

Examination of the Relationships Between Servant Leadership, Organizational Commitment, and Voice and Antisocial Behaviors

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Received: 14 June 2015 / Accepted: 17 December 2015
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Abstract This study examines the relationships of servant leadership to organizational commitment, voice behaviors, and antisocial behaviors. Adopting a multi-faceted approach to commitment, we hypothesized that servant leadership would be positively related to affective, normative, and perceived sacrifice commitment, but unrelated to few alternatives commitment. We further hypothesized that affective commitment would be positively related to voice behaviors, controlling for the other commitment components, and would mediate a positive relationship between servant leadership and voice behaviors. Similarly, we hypothesized that normative commitment would be negatively related to antisocial behaviors, controlling for the other commitment components, and would mediate a negative relationship between servant leadership and antisocial behaviors. These predictions were tested using matched data from a sample of 181 Canadian customer service employees and their managers. Results largely supported the above predictions. Importantly, affective commitment mediated a positive relationship between servant leadership and voice behaviors. Yet, while servant leadership was positively related to normative commitment and the latter was negatively related to anti-social behaviors, the indirect effect of servant leadership on these behaviors through normative commitment was

nonsignificant. Theoretical implications and future research directions are discussed.

Keywords Antisocial behaviors · Organizational commitment · Servant leadership · Voice behaviors

Introduction

Following highly mediatised corporate scandals (e.g., Kirchner 2010; McLean and Elkind 2003), recent research has emphasized the importance for leaders to behave ethically (Dinh et al. 2014) and for organizations to give back to the community in which they operate (Sun 2013). Researchers and practitioners alike have also shown increased interest in the development of leaders who put the interests of their followers and organizations ahead of their own (e.g., Arkin 2009; Boyatzis and McKee 2005; George 2003; Liden et al. 2008; van Dierendonck 2011). In the same vein, followers are increasingly seeking leaders who take care of their relationship with them, demonstrate trustworthiness, build loyalty in their teams, and focus on followers' growth (e.g., Carter and Baghurst 2014; Nichols and Cottrell 2014). As a response to these emerging trends and expectations, scholars (e.g., Liden et al. 2008, 2014; Parris and Peachey 2013; van Dierendonck 2011) have recently rediscovered and turned to *servant leadership* (Greenleaf 1970, 1977), a model of leadership that concentrates on the development of employees' full potential, as an approach to leadership that has the capacity to meet the above challenges.

Servant leadership depicts leaders' first purpose as *serving* more than leading, stresses the importance of personal integrity, and acknowledges that organizations' responsibilities should extend to the community and the

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society (Carter and Baghurst 2014; Graham 1991; Greenleaf 1977, 1998; Liden et al. 2008, Parris and Peachey 2013). Servant leadership also focuses on the development of strong, long-term relationships between leaders and employees (Liden et al. 2008). Because leaders personify the organization (Eisenberger et al. 2002; Liden et al. 2004), servant leaders also contribute to strengthen the relationship between employees and the organization (e.g., van Dierendonck et al. 2014). Yet, as employee–organization relationships are multifaceted (Coyle-Shapiro and Shore 2007; Meyer and Allen 1991; Shore et al. 2009; Tsui et al. 1997), the nature and strength of the relationship with the organization that servant leaders come to develop among their followers remains unclear. Furthermore, the fact that servant leaders aim to influence followers' attitudes and behaviors without relying on positional or authoritative power (Carter and Baghurst 2014) raises questions regarding how they "lead" employees to positively contribute to the organization and refrain from engaging in negative behavior (Neubert et al. 2008; van Dierendonck et al. 2014). Accordingly, this paper aims to explore the relationships between servant leadership and *organizational commitment components*, which capture different bases for employees' relationship with the organization (i.e., affective, normative, and continuance, the latter including "perceived sacrifice" and "few alternatives" dimensions; Bentein et al. 2005; Meyer and Allen 1991), *voice behaviors*, which refer to the expression of constructive ideas to improve work procedures (Van Dyne and LePine 1998), and *antisocial behaviors*, which represent behaviors that cause harm to others or the organization (Robinson and O'Leary-Kelly 1998).

Using Meyer and Allen's (1991; see also Meyer and Herscovitch 2001) three-component model of commitment, we contend that servant leadership will foster affective commitment (i.e., an employee's sense of emotional attachment to the organization), normative commitment (i.e., an employee's sense of loyalty based on perceived obligation toward the organization), and perceived sacrifice commitment (i.e., an employee's sense that organizational membership provides valuable benefits). These predictions are based on the idea that servant leaders provide employees with positive and favorable experiences, which should foster emotional attachment to the organization through a social exchange process (Meyer and Allen 1991; Meyer et al. 2002), generate feelings of indebtedness and moral obligation toward the organization (González and Guillén 2008; Meyer and Parfyonova 2010), and raise employees' awareness regarding what they stand to lose in case of leaving (Powell and Meyer 2004; Vandenberghe and Panaccio 2012; Vandenberghe et al. 2011), leading to affective, normative, and perceived sacrifice commitment, respectively. We do not expect servant leadership to foster

few alternatives commitment, as this commitment component is based on external contingencies (i.e., employment opportunities; Powell and Meyer 2004; Vandenberghe et al. 2011).

Second, based on the premise that distinct motivational forces underlie commitment components (Meyer et al. 2004), we postulate that affective commitment will be positively related to employee voice behaviors and that normative commitment will be negatively related to employee antisocial behaviors, controlling for the other commitment components. As affective commitment is rooted in a desire to proactively serve the organization's interests (Meyer et al. 2004), affectively committed employees should be particularly willing to make constructive suggestions that improve organizational efficiency (Morrison 2011; Van Dyne and LePine 1998). Relatedly, normative commitment is based on a concern about the rightness of one's behaviors and moral rectitude toward the organization (González and Guillén 2008; Meyer et al. 2004; Meyer and Parfyonova 2010). Hence, employees with strong normative commitment should be inclined to refrain from engaging in behaviors that would damage the organization's property or hurt its members (Hershcovis et al. 2007; Robinson and Bennett 1995; Robinson and O'Leary-Kelly 1998). By extension, we also argue that (a) affective commitment will mediate a positive relationship between servant leadership and employee voice behaviors and (b) normative commitment will mediate a negative relationship between servant leadership and employee antisocial behaviors.

We contend that the present investigation is a worthwhile and timely research endeavor. As highlighted by Beck (2014), Hunter et al. (2013), and Parris and Peachey (2013), recent servant leadership research has mainly focused on the development of measurement instruments rather than on understanding servant leadership's implications for employee attitudes and behavior. First, the present study goes beyond the rare research endeavors targeting servant leadership's relationships to organizational commitment components (Miao et al. 2014) by distinguishing between *perceived sacrifice* and *few alternatives* as distinct dimensions within continuance commitment. As such, this study intends to show that the absence of a significant relationship between servant leadership and continuance commitment (Miao et al. 2014) may be caused by the two subcomponents being confounded within a general measure of the construct. In doing so, the discriminant validity of commitment components, which has been questioned (Bergman 2006; Jaros 1997; Ko et al. 1997; Powell and Meyer 2004), will be further clarified.

Second, the emerging work on servant leadership's workings has essentially focused on servant leaders' ability to promote positive behaviors (e.g., in-role performance

and customer service behaviors; Chen et al. 2015; Liden et al. 2014). This study extends this work by looking at relationships to employee voice, i.e., a specific form of extra-role behavior, and antisocial behaviors, and how commitment components intervene in these linkages. Thus, the present investigation explores a wider array of behaviors (positive and negative) that can potentially be influenced by servant leadership and looks at the psychological mechanisms involved in these influences. This should expand our view of servant leadership's implications (Hunter et al. 2013) and contribute to identify the specific mechanisms associated with the emergence of voice and antisocial behaviors (Hershcovis et al. 2007; Van Dyne and LePine 1998) (see also Dalal 2005).

Third, this study uses data collected among Canadian customer service departments in which employee reports of their commitment to the organization and manager's servant leadership behaviors are matched to managers' reports of employee voice and antisocial behaviors. The use of a Canadian sample contributes to a trend toward studying servant leadership's influence across cultures (Hale and Fields 2007; Pekerti and Sendjaya 2010) while the context of customer service has been suggested to be particularly suitable to study servant leadership's effects (Carter and Baghurst 2014; Jaramillo et al. 2009a, b; Liden et al. 2014; Wu et al. 2013). Using matched data from employees and their managers is also in line with recent calls toward going beyond single-level, self-reported data in this area of research (e.g., Chen et al. 2015; Liden et al. 2014; Newman et al. 2015). We now turn to the presentation of this study's theoretical background and hypotheses.

Theory and Hypotheses

Servant Leadership

Servant leadership was first introduced by Greenleaf in the 1970s (Greenleaf 1970, 1977). Viewing servant leadership as a way of living more than a way of managing people, Greenleaf (1977) emphasized the fact that servant leadership should begin with "the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first" (p. 7). Although ground-breaking, Greenleaf's early work (1970, 1977) reflected more a servant leadership philosophy than a servant leadership theory characterized by specific dimensions and theoretical propositions (Liden et al. 2015). Such developments were initiated more recently (see Parris and Peachey 2013, for a review). One of the most compelling frameworks of servant leadership has been proposed by Liden et al. (2008; see also Liden et al. 2015).

According to Liden and colleagues, servant leadership consists of seven dimensions: *emotional healing* or being

sensitive to the personal concerns of followers; *creating value for the community* or demonstrating a conscious, genuine concern for helping the community; *conceptual skills* or showing knowledge about the organization and the tasks that are prerequisites for providing help to followers; *empowering followers* or encouraging and helping followers to identify and solve problems, as well as to determine when and how to complete work tasks; *helping followers grow and succeed* or demonstrating a genuine concern for followers' career growth and development; *putting subordinates first* or using actions and words to make it clear to followers that satisfying their work needs is a priority; and finally, *behaving ethically* or interacting openly, fairly, and honestly with others.

As Liden et al. (2015, p. 254) posited, through the above facets, servant leaders have the potential to influence the behavior of employees as well as the well-being of organizations because they promote integrity, concentrate on helping others, and give high priority to "bringing out the full potential of followers." Thus, together, these dimensions capture the essential behaviors that servant leaders should demonstrate and, as such, they can be combined to investigate global servant leadership (Hu and Liden 2011; Liden et al. 2015). As this study aims to examine the effects and workings of global servant leadership rather than those of specific servant leadership dimensions, adopting Liden et al.'s (2008; see also Liden et al. 2015) framework appears appropriate.

Servant Leadership and Employee Organizational Commitment

According to Meyer and Allen (1991; see also Meyer et al. 1993; Meyer and Herscovitch 2001), organizational commitment is a multifaceted construct capturing the strength and nature of employees' relationship with the organization. As Meyer and Herscovitch (2001) emphasized, organizational commitment represents a force that binds an individual to the organization and to a course of action of relevance to that target. Yet, this force is associated with different *mindsets* reflecting the bases of employees' relationship to the organization (Meyer and Allen 1991; Meyer and Herscovitch 2001). Affective commitment captures employees' emotional attachment to the organization (Meyer and Allen 1991; Meyer and Herscovitch 2001), normative commitment reflects employees' feeling of obligation toward the organization (Meyer and Allen 1991; Meyer and Herscovitch 2001), while continuance commitment, which subsumes two subcomponents (Bentein et al. 2005; McGee and Ford 1987; Meyer et al. 1990), refers to employees' perception of (a) the cost associated with leaving the organization (i.e., perceived sacrifice commitment) or (b) the lack of alternative employment

opportunities (i.e., few alternatives commitment) (Meyer and Allen 1991; Meyer and Herscovitch 2001). Thus, commitment components represent distinct, yet related bases or motives that are used by employees to make sense of their behavior within and toward the organization.

Affective commitment, normative commitment, and perceived sacrifice commitment have in common that they are all influenced by work and/or socialization experiences, whereas few alternatives commitment is based on external contingencies pertaining to employment opportunities (e.g., economic conditions; Powell and Meyer 2004; Vandenberghe et al. 2011). As servant leadership is aimed at fostering followers' holistic development (Beck 2014; Hunter et al. 2013; Liden et al. 2008), it should primarily strengthen affective commitment. Indeed, servant leaders are thought to provide followers with support (*emotional healing dimension*) and opportunities to learn new skills (*helping subordinates grow and succeed dimension*), self-develop, and actively participate in decision-making and problem solving (*empowering dimension*) (Liden et al. 2008; Page and Wong 2000). These behaviors are likely to make the experience of work more challenging and rewarding. As leaders usually represent the organization in the eyes of employees (Eisenberger et al. 2002; Liden et al. 2004), subordinates may feel compelled to become emotionally attached to the organization as a result of these experiences, as social exchange theory would predict (Settoon et al. 1996). This should lead to increased affective commitment.

Similarly, servant leadership has a strong ethical component and promotes engagement in prosocial behaviors benefiting others or the community (*behaving ethically and creating value for the community dimensions*). These aspects convey high moral standards, which are naturally appealing to normatively committed individuals (González and Guillén 2008). Through these behaviors, servant leaders may thus instill a sense of moral rectitude and perceived obligation to the organization, which should lead to increased normative commitment (González and Guillén 2008; Meyer and Parfyonova 2010).

We also argue that servant leadership will lead to increased perceived sacrifice commitment by raising employees' awareness of the costs of discontinuing the relationship with the organization (Powell and Meyer 2004). As described above, servant leaders provide employees with positive work experiences by, for example, making their work more interesting (*helping subordinates grow and succeed* and *empowering* dimensions) and meaningful (*behaving ethically* and *creating value for the community* dimensions). In addition to instilling a sense of emotional attachment and perceived obligation to the

organization (i.e., affective and normative commitment), these positive experiences may be perceived by employees as valuable benefits or "side bets" (cf. Becker 1960; McGee and Ford 1987). Such benefits make organizational membership a worthwhile investment and make it more costly for employees to leave the organization, therefore leading to perceived sacrifice commitment (Powell and Meyer 2004). This rationale is further supported by the fact that perceived sacrifice commitment correlates positively with affective and normative commitment (Meyer et al. 2002) and the fact that affective, normative, and perceived sacrifice commitment display a comparable pattern of relationships with commitment antecedents (e.g., perceived organizational support; Panaccio and Vandenberghe 2009; Vandenberghe et al. 2007).

Furthermore, meta-analyses (DeGroot et al. 2000; Gerstner and Day 1997; Mathieu and Zajac 1990; Meyer et al. 2002) report significant relationships between leadership style or leader behaviors (e.g., charismatic leadership, leader communication, leader consideration, leader initiating structure, leader–member exchange, participative leadership, or transformational leadership) and commitment components. However, findings remain contradictory regarding continuance commitment, because research scarcely distinguished perceived sacrifice commitment from few alternatives commitment (see Meyer et al. 2002, for a discussion). Regarding servant leadership specifically, research has essentially focused on the relationship with affective commitment, without considering other commitment components (e.g., Cerit 2010; Jaramillo et al. 2009a, b; Liden et al. 2008; van Dierendonck et al. 2014). The only exception is Miao et al.'s (2014) study, which included affective, normative, and continuance commitment. Yet again, that study did not distinguish between perceived sacrifice and few alternatives commitment. In an attempt to fill that gap in the literature and clarify contradictory findings, we predict, based on the theoretical arguments developed above, that servant leadership will be positively related to affective, normative, and perceived sacrifice commitment. As few alternatives commitment is based on external contingencies (Vandenberghe et al. 2011), no relationship is expected with servant leadership. Thus, the following hypotheses are proposed.

Hypothesis 1 Servant leadership is positively related to affective commitment.

Hypothesis 2 Servant leadership is positively related to normative commitment.

Hypothesis 3 Servant leadership is positively related to perceived sacrifice commitment.

Servant Leadership, Employee Organizational Commitment, and Employee Behaviors

As mentioned previously, commitment components represent distinct, yet related facets of the employee–organization relationship. They are related in that, as suggested by the above discussion, they share some common antecedents. They are distinct in that, according to Meyer et al. (2004), different motivational forces underlie commitment components, which suppose that they may affect different outcome variables. Based on this premise, in the next sections, we develop hypotheses suggesting that solely affective commitment is related to voice behaviors and mediates the servant leadership–voice behaviors relationship and solely normative commitment is related to anti-social behaviors and mediates the servant leadership–antisocial behaviors relationship. In order to capture the unique effect of affective and normative commitment, we will examine these relationships while controlling for the other commitment components. This approach is acknowledged in the commitment literature as being well suited to isolate the unique effects of each commitment component (e.g., Bentein et al. 2005; Lapointe et al. 2011; Panaccio and Vandenberghe 2009; Stinglhamber et al. 2002; Vandenberghe et al. 2007).

Servant Leadership, Affective Commitment, and Voice Behaviors

According to Meyer and Herscovitch (2001; see also Becker 1992; Becker et al. 1996), affective commitment stems from a sense of identification with the organization, being involved with it, and sharing its values. Employees with high levels of affective commitment genuinely desire to remain with their organization. They feel autonomously motivated to serve important and valued purposes and tend to seek novelty and challenges in their role (Meyer et al. 2004). They follow an ideal and are seeking personal accomplishment and self-growth (Higgins 1998; Meyer et al. 2004; see also González and Guillén 2008). They should therefore be likely to seek opportunities to contribute to the organization and should be willing to put forward their ideas such as through demonstrating voice behaviors (Morrison 2011; Van Dyne and LePine 1998).

Voice refers to behaviors through which employees proactively make suggestions or recommendations that can enhance organizational efficiency and express concerns about current and potential problems in the organization (Morrison 2011; Van Dyne and LePine 1998). As such, it goes beyond merely criticizing and is aimed at changing things *for the good* of the organization (Van Dyne and LePine 1998). Voice behaviors are important for organizations' performance and contribute to continuous

improvement and learning (Detert and Burris 2007; Morrison 2011; Nemeth and Staw 1989). As these behaviors are intended to aid organizational success (Van Dyne and LePine 1998) and as affective commitment primarily fosters proactive contribution to the organization, those who, as a result of the positive experiences provided by servant leaders, are affectively committed to their organization, should be particularly motivated to engage in voice behaviors.

To our knowledge, our study is the first to examine the servant leadership–voice behaviors relationship. However, previous studies examined the relationships between servant leadership and various forms of organizational citizenship behaviors (e.g., Chen et al. 2015; Ehrhart 2004; Hu and Liden 2011; Hunter et al. 2013; Jaramillo et al. 2009a; Liden et al. 2008; Neubert et al. 2008; Newman et al. 2015; Reed 2015; Walumbwa et al. 2010; Wu et al. 2013). For example, research reported a positive association between servant leadership and citizenship behaviors directed toward the team (Hu and Liden 2011) and customers (Chen et al. 2015), and between servant leadership and helping behaviors (Neubert et al. 2008). As these behaviors and voice behaviors are all falling within the broad category of discretionary or extra-role behaviors (i.e., they all go beyond individuals' formal job responsibilities and contribute to organizational success; Dalal 2005; Organ 1988; Walumbwa and Schaubroeck 2009), servant leadership plausibly contributes to facilitate employee voice behaviors. However, as discussed above, it is likely that this relationship will be mediated through affective commitment. This indirect relationship seems plausible in light of Si and Li's (2012) study, which, although it did not control for the influence of other commitment components, found a significant relationship between affective commitment and voice behaviors. Thus, we formulate the following hypotheses.

Hypothesis 4 Affective commitment is positively related to employee voice behaviors, controlling for the other commitment components.

Hypothesis 5 Affective commitment mediates a positive relationship between servant leadership and employee voice behaviors, controlling for the other commitment components.

Servant Leadership, Normative Commitment, and Antisocial Behaviors

Unlike the other commitment components, normative commitment is loyalty-driven and stems from the internalization of certain norms concerning appropriate conduct, the terms of the psychological contract, and the need to reciprocate favorable treatment (Meyer and Herscovitch

2001; Scholl 1981; Weiner 1982). Employees with high levels of normative commitment remain with their organization as a mean to fulfill felt indebtedness toward the organization. Their behaviors at work are determined by their need to avoid feelings of guilt or anxiety or to gain others' respect (Meyer et al. 2004; Ryan and Deci 2000). They prefer to play safe and do what they feel they ought to do as organizational members (González and Guillén 2008; Meyer and Parfyonova 2010; Meyer et al. 2004). Normatively committed individuals should therefore be less likely to move away from accomplishing their tasks to voluntarily enact behaviors that could, in one way or another, harm the organization or its members, such as antisocial behaviors (Dalal 2005; Hershcovis et al. 2007; Robinson and Bennett 1995; Robinson and O'Leary-Kelly 1998).

In its broadest sense, the term "antisocial behavior" (or "deviant behavior") refers to negative or destructive behaviors in organizations (Hershcovis et al. 2007; Robinson and O'Leary-Kelly 1998). Of critical importance, antisocial behaviors are intended to hurt the organization and/or its members and thus threaten their well-being (Giacalone and Greenberg 1997; Gill et al. 2011; Robinson and Bennett 1995; Robinson and O'Leary-Kelly 1998). For example, employees display antisocial behaviors when they purposely damage the organization's property or when they intentionally try to hurt others at work via their words and actions (Bennett and Robinson 2000; Robinson and O'Leary-Kelly 1998; Stewart et al. 2009; Warren 2003). As these behaviors are fundamentally detrimental to others (Robinson and O'Leary-Kelly 1998) and as normative commitment primarily reflects a concern for the moral significance of one's actions toward the organization or its members, employees who, as a result of the positive experiences provided by servant leaders, become normatively committed to their organization, should be less likely to engage in antisocial behaviors.

In support of our contention, previous self-reported studies found negative links between normative commitment and interpersonal forms of antisocial behaviors (e.g., Ménard et al. 2011a, b). Previous research in related domains (e.g., unethical behaviors and unethical decision-making; Detert et al. 2008; Welsh et al. 2015) also suggest that actions potentially detrimental to others are influenced by moral obligation processes. In addition, previous research (e.g., Brown and Treviño 2006; Mayer et al. 2009; Neubert et al. 2008; Tepper et al. 2008, 2009; Thau et al. 2009; van Gils et al. 2015) has demonstrated that the way a leader behaves or his/her leadership style can influence followers' likelihood to engage in antisocial behaviors. Thus, theoretical arguments and empirical findings concur to suggest that normative commitment will be negatively related to employee antisocial behaviors and that normative commitment should mediate the relationship of servant

leadership to these behaviors. This leads to the following, remaining hypotheses.

Hypothesis 6 Normative commitment is negatively related to employee antisocial behaviors, controlling for the other commitment components.

Hypothesis 7 Normative commitment mediates a negative relationship between servant leadership and employee antisocial behaviors, controlling for the other commitment components.

Method

Sample and Procedure

The study was conducted among the employees working for the customer service departments of five Canadian companies. We contacted and obtained the agreement of the managers of these departments for surveying employees about servant leadership practices of the manager and employee organizational commitment, among others, as well as demographics (age, gender, and organizational tenure). Researchers distributed hard copies of the questionnaire to employees on-site. A cover letter explained the purpose of the study and advised respondents that participation was voluntary and responses would be kept confidential. In parallel, department managers received a packet including questionnaires that addressed, among other things, employee voice and antisocial behaviors. A cover letter attached to these questionnaires described the purpose of the study and invited managers to rate each of their employees. All questionnaires were coded so as to allow employee and manager responses to be matched. The codes were employees' identification numbers, which were known of the employees and managers only. Specifically, employees and managers completed their questionnaires separately and reported the target employee's identification number on top of the relevant questionnaires. Employee and manager questionnaires were completed during working hours and were collected by the researchers.

The companies to which employees and managers belonged operated in a variety of industries including telecommunications ($n = 2$), insurance ($n = 1$), electricity ($n = 1$), and marketing services ($n = 1$). The number of employees (all employed in customer service) per department ranged from 40 to 70 ($M = 52.20$; $SD = 13.91$). Among the 261 employees who were contacted for participation, usable questionnaires were obtained from 181 employees (a 69.35 % response rate; the rates effectively ranged from 48.57 to 84.44 % across departments) and their managers (all managers provided performance ratings for the 181 employees). In this sample, 46.70 % of the

employees were female, average age was 34.96 years ($SD = 7.96$), and average organizational tenure was 4.32 years ($SD = 5.52$). Among managers, 3 (60 %) were men, average age was 44.80 years ($SD = 7.09$; range = 40–57), and average organizational tenure was 14.80 years ($SD = 9.23$; range = 6–30).

Measures

Servant leadership and commitment variables were assessed through employee reports while voice and antisocial behaviors were rated by managers. As the study was conducted in French-speaking work contexts, we translated English-language items into French through a translation-back-translation procedure (Brislin 1980).

Servant Leadership

We used a slightly modified version of Liden et al.'s (2015) 7-item scale, which is a global and shortened servant leadership measure developed from Liden et al.'s (2008) 28-item multidimensional measure. Liden et al. (2015) reported strong evidence for the convergent validity of the short form of their instrument with the full scale, the internal consistency of the short form, as well as its predictive validity with regard to in-role performance, organizational citizenship behavior, and creativity. The 7-item scale of servant leadership is composed of items with the strongest loadings on their respective factor (one item per dimension) as reported in Liden et al. (2008). For example, the item "I would seek help from my manager if I had a personal problem" captures *emotional healing*, the item "My leader emphasizes the importance of giving back to the community" captures *creating value for the community*, and the item "My leader would NOT compromise ethical principles in order to achieve success" captures *behaving ethically*. Note that, because the latter item was negatively worded, we replaced it by "My manager is always honest" (see Liden et al. 2008) in this study. The full list of items used in this study to measure servant leadership is provided in the Appendix. All items were rated using a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). The reliability coefficient for this scale in this study ($\alpha = .82$) was comparable to reliability coefficients reported in Liden et al. (2015; $\alpha_s = .80-.90$).

Several scales of servant leadership are available in the literature (e.g., Ehrhart 2004; Liden et al. 2008, 2015; Sendjaya et al. 2008; van Dierendonck and Nuijten 2011). Among them, we selected Liden et al.'s (2015) measure for theoretical and practical reasons. From a theoretical perspective, our study did not aim to look at the relationships between specific dimensions of servant leadership and outcome variables. Rather, we explored the relationships

between servant leadership behaviors as a whole and employee commitment and behavior. In this context, employing a measure specifically designed to capture global servant leadership, rather than specific servant leadership dimensions, is warranted. Liden et al.'s (2015) scale is specifically designed to capture global servant leadership, whereas the other available measures (e.g., Ehrhart 2004; Liden et al. 2008; Sendjaya et al. 2008; van Dierendonck and Nuijten 2011) are multidimensional in nature. From a practical perspective, Liden et al.'s (2015) 7-item scale is the most concise servant leadership measure currently available. In comparison, Ehrhart's (2004) scale comprises 14 items, Sendjaya et al.'s (2008) scale has 35 items, and van Dierendonck and Nuijten's (2011) scale includes 30 items. As survey fatigue represents a threat to the integrity of participants' responses and thus, to the validity of a study's conclusions (Credé 2012), we opted for the more concise (yet rigorously developed and well-validated) measure from Liden et al. (2015; see also Liden et al. 2014).

Organizational Commitment Components

Organizational commitment components were measured using Bentein et al.'s (2005) version of Meyer et al.'s (1993) scales. Affective commitment and normative commitment scales each comprised 6 items, while perceived sacrifice commitment and few alternatives commitment scales included 3 items. A 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*) was used for all items. A typical item for affective commitment is "I really feel that I belong in this organization" while a sample item for normative commitment is "I think I would be guilty if I left my current organization now." Typical items for perceived sacrifice and few alternatives commitment include "I would not leave this organization because of what I would stand to lose" and "I have no choice but to stay with this organization," respectively. The reliability coefficients for affective ($\alpha = .93$), normative ($\alpha = .87$), perceived sacrifice ($\alpha = .81$), and few alternatives ($\alpha = .82$) commitment were all satisfactory and comparable to those reported by Bentein et al. (2005; $\alpha_s = .81, .78$, and $.83$ for affective commitment; $.91, .92$, and $.92$ for normative commitment; $.74, .78$, and $.81$ for perceived sacrifice commitment; $.81, .83$, and $.83$ for few alternatives commitment).

Voice Behaviors

Managers provided ratings of employee voice behaviors using the 6-item scale developed by Van Dyne and LePine (1998), which was based on previous work by Van Dyne et al. (1994) and Withey and Cooper (1989). A 5-point frequency scale ranging from 1 (*never*) to 5 (*very often*) was used for these items. Sample items include "develops

and makes recommendations concerning issues that affect his/her work group” and “speaks up and encourages others in this group to get involved in issues that affect the group.” The reliability coefficient for this scale ($\alpha = .96$) was comparable to the reliability coefficient reported by Van Dyne and LePine (1998) for their supervisor-rated measure of employee voice behaviors ($\alpha = .94$).

Antisocial Behaviors

Managers rated employees’ antisocial behaviors using an 11-item measure. This scale comprised Robinson and O’Leary-Kelly’s (1998) 9-item scale that we adapted to fit the supervisor’s perspective and was supplemented by two items from Stewart et al. (2009), which were developed based on Bennett and Robinson’s (2000) work on interpersonal deviance. The 9 items from Robinson and O’Leary-Kelly (1998) measured various antisocial behaviors, while the two items from Stewart et al. (2009) specifically measured personal aggression. The combination of these two sources into an overall scale of 11 items helped to obtain a balance between organization-directed deviance and interpersonal deviance content. Managers were asked to rate the frequency to which their subordinates demonstrated each of the behaviors described using a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (*never*) to 5 (*every week*). Sample items from Robinson and O’Leary-Kelly’s (1998) scale are “damaged property belonging to the organization” and “said or did something to purposely hurt someone at work,” while the two items from Stewart et al. (2009) are “lost his/her temper while at work” and “made fun of someone at work.” The reliability coefficient for the 11-item measure of antisocial behaviors was .72, which falls in the range of internal consistencies found in Robinson and O’Leary-Kelly (1998; .68, .75, and .81).

Control Variables

We controlled for age, gender, and organizational tenure as these variables have been found in the past to be related to organizational commitment components, voice behaviors, and antisocial behaviors (Berry et al. 2007; Gao et al. 2011; Hershcovis et al. 2007; Mathieu and Zajac 1990; Meyer et al. 2002; Ng et al. 2014; Robinson and O’Leary-Kelly 1998; Vandenberghe et al. 2011).

Results

Confirmatory Factor Analysis

We conducted a series of confirmatory factor analyses to examine the distinctiveness of our study variables. Data

were analyzed using LISREL 8.80 and the maximum likelihood method of estimation. To examine which model was the best fit to the data, we used χ^2 difference tests and compared more parsimonious models with our hypothesized 7-factor solution (Bentler and Bonnett 1980). As can be seen from Table 1, the hypothesized model yielded a good fit to the data: $\chi^2 (254) = 433.67, p < .001$, non-normed fit index (NNFI) = .95, comparative fit index (CFI) = .96, incremental fit index (IFI) = .96, root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = .063, and standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) = .061. This model also proved superior ($p < .001$; see Table 1) to more parsimonious 6-factor models in which variables were combined on a two-by-two basis and a 1-factor model. These results suggest that the study variables were distinguishable.

Descriptive Statistics and Intercorrelations

Descriptive statistics and intercorrelations for the study variables are presented in Table 2. All variables displayed good internal consistency ($\alpha > .70$). Of interest, servant leadership was positively related to affective commitment ($r = .26, p < .01$), normative commitment ($r = .29, p < .01$), and (marginally) perceived sacrifice commitment ($r = .14, p < .10$). Servant leadership was also positively related to voice behaviors ($r = .18, p < .05$) and negatively related to antisocial behaviors ($r = -.15, p < .05$). Finally, affective commitment was positively related to voice behaviors ($r = .44, p < .01$), while normative commitment was negatively related to antisocial behaviors ($r = -.17, p < .05$).

Hypothesis Testing

As the data were nested (managers rated the performance of multiple employees), these data were likely nonindependent (Bliese and Hanges 2004). Therefore, we used random coefficient modeling (Raudenbush and Bryk 2002) to examine our hypotheses. As recommended by Bliese (2000), predictors were grand-mean centered. We first examined the relationship of servant leadership to organizational commitment components, over and above employee demographics (age, gender, and organizational tenure). Results are presented in Table 3. As can be seen (Table 3, Model 2s), servant leadership was positively related to affective commitment ($\gamma = .18, p < .001$), normative commitment ($\gamma = .24, p < .001$), and perceived sacrifice commitment ($\gamma = .13, p < .05$). Hypotheses 1–3 are thus supported.

Next, we examined how servant leadership and commitment components predicted voice and antisocial behaviors. Again using random coefficient modeling,

Table 1 Confirmatory factor analysis results: Fit indices

	$\chi^2 (df)$	NNFI	CFI	IFI	RMSEA	SRMR	$\Delta\chi^2 (\Delta df)$
1. Hypothesized seven-factor solution	433.67*** (254)	.95	.96	.96	.063	.061	–
2. Combining voice and antisocial behaviors	630.42*** (260)	.90	.91	.91	.087	.084	196.75*** (6)
3. Combining servant leadership and voice behaviors	1108.17*** (260)	.77	.80	.80	.130	.120	674.50*** (6)
4. Combining servant leadership and antisocial behaviors	640.88*** (260)	.90	.91	.91	.089	.089	207.21*** (6)
5. Combining perceived sacrifice and few alternatives commitment	460.16*** (260)	.95	.95	.95	.065	.062	26.49*** (6)
6. Combining affective and normative commitment	627.76*** (260)	.90	.91	.91	.099	.085	194.09*** (6)
7. Combining servant leadership and commitment components	1236.05*** (272)	.75	.77	.77	.170	.130	802.38*** (18)
8. One-factor model	1969.95*** (275)	.56	.60	.60	.200	.150	1536.28*** (21)

N = 180

NNFI non-normed fit index, CFI comparative fit index, IFI incremental fit index, RMSEA root mean square error of approximation, SRMR standardized root mean square residual

*** $p < .001$ **Table 2** Descriptive statistics and correlations among variables

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Age	34.96	7.96	–									
2. Gender	1.53	.50	.32**	–								
3. Organizational tenure	4.32	5.52	.56**	.01	–							
4. Servant leadership	4.50	1.22	−.09	−.09	.02	(.82)						
5. Affective commitment	3.91	.90	.07	−.04	.08	.26**	(.93)					
6. Normative commitment	3.41	.99	.13†	−.03	.18*	.29**	.56**	(.87)				
7. Perceived sacrifice commitment	3.24	1.06	.14†	.01	.14†	.14†	.22**	.47**	(.81)			
8. Few alternatives commitment	2.83	1.37	.08	−.05	.23**	.09	.09	.44**	.67**	(.82)		
9. Voice behaviors	2.82	1.05	.29**	−.05	.38**	.18*	.44**	.40**	.27**	.26**	(.96)	
10. Antisocial behaviors	1.09	.20	−.02	.19*	−.11	−.15*	−.17*	−.27**	−.08	−.12	−.22**	(.72)

Ns = 177–180. For gender, 1 = female, 2 = male. Reliability coefficients are reported in parentheses on the diagonal† $p < .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

employee demographics were introduced in the first step, servant leadership was added in the second step, and the four commitment components were added in the third step. Entering all commitment components in the same step enables us to capture the unique effect of each commitment component. Results are presented in Table 4. As can be seen, servant leadership was positively related to employee voice behaviors ($\gamma = .15$, $p < .05$; Model 2) but this relationship became nonsignificant ($\gamma = .05$, *ns*; Model 3) when the four commitment components were introduced in the model. Among commitment components, affective commitment was the single significant and positive predictor of employee voice behaviors ($\gamma = .38$, $p < .001$; Model 3). Hypothesis 4 is thus supported.

As servant leadership was positively related to affective commitment ($\gamma = .18$, $p < .001$; Table 3, Model 2) and the

latter was positively associated with voice behaviors ($\gamma = .38$, $p < .001$; Table 4, Model 3), it was reasonable to expect affective commitment to act as a mediator between servant leadership and employee voice behaviors. To formally test this hypothesis, we used the Monte Carlo-based simultaneous regression procedure developed by Bauer et al. (2006) (for the computer software, see Preacher and Selig 2010) to test indirect effects in the context of multilevel models. This analysis indicated that the indirect effect of servant leadership on employee voice behaviors through affective commitment was significant and positive (.09; Monte Carlo confidence interval [.03–.17], $p < .05$). Hypothesis 5 is thus supported.

Table 4 also shows that servant leadership was marginally negatively related to employee antisocial behaviors ($\gamma = −.02$, $p < .10$; Model 2), but this relationship became

Table 3 Multilevel estimates of random coefficient modeling analyses for organizational commitment components

Variable	Affective commitment		Normative commitment		Perceived sacrifice commitment		Few alternatives commitment	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2
Intercept	3.72***	2.79***	3.16***	1.95***	2.86***	2.17***	3.03***	2.60***
Age	.01	.01	.01	.02	.02	.02	-.01	-.01
Gender	-.16	-.13	-.18	-.15	-.14	-.13	-.16	-.15
Organizational tenure	.00	.00	.02	.02	.01	.01	.05*	.05*
Servant leadership	.18***		.24***		.13*		.08	
R^2	.02	.08	.04	.12	.03	.05	.05	.06
ΔR^2	.02	.06	.04	.08	.03	.02	.05	.01
Deviance	416.36	406.73	372.97	362.47	372.97	362.47	372.97	362.47
Deviance $\Delta\chi^2$ test	4.95*	9.62**	35.02***	10.50**	35.02***	10.50**	35.02***	10.50**
Δdf	3	1	3	1	3	1	3	1

N at Level 1 = 174; *N* at Level 2 = 5. Unstandardized coefficients are reported. Deviance tests and R^2 values are obtained using a comparison with an intercept-only model. ΔR^2 = increase in variance explained; proportions of variance explained are computed as the relative reduction in the Levels 1 and 2 variance components of commitment components across models (Snijders and Bosker 2012)

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Table 4 Multilevel estimates of random coefficient modeling analyses for voice and antisocial behaviors

Variable	Voice behaviors			Antisocial behaviors		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Intercept	2.22***	1.46**	-.05	1.01***	1.13***	1.23***
Age	.02 [†]	.02*	.02	.00	.00	.00
Gender	-.25	-.23	-.15	.08*	.08*	.07*
Organizational tenure	.05**	.05**	.04**	.00	.00	.00
Servant leadership		.15*	.05		-.02 [†]	-.01
Affective commitment			.38***			-.01
Normative commitment			.10			-.05*
Perceived sacrifice commitment			.02			.02
Few alternatives commitment			.08			-.01
R^2	.14	.17	.32	.05	.07	.12
ΔR^2	.14	.03	.16	.05	.02	.05
Deviance	416.36	406.73	392.86	372.97	362.47	355.08
Deviance $\Delta\chi^2$ test	4.95*	9.62**	13.87***	35.02***	10.50**	7.39*
Δdf	3	1	4	3	1	4

N at Level 1 = 174; *N* at Level 2 = 5. Unstandardized coefficients are reported. Deviance tests and R^2 values are obtained using a comparison with an intercept-only model. ΔR^2 = increase in variance explained; proportions of variance explained are computed as the relative reduction in the Levels 1 and 2 variance components of voice and antisocial behaviors across models (Snijders and Bosker 2012)

[†] $p < .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

nonsignificant ($\gamma = -.01$, ns; Model 3) when commitment components were introduced in the equation. Among commitment components, normative commitment was the single significant (negative) predictor of employee antisocial behaviors ($\gamma = -.05$, $p < .05$; Model 3). Hypothesis 6 is thus supported.

As servant leadership was positively related to normative commitment ($\gamma = .24$, $p < .001$; Table 3, Model 2)

and as the latter was negatively linked to antisocial behaviors ($\gamma = -.05$, $p < .05$; Table 4, Model 3), normative commitment could mediate the relationship between servant leadership and employee antisocial behaviors. We examined this possibility using the same Monte Carlo-based simultaneous regression procedure (Bauer et al. 2006; Preacher and Selig 2010) used above. This analysis revealed that the indirect effect of servant leadership on

employee antisocial behaviors through normative commitment was nonsignificant ($-.02$; Monte Carlo confidence interval [$-.05$ to $.01$], $p < .05$). Therefore, Hypothesis 7 is not supported.

Discussion

This paper examined the relationships of servant leadership to organizational commitment, voice behaviors, and anti-social behaviors. Adopting a multifaceted approach to organizational commitment, we argued that servant leadership would strengthen employees' affective, normative, and perceived sacrifice commitment but would not be related to few alternatives commitment. Based on the notion that different motivational forces underlie commitment components, we further argued that affective and normative commitment would predict employee voice and antisocial behaviors, respectively, and mediate the relationship between servant leadership and these behaviors. We tested these predictions on matched data from Canadian customer service employees and their managers. Results from random coefficient modeling analyses largely supported these predictions, except that normative commitment did not act as a mediator between servant leadership and antisocial behaviors. The present findings offer a number of theoretical implications and future research directions for servant leadership and commitment research, which we discuss below. We then present the limitations and practical implications of this study.

Theoretical Implications

First, our results indicate that servant leaders influence the nature and strength of the relationship that employees develop with their organization, as examined through Meyer and Allen's (1991; see also Meyer and Herscovitch 2001) commitment model. More precisely, servant leaders likely provide employees with positive and satisfying work experiences, which instill a sense of emotional attachment to the organization (affective commitment), create feelings of obligation toward the organization (normative commitment) and an awareness of the costs associated with leaving the organization (perceived sacrifice commitment) (Meyer et al. 2002; Powell and Meyer 2004). Results are therefore consistent with previous studies emphasizing the key role played by leaders in creating strong relationships between employees and organizations (e.g., DeGroot et al. 2000; Gerstner and Day 1997; Mathieu and Zajac 1990; Meyer et al. 2002).

It is interesting to note that servant leadership appears significantly associated with both normative ($\gamma = .24$, $p < .001$) and affective commitment ($\gamma = .18$, $p < .001$).

This finding is worth mentioning as the vast majority of studies examining the servant leadership–commitment relationship did not consider normative commitment (nor continuance commitment subcomponents) (e.g., Cerit 2010; Jaramillo et al. 2009a, b; Liden et al. 2008; van Dierendonck et al. 2014). As affective commitment is the best commitment predictor of employee behaviors (Meyer et al. 2002), researchers tend to limit their investigation to this component. From a theoretical perspective, it makes sense to assume that servant leaders, who strive to foster employees' holistic development (Beck 2014; Hunter et al. 2013; Liden et al. 2008), contribute to develop employees' emotional attachment to their organization. However, the primacy of this reasoning may be questioned. It is likely that servant leaders, through their selfless and generous attitude, primarily make employees feel indebted toward the organization (which may be accompanied by a sense of guilt; Meyer et al. 2004; Ryan and Deci 2000). The sense of obligation instilled by servant leaders is in line with viewing normative commitment as linked to self-sacrifice (Weiner 1982) and with Greenleaf's (1970, 1977; see also Liden et al. 2014) core assumption that servant leaders make followers more likely to prioritize the needs of others above their own and become servants themselves.

Furthermore, the fact that servant leadership was significantly related to perceived sacrifice commitment but not to few alternatives commitment underlines the importance of distinguishing among perceived sacrifice and few alternatives commitment (Powell and Meyer 2004; Vandenbergh and Panaccio 2012; Vandenbergh et al. 2011). Indeed, such distinction is warranted because few alternatives commitment incorporates employee's need to remain in the organization based on the lack of employment opportunities, something that is largely out of the manager's and the organization's control (Powell and Meyer 2004; Vandenbergh et al. 2011). It also involves the idea that employees feel "trapped" in the organization and that organizational membership is, in itself, an aversive experience (Powell and Meyer 2004; Vandenbergh et al. 2007, 2011). Servant leadership may have little influence on this psychological state. Thus, the present findings indicate that nonsignificant results previously reported regarding the link between servant leadership and continuance commitment (e.g., Miao et al. 2014) may be due to considering continuance commitment as a unitary construct.

At first glance, the positive relationship between servant leadership and perceived sacrifice commitment may appear to contradict servant leadership's tenets. Indeed, servant leaders should help followers develop their full potential (Greenleaf 1977; Liden et al. 2008) while perceived sacrifice commitment is rooted in a relatively calculative approach to the employee–organization relationship (Becker 1960; Meyer et al. 2002). Yet, recent research

(Powell and Meyer 2004; Vandenberghe and Panaccio 2012) suggests that the benefits or “side bets” (cf. Becker 1960; McGee and Ford 1987) underlying perceived sacrifice commitment are not exclusively instrumental. For example, Powell and Meyer (2004) found that enjoying satisfying work conditions (e.g., enjoying one’s tasks or having good working relationships) is positively related to perceived sacrifice commitment. In the same vein, Vandenberghe and Panaccio (2012) reported a positive relationship between job scope and perceived sacrifice commitment, suggesting that rich, complex, and challenging tasks are part of the benefits that give rise to this commitment component. Thus, perceived sacrifice commitment also derives from the social and more intrinsically satisfying aspects of organizational membership that are usually associated with deeper, emotional forms of employee–organization relationships (Coyle-Shapiro and Shore 2007; Meyer and Allen 1991; Shore et al. 2009; Tsui et al. 1997).

Another finding was that servant leadership fostered employees’ emotional attachment to the organization (i.e., affective commitment), which, in turn, motivated them to proactively make suggestions and recommendations to address organizational issues (i.e., voice behaviors; Meyer et al. 2004; Morrison 2011). The fact that servant leadership indirectly influenced employee behavior is consistent with recent research on servant leadership’s workings (e.g., Chen et al. 2015; Liden et al. 2014; Newman et al. 2015). In particular, the mediating effect of affective commitment suggests that proactive motivation is an alternative mechanism to others that have been identified, such as role modeling (Liden et al. 2014), social exchange (Newman et al. 2015), and social identification (Chen et al. 2015), through which servant leaders influence employee behaviors. Proactive motivation is indeed a central aspect of affective commitment (Meyer et al. 2004) and would explain *how* servant leadership encourages the expression of voice: servant leaders typically help employees to proactively serve and develop their environment (Liden et al. 2015) and would indirectly encourage them to speak up and voice their ideas.

Normative commitment was found to be negatively related to employee antisocial behaviors. Thus, the moral underpinnings of normative commitment draw employees’ attention to the moral significance of their actions toward the organization and its members (González and Guillén 2008; Meyer et al. 2004; Meyer and Parfyonova 2010), therefore making them less likely to voluntarily harm them (i.e., through antisocial behaviors; Hershcovis et al. 2007; Robinson and Bennett 1995; Robinson and O’Leary-Kelly 1998). The significant relationships between normative commitment and antisocial behaviors on one hand, and between affective commitment and voice behaviors on the

other hand support the discriminant validity of these components, which has been questioned in the past (e.g., Bergman 2006). These findings also provide some preliminary evidence that voice and antisocial behaviors, while opposite in nature, can be associated with distinct antecedents (Dalal 2005; Van Dyne and LePine 1998). Yet, the indirect effect of servant leadership on employee antisocial behaviors through normative commitment was nonsignificant. This may be due to these behaviors being relatively infrequent ($M = 1.09$, $SD = .20$), causing range restriction among them. As antisocial behaviors are often covert and hidden to external observers (Liao et al. 2004; Sackett and DeVore 2001), using supervisor reports of such behaviors has limitations. It might be interesting to determine whether servant leadership leads to less frequent antisocial behaviors through increased normative commitment when employee reports of their own antisocial behaviors are used—even if self-reports of antisocial behaviors also have limitations (Bordia et al. 2008; Fox and Spector 2005; Podsakoff et al. 2012; Stewart et al. 2009).

Directions for Future Research

Servant leadership research is still in its infancy (Parris and Peachey 2013). There are thus many research directions that can be pursued. In connection with this study’s findings, future research could examine how affective and normative commitment intervene in explaining servant leadership’s effects on other outcomes reflecting these commitments’ motivational bases (Meyer et al. 2004). For example, as affective commitment reflects a motivation to proactively contribute to the organization (Higgins 1998; Meyer et al. 2004), outcomes such as individual initiative (Bolino and Turnley 2005) and behavioral proactivity and adaptivity (Griffin et al. 2007) could be investigated. Similarly, research looking at the mediating role of normative commitment could focus on behaviors that possess a moral significance (Meyer et al. 2004; Scholl 1981; Weiner 1982) such as unethical behaviors (Welsh et al. 2015). More specific forms of antisocial behaviors such as aggression and retaliation (Fox and Spector 1999; Skarlicki and Folger 1997; Skarlicki et al. 1999) or more specific targets of antisocial behaviors such as customers (Greenbaum et al. 2013) could also be examined as outcomes.

It would also be worth examining the moderating role of variables reflecting individual differences in motivational orientation. For example, proactive personality (Seibert et al. 1999) may moderate the relationship between affective commitment and voice behaviors, as well as the indirect effect of servant leadership on voice behaviors through affective commitment. People who are naturally proactive are particularly sensitive to the effects of intrinsic

motivation (Fuller and Marler 2009) and may thus be more inclined to make suggestions to improve organizational functioning (i.e., through voice behaviors; Morrison 2011; Van Dyne and LePine 1998) when experiencing affective commitment. In a similar way, moral identity (Aquino and Reed 2002; Greenbaum et al. 2013) may affect the strength of the relationship between normative commitment and antisocial behaviors. Individuals with high levels of moral identity should be less likely to engage in impulsive reactions and experience normative commitment as being more consistent with their moral standards (Aquino and Reed 2002; Greenbaum et al. 2013; Meyer et al. 2004). Hence, there should be a stronger negative relationship between normative commitment and antisocial behaviors among individuals holding high levels of moral identity.

Finally, as servant leaders are expected to support followers' involvement in the community (Liden et al. 2008; van Dierendonck 2011), an extension of this study would be to examine whether servant leadership influences commitment to the community. Doing so would respond to recent calls to recognize the impact of servant leadership beyond organizations' boundaries (van Dierendonck 2011; Zhang et al. 2012). Research on union commitment (e.g., Bamberger et al. 1999; Cohen 2005; Fullagar et al. 2004; Monnot et al. 2011; Redman and Snape 2005) could be used as a starting point for this line of inquiry.

Limitations

This study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, as all the data have been collected at the same time, we cannot draw causal inferences regarding the relationships among variables. For example, we cannot rule out the possibility that voice behaviors lead to affective commitment rather than the reverse. On theoretical grounds, we are however confident that the causal direction hypothesized in this study is more likely. That being said, longitudinal research would be necessary to confirm the causal ordering of constructs. The fact that the data have been collected at the same time also raises concerns regarding common method variance. However, the use of supervisor reports of employee behavior along with employee reports of servant leadership and commitment reduces the likelihood of this bias (Podsakoff et al. 2012). As subjective measures still have limitations (as discussed above), more objective measures of employee behaviors such as those obtained via organizational records should be used whenever possible. Finally, the current findings were obtained from Canadian employees working in the for-profit customer service industry, and as such may not be generalizable to nonprofit organizations, in which servant leaders are plausibly more prevalent and accepted (Carter

and Baghurst 2014), and to other cultures (Hale and Fields 2007; Pekerti and Sendjaya 2010).

Practical Implications

This study's results emphasize the important role of servant leaders in fostering voice behaviors and reducing antisocial behaviors. Organizations should thus encourage managers to adopt servant leadership behaviors when dealing with their teams. One way to achieve this goal is through implementing training and mentoring programs specifically targeted at managers (Liden et al. 2014; Peterson et al. 2012; Wu et al. 2013). Managers should be trained to demonstrate personal consideration (*emotional healing* dimension), give feedback to employees on their performance and keep them informed about development opportunities in the organization (*helping subordinates grow and succeed* dimension), and establish fair and open rapports with people in the organization (*behaving ethically* dimension), among other behaviors. As this study found that servant leadership's effects were transmitted through organizational commitment, training programs directed at managers should focus on the critical role they play as *representatives* of the organization (Eisenberger et al. 2002; Liden et al. 2004) and make sure that managers endorse the values of the organization.

Similarly, organizations may want to develop a serving culture (Liden et al. 2014) in which attention to the needs of others and serving attitudes come to represent core values of the organization. To further promote servant leadership, organizations should adjust performance appraisal systems so as to incorporate *serving* as an important criterion against which managers' performance will be evaluated (Liden et al. 2008; Peterson et al. 2012; Wu et al. 2013). Organizations would also be well-advised to pay attention to how managers are selected and consider that some individual dispositions likely inhibit or facilitate servant behaviors among managers, such as narcissism (inhibiting factor) or self-esteem and altruism (facilitating factors) (Beck 2014; Peterson et al. 2012; Sun 2013). Attention paid to these factors would allow that managers most likely to engage in servant leadership behaviors be recruited. Finally, servant leadership is of worth to organizations as it helps to simultaneously build employees' attachment to the organization, promote speaking up and engagement in positive change, as well as refrain employees from engaging in antisocial behaviors. As the latter outcomes are likely to improve organizational functioning and make work climate more attractive, organizations should see advantages to promoting servant leadership behaviors among their managers.

Conclusion

Researchers and practitioners alike have recently shown increased interest in servant leadership (Liden et al. 2008; Parris and Peachey 2013; van Dierendonck 2011). This study adds to the literature by looking at servant leadership's effects on employee commitment and behaviors. Based on data from employees and managers from Canadian customer service departments, servant leadership was found to predict employees' affective, normative, and perceived sacrifice commitment. Furthermore, affective commitment positively mediated the relationship between servant leadership and voice behaviors. While normative commitment negatively predicted antisocial behaviors, it did not mediate the relationship of servant leadership to antisocial behaviors. We hope the present findings will encourage future research on servant leadership's workings and relationships to a wide array of employee outcomes.

Appendix

Items used to capture servant leadership in this study and their associated dimension in the original servant leadership instrument (Liden et al. 2008, 2015).

Item	Dimension
I would seek help from my manager if I had a personal problem	Emotional healing
My leader emphasizes the importance of giving back to the community	Creating value for the community
My manager can tell if something work related is going wrong	Conceptual skills
My manager gives me the freedom to handle difficult situations in the way that I feel is best	Empowering
My manager makes my career development a priority	Helping subordinates grow and succeed
My leader puts my best interests ahead of his/her own	Putting subordinates first
My manager is always honest	Behaving ethically

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