THE CONCEPT OF SERVANT LEADERSHIP IN CONTEMPORARY BUSINESS PRACTICES: A LITERATURE REVIEW

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Abstract

This concept paper is in response to calls for more excellent Servant leadership research. It was fueled by the fact that much research on Leadership has concentrated on transformational leadership and team leadership amid growing interest in Servant Leadership. Although the Servant leadership notion has been critiqued for its lack of empirical evidence, it is feasible in this age of unethical commercial practices. In this case, a leadership philosophy that appeals to human morals may be the best option. The study is grounded on a literature review that aims to define Servant Leadership in the context of corporate management by defining its characteristics, antecedents, and results. In the perspective of Servant Leadership, it also aimed to distinguish between Leadership and management, authority and Power. The ramifications of Servant Leadership are examined, as well as practical instances. It will also inform people who want to be Servant leaders about what is required of them. Organizations that adopt the Servant leadership philosophy will experience fewer economic failures and financial crises.

Keywords: Servant Leadership, Stewardship, Contemporary Business Practices, Authority, Power

INTRODUCTION

Leadership is an all-encompassing phenomenon that human society cannot function without (Alvehus, 2021). It is a universal act that is carried out to regulate humanity's concerns worldwide (Carrillo, 2020). Over the years, the flow of Leadership has been a critical issue (Uhl-Bien & Arena, 2018); some people take advantage of others, resulting in tumult, turmoil, or uproar; this includes today's economic world (Lewis & Xue, 2020). Many concepts on Leadership have been established due to extensive research on the issue (Behrendt, Matz, & Göritz, 2017).

This is a concept paper on Servant Leadership, and it aims to describe the concept by defining its characteristics, antecedents, and outcomes. As a result, the study focused on the notion of Servant Leadership, which examines Leadership from the perspective of the leader's moral and ethical behavior. More importantly, Servant Leadership exemplifies Jesus Christ's Leadership, an appropriate model for today's leaders. Even though Christ was God, He became a servant to save and inspire His disciples (Philippians 2:5-8).

On the other hand, Servant Leadership deviates from the norm of different leadership styles (Brière, Le Roy, & Meier, 2021). A leader has a sense of lordship, and a servant follows (Ihetu & Chigbo, 2020. The question then becomes, how can a leader serve as a servant? Setyaningrum, Setiawan, & Irawanto (2020) coined the term servant leadership to describe a mindset of putting others first and supporting them in achieving their goals. Many servant leadership models have been developed, including the several attribute (Liu, 2019) model and Prakasch & Ghayas, (2019) value-based model with characteristics for servant leaders. The anecdote of a party of travelers having a servant among them who would always cheer them up as he served them on their journey inspired the Servant leadership notion. The company could not continue their journey after the Servant vanished because no one could cheer them up along the route. The travelers realized that "the servant was truly their leader" due to this (Frey, 2017).

Servant Leadership is a style of administration that emphasizes people (Heidari, Ghasemi, & Heidari, 2019), principles (Kiersch & Peters, 2017), and the "big picture." (Wang, Xu, & Liu, 2018). As result, servant leaders serve rather than impose (Al Hila, & Al Shobaki, 2017). They empower rather than command (Aij, & Rapsaniotis, 2017). They consider their employment a vocation rather than a job (Ruiz-Palomino, & Zoghbi-Manrique-de-Lara, 2020). Knowing that a leader influences their followers (Farrington, & Lillah, 2019), the impact must be positive. As a result, this study proposes Servant Leadership as one of the solutions to organizational leadership difficulties. Servant leadership is likely to be the best answer because it is the leadership model Jesus Christ used. It is founded on ethical behavior (Lemoine,

Hartnell, & Leroy, 2019) and Leadership through service (Petrovskaya & Mirakyan, 2018), both of which are lacking in most businesses. This research will benefit both organizations that need to try out servant leadership and individuals who want to be Servant Leaders.

Servant Leadership's Authority and Power

Servant Leadership expresses authority (Allen, Winston, Tatone, & Crowson, 2018), and power (Sousa & van Dierendonck, 2017) differs from how it is understood using other leadership concepts. Servant Leadership is consistent (Roberts, 2018) with a leadership philosophy that emphasizes integration (Lemoine et al., 2019) and authority (Tanno, 2017). The source of power should be one's influence over subordinates, not one's position. When leaders mingle with their associates, they can influence them while working together (Muzira, Muzira, & Min, 2020). Still, when they reign over them, they can only compel them into working (Ahmad, Donia, Khan, & Waris, 2019). Coercion does not result in a lasting change of behavior (Mountjoy, 2019).; however, good influence can result in ripple effects of Servant Leadership (Stollberger, Las Heras, Rofcanin, & Bosch, 2019).

The acceptance of Power by a member, not the person in charge, is the source of authority (Presthus, 2019). This signifies that even if a person is in a position of power, such as a manager, if the members do not accept their management, they have no control because they do not influence them. Moral Leadership is defined as having CEOs with a high moral code (Solinger, Jansen, & Cornelissen, 2020), demonstrating it as an example, and attempting to instill this morality in others as part of the servant concept. This is consistent with Servant Leadership, which requires a leader to have high morals, lead by example, and inspire followers to follow suit. As a result, a person in a position of power should be able to influence the followers (Hermawati, Sugiyarti, Handayani, Sunarsi, Alfiah, & Maddinsyah, 2020).

A servant leader should have "power to" rather than "power over" (Ross, Matteson, Sasso, & Peyton, 2020). This means a Servant leader has the authority to serve others rather than to be served. "Power over" connotes coercion, whereas "power to" connotes. Unlike other leadership styles, where Power is derived from the leader's influence while serving the followers (NawoseIng'ollan & Roussel, 2017), Servant Leadership derives Power from the leader's influence while serving the followers (Lee, Lyubovnikova, Tian, & Knight, 2020). Power is utilized to persuade rather than coerce or force(Etzioni, 2019).

Servant Leadership versus Management

When attempting to distinguish Servant Leadership from management, confusion is common. Before getting into the concept of Servant Leadership, there are a few things to

consider that can help you distinguish between the two phrases. The fundamental objective, goal setting, relationships, operation, and governance are all examples of this. Managers excel in stable circumstances by maintaining the status quo (Kraus, Burtscher, Vallaster, & Angerer, 2018). In contrast, leaders excel in dynamic, tumultuous, and uncertain environments by conquering the context (Shufutinsky, Long, Sibel, & Burrell, 2021). As a result, to survive the volatile climate of the twenty-first century, leaders are required more than managers.

A servant leader's primary goal is to serve the interests of their followers (Wu, Liden, Liao, & Wayne, 2021), whereas a manager's goal is to achieve the organization's goals (Latham, 2020). Managers' obsession with outcomes (Mesdaghinia, Rawat, & Nadavulakere, 2019) and control (Panda, 2019) often instill fear of failure in their subordinates, risking growth. People must be driven and purposeful to give their best in work (Muñoz, Cacciotti, & Cohen, 2018). This isn't to say that a servant leader isn't concerned with the organization's goals. It signifies that the organization's goals will be realized while assisting followers in reaching their full potential (Chaturvedi, Rizvi, & Pasipanodya, 2019). A servant leader exists to serve others (Petrovskaya & Mirakyan, 2018), whereas a manager exists to serve the organization through their employees (Hur, Y. 2018). As a result, a servant leader appreciates the individuals who make up the organization (Dutta & Khatri, 2017).

When it comes to goal-setting, servant leaders express the vision, envision the future, and see the larger picture (Rashid, Tasmin, Qureshi, & Shafiq, 2019). Managers, on the other hand, carry out plans (Fayzullaevna, 2021), enhance the current situation (Aung & Preudhikulpradab, 2021), and maintain a narrow perspective (Raisch & Krakowski, 2021). Servant leaders focus on the future by assisting their followers in reaching their full potential (Heyler & Martin, 2018). In contrast, managers focus on what their subordinates can achieve best in the present (Molnar, Schwarz, Hellgren, Hasson, & Tafvelin, 2019). Managers have a narrow vision of only fulfilling organizational goals (Chams & García-Blandón, 2019), therefore implementing what has been planned (Biniari, 2020). Still, servant leaders look at the larger picture of the followers (Sendjaya, Eva, Robin, Sugianto, ButarButar, & Hartel, 2019), the organization (Muhtasom, Mus, Bijang, & Latief, 2017), and the environment (Woo & Kang, 2020). This is one of the causes why most managers fail in high-stress situations.

A servant leader prioritizes relationships above results (Hartnell, Karam, Kinicki, & Dimotakis, 2020), whereas a manager prioritizes task results over relationships (Gerpott, Lehmann-Willenbrock, Voelpel, & Van Vugt, 2019). Managers treat their employees as inferiors (Tang, Zheng, & Chen, 2017), whereas servant leaders consider their followers as partners (Crippen & Willows, 2019) and equals (Xu & Wang, 2020). Managers utilize their rightful Power to control their employees (Ravenelle, 2019). Still, servant leaders use their service to empower

(Yang, Gu, & Liu, 2019) and influence (Newman, Schwarz, Cooper, & Sendjaya, 2017). While managers plan the work that their subordinates will do (Long, 2018), servant leaders lead their followers in doing the task together (Chiniara & Bentein, 2018).

Managers do the right things in operations (Spring & Unterhitzenberger, 2020), whereas leaders do the right things in Leadership (Agarwal & Sisodia, 2021). This explains why servant leaders' actions are guided by morality (GÜmÜsay, 2019) and ethics (Lumpkin & Achen, 2018). While doing the right thing necessitates ethical behavior, doing the right thing might conflict with ethics and morals. In their operations, servant leaders serve their subordinates (Saleem, Zhang, Gopinath, & Adeel, 2020), whereas, in management, aides serve their managers (Wu et al., 2021), who then serve their superiors. Managers employ authority in governance (Hettiarachchi, Ryu, Caucci, & Silva, 2018), whereas servant leaders use influence (Muzira et al., 2020). The leader under Servant Leadership leads by example (Kiker, Callahan, & Kiker, 2019). In contrast, a manager exerts control (Agostino & Arnaboldi, 2018) and often employs force (Möhlmann & Zalmanson, 2017) to get their way. Managers utilize their employees for their recognition (Stoyanova & Iliev, 2017) and promotion (Hetland, Hetland, Bakker, & Demerouti, 2018), whereas servant leaders rely on self-sacrifice (Urick, 2021). rather than self-glory (Mutua & Kiruhi, 2021).

Attributes of Servant Leadership

Leadership is inherited rather than taught (Resnick & Schantz, 2017). As a result, leaders have significant responsibility for modeling what their followers should imitate (Cheng, Wei, & Lin, 2019). Leadership or management is a critical organizational job (Qing, Asif, Hussain, & Jameel, 2020), and for any company to expand (Delen, Moscato, & Toma, 2018, January) and be effective (Graves & Moore, 2018), it must have well-informed leaders. As a result, a servant leader must possess specific qualities, such as good listening skills (Sikorski, 2017), the ability to communicate effectively (Coetzer, Bussin, & Geldenhuys, 2017), and the ability to be empathetic (Elche, Ruiz-Palomino, & Linuesa-Langreo, 2020), patient (ELLIS, 2019), and truthful (Burton, Peachey, & Wells, 2017). A leader who possesses these qualities naturally has a better possibility of engaging in Servant Leadership.

These characteristics are an essential vehicle for improving the way firms are managed. As a result, Servant Leadership is concerned with one's behavior (Stollberger et al., 2019) and character (Sousa, & van Dierendonck, 2017). Unlike management, which is involved with the activities we perform, such as planning (Leahy & Lyons, 2021) and organizing (Lu, Zhou, & Chen, 2019), leadership is concerned with who we are. The Servant leadership characteristics

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are divided into four areas in this study: visionary, selfless, good communicator, and stewardship. The following is an example:

Selflessness

Selfless leaders are those who prioritize the needs of their followers (Stouten & Liden, 2020), assist them in growing (Mao, Chiu, Owens, Brown, & Liao, 2019) and succeeding (Rasmussen, 2020), and empower them (Yang et al., 2019). Servant leaders consider followers by putting others first (Mulinge, 2018). Even if their followers do not behave how they intend, this helps them understand them better (Kiersch & Peters, 2017). Empathy will also force the servant leader to become more empathic (Khatri, Dutta, & Kaushik, 2021). They are not envious (Roberts, 2020) but rather delighted when others outperform them (Smith, 2018). Their success is achieved by how well their followers carry out their responsibilities at work to ensure their overall success (Xu & Wang, 2020).

They train their followers to be Servant leaders by empowering them (Ammons, & McLaughlin, 2017). These leaders provide the resources needed for a given activity (Opoku, Choi, & Kang, 2019), instruct the followers on how to effectively use those resources (Williams, Brandon, Hayek, Haden, & Atinc, 2017), then supervise the followers while they do the assignment (Prasad, & Sugianto, 2019). When followers are empowered, they are encouraged to think critically (Yelamanchili, 2018), resulting in a high level of invention. As a result, empowerment recognizes that other people have the potential to lead as well (Vaquera, Aranda, & Sousa-Rodriguez, 2017).

Stewardship

A steward is someone who has been entrusted with the property (Boaheng, 2021) or assets (Situmorang, 2019) of another person. As a result, a servant leader should be a steward who looks after people (Sherman, 2019), an organization's most precious asset, to reach their full potential. Social responsibility (Kuttner et al. 2020), commitment (Akinboyo & Gerber, 2020), and teamwork (Drekonja et al. 2019) are all integrally linked to stewardship. Stewardship includes resource management as well (Hutchings, 2018). This comprises protecting the environment by decreasing pollution (Jorgensen, Krasny, & Baztan, 2021) and land degradation (Duque et al., 2021), which corporations have generated in some situations to unload pollutants. As a result, servant leaders should have stewardship characteristics such as loyalty (Shah, Batool, & Hassan, 2019), ethical behavior (Lumpkin & Achen, 2018), and social responsibility (Yoon, Darville, & Spann, 2021). A steward is faithful to the owner of the land or assets they oversee, as well as their followers and the organization for which they work. The individuals they

serve admire the leader because of their loyalty. Because of their commitment, they are dependable (Croft, 2021) and accountable (ten Have & Neves, 2021). A steward is supposed to act ethically (Yen & Cutrell, 2021). A servant leader is also required to be honest in their personal (Hoch, Bommer, Dulebohn, & Wu, 2018), professional (Coetzer et al., 2017), and overall lives (Sims, 2018).

Their way of life should serve as an example to their followers (Kiker al., 2019). As a result, stewardship necessitates genuine concern for the well-being of others (Stoewen, 2017). As a result, servant leaders become more socially accountable (Ragnarsson, Kristjánsdóttir, & Gunnarsdóttir, 2018). Their selflessness contributes to their concern for society (Erdurmazlı, 2019). Their social obligation should also include environmental stewardship (Barrage, Chyn, & Hastings, 2020).

Biblical Perspective of Servant Leadership

One Bible character who exemplified Servant Leadership is Moses. He was ready to put his life on the line for the Israelites (Exodus 18: 13-16). Moses then empowered and assigned his disciples to reign over Israel on minor things after receiving guidance from his father-in-law, Jethro (Exodus 18: 25-26). When he prayed with God to remove his name from the book of life and preserve the Israelites, he demonstrated the qualities of a servant leader (Exodus 32:32). This deed showed compassion and love for his people, two characteristics of Servant Leadership.

Jesus' life is also an excellent illustration of Servant Leadership in action. As a leader, Jesus became equal to men to set an example for them. His approach and the influence he had on His followers reflect His Servant Leadership. "Let this awareness be in you which was in Christ Jesus..." Christ's disciples are obligated to have the same mindset. "...whoever aspires to grow great among you shall be your servant..." (Philippians 2: 5) and (Matthew 10:43-45). The concept of a Servant leader is reflected in these verses. Although Christ was a leader, He displayed Servant Leadership when He washed His followers' feet (John 13: 3-5). He served them as servants to learn from Him to be servant leaders (John 13: 13-15). Up until His death, Jesus demonstrated servant leadership traits such as a sacrificial spirit, leading by example, and assisting followers in their growth.

Business Management Implications

Servant Leadership has ramifications in that it demonstrates how a firm should be run so that subordinates might follow suit. The achievement of the targeted institution results or outcomes would therefore be guided by this. Employees are groomed to be Servant leaders due

to this modeling since they are involved in institutional decision-making. Employees are compelled to feel ownership of the organization, which inspires them to give their utmost in the performance of their jobs without being coerced or pushed to do so. Employee ownership of the firm is likely to lead to enhanced productivity and quality.

DISCUSSION AND FURTHER RESEARCH

Servant Leadership is a Management style that is used all over the world. Serving others raises those around you above yourself, allowing the leader to empower others. They inspire others to think beyond themselves, to consider others and the organization as a whole, resulting in a more substantial effect as everyone works together to serve people and the organization with a purpose. Jesus Christ (who is one of the Christian God-Persons) heads came to earth in the shape of a servant to serve (Mark 10:45), and He compels those who follow Him (Christians) to help others as well (Mark 10:43-44). Servant Leadership improves the performance (Ye, Lyu, & He, 2019) and growth of followers (Setyaningrum al., 2020), as well as the implementation of organizations (Yuesti, Parwati, Suardhika, & Latupeirissa, 2020), and societal influence (Luu, 2019). Servant leadership is also beneficial to society (Afsar, Cheema, & Javed, 2018). The Servant leader's care for the followers' well-being impacts society and the environment Kaltiainen & Hakanen, 2020). This affects the corporate social responsibilities that firms take on to help the communities in which they operate.

The study recommends that empirical research be further examined to determine if Servant Leadership with a mediating impact of teamwork will aid contemporary business practices. The following research questions and null hypotheses may be considered:

Research Question

Is there a significant relationship between Servant Leadership and contemporary business practices?

Null Hypothesis

There is no significant relationship between Servant Leadership and contemporary business practices?

CONCLUSION

Learning to serve individuals in one's immediate environment will be critical to becoming a servant leader and a global leader. Leaders in global settings must realize that their perspectives and responsibilities are not more important or valuable than others. As leaders work alongside those in their organizations, they are better able to serve each other, the organization, and the mission they will pursue. Many cultures have established that

servanthood, and ultimately servant leadership, is beneficial and strongly supported within their current worldview. People now want to give back to their communities and the world in a variety of ways. Many people today want to use what they have been given to help the disadvantaged, the needy, and the lost. People serve their countries and communities daily, making a difference in their own lives as well as the lives of those they may not know. Servant leadership is gaining popularity as a result of the benefits it gives to a community or organization. It is not about one's self-interest but rather about the betterment of the community.

Servant leaders prioritize serving the needs of others and the community before their own. A good steward is a servant leader. As many misconceptions as there are about how a leader might be a servant. Servant Leadership does not imply that the leader is a servant, but rather that the leader serves others in the same way that Jesus Christ served humanity. Servant leadership comprises a business entity's CEO modeling, empowering, grooming, and motivating employees to take ownership of the company without coercion. Although it is challenging to prove Servant leadership objectively, its presence cannot be questioned because it has been practiced since the Bible.

Notwithstanding the lack of a universal definition for servant leadership, many authors agree on its characteristics, antecedents, and outcomes. This is how it is presented in this publication. As a result, to become Servant leaders, leaders should adhere to the ideas presented in this paper.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In today's creation, where there is so much dishonesty and selfishness and fraud and scandals, Servant Leadership should be the ideal leadership style. The benefits of Servant leadership are appealing to many firms because they include improved organizational performance, which is crucial for a company's existence. As a result, more research into the implementation of Servant Leadership in company management is needed. Unlike other management theories, which focus on actions that necessitate ownership, administration, and control to achieve established goals, Servant leadership draws authority from one's effect on subordinates rather than one's position.

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