Preface

Servant leadership has gained much attention and momentum. Its significance has been widely discussed and debated since Greenleaf introduced it in the 1970s and continues to be explored today. Several researchers are empirically testing the servant leadership construct and finding positive results in support of servant leadership and its effectiveness. In addition, studies have found strong relationships between servant leadership and perceived effectiveness, satisfaction, and extra effort. Other scholars have contended that servant leadership has positive outcomes on improved decision-making, productivity, morale, trust, and loyalty, and reduction in employee turnover in business organizations. According to world-renowned leadership scholar and expert Ken Blanchard (n.d.), “I truly believe that Servant Leadership has never been more applicable to the world of leadership than it is today. Not only are people looking for a deeper purpose and meaning when they must meet the challenges of today’s changing world, they are also looking for principles and philosophies that actually work. Servant Leadership works. Servant Leadership is about getting people to a higher level by leading people at a higher level.”

Several world-class organizations like Southwest Airlines, Starbucks, Steak-n-Shake, Synovus, Chick-Fil-A, Hobby Lobby, and others are all using servant leadership principles, and some of them are attesting their success to such principles and practices. This publication, titled *Servant Leadership: Research and Practice*, would help provide more validation to the increasingly significant servant leadership perspective, and for its continuing research, practice, and applications in organizations.

The purposes of *Servant Leadership: Research and Practice* are to:

- Provide a forum for discussing and sharing high quality research by scholars and practitioners from all over the world on topics in the servant leadership area.
- Present a variety of some basic research studies for stimulating further research related to servant leadership.
- Integrate and synthesize interdisciplinary, theoretical, and practical research studies related to servant leadership.
- Formulate and present conceptual models for research on servant leadership relationships and situations.
- Develop new, current perspectives on servant leadership attributes, characteristics, principles, applications, and benefits to organizations.
- Serve as a catalyst for researchers and encourage more interest and research in the area of servant leadership, its effectiveness, and practice in organizations.
Servant Leadership: Research and Practice makes a significant contribution to the growing field of servant leadership. It brings together leaders, servant leaders, scholars, and experts from various countries of the world including Canada, Europe, and the US. This publication presents various types of leaders’ and servant leaders’ experiences, beliefs, thoughts, and perspectives on servant leadership – its significance, value, practice, and benefits. Although most chapters are of scholarly nature coming from academicians, the topics discussed are of keen interest and high value to a variety of leaders, managers, and practitioners from all types of organizations.

Servant Leadership: Research and Practice provides a valuable resource of research ideas, thoughts, studies, and findings from authors around the world, and integrates top quality research on servant leadership from variety of situations and settings into a single source. The book provides a wide array of interesting and timely topics in the area of servant leadership and hence would be a valuable primary reference source for graduate students and undergraduate students interested in leadership and servant leadership. In addition, the book would be a valuable tool for practicing managers, leaders, and servant leaders in managing, leading, and motivating their people and organizations toward a higher level of productivity, profit, success, and excellence.

Servant Leadership: Research and Practice focuses on four main areas of servant leadership. The first section focuses on servant leadership in terms of servant leaders’ attributes and principles and their relationships to followers. Some effective servant leader attributes and principles like accountability, discipline, and practice are discussed. The second section looks at servant leadership from some interesting perspectives and settings including cross-cultural settings, servant leadership practices in a volunteer-led organization, servant mentors and transnational mentees, school crisis management situations, school principalship and servant leadership, impact of faith on leadership, ethics and leadership and the role of prevention and promotion oriented approaches, enspirited leadership, and a comprehensive servant leadership measurement framework. The third section reminds us about the past through an exhaustive review of the historical highlights, origins, and foundations of servant leadership. The fourth section focuses on impactful, contemporary practices and applications of servant leadership. It discusses different examples of great servant leadership, including the case study of the greatest servant leader, exhibited in organizations through case studies, practices, applications, and interviews.

In “Accountability to a Servant Leader and OCB: The Role of Follower Integrity,” Wallace Williams Jr., Christopher Thomas, Anthony Ammeter, Mario Hayek, and Milorad Novicevic discuss accountability to a servant leader and related organizational behaviors and follower accountability that can be influenced by both internal and external mechanisms. The authors in this chapter examine how followers’ commitment to their own moral principles (internal) may be congruent, or in conflict, with a servant leader’s principles (external) and thus have a positive or negative interactive effect on the followers’ accountability to the leader. Furthermore, they examine how accountability to the leader may manifest itself through extra-role behaviors towards others within the organization. The empirical findings of this study show that when follower integrity is low, accountability can still be increased in the presence of a servant leader.

In “The Controlled Discipline of Servant Leaders: A Qualitative Study,” authors Maurice Buford, Doris Gomez, Kathleen Patterson, Bruce Winston investigate claims by Johnson and Bowie that servant leaders tend not to assert authority. Twenty servant leaders were asked 5 open-ended questions about their use of discipline with outcomes of the discipline ranging from more training for subordinates to termination. Analysis of the responses resulted in 39 themes and 8 qualitative truths about servant leaders’ use of discipline. This chapter provides a qualitative base for future research into servant leaders’ use
of discipline. This chapter also unearthed 8 unexpected truths from observations, impromptu questions, and from the margins of the interviews. The authors conclude that the sum total of this body of work stimulates the greater leadership dialogue and provides a platform for other researchers to build upon.

David Whitfield in “Servant Leadership with Cultural Dimensions in Cross-Cultural Settings” demonstrates how the power of servant-leadership characteristics and 9 cultural dimensions offer intercultural leaders increased capacity in cross-cultural workplaces. The main objective of the chapter is to increase intercultural leader capacity to lead in culturally mixed organizations, be they domestic or international, resulting in minimizing or avoiding institutional or organizational failure. It promoted the importance and strength of the servant-leadership characteristics working in pairs with cultural dimensions, though some pairs were not as strongly linked or equated as anticipated. The author’s thrust in this chapter is to provide the necessary means to build intercultural leader capacity to effectively navigate cultural differences, overcome cultural barriers, and create cultures that are inclusive, collaborative, participative, and highly effective.

In “Servant Leadership Practices in a Volunteer-Led Organization,” Kristen Bowers, in her recent research study conducted in a large, volunteer-led community service organization, finds several leadership practices consistent with those of servant leadership. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 8 volunteer leaders whose scores on the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) indicated they engaged in the 5 practices of exemplary leadership: Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart. During the course of the interviews, evidence of servant-leadership behavior emerged. Her study also suggests that they were practicing servant leadership, whether that behavior was intentional or not. The organization’s focus on serving the local and global community creates a sense of moral purpose and connects with members’ sense of what is right, good, and noble. The author concludes that perhaps the greatest impact servant leader led volunteer organizations can have is to build community. Civic and service groups, already focused on local communities, have the potential to create the deep sense of community that enriches lives and meets the needs of citizens.

In “Servant Mentors and Transnational Mentees,” David Starr-Glass emphasizes that relational connectedness is critical for servant leaders, who articulate inclusiveness, concern, and citizenship within the enterprise. In this chapter, he argues that relational connectedness and a similar set of values are also critical for successful mentoring. Although grounded in a specific mentoring context, the chapter contends that similar relational distance occurs in all mentoring work and suggests that the process of mentoring is made stronger and more effective if it utilizes the tenets of servant leadership. This more relational approach is termed “servant mentoring.” The author concludes by stating that it is more realistic to consider the potential value of a synergistic fusion between mentoring and servant leadership – a fusion that might provide utility in certain situations. In any case, recognition of this possibility will undoubtedly promote further exploration of how we mentor, even if a servant-leading approach is not ultimately adopted.

Greg Geer and Howard V. Coleman in “Servant Leadership and School Crisis Management” present a case study about the experiences of a school superintendent practicing servant leadership to help heal a small community when dealing with the accidental deaths of a local family. The school superintendent practicing servant leadership in this case illustrates the effectiveness of this leadership model in school administration. The authors reveal how a public school superintendent applied the servant-leadership characteristics of empathy, listening, caring, and stewardship to building trusting relationships and to effectively meet the needs of his followers. The case study underscores how servant leaders must also be proactive in anticipating the needs of all those they serve. It also illustrates the importance of ap-
plying servant leadership even when the leader is connected personally and emotionally with his or her followers. The victim’s family members repeatedly expressed their appreciation for the superintendent’s support and the feedback from the community was very positive. This enhanced the perception of the superintendent’s competency as a leader and the school district’s reputation as a caring and compassionate organization. Servant leadership practices can help guide educational leaders in providing support for students, teachers, and parents in school crisis situations and assist them in gaining followership from their communities.

In “African American Urban School Principal Servant Leadership,” Wafa Hozien states that the purpose of this study was to investigate the characteristics of African American school principals and the obstacles they experience on their path to the principalship. A secondary purpose, but very important as well, was to analyse critically the experiences of successful African American male principals to help inform the preparation of principals who lead organizations of diverse demographics. The author finds that each research participant conveyed he/she is open to change, willing to create and implement new approaches within their organization, as they work to improve the educational services provided to students. Additionally, each school leader shared his/her own willingness to grow professionally by working with others and seeking information and assistance from within and outside the school district. The author believes that school leaders should naturally be servant leaders. Further, the author also believes that some leaders are born with the propensity to be service-oriented, although one may learn and/or work to develop the characteristics of a servant leader.

In his chapter, “The Impact of Faith on Leadership and Leadership Behavior,” Timothy Puls describes a couple of the deepest, compelling antecedents or schemata, which shape personal faith and spiritual beliefs as well as two behaviors that exude outwardly toward followers of servant leaders. He focuses on a leader’s personal spiritual beliefs, schema, or worldview; a leader’s constructive development or life experience; a leader outcome, called meta-belief; and a leader’s perspective of vision and hope. A hopeful leader is always optimistically looking ahead with foresight, knowing what has taken place in both the past and present. In addition, the author contends that as servant leadership is a virtuous and moral endeavor to truly benefit and serve others, it must have a solid root structure to sustain and uphold those who exercise it. He points out that through a reflective process, a leader can utilize these experiences, both positive and negative, for a greater good in leading other people. Learning from others and with others often shapes leaders’ concern and passion for others.

In their chapter, “Ethics and Leadership: The Role of Prevention and Promotion Oriented Approaches to Leadership,” Nathan Hartman and Thomas Conklin discuss how various leadership approaches and behaviors lead to or develop different types of employee behaviors that impact organizational outcomes. Their framework reviews ethical, transformational, and servant leadership and their relationship to self-regulatory focus. Specifically, promotion-oriented leaders tend to reflect transformational and servant-leadership behaviors and resulting organization cultures, while prevention-oriented leaders match the ethical leadership style and related organization culture. The authors also highlight the unique servant-leadership culture at Southwest Airlines – a community built by honoring the sacredness of the person and caring for all employees, customers, and the broader community. The firm emphasizes highly competitive and innovative business practices and outstanding employee dedication, which have contributed to their continued success as one of the most, and at times only, profitable airlines in the US.

Bob Stilger, in his chapter titled “Enspirited Leadership,” discusses enspirited leadership in terms of the set of landmarks and principles that support younger leaders around the world, who are called to offer their servant leadership in their local communities. In his research, the author identifies six core
landmarks of *enspired* leadership that form an ecology that supports servant leadership. He also has identified a core set of values and beliefs that demonstrate a living systems approach to servant leadership. He believes that the one thing that seems indisputable is that our world is ambiguous and uncertain. Very little can be predicted accurately about the future. All of this, of course, raises questions about the kind of leadership that is needed now, in these turbulent, changing times. Servant Leadership fits these times. He suggests that we must discover how to call more of it forward in our organizations and communities. We must find ways help people develop the clarity and the courage to practice Servant Leadership. He believes that the landmarks of *enspired* leadership may be this journey.

In “Measuring Servant Leadership,” Claudio Pousa points out that though a very clear picture of servant leadership in philosophical terms exists, an empirically validated clear definition of servant leadership does not. For this reason, numerous scholars worked individually on developing competing frameworks to define servant leadership since the mid-1990s; the result is that, throughout the scientific literature, the construct of servant leadership is defined by an inconsistent set of dimensions and there is still no consensus about an operational definition of the construct. In a similar way, since the end of the 1990s, numerous scholars developed different scales to measure servant leadership based on different operational definitions. Accordingly, there is not an agreed upon measure of Servant Leadership; a few measures were used in a limited number of studies, and a relatively large number of measures were used in less than two. The author in this chapter presents the most significant and used operational definitions, a detailed description of the development of the different measuring instruments, as well as a reference to some of the studies that used them, and a final section where the advantages and disadvantages of using certain measures are presented.

In “Historical Derivative of Servant Leadership and the Untold Story of the Influence of Quakerism on Greenleaf’s Teachings,” Tiffany Beaver’s focus is to explore the historical derivation of servant leadership on Greenleaf, and illuminate how certain perspectives profoundly influenced Greenleaf, inspiring how he taught servant leadership. Leadership theories have evolved over the past century. Gaining concrete momentum is servant leadership. This leadership theory capitulates a shift in focus nascent to most organizations in which the leader serves the need of others first. The author also encourages a more widespread adoption of Smith’s servant leadership paradigm, as it visually solidifies the shifting of leading and following prevalent in servant leadership.

Ben Tran in “The Origin of Servant Leadership: The Foundation of Leadership” analyzes the origin, the meaning, the role, and the purpose of authentic servant leadership. Servant leadership suffers from the same limitation as leadership studies in general, and hence, a strong foundation must be built to support the emerging structure of servant leader scholarship. In so doing, the author defines and clarifies the foundation and meaning of leadership, the role and meaning of follower, and the role and meaning of management. The chapter concludes with the explanation of the intended meaning and purpose of authentic servant leadership.

In the final section, “Interviews and Case Studies,” Shawn Carraher and Raj Selladurai present some interesting case studies, applications, practices, and interviews related to servant leadership about individual leaders and organizations including world-class organizations like United Airlines, Southwest Airlines, Hobby Lobby, Chick-Fil-A, Starbucks, Albanese Confectionery, PacMoore, and several others. The authors also discuss current research studies that have found strong positive relationships between servant leadership and organizational outcomes such as productivity, profit, and commitment, as well as job attitudes in terms of satisfaction, commitment, empowerment, and engagement. Hence, the authors believe that servant leadership is here to stay and that organizations are increasingly paying closer attention to it as a significant factor that impacts various organizational outcomes.
Servant Leadership: Research and Practice provides a significant and unique perspective on servant leadership. It focuses on leadership topics relevant to servant leadership that are important to academicians and practitioners in organizations. The book also is unique because it brings together scholarly research from both academicians and practitioners from several countries. Finally, the book integrates cross-disciplinary theoretical foundations, synthesizes relevant thoughts from existing theory in various fields, and presents the application of servant leadership principles and attributes in organizations from high quality theoretical and empirical research. It includes conceptual research, case studies, interviews, applications, practices, surveys, and models. We believe that Servant Leadership: Research and Practice makes a valuable contribution to the fascinating field of servant leadership through exploring and analyzing various attributes, principles, practices, and applications that impact leaders and servant leaders, followers, and organizations of different types and in diverse settings.

Raj Selladurai  
Indiana University Northwest, USA

Shawn Carraher  
University of Texas – Dallas, USA

REFERENCES