



# A Call to Compare Servant Leadership and Related Fields

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It has been a busy few months since the last edition of *Servant Leadership: Theory & Practice* was published and I must say I'm excited with the number and quality of articles that have been submitted to the journal. One of my primary desires as editor has been to shorten the amount of time it takes for an article to go from submission to initial decision. While not every article thus far has been decided upon within the 3-month target timeframe, we are already seeing improvements on this goal and this is all due to a dedicated group of reviewers who willingly give their time to serve the journal and our vision of becoming the first choice journal for authors and researchers of servant leadership and related fields.

So what about plans to move the journal forward? There is an obvious need to expand our database of willing reviewers in order to accomplish our goal of a 3-month review process. There is also a need to promote the "related fields" in our vision statement. A number of researchers have addressed the theoretical differences between servant leadership and transformational leadership (Stone, Russell, & Patterson, 2004; Patterson, 2003) but few have empirically tested these differences (see Parolini, Patterson, & Winston, 2009; Washington, Sutton, & Sauser, J., 2014). Van Dierendonck (2011) provided a succinct comparison of servant leadership to transformational, authentic, ethical, level 5, empowering, spiritual, and self-sacrificing leadership. Given their conceptual overlap, further theoretical and empirical examinations comparing and contrasting these fields with servant leadership are of high interest to the journal.

Also of interest are manuscripts that address the incremental validity of servant leadership over these related leadership fields. Initial studies suggest that after controlling for transformational leadership (Peterson, Galvin, & Lange, 2012), authentic, and ethical leadership (Hoch, Bommer, Dulebohn, & Wu, 2016), servant leadership is able to

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account for incremental explanations of the outcome variable(s). Clearly, more studies of this type are necessary.

Now, onto the current articles. The present issue is comprised of: Achen, Dodd, Lumpkin, and Plunkett's empirical examination of servant leaders on trust, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions in intercollegiate sports; Lindquist, Jr. and Russell's correlational study of servant leadership behaviors of fire and emergency service leaders and employee job satisfaction; Mareus, Firestone, Patterson, and Winston's focus on servant leadership in a top-down environment; and Quinn and Bryant's assessment of faith-based leadership behaviors in the military.

Achen and colleagues examined the possible influence of servant leadership in NCAA Division III intercollegiate athletics. The authors collected 326 surveys from athletic department employees to assess their perceptions of their athletic director's servant leadership characteristics. Results from structural equation modeling suggested servant-leaders significantly and positively impacted perceptions of trust in leader and job satisfaction. Additionally, there was a significant effect of perceptions of servant leadership on turnover intentions as mediated by job satisfaction

Lindquist, Jr. and Russell examined the correlation between perceived servant leadership behaviors of fire and emergency service leaders and employee job satisfaction in fire and emergency services personnel. Participants (n=205) completed Laub's (1999) Organizational Leadership Assessment. The authors found a statistically significant relationship between servant leadership and employee job satisfaction in fire and emergency services personnel. The authors found that servant leadership seems to be naturally occurring within the fire and emergency services, making this practice of leadership easier to hone and foster through training and development.

Mareus and colleagues proposed to answer the question: To what extent, if any, is a mayor of a metropolitan area in the Northeast region of the USA displaying at work Spears' (1995) ten characteristics of servant leadership? The authors found that four of the ten characteristics were dominant in the mayor's leadership style: building community, commitment to the growth of people, empathy, and stewardship.

Finally, Quinn and Bryant address the potentially conflicting imperatives between moral obligations of military service and discipleship. The authors propose that a Christian officer can satisfy all obligations by pursuing the work of their profession in a faithful manner through servant leadership. The tenets of servant leadership as described by van Dierendonck (2011) are compatible with Christian theology and Army doctrine.

I hope you enjoy the articles in this edition of SLTP. As always, how can I help?

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