



Servant Leadership:  
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# Leading in Tumultuous Times

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Since December 2019, the world has been contending with the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). Global health emergencies, lockdowns, and mask mandates were among the many measures that government officials imposed on their people in order to flatten the curve (Schumaker, 2020). While there is some evidence that these measures helped reduce the number of cases worldwide (Preidt, 2020), new variants of the virus continue to emerge (Snider, 2022).

The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted all facets of life, bringing with it many challenges to leaders, whether in the context of schools, research, sports, healthcare, or business (see Drewes et al., 2021; Fairlie, 2020; Harper et al., 2020; Pokhrel & Chhetri, 2021; Schreffler et al., 2020). How leaders have dealt with these challenges, via direct or indirect means, is a common theme in some of the articles presented in this issue. With so many unknowns still associated with COVID-19 and its impact on followers and organizations alike, a servant leaders' continued focus on meeting the needs of their people, listening, and displaying empathy, may be important factors that keep their people, and their organizations, healthy.

Now, onto the current articles, The present issue is comprised of: Winston's empirical examination of servant leadership, perceived organizational support, and work-family conflict on employee well-being; Chan's application of shepherd leadership to serve children during and after COVID-19; Carroll's review of servant leadership on team performance through the mediating mechanisms of team potency, leader communication, and goal clarity; Funfar's focus on developing servant leadership through peer mentor programs, and Eliot & Osburn's efforts to build resilient business students through faculty servant leaders.

Winston tested the effects of servant leadership, perceived organizational support, and work-family conflict on employee's perceptions of well-being. He found that servant leadership and work-family conflict showed a low to medium positive correlation. He also found a significant difference based on gender, which prompted

subsequent multiple regressions to analyze males and females. A significant regression was found for males only. To assess participant's perceptions of servant-leader's behaviors on employee well-being, a follow-up qualitative study was conducted. Results suggest males and females value leaders who demonstrate concern for the employee.

Chan presents shepherd leadership as a specific form of servant leadership, examining the thinking, doing, and being of shepherds and the practical applications-guiding, providing, and protecting-of shepherd leadership to modern-day living. While governments work to provide vaccines for its citizens, Chang suggests that those who are parents, caregivers, and teachers can shepherd children through the COVID-19 pandemic.

Carroll develops a conceptual model linking servant leadership and team performance through the mediating mechanisms of team potency, leader communication frequency, and goal clarity. Based on a review of the literature, she puts forth propositions regarding the positive influence of these variables on the servant leadership-team performance relationship. The importance of these constructs is discussed within the context of the fundraising profession.

Funfar presents a qualitative case study to investigate the impact of a high school peer mentor program and corresponding challenge course training on the participants' servant leadership skillset through the lens of social constructivism. He concludes that challenge course training and participation in a peer mentor program are a potentially good combination that allows participants to grow as servant leaders.

Finally, Elliot and Osburn note that COVID-19 disrupted the normal cadence of life, focusing specifically on its effects on university students. They identify resilience as an important skill to success during hardships like those presented by COVID-19. They contend that faculty, by applying servant leadership principles in the classrooms, are in a unique position to help students build the resiliency they need for success in and out of the classroom.

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

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