

# **The Dichotomy of Servant Leadership and Its practicality on the African Continent**

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## **ABSTRACT**

To many outsiders, Africa is a continent rife with famines, droughts, militia groups, and emaciated children. As far as leadership is concerned, Africa comes across as a continent whose nations are led by incompetent and arrogant, as well as economically ineffective and politically suspicious leaders who undermine their own democracies. As if to give credence to this observation, in 2012, the Mo Ibrahim Foundation failed to award its annual leadership prize, normally reserved for extraordinary performance in delivery of human rights, integrity, transparency in office and building social cohesion by an African head of state who has left power in the last three years. This leaves one wondering whether there is any chance for the emergence of a leader who truly believes and dedicates himself to the welfare of his people. A servant leader. It is important to understand the intricate details in the servant leadership theory and compare it to other leadership theories, as such an understanding helps leaders in adopting this leadership theory. This note examines the servant leadership theory, its dimensions, the behaviors of servant leaders, the strengths in the theory, criticisms against the theory, expected outcomes and goes on to compare the theory to other theories, before consequently drawing conclusions, thus setting an agenda for future research

## **Introduction**

Sendjaya and Cooper (2011) define servant leadership as holistic and multi-dimensional approach to leadership that encompasses the rational, emotional, ethical, and spiritual sides of both leaders and followers. The concept of servant leadership is dichotomous and creates a semantic dissonance at a first glance. But as Catchim (2012) argues, that dichotomy is false, and is borne out of an increasing need to create a false dichotomy between leadership and servant hood. He explains further that as the logic goes, having an organizational structure that identifies someone as "the leader" is somehow tyrannical and loaded down with exorbitant pitfalls. It can thus be concluded that truly effective people and organizations

use "mutual submission" and "team based models" of leadership. As Gupta, McDaniel and Herath (2005) explain, leadership remains a relatively mysterious concept despite having been studied for several decades. At one level, leadership has been understood as the relationship between a person who influences the behavior or actions of other people and those who are so influenced (Mullins, 1996).

As Masango (2002) observes, Africa has a rich and diverse leadership heritage, which though similar at many levels, is notably different from one country and culture to another, as dictated mainly by the largest religions, which are: African religions, Christianity and Islam. Servant leadership is thus not alien to Africans. Unfortunately, this is largely ignored by the media, who only concentrate on leaders who focus on self-aggrandisement (Ngima, 2015). In agreement, Lekota (2011) observes that the African continent is largely in the hands of individuals who are largely focused on selfish personal gains as opposed to serving the community. According to Brubaker (2013), there are different servant leadership models, which propose different behaviors and virtues for the leader. Sendjaya, Sarros, and Santora (2008) look at a model of servant leadership that emphasizes the importance of spirituality and morality, while, Patterson (2004) approaches it from the angle of empowerment and service to the followers. However, according to Heskett (2013), servant leadership is experienced so rarely in Africa because of the trends in the leadership environment, the scarcity of human qualities required, demands that the practice places on the practitioner, and the very nature of the practice itself. That is why this paper will seek to examine servant leadership and its practicality on the African continent

### **The Servant Leadership Theory**

Achua and Lussier (2013) define servant leadership as a leadership that transcends self-interests to serve the needs of others, placing the leader in a non-focal position within a group in such a way that the organizational resources and support are provided to followers without the expectation of acknowledgement, thereby helping them grow, both professionally and personally. As Norhouse (2013) explains, servant leaders believe that they are no better than the people they lead, and is a style of leadership that focuses on leadership from the point of view of the leader and his or her behaviors, emphasizing the need of the leaders to pay attention to the concerns of their followers, empathize with them and nurture them. According to Sendjaya, Sarros and Santora (2008), servant leaders put their followers first, empower them, and help them to develop their full personal capacities and lead in ways that serves the greater good of the organization, community and society at large. Daft (2011) explains that by sharing leadership and displaying authenticity in leadership, servant leaders function as "trustees" who facilitate the development of community among organizational members. As Greenleaf (1977) explains, unlike the traditional leaders who are primarily motivated by aspirations to lead, servant leaders are motivated more by a desire to serve than to lead. As a result, the motivation of servant leaders arises from an underlying attitude of egalitarianism (Sendjaya et al., 2008).

According to Greenleaf (1970), servant leadership begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve first, then a conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. Greenleaf (1970) further points out that servant leadership manifests itself in the care taken by the servant first to make sure that other people's highest priority needs are being served. He suggests that the highest test of servant leadership is whether those

served grow as people, become healthier, wise, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants. Greenleaf (1977) gives another test of servant leadership to be how it affects or benefits the least privileged in the society. According to Achua and Lussier (2013), the following servant leadership characteristics have been confirmed in various studies: listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people, and building community.

### **Dimensions of the Servant Leadership Theory**

Servant leadership, first theorized four decades ago (Greenleaf, 1970), was originally described as a leadership philosophy that values service to others over self-interests. This work carried with it intuitive appeal, and subsequent popular press publications glorified the construct (Spears, 1995). Although ten dimensions of servant leadership were identified, no empirical tests of these dimensions were conducted. Consequently, servant leadership was viewed primarily as a conceptual, albeit rather elusive construct, lacking any consensual framework or empirical rigor (Bass, 2000). According to Barbuto and Wheeler (2006), the construct was rejuvenated by a clarification and scale development procedure that operationalized a testable theory of servant leadership. As Searle and Barbuto (2010) explain, this clarification and measure stimulated subsequent empirical works on servant leadership. When testing for possible gender bias characterized as agentic (masculine) and communal (feminine), Barbuto and Gifford (2010) found no significant differences among servant leaders. Consequently, Sendjaya et al (2008) identified and confirmed altruistic calling, emotional healing, wisdom, persuasive mapping, and organizational stewardship as the five dimensions of servant leadership. These dimensions are discussed next.

#### ***Altruistic Calling***

Altruistic calling is defined as the fundamental conscious choice to serve others (Greenleaf, 1977). This desire to positively influence others through service is deemed central to servant leadership ideology (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006). Servant leaders embrace service to followers and sacrifice self-interest for their followers' development (Bass, 2000; Graham, 1991). Servant leaders desire positive development in individuals, organizations, communities, and societies (Liden et al., 2008). The necessity for altruism in leadership has been recognized by many scholars (Avolio & Locke, 2002; Block, 1996) as has the altruistic nature of servant leadership (Greenleaf, 1977; Sendjaya et al., 2008). Leaders demonstrating a willingness to put followers' interests ahead of their own will likely garner great trust and dedication from followers, leading to higher quality of exchanges.

#### ***Emotional Healing***

Barbuto and Hayden (2011) explain that emotional healing describes the ability to recognize when and how to facilitate the healing process. This includes a leader's ability to foster spiritual recovery from hardship and trauma (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006). According to Liden et al., (2008), servant leaders are highly empathetic and able to show sensitivity to others. They create an environment with their followers enabling them to voice personal and professional concerns (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006). According to Barbuto and

Hayden (2011), leaders who are capable of producing emotional healing in followers are more likely to have strong relationships with them.

### ***Wisdom***

Wisdom describes an ability to pick up cues from the environment and to recognize possible consequences and implications of their observations (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006). Bierly et al. (2000) explains that servant leaders are observant and anticipatory across multiple contexts, enabling them to translate their knowledge into forward action. According to Barbuto and Hayden (2011), there is a great need for leaders with a strong sense of awareness coupled with an ability to apply the knowledge gained through observation. They go on to observe that leaders that are keenly aware and insightful will garner followers' respect and trust, which is necessary to develop strong dyadic relationships.

### ***Persuasive Mapping***

Persuasive mapping describes an ability to use mental models and sound reasoning to encourage lateral thinking in others (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006). Servant leaders high in persuasive mapping are skilled at articulating issues and conceptualizing possibilities by sharing their train of thought. They possess the necessary knowledge to assist and support their followers effectively (Liden et al., 2008). Barbuto and Hayden (2011) argue that persuasiveness-based models are more productive than authority-based models on positive outcomes, arguing further that leaders who are capable of consistently using persuasive mapping rather than legitimization develop stronger relationships with their followers.

### ***Organizational Stewardship***

According to Barbuto and Wheeler (2006), organizational stewardship refers to the extent to which leaders prepare their organization to make a positive contribution to the community and society. A servant leader demonstrates a strong sense of social responsibility and encourages organizations to implement moral and ethical actions that benefit all stakeholders (Sendjaya et al., 2008). This emphasis is accomplished by reaching out to the community through community development programs, outreach activities, and facilitating company policies that benefit the surrounding community, society, and environment (Barbuto and Hayden, 2011). Servant leaders' ideology advocates that their organizations create value for the community (Liden et al., 2008). Those leaders capable of uniting an organization for greater purpose and community citizenship will garner the trust and respect that fosters strong dyadic relations.

### **Servant Leader Behaviors**

According to Liden et al (2008), there are seven leadership behaviors which are core to the servant leadership process. Collectively, these behaviors are the central focus of servant leadership. Individually, each behavior makes a unique contribution to the whole process.

These are:

#### ***Conceptualizing***

According to Northouse (2013), this refers to the servant leader's thorough understanding of the organization, its purposes, complexities, and mission, which allows the servant leader to think through multifaceted problems, to know when something is going wrong and to address problems creatively in accordance with the overall goals of the organization.

### ***Emotional Healing***

This involves being sensitive to the personal concerns and well-being of others, and includes recognizing others' problems and being willing to take the time to address them Sendjaya et al. (2008). According to Northouse (2013), servant leaders exhibit emotional healing, avail themselves to others, stand by them and provide them with support.

### ***Putting Others First***

Greenleaf (1977) calls this the sine qua non of servant leadership and refers to it as the act of using actions and words that clearly demonstrate to followers that their concerns are a priority, including placing followers' interests and success ahead of those of the leader. It may mean the leader breaking from his own tasks to assist followers with theirs.

### ***Helping Followers Grow and Succeed***

This refers to knowing followers' professional and personal goals and helping them to accomplish those aspirations Sendjaya et al (2008). Servant leaders make subordinates' career development a priority, including mentoring followers and providing them with support (Northouse, 2013). At its core, helping followers grow and succeed is about aiding these individuals become self-actualized, and consequently reaching their fullest human potential (Achua and Lussier, 2013).

### ***Behaving Ethically***

This refers to doing the right thing in the right way, which includes holding on to strong ethical standards, including being open, honest and fair with followers (Northouse, 2013). Servant leaders do not compromise their ethical principles in order to achieve success (Greenleaf, 1977).

### ***Empowering***

This refers to allowing followers the freedom to be independent, make decisions on their own, and be self-sufficient. According to Northouse (2013), this is a way for leaders to share power with followers by allowing them to have control and it builds the followers' confidence by allowing them to have control. Empowerment also builds the followers' confidence in their own capacities to think and act on their own because they are given the freedom to handle difficult situations the way they feel is best (Sendjaya et al, 2008).

### ***Creating Value for the Community***

Servant leaders create value for the community by consciously and intentionally giving back to the community (Greenleaf, 1977), something they achieve by getting involved in local activities and encouraging followers to also volunteer for community service. According to Northouse (2013), the creating value for the community is the one true way that leaders can use to link the purposes and goals of an organization with the broader purpose of the community

### **Strengths In The Servant Leadership Theory**

Servant leadership is unique in the way it makes altruism the central component of the leadership process. According to Northouse (2013), servant leadership argues unabashedly that leaders should put followers forward, share control with followers and embrace their growth. It is the only leadership approach that frames the leadership process around the principle of caring for others. Secondly, servant leadership provides a counterintuitive and provocative approach to the use of influence or power in leadership. Nearly all other theories of leadership treat influence as a positive factor in the leadership process, but servant leadership does just the opposite, arguing that a leader should not dominate, direct or control, but share control and influence. The main goal for servant leadership is to give up control rather than seek it. In other words, servant leadership is an influence process that does not incorporate influence in the traditional way. Lastly, the followers' readiness to receive servant leadership moderates the potential usefulness of leading from this approach (Liden, et al, 2008).

### **Criticisms For The Servant Leadership Theory**

Although servant leadership has many positive features, this approach has many limitations. First, the paradoxical nature of the title "servant leadership" creates a semantic noise that diminishes the potential of value of the approach, because the name appears contradictory, which means that servant leadership could end up being perceived as fanciful or whimsical (Northouse, 2013). On the other hand, servant leadership is perceived as implying a following, which can be easily perceived as being the opposite of leadership. Although servant leadership incorporates influence, the mechanism of how influence functions as a part of servant leadership is not fully explicated in the approach. On the other hand, Nayab (2011) points out that a major servant leadership criticism relates to its soft approach, which is unsuitable for a competitive environment. This is because as Nayab (2011) explains, the servant leader lags behind leaders following other leadership styles. He further observes that as the servant leader focuses on "serving" and "inspiring" followers, accountability or responsibility gets diluted, explaining that much of the core characteristics of servant leadership remain unsuitable on many occasions because, first, a servant leader is more often than not required to discard the characteristic of openness in order to maintain confidentiality and the integrity of the community's core values and beliefs, for legal reasons and for the protection of others (Blanchard & Hodges, 2003). Secondly, during crisis situations, servant leaders find themselves having to suspend the listening and consultative processes and being forced to issue specific orders (Nayab, 2011). Also, servant leadership thrusts on human resource development would fall flat on its face when market pressures force the organization to downsize (Sendjaya et al, 2008).



According to Blanchard and Hodges (2003), there is a raging debate among servant leadership scholars regarding the core dimensions of the theory. This is because, although servant leadership is hypothesized to include a multitude of abilities, traits and behaviors, to this day researchers are unable to reach a consensus on a common definition or theoretical framework for servant leadership (Nayab, 2011). Consequently, Northouse (2013) suggests that, until a larger body of findings is published on servant leadership, the robustness of theoretical formulations about it will remain limited. As Blanchard and Hodges (2003) observes, a large segment of the writings on servant leadership have a prescriptive overtone, that imply that good leaders “put others first”. While advocating an altruistic is commendable, it has a utopian ring because it conflicts with individual autonomy and other principles of leadership as directing, concern for production, goal setting and creating a vision (Gergen, 2006). Also, along with the “value-push” prescriptive quality, there is a moralistic nature that seems to surround servant leadership (Blanchard and Hodges, 2003). As a result, many practitioners of servant leadership are not necessarily researchers who want to conduct studies to test the validity of servant leadership (Sendjaya et al, 2008).

As Achua and Lussier (2013) point out, the word “servant” implies a low status for the person serving and its use connotes negative feelings about leadership, especially for those who have traditionally thought of leaders as powerful visionaries leading the pack-the “great man” theory of leadership. Finally, it is unclear why “conceptualizing” is included as one of the servant leadership behaviors in the model of servant leadership. This is because conceptualization is a cognitive ability and researchers in servant leadership have not given enough reasons as to why it should be considered a determinant of servant leadership (Northouse, 2013).

Nayab (2011) observes that the major function of leadership is to induce an employee-organization fit by aligning individual goals with organizational goals. Servant leadership gives primary importance to individual needs and aspirations and tries to make employees perform their organizational tasks through inspiration (Sendjaya et al, 2008). This method does not always work and does not effectively resolve issues related to individual-organization fit (Northouse, 2013). An analysis of servant leadership theory strengths and weaknesses reveal that this leadership approach leads to unresolved cases of individual goals and values conflicting with the organizational goals and values, and leads to organizational goals remaining unfulfilled owing to employees not giving the attention, priority or urgency such goals deserves (Nayab, 2011).

Similarly, the servant leader's commitment to building community among the team members might not go down well with all team members, many of whom would have their own personal lives and wish to keep work and family life separate (Achua and Lussier, 2007).The servant leadership style works best when everyone in the organization is committed to the concept, and has certain core skills and behaviors (Northouse, 2013). According to Nayab (2011), servant leadership is not a quick fix and the real benefits of servant leadership become apparent only in the long run.

## **Servant Leadership Outcomes**

Although servant leadership focuses on behaviors primarily, it is important to also examine potential outcomes of servant leadership. Northouse (2013) points out that the main outcomes of servant leadership are better follower performance and growth, organizational performance and societal impact. Greenleaf (2003) explains further that, the central goal of servant leadership is healthy organizations that nurture individual growth, strengthen organizational performance and in the end, produce a positive impact on the society. Following is a detailed examination of servant leadership outcomes.

### ***Follower performance and growth***

Under servant leadership, the servant leader's behavior focuses on recognizing the followers' contributions and helping them realize their human potential (Northouse, 2013). The expected outcome for the followers is greater self-actualization, that is, the followers realize their full capabilities when leaders nurture them and help them with their personal goals by giving them control (Sendjaya et al 2008).

Secondly, Meuser et al., (2011) explains that servant leadership has a favorable impact on the subordinate's in-role performance, that is, the way the followers do their assigned work. Lastly, the followers become servant leaders themselves (Sendjaya et al, 2008). Greenleaf (2003) conceptualization of servant leadership hypothesizes that when followers receive caring and empowerment from ethical leaders, they in turn will likely begin treating others in this way. Servant leadership thus produces ripple effect in which servant leaders create more servant leaders.

### ***Organizational performance***

In addition to affecting followers and their performance, Northouse (2013) points out that servant leadership has an influence on organizational performance. Northouse (2013) further points out that servant leadership also affects the way organizational teams function. According to Hu and Liden (2011), servant leadership enhances team effectiveness by increasing the members' shared confidence that they could be effective as a work group.

### ***Societal impact***

Although societal impact is not commonly measured in studies of servant leadership, there are examples of servant leadership's impact on society that are highly visible. For example, the work of mother Teresa, whose years of service for the hungry, homeless and unwanted resulted in the creation of a new religious order, the missionaries of charity. This order now has more than 1 million workers in over 40 countries worldwide. Mother Teresa's servant leadership model had an extraordinary impact on societies around the world (Meuser et al., 2011).

## **Comparing Servant Leadership To Other Leadership Theories**



In order to understand servant leadership, it is important at this point to examine the similarities between servant leadership and other contemporary leadership models, namely transformational, authentic, and spiritual leadership.

### ***Servant Leadership versus Transformational Leadership***

According to Northouse (2013), transformational leadership is “a process whereby a person engages with others and creates a connection that raises the level of motivation and morality in both the leader and the followers”. He further opines that this type of a leader is attentive to the needs and the motives of the followers and tries to help them reach their fullest potential. According to Bass and Riggio (2006), transformational leaders motivate people to “do their best” and make their followers perform beyond expectations by moving them to transcend their own self-interest for a higher purpose or vision.

According to Farling et al. (1999), servant leadership is similar to transformational leadership in that both approaches encourage leaders and followers to ‘raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality’. However, servant leaders are conceptually distinct from transformational leaders in that unlike transformational leaders, servant leaders demonstrate a natural inclination to serve marginalized people. Bass (2000) argues that transformational leaders seek to empower and elevate followers rather than keep followers weak and dependent; however the effects of that increased motivation and commitment does not necessarily benefit the followers, as ‘there is nothing in the transformational leadership model that says leaders should serve followers for the good of followers’ (Graham, 1991). However, servant leadership is similar to transformational leadership in that servant leadership requires that leaders lead their followers for the followers’ own ultimate good (Burns, 1978). Secondly, servant leaders, unlike transformational leaders, set their priorities in such a way that the followers’ needs come first, then the organization’s needs and their own needs last (Graham, 1991). On the other hand, Barbuto and Wheeler (2006) observe that the role of servant leaders is to serve followers, whereas the role of transformational leaders is to inspire their followers to pursue organizational goals. Consequently, the focus of servant leadership is first and foremost on their individual follower, something which takes precedence over the organizational objectives.

The rationale behind this deliberate focus on followers is well summarized by Stone et al. (2004), who asserts that “organizational goals will be achieved on a long-term basis only by first facilitating the growth, development, and general well-being of the individuals who comprise the organization”. Unlike transformational leadership whose primary concern is “performance beyond expectations”, the sine qua non of servant leadership is the followers’ holistic moral and ethical development. In fact, from its earliest conceptualization, servant leadership has been considered a leadership approach that elevates leaders and followers both morally and ethically (Greenleaf, 1977).

### ***Servant Leadership versus Authentic Leadership***

According to Gardner et al. (2005), authentic leaders are individuals who have a deep awareness of their own and others’ values/perspectives and the context in which they operate, and are positive in their outlook. Although self-awareness and self regulation are not very common in servant leadership, the perspectives in authentic leadership are similar to those in servant leadership (Avolio et al., 2004). On the

other hand, servant leadership shares similar key characteristics with authentic leadership, in that both explicitly recognize the importance of positive moral perspective, self-awareness, self-regulation (authentic behavior), positive modeling, and a focus on follower development for a leader to function effectively (Avolio & Gardner, 2005). Barbuto and Wheeler (2006) observe that through positive modeling, servant leaders encourage followers to demonstrate a consistency between what they say and do, are transparent about their limitations, and strongly engage in moral reasoning with their followers. In conclusion, servant leadership emphasizes a spiritual orientation, which is also an important source of motivation for spiritual leaders, something which is not strongly highlighted in the authentic leadership model (Whittington et al., 2006).

### ***Servant Leadership versus Spiritual Leadership***

Blackaby and Blackaby (2001) define spiritual leadership as an emerging paradigm designed to create an intrinsically motivated, learning organization that maximizes the triple bottom line. They further observe that spiritual leadership involves motivating and inspiring workers through a hope/faith in a vision of service to key stakeholders and a corporate culture based on the values of altruistic love to produce a highly motivated, committed and productive workforce, and conclude by observing that the main purpose of spiritual leadership is to tap into the fundamental needs of both leader and follower for spiritual well-being through calling and membership; to create vision and value congruence across the individual, empowered team, and organization levels; and, ultimately, to foster higher levels of employee well-being, organizational commitment, financial performance, and social responsibility – the Triple Bottom Line. According to Fry (2003), there are points of convergence and divergence between servant leadership and spiritual leadership. Both servant leadership and spiritual leadership models appeal to virtuous leadership practices and intrinsic motivating factors to cultivate a sense of meaning, purpose, and interconnectedness in the organization. In particular, both approaches attempt to facilitate a holistic and integrated organization where individuals engage in meaningful and intrinsically motivating work (Russell and Stone, 2002). Servant leadership finds its expression through service, which at the same time becomes a source from which leaders derive the meaning and purpose of life (Fry, 2003). Fry (2003) further observes that servant leadership has three main qualities, which are vision, altruistic love and hope (faith).

Greenleaf (1977) points out that servant leaders “need to have a sense for the unknowable and be able to foresee the unforeseeable”. On the other hand, Fry (2003) observes that the values categorized under altruistic love and hope (faith), that is, trust, integrity, acceptance, humility, compassion, and perseverance, are also reflected in servant leadership. Integrity, for example, is conceptually associated with servant leadership (Wong & Page, 2003), as is trust (Joseph & Winston, 2005). Given the above similarities, one could argue that servant leadership is embedded in spiritual leadership, in that servant leadership is a manifestation of altruistic love in the action of pursuing transcendent vision and being driven to satisfy needs for calling and membership. However, it would be equally valid to argue the contrary, whereby spirituality is the motivational basis for servant leaders to engage others in authentic and profound ways that transform them to be what they are capable of becoming. Sendjaya et al. (2008) concludes that

although spirituality one of the many important dimensions of servant leadership, there are many other equally important dimensions such as self-sacrificial servanthood and moral values, which are not clearly articulated in the available literature on servant leadership.

Through the comparative analysis of the three different leadership models, it is clear that servant leadership incorporates a follower-oriented, service, spiritual, and moral dimensions of leadership, as is urgently needed in the current organizational context. Sendjaya et al. (2008) observes that “the strength of the servant leadership model and its many links to encouraging follower learning, growth, and autonomy, suggests that the untested theory will play a role in the future leadership of the learning organization”.

### ***Servant Leadership versus Transactional Leadership***

Transactional leadership is a style of leadership in which the leader promotes compliance of his followers through both rewards and punishments (TLT, 2010). Unlike other styles of leadership, which seek to either improve organizational performance or the welfare of the followers, leaders using the transactional approach look to maintain the status quo (Washington, 2007). As Washington (2007) further observes, servant leadership and transactional leadership are distinguishable in a number of ways. First, servant leadership emphasizes activities that demonstrate concern for the followers’ well-being, while transactional leadership focuses on the routine maintenance activities of allocating resources and monitoring and directing followers in order to achieve organizational goals (Kanungo, 2001). On the other hand, unlike servant leaders who influence followers through personal development and empowerment, the transactional leaders use rewards, sanctions, and formal authority and position to induce compliance from followers (Northouse, 2013).

According to Bass (2008), transactional leaders create strong expectations for employee work behaviors, along with clear indications of rewards employees will receive in exchange for meeting transactional leaders’ expectations. Thus, transactional leaders use contingent reward behavior to set up transactions with followers in order to achieve work goals (Northouse, 2013). Sendjaya et al., (2008) observes that transactional leaders work to induce compliant behavior by using rewards, sanctions and formal authority, which are all influence strategies, which contradicts the empowerment strategies emphasized by servant leaders

According to Bass (2000), transactional leaders utilizing management-by-exception do not involve themselves with their followers until deviations from work standards occur. On the other hand, Ware (2011) observes that passive leaders wait until followers’ behaviors have created problems before they take corrective action against obvious deviations from performance standards, while active leaders monitor follower performance in order to anticipate deviations from standards prior to their becoming problems. Both active and passive, management-by-exception (which are common in transactional leadership) emphasize the use of tactics such as discipline, punishment, negative feedback (Avolio & Gardner, 2005), and other influence strategies that oppose the empowerment tactics embraced in servant leadership (Northouse, 2013).

## **Analysis And Conclusions**

### ***Analysis***

From the study it is clear that servant leadership gives the organization a human face, by encouraging a caring-benefactor relationship between the leaders and the followers (workers in the organization). There however, seems to be a paucity of literature on servant leadership, because majority of the available literature is based on Robert Greenleaf findings, while most of the remaining literature is on biblical or religious contexts. There is thus a need for researchers to bring a new perspective to servant leadership, different from and not based on Robert Greenleaf's writings.

On the other hand, servant leadership brings a totally different outlook to the whole issue of power and leadership. This is because, while nearly all the other leadership theories treat influence as a positive factor, servant leadership non dominance, arguing that leaders should not dominate, or control, but should share control and influence, with the main goal being to give up control rather than to seek it. Servant leadership also seems to encourage passivity and may not work in some organizations, especially those in high power distance contexts. While it is obvious that servant leadership is mainly about shifting from the old paradigms of power hoarding by the leaders, to new paradigm of power sharing, it seems weak when compared to the other leadership styles, and may in most instances not fit with the current generations' will to power, egocentric nature and emphasis on assertiveness on leaders. Servant leadership also seems different and a threat to those who like wielding power or those who see power in a hierarchical structure. From the available literature, one is forced to ask themselves whether being a servant leader is just about being nice for the sake of niceness. However, after looking at different literature from different researchers in different contexts, one is forced to conclude that servant leadership does indeed work.

### ***Conclusions and Implications***

From the above study, it can be safely concluded that servant leadership is more a personal orientation toward life which grows from a particular worldview, with religion, especially the Judeo-Christian worldview being the main one. It is also clear that leadership is not constrained by context, but happens in every area of human interaction, including industry, education, government, politics, and routine social interactions. While in the past, servant leadership was treated like folklore in leadership forums, mainly due to a paucity of empirical research on the subject, all that has changed since the true impact of servant leadership can now be tested. While this study presents a positive picture of servant leadership, the obstacles to its implementation especially in third world countries is substantial. These challenges are not only in its implementation at the organization level, but in the research sphere.

Although the concept of servant leadership research is still in the beginning, the opportunity for research is immense. This is because research and findings on servant leadership would benefit those interested in servant leadership in the third world context, especially those disenchanted with the current leadership models in Africa and the third world in general, but also those in other parts of the world who are increasingly engaged in business and other forms of cross-cultural interaction with Africa and the third

world in general. Future research should study other impacts of servant leadership to better quantify its impact on organizational and individual growth.

Further research should test the outcomes of servant leadership, especially the propensity of followers to become servant leaders themselves. On the other hand, the key implication in all this is that servant leadership does not exist merely as a tool to use; rather, it is more of an archetype or ego ideal that daily interactions, which does not represent leadership that merely serves, but servant leadership as a whole, which has more to do with *being* than merely *doing*. It can thus be concluded that servant is all about being a servant.

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