mindfulness interventions and activities when they feel that their leaders support them and are interested in their well-being.

- *Promote Personal Responsibility for Well-Being*

Because mindfulness is so strongly connected with WLB, employees can be encouraged to take personal responsibility for their mental wellness. Mindfulness could be understood as an empowering tool that people can use to independently navigate stress and prioritise WLB. Organisations could also provide self-help resources or online courses for employees to practice mindfulness at their discretion. As the need for improved WLB grows, both researchers and practitioners are exploring strategies to help employees better manage the dual demands of work and personal life (Yu, 2019). Organisations have implemented various practices, such as flexible working hours, parental leave, and childcare provisions, all aimed at enhancing employee autonomy and flexibility. These initiatives not only support employees in balancing their professional and personal lives but also contribute to improved organisational productivity, profitability, and employee retention (Rodríguez-Sánchez et al., 2020).

- *Tailored Programmes for Different Employee Needs*

As different employees will have different needs, and they will respond differently to mindfulness and leadership methods in practice, it will be important to take an individualised approach. For example, some employees might rely more on leadership-driven support (which provides the employee direction through servant leadership), while in some instances, others may find that adopting mindfulness practices is more effective for managing their balance. By providing both leadership development opportunities along with mindfulness resources, employees will be given the ability to navigate and decide what is best for them.

- *Backing for WLB Programmes Through Corporate Policies*

Mindfulness and servant leadership can also be a part of corporate policies, such as employee assistance programmes (EAPs) or wellness benefits. Supporting mental health and flexibility and creating leaders through policies or interventions can positively demonstrate what the organisation believes in when it comes to supporting WLB. Organisations could also implement incentives for employees who do mindfulness training or become leaders through leadership development programmes.

In providing these implications, organisations can facilitate a work environment where employees thrive personally and professionally, which can build more well-being, satisfaction, and productivity.

## Limitations and Future Research Suggestions

While this study provides valuable insights, it has some limitations that suggest directions for future research. First, relying solely on self-reported measurements increases the likelihood of CMB. This underlines the upside of integrating several data collection approaches, i.e., a combination of qualitative or quantitative data or secondary or primary sources, to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the studied context. Furthermore, the study limited its generalisability to other industries or cultural settings as the majority of its participants are service sector employees in India, particularly from banking and IT sectors. Thus, to validate and expand upon the findings, further research should make an effort to collect more diverse and representative samples for the study. In addition, the cross-sectional design does not lead to the establishment of causal relationships between variables, suggesting the need for longitudinal research.

## Statement and Declaration

The manuscript has not been communicated elsewhere for publication. All matter included in the manuscript does not infringe upon any existing copyright and does not violate any intellectual property right of any person or entity.

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