A Study on Putting Servant Leadership to Use

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ABSTRACT:

A key component of the leadership ideology known as servant leadership is the leader's dedication to serving others and putting their needs ahead of their own. An overview of servant leadership, its guiding principles, and its effects on productive organisations and happy employees are given in this abstract. It addresses the idea of servant leadership as a revolutionary style of leadership that encourages teamwork, empathetic behaviour, and moral judgement. It also talks about how servant leadership may be used in several fields, such business, education, and healthcare. Understanding servant leadership provides useful insights for developing empowering and supportive leadership behaviours that support the development of both people and organisations.

KEYWORDS:

Behaviours, Leadership, Leaders, Potential, Team.

I.   INTRODUCTION

A leadership paradigm known as servant leadership concentrates the leader's main emphasis on helping others. It is predicated on the idea that leaders should put their followers' welfare and development first in order to help them realise their greatest potential. Servant leaders have a strong sense of empathy, compassion, and dedication to making moral decisions.Servant leadership adopts a more collaborative and people-centered approach in contrast to conventional leadership approaches that place an emphasis on the use of power and control. Servant leaders encourage and empower their followers in order to create an atmosphere that is favourable to their achievement, as opposed to pursuing personal authority and recognition.Robert K. Greenleaf, who coined the phrase in the 1970s, is credited with developing the idea of servant leadership. Since then, servant leadership has grown in popularity as a transformational style of leadership that prioritises personal growth and well-being above meeting organisational objectives[1], [2].

The notion of service is one of the main tenets of servant leadership. Since they understand that their job is to encourage, support, and aid the development of their followers, servant leaders see leadership as a kind of service to others. They place a high value on hearing out, comprehending, and attending to the needs of their team members, helping to create a climate of trust and cooperation.Empathy is another essential component of servant leadership. Servant leaders show real care and concern for their followers' welfare by making an effort to comprehend their experiences and points of view. Leaders can better meet the needs of their team members, inspire them, and foster a diverse and inclusive workplace by empathising with them[3], [4].

Additionally essential to servant leadership is ethical decision-making. Servant leaders uphold the highest moral standards, making decisions that are consistent with their principles and advance the common good. In their relationships with others, they place a high value on fairness, honesty, and integrity, providing a role model for moral conduct.There are several practical applications of servant leadership. Servant leadership has been linked in the corporate sector to improved organisational success, employee engagement, and satisfaction. It supports student-centered learning and encourages wholesome interactions between educators and pupils. Servant leadership optimises patient-centered care and improves patient outcomes in the healthcare industry[5], [6].

Individuals and organisations may foster a supportive and empowering work environment by embracing a servant leadership strategy. Servant leaders provide a sense of purpose and meaning in their followers, inspire and encourage them, and help people and organisations grow and develop as a whole.In the discussion that follows, we will look at the main ideas and behaviours of servant leadership, consider its advantages and difficulties, and explore real-world examples of its use in various situations. Leaders may have a long-lasting influence by adopting servant leadership and developing the potential and wellbeing of people they serve. Leadership at all levels and in a variety of areas may practise servant leadership, which is more than simply a theoretical idea. It calls for a mental change in which leaders put other people's needs first and work to empower and elevate their followers. This strategy promotes a feeling of common goal and group accomplishment[7], [8].

The focus placed on cooperation and teamwork by servant leadership is one of its distinctive qualities. Servant leaders see the value of creating lasting bonds and encouraging a feeling of belonging among their staff. They actively include their followers in decision-making, seek out their opinions, and provide them chances for improvement.Servant leaders understand the value of lifelong learning and personal development. They inspire their followers to do the same while working to improve their own leadership skills. Servant leaders foster a culture of continuous improvement and build a pipeline of future leaders by investing in the development of their team members.Additionally, servant leadership has the capacity to produce a fruitful cascade of change inside organisations. When leaders take a servant leadership stance, others are inspired to do the same. It fosters an environment where people feel appreciated and inspired to put out their best efforts. It also fosters a culture of respect, trust, and empowerment. Increased employee engagement, productivity, and organisational success follow from this.

Although servant leadership has many advantages, it also has drawbacks. It is necessary for leaders to achieve a balance between meeting the demands of others and their own. Leaders must take care of themselves and make sure they have the resources and support they need to do their duties well.servant leadership presents a convincing and practical method of leadership that puts the welfare and development of others first. Leaders may build an atmosphere that promotes cooperation, individual growth, and organisational success by adopting the values of service, empathy, and ethical decision-making. In addition to helping people and groups, servant leadership also advances societal progress.

II. DISCUSSION

It is simple to make the case that leadership is the most important aspect of management since it determines the organisational atmosphere, employee attitudes and motivation, and organisational strategy. Although there have always been servant leaders, the philosophy of servant leadership is particularly well adapted to management in the twenty-first century. The great majority of organisations must deal with unstable settings that are marked by intense social, political, and economic demands as well as harsh global competitiveness. The greatest workforce to deal with such uncertain conditions is one that is empowered, innovative, and driven. In addition to the current state of the environment, corporate responsibility is now more important than ever because of the increased visibility of and scrutiny placed on organisations' operations. These issues are specifically addressed by the servant leadership philosophy, which is described as leadership that puts the needs of the followers first while exhibiting moral, helpful, and compassionate behaviours.

While some leadership theories, like transformational leadership, place a significant emphasis on coordinating follower behaviour with organisational objectives, servant leadership places a great emphasis on giving followers the resources and encouragement they need to realise their full potential. When followers feel empowered, encouraged, and able to trust their leaders, they will automatically participate in necessary behaviours, particularly discretionary ones. Thus, servant leadership stands out from other leadership philosophies in that it emphasises attending to the needs of followers[9], [10].

Additionally, servant leadership is unmatched amongFor its premise that leaders cannot be genuine servants unless they prioritise helping others in all spheres of life (job, family, community), leadership theories. The foundation of servant leadership is this idea.that followers acquire self-confidence and

faith in the leader when leaders prioritise satisfying their needs above all else. As a result, they get closer to realising their full potential. When leaders assist them, followers return the favour by acting in ways that are advantageous for the leader, their colleagues, the organisation, and the community in which they operate. Additionally, only servant leadership encourages the development of chosen followers into servant leaders. This practise, when implemented by a number of leaders, results in the development of a servant leadership culture that values aiding others. The main ideas of this newly developed theory of leadership are introduced in this post, with an emphasis on showing how the theory may advance understanding of leadership and operate as a guide for managers in the real world. It is explored how to quantify servant leadership and the value of building the theory and doing empirical studies at various levels of analysis. Finally, a number of areas for more research and the growth of the theory are suggested.

Fundamentals

Despite being developed in 1970 by Robert Greenleaf and rapidly gaining popularity among practitioners, empirical research on this method of leadership did not start to be published in scholarly publications until the 2000s. So far, the research's results have shown the viability of the servant leadership idea for both individuals and teams. In particular, the study has shown that servant leadership is associated with significant results, even when adjusting for the impact of well-known leadership theories like transformational leadership and leader-member interaction.

The creation of a measure was essential to the start of empirical study on servant leadership. According to strict scale creation methods, the first scale produced a measure that captures seven distinct characteristics that characterise the servant leadership domain, with each component contributing to overall or global servant leadership:

1. Emotional healing being sensitive to the personal setbacks faced by followers
2. Creating value for the community serving as a role model to followers by being active in helping the community as well as encouraging followers to also provide service to the community
3. Conceptual skills the task knowledge and problem-solving abilities necessary for being able to provide help to followers
4. Empowering providing followers with the autonomy, decision-making influence, and selfconfidence critical for enabling followers to realize their full potential
5. Helping subordinates grow and succeed providing emotional support and guidance to help followers develop professionally and to accomplish personal goals
6. Putting subordinates first captures the essence of servant leadership, involves prioritizing fulfillment of follower needs above one's own needs
7. Behaving ethically the demonstration of fairness, honesty, and integrity both at work and outside work, critical for gaining the trust and respect of followers

However, most studies have a tendency to compress the dimensions into a global servant leadership measure, despite the fact that the first validation of this servant leadership measure demonstrated that the dimensions were uniquely associated to outcomes.At the individual level, it has been discovered that servant leadership is positively correlated with organisational commitment, commitment to the leader, self-efficacy (one's belief in one's ability to successfully complete a task), job performance, organisational citizenship behaviours (behaviours that go above and beyond what is required under the terms of the employment contract), creativity, and involvement in charitable endeavours. The discovery that servant leadership cultivates in followers a desire to fulfil one's inner potential by seeking opportunities that help develop skills and abilities aids in explaining how servant leadership influences outcomes—such as helping citizenship behaviours, creativity, and community service behaviours. Additionally enhancing the beneficial effects of servant leadership isbecause of the empathy, support, and encouragement from leaders, followers' self-confidence and faith in those leaders increases.

Serving leaders care about their followers and provide mentorship. Despite the generally favourable results for servant leadership at the individual level, it has been shown that followers' preferences for servant leadership vary. Despite the fact that no followers have been identified who are against servant

leadership, a variety of reactions, from apathy to intense excitement, has been seen. Additionally, the less their leader practises servant leadership behaviours, the less good work attitudes, job performance, and organisational citizenship behaviours are shown by followers that display this attitude.At the team level, it has been shown that servant leadership is positively correlated with team psychological safety, which refers to team environments where members feel secure sharing their opinions and personalities because they respect, trust, and care for one another. The atmosphere of team procedural justice, which describes environments where team members believe that procedures used to make choices about team members are fair, also has a good relationship with servant leadership. Strong service cultures may be fostered through servant leadership, and this directly affects customer happiness. Along with team performance and team participation in organisational citizenship behaviours, servant leadership has a positive relationship with team potency, which is defined as a team's belief in its capacity to perform effectively.

Important connections in team settings have been demonstrated to be moderated by servant leadership.A research of five banks is particularly notable since it revealed that team effectiveness was positively correlated with goal and process clarity only when a servant leader was present. These findings point to a crucial need for the widely held view that goal clarity improves team effectiveness and hence team performance.The findings specifically showed that teams really perform at considerably greater levels when they are unsure about the aim when leaders tend not to exhibit servant leadership behaviours. Teams seem to get irritated when they have a clear understanding of the objective but are unable to achieve it because they are not receiving the support they need from the leader. Goal and process clarity, however, demonstrated a high positive correlation with team potential and performance when a servant leader was present.

Importance

The optimistic study findings imply that it would be good for working managers to have a comprehensive toolkit of servant leadership traits. Being a servant leader is challenging, however; it is far harder than being a "traditional" leader. When compared to considering every follower as a distinct person and investing the time and effort necessary to guarantee that every follower realises their full potential, managing and directing followers via formal power and authority is comparatively simple. Given this enormous task, persons in leadership positions must be patient in honing their servant leadership abilities. It takes dedication and practise to develop into an excellent leader who practises servant leadership behaviours. Servant leadership involves a lot of practise, and retaining the talent demands ongoing attention throughout a leader's career, much as a concert pianist or star athlete must practise endlessly to develop and maintain vital abilities.

There is still much to learn about this leadership idea since scientific study on it is still in its early stages. In particular, there are still questions concerning servant leadership's origins and the precise mechanisms by which it affects the performance of both individuals and teams. The cross-cultural implications on servant leadership and its linkages with antecedents and outcomes also need additional investigation, as is the case with almost all management-related subjects.Many servant leadership precursors have been discovered, but they haven't been scientifically verified. The desire to help others is perhaps the most important prerequisite for a leader. Altruism, conscientiousness, and agreeableness are examples of personality traits that might be investigated as servant leadership antecedents. Given the significance of: (1) being aware of one's own emotions before attempting to understand the emotions of others, (2) listening to and empathising with followers to determine how to best serve each follower, and (3) being able to regulate one's emotions to increase the likelihood that followers will trust and respect the leader, emotional intelligence probably plays a crucial antecedent role. Additionally, a willingness for servant leadership is required on the part of the followers in the leader-follower relationship.

There is still much to learn about the mechanism through which servant leadership influences results. The emphasis on assisting followers in realising their full potential in servant leadership shows the crucial significance of the dyadic interaction between leader and follower. It has been suggested that

servant leaders make an effort to comprehend their followers' potential, needs, wants, and aspirations via one-on-one interaction. Servant leadership most typically occurs in the dyadic interaction between leader and follower, especially with regard to individual results. According to studies conducted over the last several decades, the connections that workers have with their managers are crucial to understanding how they might reach their potential and become self-motivated. Employees become more dedicated to organisational principles and are more likely to "go the extra mile" in servicing the organization's constituents when leaders foster self-efficacy and self-motivation. A significant portion of this study contends that rather than depending exclusively on the financial incentives connected to the employment agreement or the power vested in their positions, leaders may cultivate these crucial attitudes and behaviours by developing social exchange connections with their followers. This implies that it may be worthwhile to examine how servant leadership and leader-follower dyadic relationships interact, as fully described by leader-member exchange theory. It has been shown that leaders who practise servant leadership tend to build more effective leader-member exchange connections with their followers than leaders who do not.

Therefore, further research is required to understand how servant leadership effects personal outcomes and the quality of the leader-member exchange relationship. Finally, additional research is needed to determine how servant leadership manifests itself in various cultural situations. So far, studies on servant leadership have shown consistent findings in Africa, mainland China, Hong Kong, and the United States, among other nations.The importance of important cultural factors, such as collectivism, power distance, and the prominence of context, has to be examined in order to better comprehend the cross-cultural implications of servant leadership's antecedents, process, and consequences. Servant leaders create trust by putting others' needs ahead of their own. Serving others before oneself is a notion that permeates not just the business but also the family and neighbourhood. Servant leaders put others before themselves in whatever they do. The ability and desire to become servant leaders is arguably most importantly instilled in followers by servant leaders. A culture of servant leadership may be developed through transforming followers into servant leaders. A helpful culture aims to support each person within the organisation and the community in realising their full potential.

III.   CONCLUSION

A potent leadership paradigm that puts others' needs and welfare first is called servant leadership. It contrasts with conventional leadership paradigms, which emphasise power and control. By fostering a culture of trust, cooperation, and personal development, servant leaders inspire and enable their subordinates. Leaders may create an atmosphere where people feel respected, encouraged, and inspired to put out their best efforts by embracing a servant leadership strategy. This kind of leadership encourages empathy, attentive listening, and a sincere interest in the welfare of others. It urges leaders to create an example of moral conduct and integrity by acting as role models.The effects of servant leadership go beyond specific followers and groups of people. By encouraging employee engagement, contentment, and dedication, it helps organisations succeed overall and remain sustainable. Servant leaders are aware of the significance of groupwork and cooperation, as well as the advantages of many viewpoints and inclusive decision-making.

Additionally, servant leadership affects society as a whole. Servant leaders aid in the development of an optimistic and welcoming culture by placing a strong emphasis on empathy, social responsibility, and moral decision-making. They encourage people to adopt servant leadership practises and do deeds of kindness in order to have a significant positive influence on their communities.Although servant leadership has many advantages, there are also some difficulties. It necessitates that leaders manage intricate organisational dynamics while balancing their personal demands and those of their followers. As leaders work to enhance their capacity to serve others successfully, it requires a high degree of self-awareness, emotional intelligence, and ongoing development. Servant leadership is a revolutionary style of leadership that emphasises empathy, service, and moral judgement. It fosters an atmosphere in which people may flourish, work together, and realise their full potential. Servant leaders create a climate of trust, respect, and one purpose while inspiring and empowering their people. Leaders may have a long-

lasting influence on people, teams, organisations, and society as a whole by adopting the ideals of servant leadership.

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