

Servant Leadership and the Effectiveness of Teams

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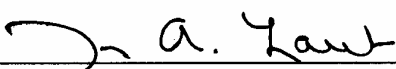
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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between servant leadership and the effectiveness of teams. While Greenleaf's (1977) seminal work on servant leadership has led to a growing body of literature surrounding the construct, up to this point, very little has been done to investigate what effect servant leadership behaviors have on the effectiveness of teams. In light of this void in the literature, the present study sought to answer the research question: "Is there a relationship between servant leadership and team effectiveness?" by conducting an empirical study in a U.S. division of an international nonprofit organization. The data collected were gathered using three instruments: (a) The Organizational Leadership Assessment (Laub, 1999); (b) The Servant Leadership Assessment Instrument (Dennis, 2004); and (c) The Team Effectiveness Questionnaire (Larson & LaFasto, 2001). These instruments provided data around the following variables: (a) servant leadership at the organizational level; (b) job satisfaction at the individual participant level; (c) team effectiveness at the team level; and the servant leadership variables of (d) love, (e) empowerment, (f) vision, (g) humility, and (h) trust at the individual leader level. Pearson r correlation analyses were used to examine the relationship between team effectiveness and the other variables associated with servant leadership and job satisfaction. A statistically significant and positive correlation was found for each of the variables associated with servant leadership and job satisfaction when analyzed in reference to team effectiveness.

Dedication

To the One who has transformed my life,
The Divine Servant Leader—Jesus Christ.

Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus,
who, although He existed in the form of God,
did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped,
but emptied Himself,
taking on the form of a bond-servant,
and being made in the likeness of men.

Being found in appearance as a man,
He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death,
even death on a cross.

For this reason also,
God highly exalted Him,
and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name,
so that at the name of Jesus
every knee will bow,
of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
and that every tongue will confess
that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

Philippians 2:5-11 (New American Standard Bible)

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Definitions of Key Terms

1. **Leader:** A leader is a person who is able to partner with followers in the creation and implementation of a common vision.
2. **Followers:** Followers are those individuals who voluntarily engage in the leadership process by partnering with leaders and other followers for the purpose of achieving a common vision.
3. **Leadership:** Leadership is the process by which an individual or group influences another individual or group for the purpose of achieving a common vision.
4. **Servant Leadership:** Servant leadership is a process of leaders and followers partnering together for the purpose of achieving a common vision in which the good of the led are placed over the good of the leaders.
5. **Team:** A team is a partnership of two or more people who share a common objective or goal in which coordinated activity among the members of the team is requisite for the attainment of the objective or goal.
6. **Effectiveness:** Effectiveness is the attainment of common objectives or goals
7. **Team Effectiveness:** Team effectiveness is the attainment of common objectives or goals by means of the coordinated activity of the members of a team.

Chapter 1 – Introduction

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between servant leadership and the effectiveness of teams. While Greenleaf's (1977) seminal work on servant leadership has led to a growing body of literature surrounding the construct, up to this point, very little has been done to investigate what effect servant leadership behaviors have on the effectiveness of teams. In light of the contemporary interest in teams by researchers and practitioners such as West et al. (2003); Naquin and Tynan (2003); Edmondson, Roberto, and Watkins (2003); van der Vegt and Janssen (2003); and Gibson and Vermeulen (2003); exploring the effect of servant leadership on the effectiveness of teams takes on special significance. Specifically, if servant leadership behaviors are associated with the effectiveness of teams, the research focus of this study, then it becomes essential that organizational leaders not ignore the positive effect that their servant leadership behaviors or, conversely, the negative effect that the absence of these behaviors will have on the effectiveness of teams in the attainment of common objectives or goals.

Greenleaf's (1977) initial work brought the concept of servant leadership to public discourse in the mid 1970s. Since that time, a number of works have emerged: Graham (1991); Spears (1995); Quay (1997); Spears (1998a); Blanchard (1998); Buchen (1998); Farling, Stone, and Winston (1999); Laub (1999); Russell (2001a); Russell and Stone (2002); Sendjaya and Sarros (2002); Spears and Lawrence (2002); Dennis and Winston (2003); Jennings and Stahl-Wert (2003); Laub (2003); Ledbetter (2003); Patterson (2003); Rude (2003); Russell (2003); Sendjaya (2003); Stone, Russell, and Patterson (2003); Winston (2003); Wong and Page (2003); Cerff (2004); Dennis (2004);

Drury (2004); Hale (2004); Helland (2004); Hebert (2004); Irving (2004); Laub (2004); Ndoria (2004); Nwogu (2004); Page (2004); Parolini (2004); Patterson and Stone (2004); Wolford-Ulrich (2004); Winston and Hartsfield (2004); Smith, Montagno, and Kuzmenko (2004); Stone, Russell, and Patterson (2004); and Winston (2004).

Of these works, a majority are theoretical in nature: Blanchard (1998); Buchen (1998); Cerff (2004); Farling et al. (1999); Graham (1991); Hale (2004); Jennings and Stahl-Wert (2003); Laub (2004); Ndoria (2004); Nwogu (2004); Page (2004); Parolini (2004); Patterson (2003); Patterson and Stone (2004); Quay (1997); Rude (2003); Russell (2001a, 2003); Russell and Stone (2002); Sendjaya and Sarros (2002); Smith et al. (2004); Spears (1995, 1998a); Spears and Lawrence (2002); Stone, Russell, and Patterson (2003, 2004); Wolford-Ulrich (2004); Winston (2003); Winston and Hartsfield (2004); and Wong and Page (2003). Several empirical studies such as Dennis (2004), Dennis and Winston (2003), Drury (2004), Hebert (2004), Helland (2004), Irving (2004), Laub (1999, 2003), Ledbetter (2003), Sendjaya (2003), and Winston (2004) emerged as well.

The work surrounding servant leadership from the early 1990s through 2003 focused on identifying themes that could help to operationalize the concept of servant leadership. Graham (1991) stressed the inspirational and moral dimensions. Buchen (1998) argued that self-identity, capacity for reciprocity, relationship building, and preoccupation with the future were essential themes. Spears (1998a) emphasized the dimensions of listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment, and community building. Farling et al. (1999) argued for the importance of vision, influence credibility, trust, and service. Laub (1999) put forward valuing people, developing people, building community, displaying

authenticity, providing leadership, and sharing leadership. Russell (2001a) argued for vision, credibility, trust, service, modeling, pioneering, appreciating others, and empowerment. Patterson (2003) presented the dimensions of *agapáo* love, humility, altruism, vision, trust, empowerment, and service as the essential dimensions of servant leadership.

Table 1

Operational Themes of Servant Leadership

The Servant Leadership Emphases	
Graham (1991)	Inspirational, Moral
Buchen (1998)	Self-Identity, Capacity for Reciprocity, Relationship Builders, Preoccupation with the Future
Spears (1998a)	Listening, Empathy, Healing, Awareness, Persuasion, Conceptualization, Foresight, Stewardship, Commitment, Community Building
Farling et al. (1999)	Vision, Influence, Credibility, Trust, Service
Laub (1999)	Valuing People, Developing People, Building Community, Displaying Authenticity, Provides Leadership, Shares Leadership
Russell (2001a)	Vision, Credibility, Trust, Service, Modeling, Pioneering, Appreciation of Others, Empowerment
Patterson (2003)	<i>Agapáo</i> Love, Humility, Altruism, Vision, Trust, Empowerment, Service

Note. Adapted from “Development and Validation of Servant Leadership Behavior Scale,” by S. Sendjaya, 2003, *Proceedings of the Servant Leadership Research Roundtable*, Retrieved July 15, 2004, from <http://www.regent.edu/acad/cls/2003ServantLeadershipRoundtable/>

While empirical measures of servant leadership such as Dennis (2004), Sendjaya (2003), Page and Wong (2003) have emerged, Laub’s (1999) Organizational Leadership

Assessment (OLA) has been the dominate instrument used for measuring servant leadership at the organizational level in recent years as evidenced by works such as Drury (2004), Hebert (2004), Irving (2004), Laub (1999, 2003), and Ledbetter (2003). Drury researched the relationship between servant leadership and organizational commitment and found, contrary to the theoretical literature, an inverse relationship that was statistically significant. Hebert examined the relationship of perceived servant leadership and job satisfaction from the follower's perspective and found that there was a significant relationship between perceptions of servant leadership and overall and intrinsic job satisfaction. Laub (1999) developed the OLA through a Delphi investigation and then put the instrument through a broader field test for reliability and found a Cronbach alpha coefficient of .98. 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. Ledbetter confirmed the reliability of the OLA among law enforcement agencies and found a Cronbach alpha coefficient of .9814. Irving's (2004) study found a Cronbach alpha coefficient of .9807 for the OLA and further explored the relationship between the servant leadership characteristics of the OLA and the characteristics of effective teams in Larson and LaFasto's (2001) Team Effectiveness Questionnaire (TEQ). In Irving's (2004) study, the correlation coefficient was .592 (two-tailed Pearson r correlation) with a significance value of .000, indicating that the relationship between the two constructs was both substantial and highly significant.

Statement of the Problem

While Irving's (2004) study broke new ground in that it was the first study to empirically examine the relationship between servant leadership and team effectiveness, several considerations of this study pointed to the need for further research. First, while the significant and substantially positive relationship was found in multiple sectors—nonprofit, church, and business—the findings indicated different degrees of the relationship when analyzed by sector. Among the nonprofit sector, the correlation coefficient was $.547$ ($p = .008$). Among the church sector, the correlation coefficient was $.563$ ($p = .000$). Among the business sector, the correlation coefficient was $.758$ ($p = .001$).

Table 2

OLA (Laub, 1999)-TEQ (Larson & LaFasto, 2001) Correlation Coefficients

Sector	<i>n</i>	Pearson <i>r</i>	Significance
Nonprofit	22	.547	.008
Church	165	.563	.000
Business	15	.758	.001
Entire Sample	202	.592	.000

As illustrated by Table 2, the sample was not equally representative of the three sectors. While the *N* for the entire sample was 202, the *n* values for the sectors were as follows: nonprofit, $n = 22$; church, $n = 165$; and business, $n = 15$. These values represented the following percentages of the total sample size: nonprofit (10.89%), church (81.68%), and business (7.43%). Though Irving's (2004) findings provided a credible basis for future studies, the low *n* values in the business and nonprofit sectors

provided both an implicit and explicit call for future research on the relationship between servant leadership and team effectiveness among these sectors. Finally, while Irving's (2004) study analyzed the relationship between servant leadership and team effectiveness at the organizational level, the OLA (Laub, 1999) is not suited for analyzing servant leadership at the individual leader level.

In light of these implications and limitations of Irving's (2004) research, the problem explored in this research project became even more focused and significant. Specifically, in light of the substantial and statistically significant findings among the nonprofit sector ($r = .547, p = .008, n = 22$) in Irving's (2004) study, the present research sought to confirm these findings with a larger sample size and in a different nonprofit organization. Furthermore, the proposed study sought to address servant leadership not only on the organizational level with the OLA (Laub, 1999), but also at the individual leader level. Utilizing two servant leadership instruments provided a means for analyzing the relationship between the two constructs at both the organizational and the individual leader level.

Research Question and Hypotheses

Defining hypotheses as conjunctural statements about the relation between two or more variables, Kerlinger and Lee (2000) argued that there are two primary criteria for good hypotheses: (a) hypotheses are statements about the relationships between variables, and (b) hypotheses carry clear implications for testing the stated relations. Kerlinger and Lee further noted the important and indispensable nature of hypotheses in research; arguing that hypotheses (a) are the working instruments of theory, (b) can be tested and shown to be probably true or probably false, and (c) are powerful tools for the

advancement of knowledge. In order to provide the theoretical basis for the proposed research question and hypotheses, a discussion of the theoretical support found in the literature is presented in the following section.

Theoretical Support from the Literature

In addressing the theoretical support from the literature, it is appropriate to begin with Greenleaf's (1977) seminal work. Addressing the topic of large business as a servant and the need for servant-led organizations, Greenleaf noted that in light of the revolution of expectation among young people which has forced companies to try to make work more significant for their employees, one who presides over a successful business "will need to evolve from being the *chief* into the *builder of the team*" (p. 85). In Greenleaf's conceptualization of leadership in this late-modern era, in the face of generational and cultural shifts and pressures, the servant leader must be a team-builder over chief. In so arguing, Greenleaf provided an initial basis for looking at the relationship between the constructs of servant leadership and team effectiveness.

In addressing why one should be a servant leader, Tarr (1995) provided several considerations about servant leadership: (a) it works; (b) it reinforces the nature of one's profession and calls upon its more noble instincts; (c) it is action-oriented; and (d) servant leadership is a commitment to the celebration of people and their potential. Addressing the first consideration, Tarr noted that the hands-on nature of servant leadership "can encourage the team spirit that leads to increased productivity with commensurate rewards all around" (p. 82). In so doing, it provides further support for the relationship proposed for research in the present study.

Arguing for the concept of team-building through servant leadership,

Chamberlain (1995) wrote, “Organizations should operate to upgrade their standard community-based operations with team-building promoted by servant-leadership” (p. 171). For Chamberlain, when team members profess servant leadership, they are able to emerge as trustworthy professional coleaders, an essential factor in building teams. Furthermore, noting that servant leadership is now in its third decade as a specific leadership and management concept, Spears (1998b) noted that this shift toward servant leadership has been accompanied by a shift from traditional, autocratic, and hierarchical modes of leadership to a new model that is “based on teamwork and community” (p. 1). These cultural shifts felt in organizations have created an environment in which servant leadership, which may have been optional in the industrial age, is becoming vital as the value of community and teams is raised.

While servant leadership at the individual leader level is an important consideration and an important point addressed in this study, Covey (1998) warned that “If you really want to get servant-leadership, then you’ve got to have institutionalization of the principles at the organizational level” (p. xvii). Of the servant leadership instruments, the OLA (Laub, 1999) is the best suited for addressing servant leadership at this level of analysis. 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).

At this point, it is helpful to examine the theoretical points of connection between servant leadership and the effectiveness of teams from those who have done research with the OLA (Laub, 1999). First, Ledbetter (2003) argued that servant leaders who value people are those who (a) encourage, (b) are loyal, (c) build teamwork, (d) are committed,

and (e) respect the dignity and worth of others. Second, as noted previously, Irving (2004) found a highly significant and positive correlation ($p = .000$, $r = .592$) between the OLA (Laub, 1999) and the TEQ (Larson & LaFasto, 2001). Third, Laub (2003) argued that higher OLA scores are indicative of higher levels of team function. For example, teams with low OLA scores are characterized by (a) members being out for themselves, (b) members being manipulated and pitted against each other, and (c) members being punished for nonperformance. Conversely, teams with high OLA scores are characterized by (a) an extremely high level of community, (b) members working together well, and (c) members choosing collaboration over competition against one another.

While, as Covey (1998) has noted, the institutionalization of the servant leadership principles at the organizational level is vital, examining servant leadership at the individual leader level provides the opportunity to evaluate key individual dimensions of servant leadership. Dennis (2004) highlighted five essential characteristics of servant leadership: (a) love, (b) empowerment, (c) vision, (d) humility, and (e) trust. These are five of the seven theoretical dimensions put forward in Patterson's (2003) dissertation. Dennis' work of conceptualizing the items and scales of the Servant Leadership Assessment Instrument (SLAI) has provided a theoretical basis for anticipating that these variables will be positively related to team effectiveness. First, Dennis' love variable is based on Winston's (2002) conceptualization of *agapáo* love. Winston (2002) noted that, "This Greek word refers to a moral love, doing the right thing at the right time for the right reasons" (p. 5) and that "*agapáo* means to love in a social or moral sense, embracing the judgment and the deliberate assent of the will as a matter of principle, duty, and propriety" (p. 5). Dennis noted that the love of servant leadership includes truly

caring about team members as people, making them feel important and being genuinely interested in their lives. Such care for team members is one of the dimensions that should theoretically foster greater team collaboration and effectiveness.

Second, Dennis (2004) embraced a definition of empowerment that places an emphasis on teamwork: “Empowerment is entrusting power to others, and for the servant leader it involves effective listening, making people feel significant, putting an emphasis on teamwork, and the valuing of love and equality (Russell & Stone, 2002)” (p. 7). Third, describing the variable of vision, Dennis drew on Bennett’s (2001) statement that explicitly links the constructs of servant leadership and team effectiveness: “By linking servant leadership—characterized by openness, stewardship, and vision—to personal values, we can enhance individual, team, and organizational performance” (p. 46). In other words, when personal values are linked with servant leadership that is characterized by vision, team performance can be enhanced.

Fourth, in describing the variable of humility, Dennis (2004) drew from Crom’s (1998) assertion that effective leaders are those that maintain their humility by showing respect for employees and acknowledging their contribution to the team. This dimension of humility encourages the supportiveness that LaFasto and Larson (2001) identified as a key teamwork factor. Finally, Dennis’ conceptualization of trust embraced confidence in or reliance on other team members, a definition of trust put forward by Hauser and House (2000). Since, according to LaFasto and Larson, openness is also a key teamwork factor, trust becomes essential for creating the type of environment in which teams may effectively attain their objectives and goals. In light of the theoretical support for these variables and their interrelationship with the effectiveness of teams, the following section

will address more specifically which instruments were utilized to measure these variables.

Instrumentation

Turning now to the research question and associated hypotheses, it is helpful to provide a summary of the instruments and associated variables that were a part of the research. The first instrument is the OLA (Laub, 1999) which is a measure of servant leadership at the organizational level. Laub (2003) clearly noted that, “the overall *OLA* score is recommended for research purposes” (p. 4). The OLA also provides a scale for the measurement of job satisfaction at the individual research participant level. The second instrument is the SLAI (Dennis, 2004) which measures the servant leadership variables of: (a) love, (b) empowerment, (c) vision, (d) humility, and (e) trust at the individual leader level. The third instrument is the TEQ (Larson & LaFasto, 2001) which provides a collective measure of team effectiveness. In light of this, the following variables were included in the present research: (a) servant leadership at the organizational level (OLA); (b) job satisfaction at the individual participant level (OLA); (c) love (SLAI), (d) empowerment (SLAI), (e) vision (SLAI), (f) humility (SLAI), and (g) trust (SLAI) at the individual leader level; and (h) team effectiveness (TEQ) at the team level.

Because Dennis’ (2004) SLAI is relatively new in the field of servant leadership studies, it would be helpful to introduce the instrument’s basic properties. The following Cronbach alpha coefficients were found for the scales in the SLAI: (a) love = .94, (b) empowerment = .94, (c) vision = .89, and (d) humility = .92. Because the trust scale only has two items, a Cronbach alpha coefficient could not be calculated. Dennis included the

trust scale in the SLAI because the two items loaded together in two independent data collections. Table 3 provides an overview of the SLAI scales, their associated alpha coefficients, and the associated items that loaded together in the factor analyses.

Table 3

Servant Leadership Factors From Dennis' (2004) SLAI

Scale	Alpha Coefficient	Items
<i>Love</i>	.94	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My leader is genuinely interested in me as a person • My leader creates a culture that fosters high standards of ethics • My leader has shown his or her care for me by encouraging me • My leader has shown compassion in his or her actions toward me • My leader shows concern for me
<i>Empowerment</i>	.94	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My leader lets me make decisions with increasing responsibility • My leader gives me the authority I need to do my job • My leader turns over some control to me so that I may accept more responsibility • My leader empowers me with opportunities so that I develop skills • My leader entrusts me to make decisions
<i>Vision</i>	.89	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My leader has sought my vision regarding the organization's vision • My leader and I have written a clear and concise vision statement for our company • My leader has asked me what I think the future direction of our company should be • My leader has shown that he or she wants to include employees' vision into the firm's goals and objectives • My leader seeks my commitment concerning the shared vision of our company
<i>Humility</i>	.92	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My leader does not overestimate his or her merits • My leader is not interested in self-glorification • My leader is humble enough to consult others in the organization when he or she may not have all the answers • My leader does not center attention on his or her own accomplishments • My leader's demeanor is one of humility
<i>Trust</i>	N/A*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My leader trusts me to keep a secret • My leader knows I am above corruption

* The alpha coefficient cannot be calculated with less than three items. Dennis included these two items as a factor because they loaded together in a factor analysis on two separate data collections.

Research Question and Hypotheses

Based on the above-noted theoretical foundation and instrumentation, the following research question guided the present study: “Is there a relationship between servant leadership and team effectiveness?” The following hypotheses were used to empirically investigate this research question:

- H₁: There is a statistically significant and positive correlation between servant leadership at the organizational level (OLA) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.
- H₁^o: There is no correlation between servant leadership at the organizational level (OLA) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.
- H₂: There is a statistically significant and positive correlation between the servant leadership variable of love at the individual leader level (SLAI) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.
- H₂^o: There is no correlation between the servant leadership variable of love at the individual leader level (SLAI) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.
- H₃: There is a statistically significant and positive correlation between the servant leadership variable of empowerment at the individual leader level (SLAI) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.
- H₃^o: There is no correlation between the servant leadership variable of empowerment at the individual leader level (SLAI) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.

- H₄: There is a statistically significant and positive correlation between the servant leadership variable of vision at the individual leader level (SLAI) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.
- H₄^o: There is no correlation between the servant leadership variable of vision at the individual leader level (SLAI) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.
- H₅: There is a statistically significant and positive correlation between the servant leadership variable of humility at the individual leader level (SLAI) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.
- H₅^o: There is no correlation between the servant leadership variable of humility at the individual leader level (SLAI) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.
- H₆: There is a statistically significant and positive correlation between the servant leadership variable of trust at the individual leader level (SLAI) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.
- H₆^o: There is no correlation between the servant leadership variable of trust at the individual leader level (SLAI) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.
- H₇: There is a statistically significant and positive correlation between job satisfaction at the individual participant level (OLA) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.

H₇^o: There is no correlation between job satisfaction at the individual participant level (OLA) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.

Method: Design and Analysis

This study was a quantitative study conducted in a U.S. division of an international nonprofit organization. This division includes 1,800 members and is an appropriate organization among which to conduct the research due to the team-based systems that permeate their operational structures. The 1,800 members of this division composed the sample frame for the study; and the research sample was drawn from this sample frame, utilizing an open-invitation to participate sent by e-mail. This method helped to insure a random sampling from the sample frame. Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) sample size recommendation for an organization with 1,800 members is 317. This is a sample response rate of slightly over 17% and was a reasonable expectation, especially since it is not uncommon to anticipate a 30% rate of response. Permission to conduct research within this division was granted, and the senior leader of the division provided an invitation to members inviting their voluntary participation.

The data were collected by inviting members of the sample frame to a URL containing a web-based instrument. This web-based instrument housed (a) basic demographic questions (participant position level, gender, and education level), (b) the OLA (Laub, 1999; servant leadership at the organizational level and job satisfaction at the individual level), (c) the SLAI (Dennis, 2004; servant leadership characteristics of love, empowerment, vision, humility, and trust at the individual leader level), and (d) the TEQ (Larson & LaFasto, 2001; team effectiveness at the team level). Utilizing this web-

based format allowed for an electronically-mediated collection of the research data. Due to the geographically dispersed nature of the organizational division throughout the US, members of the sample frame were accustomed to using web-based resources.

Correlation analyses using the Pearson r correlation were interpreted based on the scale offered by Guilford (1956): (a) $< .20$ = slight, almost negligible relationship; (b) $.20-.40$ = low correlation, definite but small relationship; (c) $.40-.70$ = moderate correlation, substantial relationship; (d) $.70-.90$ = high correlation, marked relationship; and (e) $> .90$ = very high correlation, very dependable relationship. The Guilford scale provided a consistent means for interpreting the statistical correlations, and these interpretations were evaluated in light of the significance levels. In light of the Guilford scale, and similar guidelines provided by Kerlinger and Lee (2000), an r value of $< .20$ was set for accepting the null hypotheses. Conversely, an r value of $\geq .20$ was set for rejecting the null hypotheses. A p value of $\leq .05$ (one-tailed) was set for determining the statistical significance. Finally, the alpha coefficients were calculated in order to confirm the internal reliability for each of the scales in the study: (a) servant leadership (OLA; Laub, 1999), (b) job satisfaction (OLA), (c) love (SLAI; Dennis, 2004), (d) empowerment (SLAI), (e) vision (SLAI), (f) humility (SLAI), (g) trust (SLAI), and (h) team effectiveness (TEQ; Larson & LaFasto, 2001).

Scope and Limitations of the Study

The scope of this research was limited by the nature of the design, instruments, and sample. First, at a design level, the scope of the research was limited to a quantitatively-oriented research question: “Is there a relationship between servant leadership and team effectiveness?” Qualitatively-oriented considerations such as, “Why

does a relationship between servant leadership and team effectiveness exist?” were not within the scope of the research. Second, in terms of instrumentation, servant leadership was measured at the organizational level by the OLA (Laub, 1999) and at the individual leader level by the SLAI (Dennis, 2004). Neither of these instruments include a self-assessment of servant leadership. Additionally, team effectiveness was limited to the TEQ (Larson & LaFasto, 2001), and this scale was not designed to measure the contextual dimensions of effectiveness. Finally, the sample was taken from one organization, limiting generalizations of the study to this sample frame.

Chapter 2 – Literature Review

The following review of the literature on servant leadership is provided as support for the proposed relationship between servant leadership and the effectiveness of teams. The contemporary interest in teams is evident by authors such as LaFasto and Larson (2001), Irving (2005a), West et al. (2003), Naquin and Tynan (2003), Edmondson et al. (2003), van der Vegt et al. (2003), and Gibson and Vermeulen (2003). In light of the growing interest in and use of teams in organizational practice, if servant leadership behaviors are associated with the effectiveness of teams, the relationship this study was designed to investigate, then it becomes imperative that organizational leaders pay attention to the effect that their leadership can have on the effectiveness of teams. To state the importance of this topic in another way, if the attainment of common objectives or goals in the team context is a priority for leaders, a reality that is a pressing and relevant concern for most leaders, then attending to the research question for this study (“Is there a relationship between servant leadership and team effectiveness?”) takes on a fiduciary status for leaders of organizations that utilize teams. With this in view, in order to explore the servant leadership literature, and in order to provide logical analyses of the proposed hypotheses, the following will be addressed in light of the above-noted leadership imperative: (a) construct development, (b) variables, (c) instrumentation, and (d) summary.

Construct Development

The Development of Servant Leadership as a Construct

Nearly every review of the contemporary literature on servant leadership begins with Greenleaf (1977). In this seminal work, Greenleaf made the argument that by

definition, servant leaders are to be servants first, for it is the proven record of service that provides the basis by which the led choose those who they will follow. On this point, Greenleaf noted that,

a new moral principle is emerging which holds that the only authority deserving one's allegiance is that which is freely and knowingly granted by the led to the leader in response to, and in proportion to, the clearly evident servant stature of the leader. (pp. 23-24)

To put it more directly, in Greenleaf's framework, "The servant-leader *is* servant first" (p. 27), for followers will "*freely respond only to individuals who are chosen as leaders because they are proven and trusted as servants*" (p. 24). In light of such an understanding of leadership, it will increasingly become important for servant leadership researchers to examine servant leadership from the follower perspective, a point given some treatment by Hebert (2004).

As an outgrowth of Greenleaf's (1977) work, the writing surrounding servant leadership from the early 1990s through 2003 generally focused on identifying themes that could help to operationalize the concept of servant leadership. Graham (1991) stressed the inspirational and moral dimensions in putting forward servant leadership as a model capable of addressing the inherent dangers associated with value-neutral leadership paradigms such as charismatic leadership. For Graham, a critical analysis of charismatic leadership was necessary due to "its absence of moral safeguards" (p. 105). As an answer to this inherent danger, Graham provided three workplace case examples for the purpose of suggesting that servant leadership, a model of leadership that is both inspirational and moral, provides an answer to such dangers. In light of the emergence of

teams within organizations as a dominant paradigm for engaging in organizational life, the need for leadership that is inspirational and moral in nature becomes increasingly important, for members of teams must be able to trust both the people they work with and the leaders they work under.

Buchen (1998) argued that self-identity, capacity for reciprocity, relationship building, and preoccupation with the future are essential themes for a model of servant leadership. Framed as a model for addressing the comprehensive transformation needs of higher education, Buchen argued that Greenleaf's (1977) model of servant leadership, as understood in light of the above-noted themes, is able to provide a new model for future faculty and future institutions. Buchen associated self-identity with the curtailment and redirection of ego and image, reciprocity with the circular relationship between leaders and followers or teachers and students, commitment with the absolute devotion to the academic discipline, and preoccupation with a future focus that aligns both the institution and institutional members. Building on Graham's (1991) work, issues associated with identity, reciprocity, and relationship building are interrelated with the moral dimension of human leader-follower interaction, for human nature and human relationship transcend the "value-neutral" (Graham, p. 105) by including the engagement of the whole person. If, as Buchen argued, servant leadership is associated with the curtailment and redirection of ego and image, reciprocity of leader-follower relationships, and the building of relationships; it is logical to see how servant leadership would positively relate to the effectiveness of teams, since teams are based on collaborative partnerships.

Spears (1998b) emphasized the dimensions of listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment, and

community building. This list of ten characteristics associated with the servant leader was developed through Spears' (1998b) analysis of Greenleaf's (1977) original writings. For Spears (1998b), the development of one as a servant leader coincides with a focus on these characteristics. In Spears' (1998b) words, while this is not an exhaustive list, these 10 characteristics, "serve to communicate the power and promise that [servant leadership] offers to those who are open to its invitation and challenge" (p. 6). If Graham (1991) provided a parsimonious list of the inspirational and moral aspects of servant leadership, Spears (1998b) provided a broader range of concepts to consider. Spears and Lawrence's (2002) later work reiterated the 10 characteristics affirmed in the earlier work.

Farling et al. (1999) argued for the importance of vision, influence credibility, trust, and service; arguing that these elements serve as a theoretical foundation for moving onto empirical investigation of servant leadership. Of these five dimensions, three (vision, trust, and service) were adopted in Patterson's (2003) model. Farling et al.'s work has become a regularly cited article in the field of servant leadership studies and has served as a theoretical basis for many of the theoretical and empirical works that have followed. The dimensions of vision and trust in their model were included in this study as dimensions of servant leadership at the individual leader level and measured utilizing the SLAI (Dennis, 2004).

Laub (1999) put forward valuing people, developing people, building community, displaying authenticity, providing leadership, and sharing leadership as the core dimensions of servant leadership. Laub's (1999) work eventually led to the OLA. While Laub's (1999) six factors were not identifiable through a factor analysis, the OLA has become a standard in servant leadership studies for those desiring to measure the variable

of servant leadership at the organizational level. In the proposed study, the OLA was utilized to measure servant leadership at this level.

Russell (2001b) argued for vision, credibility, trust, service, modeling, pioneering, appreciating others, and empowerment as distinguishable attributes of servant leaders. Russell's (2001b) observations flow out of his review of the literature surrounding personal and organizational values with a special focus on the aspects of trust, appreciation of others, and empowerment. For Russell (2001b), values are the underlying factors that fundamentally separate servant leaders from all other leadership types. In Russell's (2001b) words, "the personal values of leadership, such as honesty and integrity, play a primary role in establishing interpersonal and organizational trust" (p. 81), a key to effective collaboration among team members. Because "servant leadership succeeds or fails on the personal values of the people who employ it" (p. 81), the effectiveness of the teams these leaders guide will be similarly affected, for leader values significantly affect followers and ultimately influence organizational performance" (p. 81), including performance at the level of teams.

Finally, Patterson (2003) presented the dimensions of *agapáo* love, humility, altruism, vision, trust, empowerment, and service as the essential dimensions of servant leadership. As a theory-building dissertation, Patterson presented servant leadership theory as an extension of transformational leadership theory. This extension was based primarily on Patterson's observation that transformational theory was not addressing the phenomena of love, humility, altruism, and being visionary for followers. As such, Patterson's model provided a basis for a variety of explorations of the servant leadership construct including Nelson (2003), Bryant (2003), and Dennis (2004). Additionally, the

present study, utilizing Dennis' SLAI, incorporated Patterson's love, empowerment, humility, vision, and trust variables.

Servant Leadership in the Literature: Theoretical Investigations

Of the works noted in the previous section, the following were theoretical in nature: Greenleaf (1977), Graham (1991), Buchen (1998), Spears (1998b), Farling et al. (1999), Russell (2001a), and Patterson (2003). Beyond these, dozens of theoretical works have emerged in the literature. Blanchard (1998) conceptually addressed the misconception that servant leadership is somehow leadership without direction. For Blanchard, rather than servant leadership being without direction, servant leadership is understood as both visionary and implementation-oriented in nature. Blanchard's observations are important for the present study, for the present research set out to investigate the relationship between servant leadership and team effectiveness, which is defined as the attainment of common objectives or goals by means of the coordinated activity of the members of a team. Because team effectiveness is concerned with goal attainment and the accomplishment of common objectives, Blanchard's confronting of the misconception about directionless servant leadership is vital.

Cerff (2004) and Hale (2004), in their concept papers, both addressed the connection of servant leadership in the African context. Specifically, Cerff engaged the concepts of Ubuntu and the African Renaissance, arguing that these concepts may provide insight regarding how servant leadership may function on a continent that continues to value its heritage. Furthermore, Hale proposed a design and an explanation of a theoretical model of cross-cultural leadership in West Africa. Hale constructed this model by deriving principles from transformational leadership, servant leadership, and

the New Testament book of Acts. Hale argued that this model results in a plan for how non-African cross-cultural leaders may interface appropriately with the West African context. Both Cerff and Hale's work asserted the value of servant leadership models within the African context and have provided a basis for pursuing servant leadership's effect on team effectiveness within cross-cultural contexts.

Jennings and Stahl-Wert (2003), conceptually writing to a practitioner-oriented audience, argued that servant leadership encourages five action points for organizational leaders: (a) upend the pyramid, (b) raise the bar, (c) blaze the trail, (d) build on strength, and (e) run to great purpose. While these five action points, being addressed to practitioners, may not add significantly to the design of the present study, Jennings and Stahl-Wert's work has provided an emphasis on understanding servant leadership on a research level as well as its impact on organizational and team leadership at the level of practice.

Laub (2004) provided a conceptual challenge to the servant leadership research community as scholarly research is growing in the field. Highlighting the importance of definitions at the foundational level of construct development, Laub (2004) noted that servant leadership shares this weakness with the larger discipline of leadership studies. In light of this, Laub (2004) offered both key definitions of concepts such as leadership, management, and servant leadership as well as a typology for understanding the relationship between leadership and servant leadership. With Laub's (2004) challenge in view, the operational definition of servant leadership in the proposed study is the following: servant leadership is a process of leaders and followers partnering together for

the purpose of achieving a common vision in which the good of the led are placed over the good of the leader.

Ndoria (2004) conceptually examined the literature around leadership studies in general and servant leadership studies in particular to address the question of whether servant leadership is a natural inclination or a learned behavior. While it may be argued from trait theory and great man theory that some leadership characteristics are associated with natural inclinations, Ndoria emphasized that servant leadership principles may be taught and developed. While the current study did not investigate this question, if servant leadership may be taught, in light of the theme of the current study, this is hopeful for leaders desiring to increase the effectiveness of teams.

Nwogu (2004), in a model paper, engaged several important servant leadership models, such as Patterson (2003) and Winston's (2003), and sought to address a gap problem identified in Drury's (2004) empirical study. To do this, Nwogu suggested that by providing a conceptual framework that uses an Esteem-Attribution Exchange Prism, additional influence variables, and a stage-based service construct in examining servant leadership; the identified gap problem may be addressed. While the present study did not engage these gap themes, the research does seek to examine the effect of servant leadership on effectiveness at the team level.

Page (2004) conceptually emphasized the limitations of servant leadership and leadership workshops and training devoid of experiential learning. In light of the limitation, Page argued that experiential learning exercises are a means for both introducing and reinforcing servant leadership practices within organizations. In light of the findings in the present study, maximizing organizational member learning through

experiential exercises becomes vital for organizational leaders wishing to increase the effectiveness of their teams.

Parolini (2004), in a model paper, explored the concepts of servant leadership and the competing values framework by bringing them into a model for effective servant leadership. In so doing, Parolini suggested that servant leaders may be able to enhance an organization's business performance, financial performance, and organizational effectiveness by prioritizing human resources; then open systems and internal process; and, lastly, rational goals. In relation to the proposed study, Parolini's suggestion that servant leaders may be able to enhance performance and effectiveness has affirmed the research focus of looking at the relationship between servant leadership and the effectiveness of teams.

Patterson and Stone (2004) conceptually argued that the contemporary CEO's rhetoric of love in the workplace often inspires more cynicism than genuine affection in those who do not understand the corresponding virtue of humility. In light of this, Patterson and Stone examined the virtues of *agapáo* love and humility from the servant leader's perspective. The present study is related to the Patterson and Stone work in that the dimensions of love and humility were examined for their interrelationship with the effectiveness of teams.

Rude (2003) conceptually examined the rationale for a quantitative correlation investigation of servant leadership and burnout. For the study, Rude described the prevalence of burnout, defined burnout, and the antecedents of burnout. Noting that both internal and external factors may be identified as possible antecedents, Rude gravitated toward the impact of external factors such as supervision. Based on Rude's engagement

of these dimensions associated with burnout, Rude argued that servant leadership is able to play a substantial and pivotal role in reducing burnout in individuals. If this is true, it provides yet another example of potential relationships between servant leadership and other constructs; in the case of the present study, team effectiveness is the construct that was examined in relationship to servant leadership.

Russell and Stone (2002), in their model paper, noted that while servant leadership is an increasingly popular concept in the repertoire of leadership styles, it has continued to lack systematic definition and support in the literature. After providing a review of the servant leadership literature, Russell and Stone provided a rational servant leadership attribute model. Identifying attributes such as (a) vision, (b) honesty, (c) integrity, (d) trust, (e) service, (f) modeling, (g) pioneering, (h) appreciation of others, and (i) empowerment with servant leadership, Russell and Stone argued that accompanying attributes such as (a) communication, (b) credibility, (c) competence, (d) stewardship, (e) visibility, (f) influence, (g) persuasion, (h) listening, (i) encouragement, (j) teaching, and (k) delegation moderate the impact of values on the servant leadership attributes noted above. Furthermore, Russell and Stone argued that the above-noted servant leadership attributes ultimately impact organizational performance through the mediated variables of organizational culture and employee attitudes and work behaviors. Russell and Stone's comments on the relationship between servant leadership and organizational performance provide further theoretical support for the relationship between servant leadership and performance at the organizational level of teams.

Sendjaya and Sarros (2002) conceptually examined the philosophical foundation of servant leadership. This examination was done primarily by extracting value-laden

principles drawn from Greenleaf's (1977) and Jesus Christ's delineation of the concept. Noting that empirical research is critical in order to develop the concepts underlying sound servant leadership theory, Sendjaya and Sarros emphasized the distinctive features of primary intent and self-concept as distinguishing features of servant leadership. As Sendjaya and Sarros defined the primary intent of servant leaders as serving others first over leading others first, Sendjaya and Sarros' conceptualization of servant leadership supports the operational definition of servant leadership utilized in the present study.

Smith et al. (2004), in their model paper, examined the conceptual similarities of transformational and servant leadership theories and provided an analysis of the contribution of both theories to the understanding of leadership. Smith et al. did this by examining the theoretical overlap between the theories and by looking at the motivation of managers to create certain organizational cultures utilizing these perspectives. The authors suggested that servant leadership leads to a spiritual generative culture that is capable of better serving static environments, while transformational leadership leads to an empowered dynamic culture better serving a dynamic organizational culture. Smith et al.'s work utilized Laub's (1999) conceptualization of servant leadership and, thus, relates to the current study's investigation into how servant leadership at the organizational level relates to team effectiveness.

Stone, Russell, and Patterson (2003, 2004) conceptually examined transformational leadership and servant leadership to determine what similarities and differences exist between the two leadership concepts. Stone, Russell, and Patterson (2003, 2004) argued that the focus of the leader is the primary difference between the two constructs. While the transformational leader's focus is toward the organization

primarily, the focus of the servant leader is toward the follower primarily. While the transformational leader seeks to build follower commitment toward organizational objectives, the servant leader focuses first on the followers with the achievement of organizational objectives as a subordinate outcome. Of the servant leadership attributes included in the Stone, Russell, and Patterson's (2003, 2004) articles, the present study examined what relationship the servant leadership variables of vision, trust, and empowerment have with team effectiveness.

Wolford-Ulrich (2004) conceptually argued for seeing servant leadership through the lens of design, noting that design is an emerging discipline with a rich service tradition. Wolford-Ulrich identified the primary work of designers around serving clients in the realization of desired outcomes. Based on this primary characteristic of design work, the designer-client relationship shares similarity with the leader-follower relationship of servant leadership; both focus primarily on the needs of those they serve. Wolford-Ulrich's understanding of servant leadership is consistent with the follower-oriented focus embedded in the operational definition of servant leadership for the present study.

Finally, Winston and Hartsfield (2004) conceptually examined the four factor concept of emotional intelligence as defined by Mayer and Salovey (1997): (a) the ability to appraise and express emotion; (b) the use of emotion to enhance cognitive processes and decision making; (c) the ability to understand and analyze emotions; and (d) the reflective regulation of emotion with five servant leadership models as presented by Page and Wong (2000), Patterson (2003), Russell and Stone (2002), Sendjaya and Sarros (2002), and Winston (2003). Winston and Hartsfield found strong ties between servant

leadership and all of the above-noted emotional intelligence factors except for the ability to understand and analyze emotions. Related to the present study, Winston and Hartsfield's use of Patterson's conceptualization of servant leadership is consistent with the leader-level dimensions of servant leadership that were utilized in the present study: (a) love, (b) empowerment, (c) humility, (d) vision, and (e) trust.

Servant Leadership in the Literature: Empirical Investigations

In addition to the above-noted theoretical investigations, several empirical studies have emerged in the field (Dennis, 2004; Dennis & Winston, 2003; Drury, 2004; Hebert, 2004; Helland, 2004; Irving, 2004; Laub, 1999; Ledbetter, 2003; Russell, 2003; Sendjaya, 2003; Winston, 2004). Dennis and Winston conducted a quantitative factor analysis of Page and Wong's (2000) servant leadership instrument and reduced the 99-item scale to 20 items yielding three factors: (a) vision, (b) empowerment, and (c) service. The sample in the study was comprised of 100 participants who were friends, family, or students at Regent University and 429 participants from the Study Response Database. While Dennis and Winston's study confirmed only 3 of the 12 original factors put forth by Page and Wong, the findings indicated that Page and Wong's instrument has merit and deserves further development and modification. While Page and Wong's instrument is not used in the present study, the two factors of vision and empowerment found within the instrument are similar to the factors of vision and empowerment utilized in the present study.

Russell (2003) explored the values and attributes of servant leaders through quantitative methods; arguing that servant leaders have values that are distinct and, therefore, their leadership attributes would be atypical. Russell (2003) identified vision,

modeling, pioneering, appreciation of others, and empowerment as central servant leadership attributes. Russell (2003) found through empirical investigation that there was strong evidence that vision and pioneering were servant leadership attributes and that modeling and appreciation of others were important attributes. The sample in Russell's (2003) study was drawn from identified servant leaders in multiple sectors and graduate students from a school of business. Russell's (2003) work supports the present research's inclusion of vision as an important servant leadership attribute to explore.

Helland (2004) engaged in a qualitative research project that utilized an interpretive biography of the life of Maestro Henry Charles Smith to explore the process of how servant leadership develops. Helland found that Smith's leadership emerged, in part, from personal values regarding the loving concern for the welfare and well-being of others and from strong, optimistic, self-efficacy beliefs. While self-efficacy is not addressed in the present study, Helland's conceptualization of loving concern for the welfare and well-being of others is both consistent with the definitional understanding of servant leadership in the present study as well as the individual leader variable of love that was examined in relationship with team effectiveness in the present study.

Sendjaya (2003) argued that in light of the current fixation on the theoretical side of servant leadership, an empirical study to develop and validate a measurement scale of servant leadership is necessary. After chronicling the steps, methods, and results of quantitative and qualitative studies which were conducted to build a measurement scale of servant leadership, Sendjaya provided preliminary results on the construct validity research for the Servant Leadership Behavior Scale based on quantitative data. The sample in Sendjaya's study was drawn from postgraduate students from a university

setting. The six dimensions found in Sendjaya's work were: (a) voluntary subordination, (b) authentic self, (c) covenantal relationship, (d) responsible morality, (e) transcendent spirituality, and (f) transforming influence.

The empirical studies of Drury (2004), Hebert (2004), Laub (1999), and Ledbetter (2003) worked with the OLA (Laub, 1999), the instrument that was utilized in this study to measure servant leadership at the organizational level. Drury researched the relationship between servant leadership and organizational commitment, utilizing quantitative methods among a sample drawn from a nontraditional college environment. In Drury's study, the Pearson r correlation for the relationship between organizational commitment and servant leadership had a statistically significant inverse relationship, a finding that was contrary to what the theoretical literature indicated. As noted previously, Nwogu suggested that by providing a conceptual framework using an Esteem-Attribution Exchange Prism, additional influence variables, and a stage-based service construct; this gap problem associated with Drury's research may be addressed. While Drury examined servant leadership's relationship with organizational commitment, the present study examined the relationship between servant leadership at the organizational level, utilizing the OLA and team effectiveness at the team level.

Hebert (2004) examined the relationship of perceived servant leadership and job satisfaction from the follower's perspective. In Hebert's quantitative study, the perception of servant leadership was measured using the OLA (Laub, 1999), and overall job satisfaction was measured utilizing the Mohrman-Cooke-Mohrman Job Satisfaction Scale (as cited in Hebert). Drawing a sample from 12 organizations in both public and private sectors, Hebert found that there was a significant relationship between perceptions of

servant leadership and overall and intrinsic job satisfaction. While Hebert examined servant leadership's relationship with overall job satisfaction, the present study examined the relationship between servant leadership and team effectiveness.

Laub (1999) developed the OLA through a Delphi investigation and then put the instrument through a broader quantitative field test for reliability. Laub (1999) found that the instrument was internally reliable with a Cronbach alpha coefficient of .98. The sample included 791 participants drawn from six organizational sectors. 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. These six areas were not found through a factor analysis of the OLA; therefore, the OLA is best to be utilized for research purposes as a single-scale measure of servant leadership at the organizational level. The present study utilized the OLA at this level of analysis.

Ledbetter (2003) quantitatively analyzed the reliability of the OLA (Laub, 1999) among a sample frame of law enforcement agencies. In this analysis, Ledbetter confirmed the reliability of the OLA and found a Cronbach alpha coefficient of .9814. Ledbetter's finding confirmed Laub's (2004) finding of a .98 alpha coefficient and provided further support for the reliability of the OLA.

At least two empirical investigations have been conducted based on Patterson's (2003) model of servant leadership (Dennis, 2004; Winston, 2004). Winston (2004), utilizing a mixed-method design, focused on qualitative inquiry and examined the attitudes of employees at Heritage Bible College toward their leader in order to determine if the leader was a servant leader and if the variables of Patterson's and Winston's (2003)

models of servant leadership helped explain the process by which leaders and followers serve each other in the organization. Winston (2004) utilized a case study approach that triangulated data through: (a) research observation over 2 years, (b) data from the Servant-Shepherd Leadership Indicator, (c) and participant responses to 10 in-depth interview questions. The case study supported the use of the variables from the two models examined in the interview questions/topics: (a) trust, (b) empowerment, (c) vision, (d) altruism, (e) intrinsic motivation, (f) commitment, and (g) service. Trust, empowerment, and vision were all utilized in the present study to examine their interrelationship with team effectiveness.

Dennis (2004) examined the following research question: “Can the presence of Patterson’s servant leadership concept be assessed through a written instrument” (p. iii)? Utilizing a jury of experts in the field of servant leadership studies, Dennis built a set of survey items supported by the literature and removed duplicate items utilizing Delphi methods. After establishing a set of survey items, Dennis utilized three separate data collections in order to refine and hone the instrument. The third collection included 300 participants using the Study Response Database. Dennis’ analysis of the data sets confirmed the presence of five of the seven factors sought from Patterson’s (2003) model: (a) love, (b) empowerment, (c) humility, (d) vision, and (e) trust. These scales from Dennis’ SLAI are the scales that were utilized to measure servant leadership at the individual leader level in the present study.

Servant Leadership and Teams

While empirical inquiry into the relationship between servant leadership and team effectiveness has been minimal (Irving, 2004), a theoretical foundation in support of the

case for the relationship of these constructs has been presented in the above-noted theoretical and empirical literature. This initial foundation has been laid for the purpose of supporting the value of investigating the research question that guided the present study: “Is there a relationship between servant leadership and team effectiveness?” In addition to the above-noted general support for anticipating a relationship between servant leadership and teams, the following conceptual reflections are provided to further solidify the relationship that was proposed in this study. In addressing the topic of large business as servant and the need for servant-led organizations, in his seminal work, Greenleaf (1977) noted that in light of the revolution of expectation among young people which has forced companies to try to make their work more significant for their employees, one who presides over a successful business “will need to evolve from being the *chief* into the *builder of the team*” (p. 85). In Greenleaf’s conceptualization of leadership in this late-modern era, the servant leader, in the face of generational and cultural shifts and pressures, by necessity must be team-builder over chief. In so arguing, Greenleaf provided an initial basis for looking at the relationship between the constructs of servant leadership and team effectiveness.

Answering the important question of “Why should one be a servant-leader?” within a conceptual paper, Tarr (1995) provided several considerations about servant leadership: (a) it works; (b) it reinforces the nature of one’s profession and calls upon its more noble instincts; (c) it is action-oriented; and (d) servant leadership is a commitment to the celebration of people and their potential. Addressing the first consideration, Tarr noted that the hands-on nature of servant leadership “can encourage the team spirit that leads to increased productivity with commensurate rewards all around” (p. 82) and, in so

doing, provides further support for the relationship that was researched in the present study.

Arguing for the concept of team-building through servant leadership, Chamberlain (1995) wrote, “Organizations should operate to upgrade their standard community-based operations with team-building promoted by servant-leadership” (p. 171). For Chamberlain, when team members profess servant leadership, they are able to emerge as trustworthy professional coleaders, an essential factor in building teams. Furthermore, noting that servant leadership is now in its third decade as a specific leadership and management concept, Spears (1998b) noted that this shift toward servant leadership has been accompanied by a shift from traditional, autocratic, and hierarchical modes of leadership to a new model that is “based on teamwork and community” (p. 1). These cultural shifts felt in organizations have created an environment in which servant leadership, which may have been optional in the industrial age, is becoming vital as the value of community and teams is raised. Each of these conceptual works support the value of investigating the research question in this study: “Is there a relationship between servant leadership and team effectiveness?”

Variables

Servant Leadership at the Organizational Level

The first variable in this study was servant leadership at the organizational level. While servant leadership at the individual leader level is an important consideration and was addressed in this study, Covey (1998) conceptually warned that, “If you really want to get servant-leadership, then you’ve got to have institutionalization of the principles at

the organizational level” (p. xvii). Covey’s statement provides support for the inclusion of the variable of servant leadership at the organizational level.

At this point, it is helpful to examine the theoretical points of connection between servant leadership and the effectiveness of teams from those who have done research with the OLA (Laub, 1999). First, Ledbetter (2003) argued that servant leaders who value people are those who (a) encourage, (b) are loyal, (c) build teamwork, (d) are committed, and (e) respect the dignity and worth of others. Second, as noted previously, Irving (2004) found a highly significant and positive correlation ($p = .000$, $r = .592$) between the OLA and the TEQ (Larson & LaFasto, 2001). Third, Laub (2003) argued that higher OLA scores are indicative of higher levels of team function. For example, teams with low OLA scores are characterized by (a) members being out for themselves, (b) members being manipulated and pitted against each other, and (c) members being punished for nonperformance. Conversely, teams with high OLA scores are characterized by (a) an extremely high level of community, (b) members working together well, and (c) members choosing collaboration over competition against one another. These authors provide important support for H_1 which reads that there will be a statistically significant and positive correlation between servant leadership at the organizational level (OLA) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample. Conversely, these authors have provided support for the rejection of H_1^0 which reads that there will be no correlation between servant leadership at the organizational level (OLA) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.

As a parenthetical point of investigation, because the OLA (Laub, 1999) is able to measure both servant leadership at the organizational level and job satisfaction at the

individual level, the OLA was used to examine H₇ which reads that there will be a statistically significant and positive correlation between job satisfaction at the individual participant level (OLA) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample. In light of the significant correlations between servant leadership and job satisfaction (Hebert, 2003; Laub, 1999), it was logical to anticipate the rejection of H₇⁰: there will be no correlation between job satisfaction at the individual participant level (OLA) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.

Servant Leadership at the Individual Leader Level

While, as Covey (1998) has noted, the institutionalization of the servant leadership principles at the organizational level is vital, examining servant leadership at the individual leader level provides the opportunity to evaluate key individual dimensions of servant leadership. Dennis (2004) highlighted five essential characteristics of servant leadership: (a) love, (b) empowerment, (c) vision, (d) humility, and (e) trust, which are five of the seven theoretical dimensions put forward in Patterson's (2003) dissertation. Dennis' work of conceptualizing the items and scales of the SLAI provided a theoretical basis for anticipating that these variables would be positively related to team effectiveness.

Love. The first variable at the individual leader level was the servant leadership characteristic of love. Dennis' (2004) love variable is based on Winston's (2002) conceptualization of *agapáo* love. Winston (2002) noted that "This Greek word refers to a moral love, doing the right thing at the right time for the right reasons" (p. 5), and that "*agapáo* means to love in a social or moral sense, embracing the judgment and the

deliberate assent of the will as a matter of principle, duty, and propriety” (p. 5). Dennis noted that the love of servant leadership includes truly caring about team members as people, making them feel important and being genuinely interested in their lives. Such care for team members is one of the dimensions that should theoretically foster greater team collaboration and effectiveness. Because of this, it was logical to anticipate the acceptance of H_2 : there will be a statistically significant and positive correlation between the servant leadership variable of love at the individual leader level (SLAI) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample. Conversely, it was logical to anticipate the rejection of H_2^0 : there will be no correlation between the servant leadership variable of love at the individual leader level (SLAI) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.

Empowerment. The second variable at the individual leader level was the servant leadership characteristic of empowerment. Dennis (2004) embraced a definition of empowerment that places an emphasis on teamwork: “Empowerment is entrusting power to others, and for the servant leader it involves effective listening, making people feel significant, putting an emphasis on teamwork, and the valuing of love and equality (Russell & Stone, 2002)” (p. 7). Since empowerment includes the embracing of teamwork in Dennis’ understanding, it was logical to anticipate the acceptance of H_3 : there will be a statistically significant and positive correlation between the servant leadership variable of empowerment at the individual leader level (SLAI) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample. Conversely, it was logical to anticipate the rejection of H_3^0 : there will be no correlation between the servant leadership variable of empowerment at the individual leader level (SLAI) and

team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.

Vision. The third variable at the individual leader level was the servant leadership characteristic of vision. Describing the variable of vision, Dennis (2004) drew on Bennett's (2001) statement that explicitly links the constructs of servant leadership and team effectiveness: "By linking servant leadership—characterized by openness, stewardship, and vision—to personal values, we can enhance individual, team, and organizational performance" (Bennett, 2001, p. 46). In other words, when personal values are linked with servant leadership that is characterized by vision, team performance can be enhanced. In view of this expectation of team performance, it was logical to anticipate the acceptance of H_4 : there will be a statistically significant and positive correlation between the servant leadership variable of vision at the individual leader level (SLAI) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample. Conversely, it was logical to anticipate the rejection of H_4^0 : there will be no correlation between the servant leadership variable of vision at the individual leader level (SLAI) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.

Humility. The fourth variable at the individual leader level was the servant leadership characteristic of humility. In describing the variable of humility, Dennis (2004) drew from Crom's (1998) assertion that effective leaders are those who maintain their humility by showing respect for employees and acknowledging their contribution to the team. This dimension of humility encourages the supportiveness that LaFasto and Larson (2001) identified as a key teamwork factor. In light of this, it was logical to anticipate the acceptance of H_5 : there will be a statistically significant and positive correlation between the servant leadership variable of humility at the individual leader

level (SLAI) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample. Conversely, it was logical to anticipate the rejection of H_5^0 : there will be no correlation between the servant leadership variable of humility at the individual leader level (SLAI) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.

Trust. The fifth variable at the individual leader level was the servant leadership characteristic of trust. Dennis' (2004) conceptualization of trust embraces confidence in or reliance on other team members, a definition of trust put forward by Hauser and House (2000). Since, according to LaFasto and Larson (2001), openness is also a key teamwork factor, trust becomes essential for creating the type of environment in which teams may effectively attain their objectives and goals. In light of this dynamic, it was logical to anticipate the acceptance of H_6 : there will be a statistically significant and positive correlation between the servant leadership variable of trust at the individual leader level (SLAI) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample. Conversely, it was logical to anticipate the rejection of H_6^0 : there will be no correlation between the servant leadership variable of trust at the individual leader level (SLAI) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.

Team Effectiveness

The final variable in the present study was team effectiveness at the team level. Based on Larson and LaFasto's (1989) definition of a team, the present study utilized the definition of a team as a partnership of two or more people who share a common objective or goal in which coordinated activity among the members of the team is

requisite for the attainment of the objective or goal. Therefore, team effectiveness was defined as the attainment of common objectives or goals by means of the coordinated activity of the members of a team. H₁ through H₆ examined the relationship between servant leadership at both the organizational and individual leader levels and the variable of team effectiveness.

Instrumentation

The OLA (Laub, 1999)

Of the servant leadership instruments, the OLA (Laub, 1999) is best suited for measuring servant leadership at the organizational level of analysis. For Laub (1999), the essence of servant leadership may be defined 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). Laub (2003) noted that “the overall *OLA* score is recommended for research purposes” (p. 4) due to the high correlation between the *OLA* subscales. The Cronbach alpha coefficient for the *OLA* is .98. The *OLA* also provides a scale for the measurement of job satisfaction at the individual research participant level. Thompson (2002) provided support validating the use of the *OLA*’s job satisfaction scale.

The SLAI (Dennis, 2004)

The second instrument is the *SLAI* (Dennis, 2004), which measures the servant leadership variables of (a) love, (b) empowerment, (c) vision, (d) humility, and (e) trust at the individual leader level. Because Dennis’ *SLAI* is relatively new in the field of servant leadership studies, it would be helpful to introduce the instrument’s basic properties. The following Cronbach alpha coefficients were found for the scales in the *SLAI*: (a) love = .94, (b) empowerment = .94, (c) vision = .89, and (d) humility = .92. Because the trust

scale only has two items, the Cronbach alpha coefficient could not be calculated. Dennis included the trust scale in the instrument since these two items loaded together in two independent data collections.

The TEQ (Larson & LaFasto, 2001)

The third instrument is the TEQ which measures team effectiveness at the team level. Based on Larson and LaFasto's (1989) grounded theory work identifying the essential characteristics of effective teams, the TEQ (Larson & LaFasto, 2001) was developed as a short form providing a single-scale assessment of team effectiveness. The Cronbach alpha coefficient for the TEQ is .85. The TEQ provided data on the variable of team effectiveness which was utilized to determine correlations between servant leadership at the organizational and individual levels with team effectiveness.

Summary

As identified throughout this chapter, the literature around servant leadership has supported investigating the study's research question: "Is there a relationship between servant leadership and team effectiveness?" The literature presented has provided support for the acceptance of the following hypotheses:

- H₁: There is a statistically significant and positive correlation between servant leadership at the organizational level (OLA) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.
- H₂: There is a statistically significant and positive correlation between the servant leadership variable of love at the individual leader level (SLAI) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.
- H₃: There is a statistically significant and positive correlation between the servant

leadership variable of empowerment at the individual leader level (SLAI) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.

- H₄: There is a statistically significant and positive correlation between the servant leadership variable of vision at the individual leader level (SLAI) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.
- H₅: There is a statistically significant and positive correlation between the servant leadership variable of humility at the individual leader level (SLAI) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.
- H₆: There is a statistically significant and positive correlation between the servant leadership variable of trust at the individual leader level (SLAI) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.
- H₇: There is a statistically significant and positive correlation between job satisfaction at the individual participant level (OLA) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.

Furthermore, the literature presented has provided support for the rejection of the following null hypotheses:

- H₁^o: There is no correlation between servant leadership at the organizational level (OLA) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.
- H₂^o: There is no correlation between the servant leadership variable of love at the individual leader level (SLAI) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.
- H₃^o: There is no correlation between the servant leadership variable of empowerment

at the individual leader level (SLAI) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.

H₄^o: There is no correlation between the servant leadership variable of vision at the individual leader level (SLAI) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.

H₅^o: There is no correlation between the servant leadership variable of humility at the individual leader level (SLAI) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.

H₆^o: There is no correlation between the servant leadership variable of trust at the individual leader level (SLAI) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.

H₇^o: There is no correlation between job satisfaction at the individual participant level (OLA) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.

Chapter 3 – Research Method

This chapter describes the research methods that were used in the present study. The methods focus on how to approach an empirical inquiry into the relationship between servant leadership at both the organizational and individual leader levels and team effectiveness. The hypotheses of the present study provided the foundation for the methods that were used. Kerlinger and Lee (2000) noted the important and indispensable nature of hypotheses in research; arguing that hypotheses (a) are the working instruments of theory, (b) can be tested and shown to be probably true or probably false, and (c) are powerful tools for the advancement of knowledge. In light of this, the following section will provide groupings of germane study hypotheses in order that the necessary data, the associated data analyses, and the instrumentation that were utilized to collect the data may each be presented in light of each of these groups of hypotheses.

Hypotheses Associated with Servant Leadership at the Organizational Level

The first set of hypotheses focused on the examination of servant leadership at the organizational level and this variable's relationship to team effectiveness at the team level.

- H₁: There is a statistically significant and positive correlation between servant leadership at the organizational level (OLA) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.
- H₁^o: There is no correlation between servant leadership at the organizational level (OLA) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.

Necessary Data and Data Analyses

In light of the above-noted hypotheses in the first grouping, the primary data collected needed to facilitate an examination of the correlation between the following two variables: (a) servant leadership at the organizational level and (b) team effectiveness at the team level. Of the four types of data (nominal, ordinal, interval, and ratio), interval data were necessary for analyzing corollary relationships by means of the Pearson product-moment coefficient. Therefore, in order to address the first set of hypotheses, continuous interval level data needed to be collected for the variables of (a) servant leadership at the organizational level and (b) team effectiveness at the team level.

Once the data were collected, the Pearson r correlation coefficient was utilized and interpreted based on the scale offered by Guilford (1956): (a) $< .20$ = slight, almost negligible relationship; (b) $.20-.40$ = low correlation, definite but small relationship; (c) $.40-.70$ = moderate correlation, substantial relationship; (d) $.70-.90$ = high correlation, marked relationship; and (e) $> .90$ = very high correlation, very dependable relationship. The Guilford scale provided a consistent means for interpreting the statistical correlations, and these interpretations were evaluated in light of the significance levels. In light of the Guilford scale, and similar guidelines provided by Kerlinger and Lee (2000), an r value of $< .20$ was set for accepting H_1^0 . Conversely, an r value of $\geq .20$ was set for rejecting H_1^0 . If H_1^0 is rejected, H_1 is accepted. A p value of $\leq .05$ (one-tailed) was set for determining the statistical significance of the data.

Associated Instrumentation

OLA (Laub, 1999). As indicated above, continuous interval-level data needed to be collected for the variable of servant leadership at the organizational level. Of the

servant leadership instruments, Laub's (1999) OLA is the best suited to provide interval data on servant leadership at the organizational level. Its use in several recent research projects (Drury, 2004; Hebert, 2004; Irving, 2004; Laub, 1999, 2003; Ledbetter, 2003) has provided implicit affirmation of its research value. Laub (1999) developed the OLA through a Delphi investigation and then subsequently put the instrument through a broader field test for reliability, finding a Cronbach alpha coefficient of .98. In the Delphi process, 60 characteristics of servant leaders were identified and eventually clustered into 6 key areas: (a) valuing people, (b) developing people, (c) building community, (d) displaying authenticity, (e) providing leadership, and (f) sharing leadership. Laub (2003) noted that a factor analysis of the OLA did not confirm these 6 clusters in the OLA, but rather a 2 factor solution. Noting that "the overall *OLA* score is recommended for research purposes" (p. 4), Laub (2003) clarified that this is primarily due to the high correlation between the OLA subscales which have high internal reliability independently. Ledbetter confirmed the reliability of the OLA among law enforcement agencies and found a Cronbach alpha coefficient of .9814. The alpha coefficient for the OLA was also calculated in the present study in order to confirm the internal reliability of the instrument.

TEQ (Larson & LaFasto, 2001). As indicated above, continuous interval-level data needed to be collected for the variable of team effectiveness at the team level. Due to Larson and LaFasto's (1989) close association with scholarship in the area of team effectiveness, the TEQ was an ideal instrument for providing interval data on team effectiveness at the team level. Based on Larson and LaFasto's grounded theory work identifying the essential characteristics of effective teams, the TEQ was developed as a

short form providing a single-scale assessment of team effectiveness. The items of the TEQ are formed around the following dimensions of team effectiveness: (a) clear, elevating goal; (b) results-driven structure; (c) competent team members; (d) unified commitment; (e) collaborative climate; (f) standards of excellence; (g) external support and recognition; and (h) principled leadership. The Cronbach alpha coefficient for the TEQ is .85. The alpha coefficient for the TEQ was also calculated in the present study in order to confirm the internal reliability of the instrument.

Hypotheses Associated with Servant Leadership at the Individual Leader Level

The second set of hypotheses focused on the examination of servant leadership at the individual leader level and the relationship between team effectiveness at the team level and these variables: (a) love, (b) empowerment, (c) vision, (d) humility, and (e) trust.

H₂: There is a statistically significant and positive correlation between the servant leadership variable of love at the individual leader level (SLAI) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.

H₂⁰: There is no correlation between the servant leadership variable of love at the individual leader level (SLAI) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.

H₃: There is a statistically significant and positive correlation between the servant leadership variable of empowerment at the individual leader level (SLAI) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.

H₃⁰: There is no correlation between the servant leadership variable of empowerment at the individual leader level (SLAI) and team effectiveness at the team level

(TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.

H₄: There is a statistically significant and positive correlation between the servant leadership variable of vision at the individual leader level (SLAI) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.

H₄^o: There is no correlation between the servant leadership variable of vision at the individual leader level (SLAI) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.

H₅: There is a statistically significant and positive correlation between the servant leadership variable of humility at the individual leader level (SLAI) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.

H₅^o: There is no correlation between the servant leadership variable of humility at the individual leader level (SLAI) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.

H₆: There is a statistically significant and positive correlation between the servant leadership variable of trust at the individual leader level (SLAI) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.

H₆^o: There is no correlation between the servant leadership variable of trust at the individual leader level (SLAI) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.

Necessary Data and Data Analyses

In light of the above-noted hypotheses in the second grouping, the primary data collected needed to facilitate an examination of the correlation between the following two variables: (a) servant leadership at the individual leader level and (b) team effectiveness

at the team level. Of the types of data (nominal, ordinal, interval, and ratio), interval data were necessary for analyzing corollary relationships by means of the Pearson product-moment coefficient. Therefore, in order to address the second set of hypotheses, continuous interval-level data needed to be collected for the variables of (a) servant leadership at the individual leader level and (b) team effectiveness at the team level.

Once the data were collected, the Pearson r correlation coefficient was utilized and interpreted, as noted in the data analysis section for the first set of hypotheses, based on the scale offered by Guilford (1956). In light of the Guilford scale, and similar guidelines provided by Kerlinger and Lee (2000), an r value of $< .20$ was set for accepting H_2^0 through H_6^0 . Conversely, an r value of $\geq .20$ was set for rejecting H_2^0 through H_6^0 . If H_2^0 through H_6^0 are rejected, H_2 through H_6 are accepted. A p value of $\leq .05$ (one-tailed) was set for determining the statistical significance of the data.

Associated Instrumentation

As with the first set of hypotheses, H_2 through H_6 and H_2^0 through H_6^0 also used the TEQ (Larson & LaFasto, 2001) as the instrument to collect data on team effectiveness. The instrument that was used to measure servant leadership at the individual level was the SLAI (Dennis, 2004). As indicated above, continuous interval-level data were collected for the variables of servant leadership at the individual leader level. Of the servant leadership instruments, Dennis' SLAI is the best suited to provide interval data on servant leadership at the individual leader level for the variables of (a) love, (b) empowerment, (c) vision, (d) humility, and (e) trust. While a relatively new instrument in the field of servant leadership studies, Dennis' SLAI demonstrates strong internal reliability. The following Cronbach alpha coefficients were found for the scales

in the SLAI: (a) love = .94, (b) empowerment = .94, (c) vision = .89, and (d) humility = .92. Because the trust scale only has two items, a Cronbach alpha coefficient could not be calculated. Dennis included the trust scale in the instrument, however, since these two items loaded together in two independent data collections. The alpha coefficients for the SLAI scales were calculated in the present study as well in order to confirm the internal reliability of the scales.

Hypotheses Associated with Job Satisfaction at the Individual Participant Level

The final set of hypotheses focused on the examination of job satisfaction at the individual participant level and the relationship of this variable to team effectiveness at the team level.

H₇: There is a statistically significant and positive correlation between job satisfaction at the individual participant level (OLA) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.

H₇⁰: There is no correlation between job satisfaction at the individual participant level (OLA) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.

Necessary Data and Data Analyses

In light of the above-noted hypotheses, the primary data collected need to facilitate an examination of the correlation between the following two variables: (a) job satisfaction at the individual research participant level and (b) team effectiveness at the team level. Of the types of data (nominal, ordinal, interval, and ratio), interval data were necessary for analyzing corollary relationships by means of the Pearson product-moment coefficient. Therefore, in order to address the third set of hypotheses, continuous interval

level data needed to be collected for the variables of (a) job satisfaction at the individual research participant level and (b) team effectiveness at the team level.

Once the data were collected, the Pearson r correlation coefficient was utilized and interpreted based on the scale offered by Guilford (1956). In light of the Guilford scale, and similar guidelines provided by Kerlinger and Lee (2000), an r value of $< .20$ was set for accepting H_7^0 . Conversely, an r value of $\geq .20$ was set for rejecting H_7^0 . If H_7^0 is rejected, H_7 is accepted. A p value of $\leq .05$ (one-tailed) was set for determining the statistical significance of the data.

Associated Instrumentation

As with the first two sets of hypotheses, H_7 and H_7^0 also used the TEQ (Larson & LaFasto, 2001) as the instrument to collect data on team effectiveness. As indicated above, continuous interval level data needed to be collected for the variable of job satisfaction at the individual research participant level. Because the OLA (Laub, 1999) includes a comparative scale measure of job satisfaction within it, the OLA's job satisfaction scale was used to measure job satisfaction at the individual research participant level. The alpha coefficient for the OLA's job satisfaction scale was calculated in the present study in order to confirm the internal reliability of the scale.

Sample

The sample for the present research was collected in a US division of an international nonprofit organization. This division includes 1,800 members and was an appropriate organization among which to conduct the research due to the team-based systems that permeate their operational structures. The 1,800 members of this division composed the sample frame for the study, and the research sample was drawn from this

sample frame utilizing an open invitation to participate sent by e-mail. This method helped to insure a random sampling from the sample frame. Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) sample size recommendation for an organization with 1,800 members is 317. This is a sample response rate of slightly over 17% and was a reasonable expectation especially since it is not uncommon to anticipate a 30% rate of response. Permission to conduct research within this division was granted, and the senior leader of this division provided an invitation to members inviting their voluntary participation.

Data Collection

The data were collected by inviting members of the sample frame to a URL containing a web-based instrument. This web-based instrument housed (a) basic demographic questions (participant position level, gender, and education level), (b) the OLA (Laub, 1999; servant leadership at organizational level and job satisfaction at the individual level), (c) the SLAI (Dennis, 2004; servant leadership characteristics of love, empowerment, vision, humility, and trust at the individual leader level), and (d) the TEQ (Larson & LaFasto, 2001; team effectiveness at the team level). Utilizing this web-based format allowed for an electronically-mediated collection of the research data. Due to the geographically dispersed nature of the organizational division throughout the United States, members of the sample frame were accustomed to the using web-based resources. The instrument was available to the sample frame for a period of 2 weeks until an appropriate sample size was met. The data collection was completed relatively quickly due to having the advocacy of the top-leader of the sample frame.

Chapter 4 - Findings

This chapter is devoted to a presentation of the research findings for this dissertation research project. Toward the end of answering the research question of this study (“Is there a relationship between servant leadership and team effectiveness?”) and evaluating the associated research hypotheses of the study, this chapter will present the (a) sample characteristics, (b) data collection, (c) findings regarding the hypotheses associated with servant leadership at the organizational level, (d) findings regarding the hypotheses associated with servant leadership at the individual leader level, (e) findings regarding the hypotheses associated with job satisfaction at the individual participant level, and (f) alpha coefficients for the research scales.

Sample Characteristics

The research sample was collected within a U.S. division of an international nonprofit organization. This division includes 1,800 members and was an appropriate organization among which to conduct the research due to the team-based systems that permeate their operational structures. The research sample was drawn from this sample frame utilizing an open invitation to participate sent by e-mail. This method helped to insure a random sampling from the sample frame. The number of participants in the study was 740. Of the 740 participants, 729 participants provided data that could be included in the analyses; this number represented a response rate of 40.5%. Based on Krejcie and Morgan’s (1970) sample size recommendation for an organization unit with 1,800 members, this research sample provided a statistically representative sample. Regarding the demographics of the participants, (a) 47% were female and 52.2% male, with .8% not reporting their gender; (b) 6.9% were top leadership, 23% management, and 69.2%

workforce, with .9% not reporting their position; and (c) 1.2% had only completed high school, 86.1% had completed bachelors studies, 11.6% had completed masters studies, and .7% had completed doctoral studies, with .4% not reporting the highest level of education completed. Participation in the study was both voluntary and anonymous for these participants.

Data Collection

The data were collected by inviting members of the sample frame to a URL containing a web-based instrument. This web-based instrument housed (a) basic demographic questions (participant position level, gender, and education level), (b) the OLA (Laub, 1999; servant leadership at the organizational level and job satisfaction at the individual level), (c) the SLAI (Dennis, 2004; servant leadership characteristics of love, empowerment, vision, humility, and trust at the individual leader level), and (d) the TEQ (Larson & LaFasto, 2001; team effectiveness at the team level). Utilizing this web-based format allowed for an electronically-mediated collection of the research data. Due to the geographically dispersed nature of the organizational division throughout the United States, members of the sample frame were accustomed to using web-based resources. The instrument was available to the sample frame for a period of 2 weeks. Within this 2-week period, the minimum sample size was obtained.

Findings Associated with Servant Leadership at the Organizational Level

The first set of hypotheses focused on the examination of servant leadership at the organizational level and this variable's relationship to team effectiveness at the team level:

H₁: There is a statistically significant and positive correlation between servant

leadership at the organizational level (OLA) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.

H_1^0 : There is no correlation between servant leadership at the organizational level (OLA) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.

Data and Data Analysis

In order to determine whether these hypotheses would be accepted or rejected, interval data were collected on (a) servant leadership at the organizational level and (b) team effectiveness at the team level, utilizing the OLA (Laub, 1999) and the TEQ (Larson & LaFasto, 2001). These interval level data were collected in order to analyze the corollary relationship between these variables by means of the Pearson product-moment coefficient. In light of the guidelines offered by Guilford (1956) and Kerlinger and Lee (2000), an r value of $< .20$ was set for accepting H_1^0 . Conversely, an r value of $\geq .20$ was set for rejecting H_1^0 . If H_1^0 is rejected, H_1 is accepted. A p value of $\leq .05$ (one-tailed) was set for determining the statistical significance of the data.

Findings

The Pearson r for the relationship between servant leadership at the organizational level (OLA; Laub, 1999) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ; Larson & LaFasto, 2001) was .522. The p value for this Pearson r finding was .000, indicating that the finding was statistically significant. Additionally; when controlling for the effects of position, gender, and level of education; the findings were similar ($r = .527, p = .000$). Based on the Pearson r , H_1^0 was rejected. Conversely, H_1 was accepted. Table 4 provides a matrix of intercorrelations for the correlations between each of the research variables.

Table 4

Matrix of Intercorrelations

		OLA	JS	TEQ	Love	Emp.	Hum.	Vision	Trust
OLA	Pearson <i>r</i>	1							
	Significance	-							
	<i>N</i>	738							
JS	Pearson <i>r</i>	.495	1						
	Significance	.000	-						
	<i>N</i>	735							
TEQ	Pearson <i>r</i>	.522	.436	1					
	Significance	.000	.000	-					
	<i>N</i>	729	727						
Love	Pearson <i>r</i>	.471	.402	.491	1				
	Significance	.000	.000	.000	-				
	<i>N</i>	730	728	725					
Empowerment	Pearson <i>r</i>	.507	.554	.493	.657	1			
	Significance	.000	.000	.000	.000	-			
	<i>N</i>	728	726	724	728				
Humility	Pearson <i>r</i>	.489	.369	.440	.678	.674	1		
	Significance	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	-		
	<i>N</i>	729	727	724	729	728			
Vision	Pearson <i>r</i>	.420	.446	.464	.613	.632	.537	1	
	Significance	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	-	
	<i>N</i>	728	726	723	728	727	728		
Trust	Pearson <i>r</i>	.378	.305	.325	.535	.482	.470	.451	1
	Significance	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	-
	<i>N</i>	727	725	722	727	726	727	726	

Findings Associated with Servant Leadership at the Individual Leader Level

The second set of hypotheses focused on the examination of servant leadership at the individual leader level and the relationship between team effectiveness at the team level and these variables: (a) love, (b) empowerment, (c) vision, (d) humility, and (e) trust.

- H₂: There is a statistically significant and positive correlation between the servant leadership variable of love at the individual leader level (SLAI) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.
- H₂^o: There is no correlation between the servant leadership variable of love at the individual leader level (SLAI) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.
- H₃: There is a statistically significant and positive correlation between the servant leadership variable of empowerment at the individual leader level (SLAI) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.
- H₃^o: There is no correlation between the servant leadership variable of empowerment at the individual leader level (SLAI) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.
- H₄: There is a statistically significant and positive correlation between the servant leadership variable of vision at the individual leader level (SLAI) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.
- H₄^o: There is no correlation between the servant leadership variable of vision at the individual leader level (SLAI) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.
- H₅: There is a statistically significant and positive correlation between the servant leadership variable of humility at the individual leader level (SLAI) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.
- H₅^o: There is no correlation between the servant leadership variable of humility at the individual leader level (SLAI) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ)

within the nonprofit research sample.

H₆: There is a statistically significant and positive correlation between the servant leadership variable of trust at the individual leader level (SLAI) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.

H₆^o: There is no correlation between the servant leadership variable of trust at the individual leader level (SLAI) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.

Data and Data Analysis

In order to determine whether these hypotheses would be accepted or rejected, interval data were collected on (a) servant leadership at the individual leader level and (b) team effectiveness at the team level, utilizing the SLAI (Dennis, 2004) and the TEQ (Larson & LaFasto, 2001). These interval level data were collected in order to analyze the corollary relationship between these variables by means of the Pearson product-moment coefficient. In light of the guidelines offered by Guilford (1956) and Kerlinger and Lee (2000), an r value of $< .20$ was set for accepting H₂^o through H₆^o. Conversely, an r value of $\geq .20$ was set for rejecting H₂^o through H₆^o. If H₂^o through H₆^o are rejected, H₂ through H₆ are accepted. A p value of $\leq .05$ (one-tailed) was set for determining the statistical significance of the data.

Findings

Love. The Pearson r for the relationship between the servant leadership variable of love at the individual leader level (SLAI; Dennis, 2004) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ; Larson & LaFasto, 2001) was .491. The p value for this Pearson r finding was .000, indicating that the finding was statistically significant. Additionally;

when controlling for the effects of position, gender, and level of education; the findings were identical ($r = .491, p = .000$). Based on the Pearson r , H_2^0 was therefore rejected. Conversely, H_2 was accepted.

Empowerment. The Pearson r for the relationship between the servant leadership variable of empowerment at the individual leader level (SLAI; Dennis, 2004) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ; Larson & LaFasto, 2001) was .493. The p value for this Pearson r finding was .000, indicating that the finding was statistically significant. Additionally; when controlling for the effects of position, gender, and level of education; the findings were similar ($r = .504, p = .000$). Based on the Pearson r , H_3^0 was therefore rejected. Conversely, H_3 was accepted.

Vision. The Pearson r for the relationship between the servant leadership variable of vision at the individual leader level (SLAI; Dennis, 2004) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ; Larson & LaFasto, 2001) was .464. The p value for this Pearson r finding was .000, indicating that the finding was statistically significant. Additionally; when controlling for the effects of position, gender, and level of education; the findings were similar ($r = .470, p = .000$). Based on the Pearson r , H_4^0 was therefore rejected. Conversely, H_4 was accepted.

Humility. The Pearson r for the relationship between the servant leadership variable of humility at the individual leader level (SLAI; Dennis, 2004) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ; Larson & LaFasto, 2001) was .440. The p value for this Pearson r finding was .000, indicating that the finding was statistically significant. Additionally; when controlling for the effects of position, gender, and level of education; the findings were similar ($r = .451, p = .000$). Based on the Pearson r , H_5^0 was therefore

rejected. Conversely, H_5 was accepted.

Trust. The Pearson r for the relationship between the servant leadership variable of trust at the individual leader level (SLAI; Dennis, 2004) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ; Larson & LaFasto, 2001) was .325. The p value for this Pearson r finding was .000, indicating that the finding was statistically significant. Additionally; when controlling for the effects of position, gender, and level of education; the findings were similar ($r = .323, p = .000$). Based on the Pearson r , H_6^0 was therefore rejected. Conversely, H_6 was accepted. Table 5 provides the findings associated with servant leadership at the organizational level.

Table 5

Servant Leadership at the Individual Level (SLAI; Dennis, 2004) and Team Effectiveness at the Team Level (TEQ; Larson & LaFasto, 2001)

SLAI Scales	Findings
Love	$r = .491$ $p = .000$
Empowerment	$r = .493$ $p = .000$
Humility	$r = .440$ $p = .000$
Vision	$r = .446$ $p = .000$
Trust	$r = .325$ $p = .000$

Findings Associated with Job Satisfaction at the Individual Participant Level

The final set of hypotheses focused on the examination of job satisfaction at the individual participant level and the relationship of this variable to team effectiveness at the team level.

H₇: There is a statistically significant and positive correlation between job satisfaction at the individual participant level (OLA) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.

H₇^o: There is no correlation between job satisfaction at the individual participant level (OLA) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ) within the nonprofit research sample.

Data and Data Analysis

In order to determine whether these hypotheses would be accepted or rejected, interval data were collected on (a) job satisfaction at the individual participant level and (b) team effectiveness at the team level, utilizing the OLA (Laub, 1999) and the TEQ (Larson & LaFasto, 2001). These interval level data were collected in order to analyze the corollary relationship between these variables by means of the Pearson product-moment coefficient. In light of the guidelines offered by Guilford (1956) and Kerlinger and Lee (2000), an r value of $< .20$ was set for accepting H₇^o. Conversely, an r value of $\geq .20$ was set for rejecting H₇^o. If H₇^o is rejected, H₇ is accepted. A p value of $\leq .05$ (one-tailed) was set for determining the statistical significance of the data.

Findings

The Pearson r for the relationship between job satisfaction at the individual participant level (OLA; Laub, 1999) and team effectiveness at the team level (TEQ; Larson & LaFasto, 2001) was .436. The p value for this Pearson r finding was .000, indicating that the finding was statistically significant. Additionally; when controlling for the effects of position, gender, and level of education; the findings were similar ($r = .456$, $p = .000$). Based on the Pearson r , H₇^o was therefore rejected. Conversely, H₇ was

accepted.

Alpha Coefficients for Research Scales

In the present study, the alpha coefficients for each of the research scales were calculated in order to confirm the internal reliability of the scales utilized in the study. The following alpha coefficients were found: (a) .9713 for the OLA (Laub, 1999) servant leadership scale, measuring servant leadership at the organizational level; (b) .8230 for the OLA job satisfaction scale, measuring job satisfaction at the individual participant level; (c) .8126 for the TEQ (Larson & LaFasto, 2001), measuring team effectiveness at the team level; (d) .9214 for the SLAI (Dennis, 2004) love scale, measuring servant leadership at the individual leader level; (e) .9200 for the SLAI empowerment scale, measuring servant leadership at the individual leader level; (f) .8637 for the SLAI vision scale, measuring servant leadership at the individual leader level; and (g) .9202 for the SLAI humility scale, measuring servant leadership at the individual leader level. A Cronbach alpha coefficient could not be calculated for the SLAI trust scale because it only has two items in the scale. Table 6 provides an overview of the alpha coefficients for each of the scales.

Table 6

Alpha Coefficients for the Research Scales

Scale	Cronbach Alpha Coefficient
OLA—Servant Leadership	.9713
OLA—Job Satisfaction	.8230
TEQ—Team Effectiveness	.8126
SLAI—Love	.9214
SLAI—Empowerment	.9200
SLAI—Humility	.9202
SLAI—Vision	.8637
SLAI—Trust	N/A

Chapter 5 - Discussion

The findings of the present study provide an important addition to the field of leadership studies and help to address the limited research related to the relationship between servant leadership and the effectiveness of teams. In light of the growing focus on teams at the early part of the 21st century (see Edmondson et al., 2003; Gibson & Vermeulen, 2003; Irving, 2005a, 2005b; LaFasto & Larson, 2001; Naquin & Tynan, 2003; van der Vegt et al., 2003; West et al., 2003), confirming the positive effect of servant leadership on the effectiveness of teams is difficult to overestimate. On the one hand, the high degree of statistical significance in the findings provides both a high degree of confidence in the findings and a strong basis for future investigation into this relationship. On the other hand, particularly for organizational leaders utilizing team-based structures, the findings of this study provide a veritable mandate for leaders to attend to the servant-oriented nature of the leadership within their organization. In light of this, the following will be addressed in this chapter: (a) implications of the findings, (b) comments on the research, (c) recommendations for future research, and (d) summary of the research project and findings.

Implications of the Findings

Implications of H₁: Servant Leadership at the Organizational Level

The priority of servant leadership. As noted in Chapter 4, the correlation between servant leadership at the organizational level and team effectiveness at the team level in this study was both highly significant ($p = .000$) and substantial ($r = .522$). This positive and significant finding is indicative of a strong relationship between servant leadership and the effectiveness of teams and is important for researchers and practitioners alike. For

researchers, especially those studying teams and the dimensions of servant leadership, the significant findings open up new doors for research and provide confidence in the positive relationship of the two constructs. For leadership practitioners, especially those interested in the practice of teams, servant leadership takes on a fiduciary status due to its high correlation with the effectiveness of teams. As Irving (2005a) noted, “if leadership practitioners want the teams in their organization to be effective, then servant leadership is vital for increasing the effectiveness of teams” (p. 843). However, servant leadership cannot merely be focused on institutional leaders. Rather, organizations must heed Covey’s (1998) warning that “If you really want to get servant-leadership, then you’ve got to have institutionalization of the principles at the organizational level” (p. xvii).

Sociocultural considerations. Why is it that servant leadership and the effectiveness of teams are so connected in this late-modern era? While further qualitative research is necessary to provide a more robust answer to this question, Greenleaf’s (1977) theoretical observations may provide some cues in answering this important question. Addressing the topic of large business as servant and the need for servant-led organizations, Greenleaf noted that in light of the revolution of expectation among young people, one who presides over a successful business “will need to evolve from being the *chief* into the *builder of the team*” (p. 85). In Greenleaf’s conceptualization of leadership in this late-modern era; the servant leader, in the face of generational and cultural shifts and pressures, must be team-builder over chief.

What is it about the late-modern era that would make team-oriented structures timely and relevant? Authors such as Wheatley (1999) and Capra (1996) have attributed such late-modern shifts to the onset of a quantum approach to organizations and the

world in general. While quantum realities at the subatomic level are embedded in our history, organizational theorists have only recently begun to apply quantum mechanics to the ways human resources are managed and led organizationally. Addressing quantum theory from a biological perspective, Capra identified the tension between mechanism and holism in the rise of systems thinking and placed particular focus on open systems thinking. Scott (2003) defined open systems as those “systems capable of self-maintenance based on a throughput of resources from their environment, such as a living cell” (p. 84). This focus on cybernetics, or self-regulation, is a central concept within systems thinking and is compatible with a quantum approach to organizing.

Addressing quantum theory with more specificity, Wheatley (1999) noted that “*relationship* is the key determiner of everything” (p. 11). As an illustration of this reality, Wheatley wrote that “subatomic particles come into form and are observed only as they are in relationship to something else. They do not exist as independent ‘things’” (p. 11). Based on such thinking, Wheatley argued that relationships, not lone individuals, are the basic organizing unit of life; therefore, participation and cooperation are essential to our survival in the world of interconnected and networked organizations.

Consistent with Wheatley’s (1999) observations, the shift toward the quantum world of thinking and organizing not only places an emphasis on relationships as the basic organizing unit, but also emphasizes (a) the whole over the part, (b) dynamic processes over static processes, (c) organizational networks over organizational hierarchies, and (d) systemic interconnectedness over linear progression and thought. Such a holistic focus on interconnectedness, relationship, and dynamic process in networked organizations naturally lends itself to the use of relationally-oriented

organizational structures such as teams. In this shift toward quantum-relational approaches to organizing, it is not surprising that new forms of leadership are needed to excel within these changing dynamics. The findings of this study provide a robust answer to what kind of leadership is effective for these relationally-based team structures. It is servant-oriented leadership that is able to lead people and human networks effectively within the interconnected world of teams.

Implications of H₂ through H₆: Servant Leadership at the Individual Leader Level

The priority of servant leadership at the individual leader level. Having addressed the priority and importance of servant leadership at the organizational level, the discussion of research implications will now be focused on servant leadership at the individual leader level. While, as Covey (1998) has noted, the institutionalization of servant leadership principles at the organizational level is vital, this study provided complementary data supporting the priority and importance of servant leadership at the individual leader level. Of the five essential characteristics of servant leadership that are a part of the SLAI (Dennis, 2004; love, empowerment, vision, humility, and trust), all were positively (with a Pearson r ranging from .325-.493) and significantly ($p = .000$) correlated with the effectiveness of teams. While the correlation of Dennis' (2004) trust scale ($r = .325$) was sufficiently above the .20 mark necessary for rejecting the associated null hypothesis, according to Guilford (1956), it is to be interpreted as a low correlation that is definite but small. Of the other four scales in the SLAI (love, empowerment, vision, and humility), all of the associated Pearson r correlations are indicative of possessing a significant and substantial relationship (Guilford) with the effectiveness of teams.

As with the discussion related to servant leadership at the organizational level, the positive and significant findings associated with the five SLAI (Dennis, 2004) variables are important for researchers and practitioners alike. For researchers, especially those studying teams and the dimensions of servant leadership, the significant findings confirm that servant leadership's impact on team effectiveness is not only important at the organizational level, but also at the individual leader level. The lower ($r = .325$), though still significant, correlation with the SLAI trust scale and team effectiveness warrants additional future research, but may be due to the low number of items (only two) in the scale. As a whole, the findings associated with the relationship between servant leadership at the individual leader level and team effectiveness provide robust statistical support for affirming the positive correlation of the constructs and open up new pathways for investigating the relationship further.

For leadership practitioners, especially those interested in the practice of teams, servant leadership at the individual leader level takes on a fiduciary status, alongside servant leadership at the organizational level, due to its high correlation with the effectiveness of teams. While Covey's (1998) reminder that the institutionalization of the principles servant leadership must be made at the organizational level, it is also vital that servant leadership be addressed at the individual leader level because the two levels are inextricably linked. To say this another way, while organizations must pay attention to the institutionalization of servant leadership at the organizational level, an institutionalizing of servant leadership cannot happen until a critical mass of individual leaders begin to practice servant leadership at the individual level. The implications of this research are that individual leaders must embody and develop the servant leadership

characteristics of (a) love, (b) empowerment, (c) vision, (d) humility, and (e) trust if teams are to perform effectively.

Servant leadership antecedents. If servant leadership at the individual leader level is vital for teams, then it becomes important to raise the topic of how one becomes a servant leader or what the antecedents of servant leadership are for these leaders. As noted in Chapter 2, Ndoria (2004) conceptually examined the literature around leadership studies in general and servant leadership studies in particular to address the question of whether servant leadership is a natural inclination or a learned behavior. While it may be argued from trait theory and great man theory that some leadership characteristics are associated with natural inclinations, Ndoria emphasized that servant leadership principles may be taught and developed. While the ongoing discussion of whether leadership is more genotypic or phenotypic is likely to continue for decades and perhaps centuries to come in both leadership and servant leadership studies, it is important to reflect on servant leadership antecedents.

Perhaps some cues related to servant leadership antecedents may be drawn from similar domains of leadership studies such as (a) sacrificial leadership, (b) level 5 leadership, and (c) the literature surrounding twice-born experiences and leader crucible moments. In a work seeking to lay the groundwork for sacrificial leadership, Walz (2001) identified the role of epiphanies as essential in the development of leadership traits. Walz associated epiphanies with turning-point moments within a person's life. The concept of epiphanies as turning points is similar to the concepts identified by Zaleznik (1992), Bennis and Thomas (2002), and Collins (2001a, 2001b). First, Zaleznik noted that leaders tend to be what William James described as twice-born people. While once-born people

have had relatively straightforward and calm lives since birth, twice-born people “are marked by a continual struggle to attain some sense of order,” and therefore do not “take things for granted” (p. 132). Second, Bennis and Thomas addressed the concept of crucible moments. They defined a crucible as “a transformative experience through which an individual comes to a new or an altered sense of identity” (p. 40).

Third, Collins (2001b) addressed the concept of catalytic events in the formation of level 5 leaders; noting that events such as a battle with cancer, changed war orders, or religious conversion can catapult a leader with the “level 5 seed” (p. 75) into a place of humility and fierce resolve in their leadership. This observation is particularly appropriate in a discussion of servant leadership antecedents since Collins (2001a) noted having considered the terms “selfless executive” and “servant leader” (p. 30) before settling on the level 5 label for leaders possessing the unique blend of personal humility and professional will. As a potential grouping of servant leadership antecedents, the broad conceptualization of epiphany is inclusive of each of the constructs noted in the work of Zaleznik (1992), Bennis and Thomas (2002), and Collins (2001a, 2001b): turning points, catalytic events, twice-born experience, and crucible moments.

Bringing Greenleaf’s (1977) important and central conceptualization of “The servant-leader [as] servant first” (p. 27) into the discussion, Collins’ (2001a, 2001b) concept of the level 5 seed may be used to lay a foundation for the concept of a servant-leadership seed that is brought to life through epiphany-type experiences (Walz, 2001) which, applying the concepts of Irving (2003); Irving, Howard, and Matteson (2004); and Irving and Klenke (2004), possess the capacity of unleashing the proposed benefits of metanarrative and meaning in the life of leaders and, arguably, for servant leaders in

particular. Since Greenleaf argued that servant leadership “begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve *first*” (p. 27), it is logical to see how a person’s master-story or metanarrative may provide them with the teleological, historical-narrative, and interpretive perspective necessary for contextualizing their service in such a way that it is filled with purpose and meaning. Such a purpose-filled and meaning-rich approach to life and leadership may be just the antecedent needed for someone to walk down the servant-first pathway of leadership rather than the leader-first pathway which Greenleaf associated with a drive to power and the need to acquire material possessions.

Implication of H₇: Job Satisfaction at the Individual Level

While the positive relationship between servant leadership and job satisfaction has been confirmed in multiple studies (Hebert, 2004; Irving, 2004; Laub, 1999; Thompson, 2002) and also was confirmed in this study ($r = .495$, $p = .000$), H₇ was focused on measuring a relationship that has not sufficiently be dealt with in the literature. H₇, which was focused on the relationship between job satisfaction at the individual level and team effectiveness at the team level, was confirmed. The relationship was both substantial ($r = .436$) and significant ($p = .000$). This finding provides implications for both researchers and practitioners.

First, the correlation between job satisfaction and team effectiveness provides another construct to consider in both the study and practice of teams within organizations. For organizational leaders desiring to increase the effectiveness of their teams, not only is it important to pay attention to servant leadership within the organization, it is also important to pay attention to the job satisfaction of team members. Second, the data support an explanation for the relationship of (a) job satisfaction at the individual leader

level, (b) servant leadership at the organizational level, and (c) team effectiveness at the team level. While the Pearson r for the correlation between servant leadership at the organizational level and team effectiveness at the team level was $.522$ ($p = .000$), when analyzing the relationship of these constructs while controlling for job satisfaction, the partial correlation was $.390$ ($p = .000$). In other words, team member job satisfaction serves as a substantial moderating variable for the relationship between servant leadership and team effectiveness (see Figure 1). When analyzing this relationship utilizing interactive-effect variables, the findings raise additional questions for future research. First, when analyzing the relationship between team effectiveness and the interactive-variable effect of servant leadership at the organizational level and job satisfaction at the individual level, the findings were significant ($r = .537, p = .000$), though not as substantially different than the main finding of this study associated with H_1 . Second, when analyzing the relationship between servant leadership at the organizational level and the interactive-variable effect of job satisfaction at the individual level and team effectiveness at the team level, the findings were significant ($r = .600, p = .000$) and noticeably different from the main findings of this study associated with H_1 .

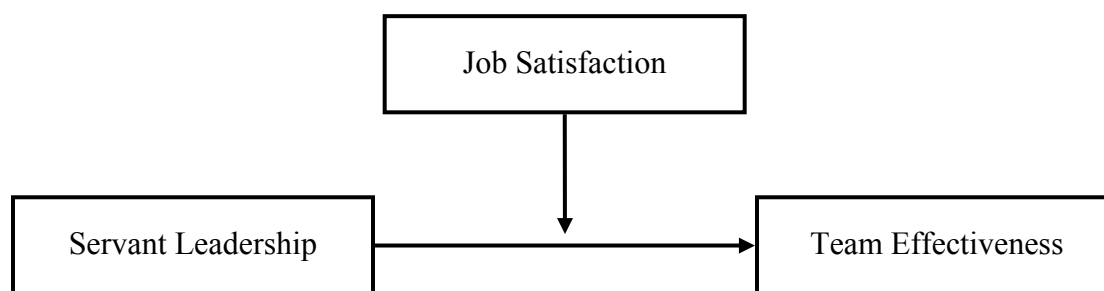


Figure 1. Moderating Effect of Job Satisfaction.

Comments on the Research

The scope of this research was limited by the nature of the design, the nature of the instruments, and the nature of the sample. First, at a design level, the scope of the research was limited to a quantitatively-oriented research question: “Is there a relationship between servant leadership and team effectiveness?” Qualitatively-oriented considerations such as “*Why* does a relationship between servant leadership and team effectiveness exist?” were not within the scope of the research. Second, in terms of instrumentation, servant leadership was measured at the organizational level by the OLA (Laub, 1999) and at the individual leader level by the SLAI (Dennis, 2004). The research is strengthened by the fact that neither of these instruments is a self-assessment of servant leadership, thus removing the confounding variable of social desirability. Additionally, team effectiveness was limited to the TEQ (Larson & LaFasto, 2001), and this scale was not designed to measure the contextual dimensions of effectiveness. Finally, the sample was taken from one organization and, thus, limits generalizations of the study to this sample frame.

Recommendations for Future Research

The present study provides basis for several directions of future research. First, while the present study provided an analysis of the relationship between servant leadership and team effectiveness within a nonprofit organization, the findings would benefit from confirmation in other organizations and other sectors. Particularly, research along a similar path is needed in the following sectors: (a) business, (b) education, (c) military, and (d) government. While Irving (2004) included a small sampling from the business sector, each of the above noted sectors could use focused research around the

relationship between servant leadership and teams. Second, while multiple measures for servant leadership were utilized in this study, and these measures provided data from multiple levels, the present line of research could benefit greatly from the inclusion of other servant leadership measures and team effectiveness and job satisfaction measures. Utilizing a range of instruments for these constructs would help to establish the findings from a diversity of perspectives on servant leadership, team effectiveness, and job satisfaction.

Third, the findings related to H₇ open up a pathway for further exploring moderating effects on the established relationship between servant leadership and the effectiveness of teams. Future research is needed in order to confirm the findings of this study that individual team member job satisfaction moderates the relationship between servant leadership and team effectiveness. Additionally, that job satisfaction was found to moderate the relationship leads to the question of what additional variables might be important moderating influences on the relationship between servant leadership and the effectiveness of teams.

Finally, while some reasons for why a positive relationship between servant leadership and team effectiveness are suggested in this chapter, research is needed to help explore the qualitatively-oriented question of why the relationship between servant leadership and team effectiveness is a positive relationship. Such qualitatively-oriented research could be better positioned to address the dynamics at work that make a servant leadership approach within organizations especially effective in team-based contexts. While these recommendations for future research do not provide an exhaustive list of

suggestions, they do provide direction for those interested in following up in this research pathway.

Summary

This research project was designed to answer the research question, “Is there a relationship between servant leadership and team effectiveness?” By administering the OLA (Laub, 1999), SLAI (Dennis, 2004), and the TEQ (Larson & LaFasto, 2001) to a nonprofit organization, data were gathered to provide a statistical answer to this research question. The findings supported the rejection of each of the null hypotheses. Both the hypotheses related to servant leadership at the organizational level and the hypotheses related to servant leadership at the individual level were supported, and a substantial relationship between servant leadership and team effectiveness was established at multiple levels. In addition to this, job satisfaction was found to be significantly and substantially related to team effectiveness as well as providing a moderating influence on the relationship between servant leadership and the effectiveness of teams.

In light of these significant findings, and in order to summarize the importance of servant leadership in today’s team-based organizations, I end with these quotes: “Servant-oriented leadership matters. The command and control styles of leadership which traditionally may have been associated with results in hierarchal organizations are giving way to more dispersed structures that enable and empower others to excel and perform” (Irving, 2004, p. 10). As Walz (2001) stated, “We live in a world crying out for leadership that is not concerned with self-aggrandizement but with selfless sacrifice to witness dreams and visions fulfilled in the lives of those being led” (p. ii).

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