Servant versus Self-Sacrificial Leadership: A Behavioral Comparison of Two Follow-Oriented Leadership Theories

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Since Greenleaf (1977), research pertaining to servant leadership has carved a unique place in the leadership literature. The last decade has produced focused theory development including instrument development and empirical studies. Similarly, since Burns (1978), this era witnessed increased theoretical and empirical attention on the role of leader self-sacrifice. Recently, Stone, Russell, and Patterson (2004) and Smith, Montagno, and Kuzmenko (2004) examined the similarities and differences of servant and transformational leadership. This paper employs analogous methods to examine servant and self-sacrificial leadership. The authors suggest that although servant and self-sacrificial leadership share many common characteristics, they differ in several behavioral dimensions.

Research pertaining to leadership has been dominated over the last quarter century by the study of transformational leadership (Bass, 1985; Burns, 1978, 2003). This theory represents an important step toward balancing the needs of both leaders and followers as they work toward fulfilling organizational goals. Meanwhile, this same era has produced several other leadership theories which represent a general movement toward follower-oriented models. Two of these models are servant leadership and self-sacrificial leadership.

As the original architect behind the contemporary study of servant leadership, Robert K. Greenleaf (1977) captured the essence of servant leadership for a modern audience. Posing the question "Who is the servant-leader?" in his writing, Greenleaf answered by stating:

> The servant-leader *is* servant first. . . . It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve *first*. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. That person is sharply different from one who is *leader* first. (p. 27)

Since Greenleaf's initial insistence that a leader should be a servant first, several theories of servant leadership have gradually taken shape, most over the past 15 years. One of the central features of servant leadership which has been clarified in its recent history is that servant leadership is essentially focused on placing the needs of followers before the personal interests of the leader and intentionally working toward raising additional servants. The development of this

view of leadership has several ramifications for organizations, leaders, and followers; not the least of which are the accompanying characteristics, attributes, practices, and outcomes of this behavior (Farling, Stone, & Winston, 1999; Laub, 1999; Patterson, 2003, 2004; Russell & Stone, 2002; Spears & Lawrence, 2002).

Self-sacrificial leadership occurs when a leader forfeits one or more professional or personal advantages for the sake of followers, the organization, or a mission. One key aim of self-sacrificial leadership is to encourage follower reciprocity (Choi & Mai-Dalton, 1998, 1999). However, this modeling behavior has the added benefit of potentially moving followers toward an organizational goal; modifying their behavior; or simply persuading them to attribute legitimacy to the leader, thus allowing the leader to gain influence (Choi & Mai-Dalton, 1998, 1999; De Cremer, 2002; De Cremer, van Djike, & Bos, 2004; De Cremer & van Knippenberg, 2004; Halverson, Holladay, Kazama, & Quinones, 2004; Javidan & Waldman, 2003; van Knippenberg & van Knippenberg, 2005; Yorges, Weiss, & Strickland, 1999).

In general, leadership theories such as these provide a description of a set of behaviors exhibited by leaders a majority of the time. For example, transformational leaders may still engage in transactional leadership activities in their daily routines. Given this reality, there is often a theoretical overlap of propositions associated with certain leadership models. Additionally, the average experience of organizational followers as they interact with a particular leadership type may vary due to their unique perspective on organizational life. The authors suggest that there is likely a theoretical overlap between servant and self-sacrificial leadership but that a close examination of these theories will reveal several distinct qualities. To date, no theoretical or empirical study has compared these two theories. Therefore, a study is needed that will crystallize our understanding of convergent and divergent aspects of servant and self-sacrificial leadership. Ultimately, this may afford future researchers the opportunity to share a common language of servant and self-sacrificial leadership and lead to useful empirical testing.

The purpose of this paper is to describe the chief components of servant and self-sacrificial leadership and to examine the commonalities and distinctions of the two conceptualizations. This study begins by suggesting an integrated model of servant leadership. Subsequent to the delineation of the associated frameworks, the characteristics and attributes of each theory will be laid side by side in an effort to compare the concepts. It is proposed that these two follower-oriented theories share some common characteristics and attributes but differ in significant areas. As a result, a scaffold will be proposed to provide the structure for highlighting the theoretical distinctives of servant and self-sacrificial leadership.

Servant Leadership

Greenleaf's (1977) seminal work on servant leadership—the work attributed with bringing the concept of servant leadership to public discourse in the mid 1970s—has led to a growing body of literature surrounding the construct since the early 1990s. The literature surrounding servant leadership can generally be categorized into two main areas: theoretical and empirical. A majority of the works are theoretical in nature: Blanchard (1998); Buchen (1998); Cerff (2004); Farling et al. (1999); Graham (1991); Hale (2004); Irving and McIntosh (2006), Jennings and Stahl-Wert (2003); Laub (2004); Ndoria (2004); Page (2004); Parolini (2004); Patterson (2003); Patterson and Stone (2004); Quay (1997); Rude (2003); Russell (2001, 2003); Russell and Stone (2002); Sendjaya and Sarros (2002); Smith et al. (2004); Spears (1995, 1998); Spears and Lawrence (2002); Stone, Russell, and Patterson (2003, 2004); Wolford-Ulrich

(2004); Winston (2003); Winston and Hartsfield (2004); and Wong and Page (2003). An increasing number of empirical studies such as Dennis (2004), Dennis and Winston (2003), Drury (2004), Hebert (2003, 2004), Helland (2004), Irving (2004, 2005a, 2005b), Irving and Longbotham (2006), Laub (1999, 2003), Ledbetter (2003), Sendjaya (2003), and Winston (2004) have emerged as well.

As the construct of servant leadership has developed over the last 15 years, it has been operationalized in several different forms. For instance, discussion has focused on the inspirational and moral dimensions of servant leadership (Graham, 1991); the dimensions of self-identity, capacity for reciprocity, relationship building, and a preoccupation with the future (Buchen, 1998); vision, influence, credibility, trust, and service (Farling et al., 1999); along with Russell's (2001) discussion which focused on vision, credibility, trust, service, modeling, pioneering, appreciation of others, and empowerment. Of the theoretical discussions of servant leadership that have become dominant in the field, Spears (1998), Laub (1999), and Patterson (2003) have been frequently cited. The model of servant leadership that is advanced in this paper is constructed largely as a composite of these three theoretical approaches and is aimed at providing framework for further research in servant leadership studies.

Because the model of servant leadership advanced in this paper fuses the Spears (1998), Laub (1999), and Patterson (2003) conceptualizations of servant leadership; it is important to begin our examination of servant leadership by briefly highlighting each at this time. Spears' (1998) 10 characteristics of servant leadership have been identified as an outgrowth of Greenleaf's (1977) discussion of servant leadership. Spears' (1998) 10 characteristics of servant leadership are (a) listening, (b) empathy, (c) healing, (d) awareness, (e) persuasion, (f) conceptualization, (g) foresight, (h) stewardship, (i) commitment, and (j) community building. Spears (1998) argued that servant leadership is tied to the character exhibited by leaders in their essential traits. Spears' (1998) focus on the character of the leader will be an important consideration as we consider an integrated model of servant leadership. Essential to the formation of servant leaders, Spears' (1998) 10 characteristics provide a practical starting point for leaders interested in developing as servant leaders.

Laub (1999) provided the second core conceptualization of servant leadership that will be utilized in this paper. Laub (1999) defined the essence of servant leadership in this manner: "Servant leadership is an understanding and practice of leadership that places the good of those led over the self-interest of the leader" (p. 81). But, in what manner do servant leaders place "the good of those led over" themselves? For Laub (1999), this is answered by the results of his Delphi study. In the Delphi process, 60 characteristics of servant leaders were identified and eventually clustered into six key areas: (a) valuing people, (b) developing people, (c) building community, (d) displaying authenticity, (e) providing leadership, and (f) sharing leadership. For Laub (1999), these are the essential behaviors that characterize what servant leaders do and are the answer to *how* servant leaders place the good of those led over their own self-interest.

The final base conceptualization of servant leadership is offered by Patterson (2003). As a theory-building dissertation, Patterson (2003) presented servant leadership theory as an extension of transformational leadership theory. This extension was based primarily on Patterson's (2003) observation that transformational theory was not addressing the phenomena of love, humility, altruism, and casting vision for followers. Because of this, Patterson's (2003) model of servant leadership includes the following dimensions as the essential characteristics of servant leadership: (a) *agapáo* love, (b) humility, (c) altruism, (d) vision, (e) trust, (f) empowerment, and (g) service. While Spears' (1998) model of servant leadership focuses

primarily on the character exhibited by servant leaders and Laub's (1999) model focuses primarily on the behaviors of servant leaders, Patterson's (2003) model provides a bridge between the dimensions of character and behavior.

Though each of these models provides significant insight into servant leadership, the divergent emphases in each of these models point to the need to consider an integrative model. Toward this end, we propose the following three-fold framework for conceptualizing an integrative model that is inclusive of the wide range of theoretical factors contained in the Spears (1998), Laub (1999), and Patterson (2003) models: (a) being—the servant leader's ontological character traits; (b) thinking—the servant leader's attitudinal mindset; and (c) doing—the servant leader's behavioral actions. Table 1 provides an overview of these three dimensions of servant leadership and the associated factors in the integrative model. This proposed three-fold framework provides a logical approach to assimilating the range of factors in the Spears (1998), Laub (1999), and Patterson (2003) models as well both a linear and circular approach to conceptualizing servant leadership.

In the linear approach, we argue that one's ontological character provides the basis for the attitudinal mindset with which a leader approaches leadership scenarios out of their cognitive-affective framework. Furthermore, we argue that one's attitudinal mindset provides the basis for servant leadership behaviors (see Figure 1). Thus, this three-fold model may be conceptualized as a linear progression from leader being, to leader thinking, to leader doing; or, to put it in other terms, it is a progression from the ontological, to the attitudinal, to the behavioral.

Understood as a circular approach, leader ontology, attitude, and behavior may be seen as regularly reinforcing one another in a circular or spiraling process in which a servant leader's being (ontological) reinforces servant-oriented thinking (attitudinal) which reinforces servant leadership doing (behavioral) which reinforces servant leader being (ontological); and, the circular reinforcement continues (see Figure 2). Though the notion of circular or spiraling models in servant leadership studies is not new (i.e., Farling et al., 1999), understanding this circular process in light of servant leader ontology, attitude, and behavior is an important addition to the literature.

Self-Sacrificial Leadership

The contemporary origins of the study of self-sacrificial leadership are found in the writings of Burns (1978) and Bass (1985). These transformational leadership theorists suggested that leader self-sacrifice is a tool which great leaders use to motivate followers. Following their lead, current charismatic leadership theorists have perceived self-sacrifice in leadership to be a tactic which a leader could employ to influence follower attributions of charisma (Conger & Kanungo, 1987; House & Shamir, 1993; Shamir, House, & Arthur, 1993). Out of this movement, Choi and Mai-Dalton (1998) proposed a model of follower responses to self-sacrificial leadership. From these theoretical underpinnings, empirical studies have been undertaken to test the validity of this model along with a variety of additional variables which may be associated with self-sacrificial leadership.

Table 1

The Three Dimensions of Servant Leadership

Dimensions	Servant Leadership Factors
Ontological Dimensions of Servant Leadership	Love Humility Authenticity Self-Awareness Self-Differentiation

Attitudinal Dimensions of Servant Leadership	Love
	Other-Centeredness
	    Oriented toward altruism
	    Valuing people
	    Commitment to the growth of people
	    Visionary
	    Orientation toward trust
	    Orientation toward listening
	    Orientation toward empathy
	Leadership mindset
	    Orientation toward persuasion
	    Capacity for conceptualization
	    Foresight

Behavioral Dimensions of Servant Leadership	Love Listening Empathy Healing Stewardship Developing people Building community Providing leadership Sharing leadership Empowering followers Serving followers

Note. As the foundation of servant leadership (Patterson, 2003), love may be categorized in each of the dimensions of servant leadership.

The Ontological Dimension of Servant Leadership → The Attitudinal Dimension of Servant Leadership → The Behavioral Dimension of Servant Leadership
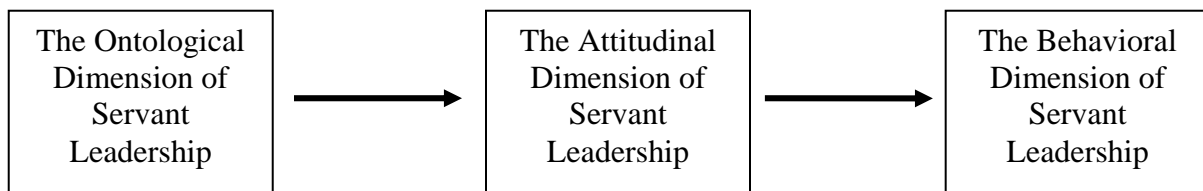
Figure 1. The three dimensions of servant leadership, a linear model.

Figure 2. The three dimensions of servant leadership, a circular model.

The empirical studies associated with self-sacrificial leadership have focused primarily on the outcomes of the sacrificial behavior on the perceptions of followers. Several of these studies found that self-sacrificing leaders were attributed charisma by followers and were perceived to be more influential, legitimate, and effective (Choi & Mai-Dalton, 1999; De Cremer, 2002; De Cremer et al., 2004; van Knippenberg & van Knippenberg, 2005; Yorges et al., 1999). Follower attributions of charisma were particularly pronounced during a period of organizational crisis or when the organization faced a social dilemma which required cooperation (De Cremer, 2002; Halverson et al., 2004).

Self-sacrificial leadership has produced additional responses from followers beyond cooperative effort. Followers of self-sacrificial leaders intended to reciprocate the self-sacrificing behaviors (Choi & Mai-Dalton, 1999), were more committed to their organization (De Cremer et al., 2004), and performed at a higher level (van Knippenberg & van Knippenberg, 2005). The main effects of self-sacrificial leadership have been found to be moderated by leader self-confidence, the leader's group-orientedness, distributive justice, and when leaders were not pushing their opinions on subordinates (De Cremer, 2006; De Cremer et al., 2004; De Cremer & van Knippenberg, 2004; van Knippenberg & van Knippenberg, 2005). The results of these initial empirical tests hint at a phenomenon, which encompasses a much larger portion of leadership theory than initially proposed. In fact, Choi and Mai-Dalton (1999) suggested that self-sacrificial leadership plays a role in all three organizational processes of production, distribution, and consumption.

The proposition of a broad influence of leader self-sacrifice led Choi and Mai-Dalton (1999) to define self-sacrificial leadership as "the total/partial abandonment, and/or permanent/temporary postponement of personal interests, privileges, and welfare in the (a) division of labor, (b) distribution of rewards, and/or (c) exercise of power" (p. 399). The authors explained that self-sacrifice in the division of labor "involves volunteering for more risky and/or

arduous actions, tasks, turns, or segments of work" (p. 399). They proffer that self-sacrifice in the distribution of rewards "involves giving up or postponing one's fair and legitimate share of organizational rewards" (p. 399). Self-sacrifice in the exercise of power is described in their research as "voluntarily giving up or refraining from exercising or using the position power, privileges, and/or personal resources one already has in his/her hand" (p. 399). Choi and Mai-Dalton (1999) drew a distinction between self-sacrifice in the distribution of rewards and in the exercise of power by noting that the former involves giving up claiming privileges and the latter involves consuming the privileges.

The economic aspects of leader self-sacrifice, while supported both theoretically and empirically, should not be considered the final boundaries of the self-sacrificial leadership construct. Other theorists have noted that leader self-sacrifice includes the loss of status, credibility, and promotion (Conger & Kanungo, 1987; Javidan & Waldman, 2003). This is a small glimpse at the motivational aspects that lay the foundation of self-sacrificial behavior, which may have origins beyond the simple desire to influence followers. After all, if a leader loses his or her status or credibility or is demoted rather than promoted, it would be difficult to impossible to influence followers. Alternatively, leaders may sacrifice to demonstrate courage and conviction in the mission while serving as a role model (Shamir et al., 1993); maintain personal beliefs and values (Yorges et al., 1999); and exhibit commitment to the cause (Avolio & Locke, 2002) or, simply, for the good of the company (Halverson et al., 2004). Therefore, it can be stated that the motivational foundation for self-sacrificial leadership may be directly related to the outcome of the behavior.

To date, the published theoretical models of self-sacrificial leadership do not address all three dimensions of leader ontology, attitude, and behavior. Instead, current models present the impact of sacrificing behavior on followers along with various moderating variables (Choi & Mai-Dalton, 1999; De Cremer, 2006; Yorges et al., 1999). While a gap in the literature regarding self-sacrificial leader ontology and attitude exists, enough research exists to present behaviors associated with self-sacrificial leaders. Table 2 offers a preliminary look at these self-sacrificial leadership behaviors.

Table 2

The Behavioral Dimensions of Self-Sacrificial Leadership

Dimension	Self-Sacrificial Leadership Factors
Behavioral Dimensions of Self-Sacrificial Leadership	Altruism
	Takes initiative
	Empathy
	Role modeling
	Provides justice
	Developing people
	Building community
	Providing leadership
	Links followers to shared vision
	Empowering followers
	Serving followers
	Yields status, privileges, power

Theoretical Comparison

While we propose the three-fold circular model of ontology, attitude, and behavior as an integrative answer to the divergent approaches to conceptualizing servant leadership, for the purpose of our comparison with self-sacrificial leadership, we will limit our analysis to the behavioral level. As identified in the literature review surrounding self-sacrificial leadership, the rationale for this is largely due to the relatively focused literature surrounding self-sacrificial leadership on the consequence of the behavior rather than its motivational origins. Certain attitudinal aspects of self-sacrificial leadership can be inferred from the research, but the authors do not support drawing conclusions from these secondary assumptions. While we recommend future explorations into the ontological and attitudinal dimensions of self-sacrificial leadership, the current agenda solely offers self-sacrificial research focused on the behavioral dimension.

This section of the paper highlights the similarities and differences of servant and self-sacrificial leadership. In keeping with two previous attempts to compare servant leadership with another leadership theory, the authors have created a matrix to compare the two theories. Stone et al. (2004) and Smith et al. (2004) previously compared servant and transformational leadership, and their graphic representations informed this current effort. In addition to Spears' (1998) and Laub's (1999) lists of characteristics which were included in these prior analyses, this paper extends the servant leadership portion by including Patterson's (2003) attributes in the comparison with self-sacrificial leadership. Recall that in this study, these three theories are presented as an integrated model of servant leadership.

In Table 3, the integrated servant leadership behavioral characteristics of Spears (1998), Laub (1999), and Patterson (2003) are listed next to the self-sacrificial leadership factors. The three dimensions of leader ontology, attitude, and behavioral characteristics are listed for servant leadership in an effort to comprehensively present the integrated model. Self-sacrificial leadership attitudinal factors are listed in gray to signify their role as inferred characteristics which will not be used for drawing conclusions. The behavioral factors associated with self-sacrificial leaders as they compare to servant leadership are the primary focus of this study.

It is immediately evident that servant and self-sacrificial leadership share several characteristics. The characteristics of empathy, developing people, building community, providing leadership, empowering followers, and serving followers represent overlapping categories. Empathy appears in the self-sacrificial leadership literature through its connection with altruism (De Cremer, 2002). The assumption of an empathy-altruism link, and its support in 25 empirical studies (Batson, Ahmad, Lishner, & Tsang, 2002), sustains this correlation between servant and self-sacrificial leadership. The modeling behaviors found in the self-sacrificial leadership literature shore up the additional characteristics found in both leadership theories. By sacrificing their power, self-sacrificial leaders empower followers. However, this empowerment is likely a product of sacrificing behavior. The shared commitment to service may be explained when self-sacrifice is understood as an extreme act of service. This comparison would evidently indicate that servant and self-sacrificial leaders may view followers in a similar fashion but may choose to interact with them in a slightly different manner.

In general terms, it may be stated that both servant and self-sacrificial leaders hold followers in very high esteem but deviate in several core behaviors. First, there is little concrete theoretical or empirical research pertaining to leader self-sacrifice which supports the thought that self-sacrificial leaders share power. Second, it could be argued that the role modeling and altruistic behaviors of self-sacrificial leaders are loving acts and, thus, would compare favorably

with servant leadership. However, there are other motivations associated with role modeling and altruistic activities which may have very little to do with love (Avolio & Locke, 2002).

Table 3

The Three Dimensional Comparisons of Servant and Self-Sacrificial Leadership

Dimensions	Servant Leadership Factors	Self-Sacrificial Leadership Factors
Ontological Dimensions	Love Humility Authenticity Self-Awareness Self-Differentiation	

Attitudinal Dimensions	Love
	Other-Centeredness
	  Oriented toward altruism
	  Valuing people
	  Commitment to the growth of people
	  Visionary
	  Orientation toward trust
	  Orientation toward listening
	  Orientation toward empathy
	Leadership mindset
	  Orientation toward persuasion
	  Capacity for conceptualization
	  Foresight
		Other-Centeredness
		  Orientation toward altruism
		  Valuing people
		  Commitment to the growth of people
		  Visionary
		
		  Orientation toward empathy
		
		Self-Confident
		Nonautocratic
		Foresight

Behavioral Dimensions	Love Listening Empathy Healing Stewardship Developing people Building community Providing leadership Sharing leadership Empowering followers Serving followers	Altruism Takes initiative Empathy Role modeling Provides justice Developing people Building community Providing leadership Links followers to shared vision Empowering followers Serving followers Yields status, privileges, power

Listening, healing, and stewardship are currently missing from the self-sacrificial leadership literature. The case can be made that listening is a necessary feature of empathy and that healing is closely aligned with providing justice. Yet, these are unsupported assumptions.

Stewardship is a different matter. In a sense, some self-sacrificial leaders are poor stewards of resources; since by definition, this type of leader may intentionally dispose of resources in order to achieve an overall goal. Since self-sacrificial leadership theory development is still in relative infancy, the authors feel much more confident in the shared characteristic list and remain cautious in drawing firm conclusions on all of the dissimilar factors. That being said, viewing these follower-oriented theories through the three dimensions of leader ontology, attitude, and behavior can further delineate both phenomena.

Although these two leadership theories share several characteristics, the provisional conclusions stated lead to the understanding that servant and self-sacrificial leadership are similar but distinct theories. Since the examination of the behavioral characteristics of these two theories is not capable of revealing a comprehensive understanding of this difference, the authors propose a broader look at servant and self-sacrificial leadership. This effort may bring further clarity to this evaluation. An opportunity for an expanded investigation may originate in the previously mentioned work of Stone et al. (2004) and Smith et al. (2004) who offered details regarding the focus, motivation, context, and outcomes of servant and transformational leadership. These four overarching categories can be employed to scrutinize servant and self-sacrificial leadership with the goal of founding an additional baseline for future scholarly discussion. The authors present this brief theoretical comparison in an attempt to launch such a conversation. Table 4 places servant and self-sacrificial leadership in the four categories discussed in the previous leadership theory comparison. The determination of the focus, motivation, context, and outcome of self-sacrificial leadership is drawn from published research pertaining to this phenomenon. The authors have consulted existing research and selected general terms to describe each category as succinctly as possible. In other words, an attempt was made to get at the heart or direction of the research to date. For example, since earlier research has noted that self-sacrificial leaders may demonstrate courage and conviction in the mission while serving as a role model (Shamir et al., 1993), maintain personal beliefs and values (Yorges et al., 1999), or exhibit commitment to the cause (Avolio & Locke, 2002); the authors have placed these activities under the umbrella of ethical self-transcendence in the broad category of focus. Additionally, since self-sacrificial leaders may be motivated by the greater good of the organization (Halverson et al., 2004), the ethical focus underpinning this motivation led the authors to conclude that self-sacrificial leaders are provoked to serve the greater good.

Table 4

The Focus, Motivation, Context, and Outcome of Servant and Self-Sacrificial Leadership

	Focus	Motivation	Context	Outcome
Self-sacrificial leadership	Ethical self-transcendence	Serving the greater good: doing what is morally and ethically right, no matter the sacrifice	Organizational or environmental crisis	Dynamic spiritual generative culture
Servant leadership	Followers	Serving the good of the follower: doing what is best for the followers	Stable environment	Spiritual generative culture

The contextual question as it pertains to self-sacrificial leadership has been considered in several studies (Choi & Mai-Dalton, 1999; Halverson et al., 2004; van Knippenberg & van Knippenberg, 2005). The research findings suggest that organizational or environmental crisis appears to be the primary context for leader self-sacrifice. Since this sacrifice comes during a time of change necessitated by these pressures and is likely intended to encourage follower reciprocity, the outcome descriptor selected by the authors intentionally builds on the outcome of servant leadership as proposed by Smith et al. (2004).

Recall that these categories, anchored in prior research, are intended to open a dialogue. It is the hope of the authors to enhance the research agenda of both servant and self-sacrificial leadership by offering frameworks which can be used to classify their espoused components. The proposed descriptors of focus, motivation, context, and outcome are offered as a foundation for scholarly exchange.

Summary

This preliminary study has described the theoretical overlap and the behavioral variations which exist between servant and self-sacrificial leadership. Yet, this undertaking necessitates an effort to confirm the theoretical conclusions with empirical testing. A concern the authors have with this present effort is that this comparison was made between two theories at different stages of development. This was evident when the researchers sought detailed information on the leadership ontology of self-sacrificial leadership and found very little assistance. A second caution comes from the realization that when the behaviors associated with these theories are exhibited in organizational life, an alternative picture has the potential to emerge. It is possible that this situation may add to or modify the findings of this present offering.

Given the suggested limitations, the authors advocate several future research directions. First, we recommend that future researchers consider the ontological and motivational aspects of the self-sacrificial leadership construct. The current agenda appears to constantly measure the effects of self-sacrificing behavior without proper attention to its origins. Second, we advocate a comprehensive research undertaking to solidify the integrated model of servant leadership delineated in our literature review. Finally, we propose an empirical study which compares the focus, motivation, context, and outcome of servant and self-sacrificial leadership.

Follower-oriented leadership theories are likely to continue to be refined as leadership research progresses in the 21st century. Although transformational leadership has dominated the research agenda, servant and self-sacrificial leadership theories have staked a claim on a portion of contemporary scholarly efforts. Building upon prior comparisons of servant and transformational leadership, the present study has briefly examined the commonalities and distinctions of servant and self-sacrificial leadership. The findings of this study, while preliminary, suggest that while these two leadership theories share several characteristics, they are likely distinct phenomena.

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