

THE CONNECTION BETWEEN SERVANT LEADERSHIP AND
JOB BURNOUT

by

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Abstract

Servant leadership is a leadership approach that aims to reduce burnout and enhance job satisfaction in organizations due to its emphasis on, character, vision, team work, serving and empowerment. Rath and Clifton (2004) have recently analyzed data collected by The Gallup Organization for more than 4 million employees. They found that praise and recognition, key attributes in servant leadership, are directly related to employee productivity, engagement, longevity, organizational loyalty, and job satisfaction and safety incidents. This study hypothesized that:

1. The positive aspects of servant leadership would be positively correlated to professional efficacy, and negatively correlated to emotional exhaustion and cynicism, whereas the opposite would be true for the negative aspect of leadership.
2. The positive aspects of servant leadership would be positively correlated to job satisfaction, whereas the negative aspect of leadership would be negatively correlated to job satisfaction.
3. Self reported scores for servant leadership would be significantly higher than ratings by subordinates.
4. Institutions that explicitly endorse the principles of servant leadership would score higher in servant leadership, job satisfaction and professional efficacy, and would score lower in emotional exhaustion and cynicism.

In this quantitative study, a total of 145 individuals were utilized from three organizations in Alberta. Two of these organizations endorse the principles of the servant

leadership approach and the other does not. The independent variable is servant leadership and the dependent variables are job burnout and job satisfaction. The results indicate general support for Hypotheses 1 and 2, specifically linking servant leadership to job burnout and job satisfaction. Results also support Hypothesis 3, highlighting a self-serving attribution bias. Finally, servant led organizations did have higher levels of the servant leadership qualities, job satisfaction as well as lower burnout levels, which supports Hypothesis 4. Implications of results are discussed relating to leadership development, counseling psychology, and use of the Servant Leadership Profile (both self-and 360) as assessment and diagnostic tools for individuals and organizations.

INTRODUCTION

Have you ever been impacted by someone's leadership, in either a negative or positive way? Perhaps you have felt the internal rush of a word of encouragement, the nod of approval or a reaching hand of support. On the other hand have you experienced the stinging pain of being ignored, marginalized or dismissed? If you answer yes, then you are not alone and will want to read on. Those in positions of influence have touched most of us.

Job burnout has historically been associated with the helping professions including doctors, teachers, nurses, social workers and counselors; however, mounting evidence suggests that job burnout is a major threat to a wide variety of individuals engaged in various occupations. In a recent study involving more than 180 Canadian organizations representing more than 500,000 full-time workers, researchers found that psychological conditions of depression, anxiety, stress and other mental health conditions affecting employee health and productivity are the leading causes of both short-term disability and long-term disability (Watson Wyatt Worldwide, 2003). According to a recent Employee Engagement Index (The Gallup Organization), American workers fit into the following categories: *truly engaged* at 29%, 54 % *not- engaged* and a stunning 17 % are *actively disengaged* (Crabtree, 2004). The definitions for the three types of employees are outlined by Crabtree (2004) as follows:

1. Engaged employees work with passion and feel a profound connection to their company. They drive innovation and move the organization forward.
2. Not-engaged employees are essentially *checked-out*. They sleepwalk through their workday, putting time – but not energy or passion – into their work.
3. Actively disengaged employees aren't just unhappy at work; they're busy acting out their unhappiness. Every day, these workers undermine what their engaged coworkers accomplish. (p.1)

The ramifications of the estimated 22 million workers in the United States that are actively disengaged include the loss of between \$250 and \$300 billion every year in lost productivity; however, if one accounts for injury, illness, turnover, absences, and fraud, the costs could surpass \$1 trillion (Rath and Clifton, 2004).

There appears to be a growing crisis in the current workforce. Employees are increasingly unable to cope with the mounting pressures; this leads to fatigue, cynicism, dissatisfaction and sub-optimal personal effectiveness. Individuals are not the only ones who suffer in these situations; organizations are also impacted. Ybema, Smulders and Bongers (2003), in a longitudinal study with approximately 1,500 workers in 34 companies in the Netherlands, found that “absence from work could partly be predicted based on job satisfaction and burnout in earlier time waves” (p.1). In other words, dissatisfied and emotionally exhausted employees are more likely to be absent from work. Moreover, Ybema et al. found stability in the frequency of absence and lost time, citing, “those who were absent relatively frequently in one year, were also likely to be frequently absent in the following years” (p.1). The scenario becomes predictable: If employees do not have job satisfaction and are suffering from burnout, they will likely be absent from work more, and this absenteeism rate will likely be maintained. This is an example of the direct negative implications for organizations when employees’ well-being is compromised.

This crisis is mitigated when employers provide wellness centers, free counseling, and stress reduction programs for their employees. Such programs can be beneficial; however, if the fundamental issue of leadership is not addressed within the organization, these programs are nothing but Band-Aids, providing only temporary relief. Leadership is

a crucial factor. Based on Gallup data, Smith and Rutigliano (2003) have “found that when top producers leave companies, 70 % of the time it is because of a breakdown in their relationship with their direct supervisor” (p.1). The influence of leaders penetrates our lives and directly affects the quality of our work experience. Some researchers, such as Meindl and Ehrlich (1987) have suggested that too much emphasis has been placed on the importance of leadership as an influencer of organizational performance, suggesting external factors may play a more significant role:

These external control models of organizations quite naturally raise questions about the relative importance of leaders and leadership factors to the functioning of firms, more or less implicitly, these views diminish the traditional significance that has been accorded to leadership as a direct, instrumental force sharing organizational outcomes (p. 91).

A landmark study by Lieberman and O'Connor also suggests that leadership does not make as much difference to organizational outcomes as do situational factors. (Thomas, 1988). However, Thomas (1988) counters this claim, suggesting the influential study by Lieberman and O'Connor is lacking in methodological integrity, and “has been held my some to be inadequate and insufficient to support the contention that leaders don't make a difference” (p.388). Thomas (1998) conducted a similar study to that of Lieberman and O'Connor correcting for some of the methodological problems, concluding that “in relationship to the two performance variables, profit and sales, for which leader influence is mostly likely detected, leadership differences have a substantial impact” (p. 397). Day and Lord (1988), based on their literature review, also conclude that “executive leadership can explain as much as 45% of an organization's performance” (p. 453).

Jaskyte (2003) also recognizes the importance of leadership within the organization when she writes: “Leadership is seen as one of the most important variables

affecting the attitudinal dimension of organizational life, and has received substantial attention in terms of its possible effect on job satisfaction and commitment” (p.29).

The quality of one’s leadership can have detrimental, negative and damaging impacts, or it can have beneficial, positive and productive impacts on work culture and on people’s lives (Coady & Kent, 1990).

There is a need within institutions, corporations and churches to more effectively develop leaders to meet the current needs, which have undergone much change. Leonard (2003), a leadership development consultant, articulates this change as follows:

The requirements for leadership change in contemporary organizations has changed significantly in the past several decades. With the rapid transformation of the global economy from an industrial/manufacturing base to a postindustrial and information base, a reexamination of our models for leadership and, consequently, leadership development is in order (p.4).

Everyday, millions of individuals interact with their boss, manager or supervisor in a myriad of work environments and either prosper or wilt. Crabtree (2004) has suggested that, “negative workplace relationships may be a big part of why so many American employees are not engaged with their jobs” (p. 1). A survey carried out by the *Gallup Management Journal* to probe the impact of workplace relationships found that the best differentiator between engaged and disengaged employees was the ability of the manager to set the subordinate up for success. In addition, engaged employees perceived an element of “selflessness in the their best and closest partnerships, particularly those with their managers” (Crabtree, 2004, p. 2).

Morely (2003) captures the essence of what hinders and helps in meaningful engagement through investigation of Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) workplaces. Morely gives us specific examples of hindered engagement in some RCMP

members:

...the disengaging power of a supervisor's comment can be seen in the following quotes officers reported hearing from their supervisors. A comment to a female officer back when females were newer to the RCMP, "Nobody wanted you here. I got stuck with you". A comment to another female officer when moved to a specialty section, "We're just taking our token woman". A comment from a unit commander to one of his junior supervisors as the unit commander leaves the office at 4:00 p.m. while the team stayed to work overtime on a search warrant, "If anything goes wrong, it's on your shoulders" (p.50).

Although there were many comments made by supervisors that caused disengagement on the part of officers, there were also some encouraging and engaging interactions. Morely (2003) relays these:

In contrast to the disengaging critical incident where a supervisor would check up on officers in an unmarked police car, one officer reported an engaging incident where her supervisor would come out on the road to simply talk with her. She stated, "They cared about me". Other critical incidents that typify this category included supervisors believing in the officer and acting on this by taking actions such as allowing an officer to work on a special project. Another officer returned to work only four months after having a child. Her supervisor let her go home to breast feed and attend to her child when necessary (p.54-55).

The power of leadership is evident in the lives of these police officers; engagement and disengagement were dictated by the behavior, actions and words of supervisors.

In order to determine how leadership approaches must change, it is important to examine what they have looked like historically. Leonard (2003) provides an excellent summary of the leadership research and theory in the 20th century. He suggests that, prior to the 1950s, the command-and-control style of leadership dominated with an emphasis on the leadership characteristics of capacity, achievement, responsibility, participation and status. This approach called for the leaders to direct, control, and influence subordinates in an attempt to meet organizational goals. This period, as elucidated by

Leonard also focused on three factors: “the personal traits of leaders, specific competencies of leaders, and the situation requiring leadership” (p.5).

Leonard (2003) suggests that leadership theory development took a turn, in part due to the effect of World War II (specifically the spread of authoritarianism and fascism), when individuals like Kurt Lewin “focused as much on the human potential as on the control and coordination of effort” (p.7). Lewin’s approach posits that individuals possess inherent motivation and responsibility, and the task for leadership is to arrange the organizational structure to best facilitate this human potential. This approach also expresses the need to balance tasks and people. Transformational leadership models emerged out of this humanistic potential approach, and leadership was seen as a social exchange. Leonard states, “At the heart of these models [transformational] was the leader’s ability to create a vision that inspires and motivates people to achieve more than they thought they were capable of” (p.8).

Leonard (2003) suggests that Chemers has attempted to integrate the major approaches to leadership (trait, situational, contingency, transformational and humanistic) by looking at leadership through the zones of self-deployment, transactional relationships, and team deployment. Servant leadership is conspicuously absent in Leonard’s description of leadership theory development. This may be driven by the large amount of research attention that transformational leadership has received compared to servant leadership (Stone, Russell, and Patterson, 2003). Servant leadership has gained momentum only recently, partly because servant leading is commonly perceived as an oxymoron. (Sendjaya & Sarros , 2002). Sendjaya and Sarros report that servant leadership is being practiced by some very influential and successful companies. They cite the following:

As one of the largest mechanical contractors in America, TDIndustries has employed servant leadership as an organizational-wide leadership development philosophy and program. CEO and Chairman of TDIndustries, Jack Lowe (1998), asserts that when people become grounded in servant leadership, trust grows and the foundation for organizational excellence is established. In a similar vein, Synovus Financial Corporation, a multi-billion dollar financial services firm, illustrates servant leadership through a strong commitment to family-oriented policies such as work flexibility, leave for new parents, work/life balance, and advancing women in their careers. Under the leadership of founder and CEO Herb Kelleher, Southwest Airlines had one of the most distinguished organizational cultures in America. The company has been recognized as one of the most admired companies in the world and the most admired airline in the world year after year. Servant leadership principles provide the foundation for altruism, defined as the constructive, gratifying service to others, and one of the core values of Southwest's culture (Quick, 1992, p.2).

Robert Greenleaf, the father of servant leadership, defines this style of leadership as one where a leader truly takes into consideration the needs of others and makes it a priority to empower and develop these individuals in a spirit of true service (Greenleaf, 1977). According to Page and Wong (2000), "servant leadership incorporates the ideals of empowerment, total quality, team building and participatory management, and the service ethic into a leadership philosophy" (p.69).

If the power and influence that leaders exert were channeled in the right direction, by caring for, developing and empowering individuals, as well as exhorting them to be meaningfully engaged in their work, there would be much less chance that these individuals would burnout on the job. However, when this power and influence is used in self-serving and coercive ways, job burnout becomes a likely result.

In order to evaluate servant leadership in this study, it will be imperative to measure servant leadership qualities in a reliable and valid manner. The assessment of leadership is "an area that is under-researched in the abundant literature on servant

leadership” (Page & Wong, 2000, p.70). Fortunately, a servant leadership assessment tool has recently been developed, which will be used in this study. This tool helps to address the reliability of a self-reported servant leadership assessment. Most people want to be viewed in a positive light (Streiner & Norman, 1995) and leaders are no exception; therefore, in addition to seeking self-report, the study will also examine how others evaluate a leader. Any disparities between other’s perceptions of leadership and self-perceptions of leadership will be evaluated.

The predictor variables in this study will be Empowering Others; Serving Others; Participatory Leadership; Visionary Leadership; Inspirational Leadership; Authentic Leadership; and Power and Pride as measured by both the Servant Leadership Profile – Revised (SLP – R) and the Servant Leadership Profile – 360 (SLP – 360) (Wong, 2004). The criterion variables will be Emotional Exhaustion, Cynicism, and Professional Efficacy as measured by the Maslach Burnout Inventory – General Survey (MBI – GS) (Schaufeli, Maslach, and Jackson, 1996) and Intrinsic Job Satisfaction, Extrinsic Job Satisfaction and General Job Satisfaction as measured by the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) (Weiss, Dawis, England and Lofquist, L.H., 1967).

This study hypothesizes the following:

The positive characteristics of Servant Leadership (Empowering Others, Serving Others, Participatory Leadership, Visionary Leadership, Inspirational Leadership and Authentic Leadership) as measured by the SLP – 360, will be significantly and positively correlated with Professional Efficacy, as measured by the MBI – GS and negatively correlated with Emotional Exhaustion and Cynicism, also measured by the MBI – GS. The negative characteristic of leadership, Power and Pride– (SLP – 360) will be negatively correlated with Emotional Exhaustion and Cynicism (MBI – GS) and

positively correlated with Professional Efficacy (MBI – GS).

The positive characteristics of Servant Leadership (Empowering Others, Serving Others, Participatory Leadership, Visionary Leadership, Inspirational Leadership and Authentic Leadership) as measured by the SLP – 360, will be significantly and positively correlated to Intrinsic Job Satisfaction, Extrinsic Job Satisfaction and General Job Satisfaction as measured by the MSQ. The negative characteristic of leadership Power and Pride will be negatively correlated to Intrinsic Job Satisfaction (MSQ), Extrinsic Job Satisfaction (MSQ) and General Job Satisfaction (MSQ).

Self-reported leader scores, as measured by the SLP – R on the positive characteristics of Servant Leadership (Empowering Others, Serving Others, Participatory Leadership, Visionary Leadership, Inspirational Leadership, and Authentic Leadership) will be significantly higher than ratings by their subordinates (SLP – 360). In addition, self-reported leader scores (SLP – R) for Power and Pride (SLP – 360), will be significantly lower than ratings by their subordinates (SLP – 360).

Institutions that explicitly endorse the principles of servant leadership will have significantly higher scores for (a) the positive characteristics of Servant Leadership (Empowering Others, Serving Others, Participatory leadership, Visionary Leadership, Inspirational Leadership and Authentic Leadership) (SLP – 360), (b) Professional Efficacy (MBI – GS) and (c) Intrinsic Job Satisfaction (MSQ), Extrinsic Job Satisfaction (MSQ) and General Job Satisfaction (MSQ), compared to institutions that do not. In addition, institutions that explicitly endorse the principles of servant leadership will have significantly lower scores for (a) The negative characteristic of leadership (Power and Pride) (SLP – 360), and (b) Emotional Exhaustion (MBI – GS) and Cynicism (MBI – GS), compared to institutions that do not.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review will focus on four areas. The first will be servant leadership, which has been written about extensively, mainly in the fields of business and management. The second area will be job burnout, which has been studied extensively and empirically within the field of psychology over the past 25 years. Job satisfaction is the third area, and it will be reviewed in the context of how it relates to leadership. The final focus will be on the techniques and implications of assessment methodology, with a specific consideration of self- versus other assessment.

Servant Leadership

Description of servant leadership. Robert Greenleaf published his first essay on servant leadership in 1977 and this seminal work was an impetus for the emergence of a reexamination of a leadership approach based on service. Greenleaf should be credited for promoting an existing leadership approach to a broader audience. The measuring test or measuring stick for servant leadership according to Greenleaf (1997) is:

The servant leader is servant first. It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. The best test, and difficult to administer, is: Do those served grow as persons? Do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants? And, what is the effect on the least privileged in society; will they benefit, or, at least, not be further deprived? (p.14).

Laub (2004) clarifies that Greenleaf's "test" for servant leadership is not a definition, but a "beautiful description of the affects of servant leadership" (p.2).

Concerns are also raised by Laub regarding the need to clearly and concisely define the terms of leader, leadership and servant leadership, in order to pave the way for

responsible servant leadership scholarship.

Larry Spears, the current Chief Executive Officer of The Greenleaf Center for Servant leadership, has developed a list of ten characteristics that represent a servant leader, based on his readings of Greenleaf's works. The ten characteristics are: listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people, and building community (Spears, 2002).

Laub (2003), credited with the development of the Organizational Leadership Assessment (OLA) model, suggests that servant leadership be defined as “the understanding and practice of leadership that places the good of those led over the self-interest of the leader” (p. 3). In order to better understand the concept of servant leadership, Laub (2004) recommends that the term leadership be clearly defined and proposes that “leadership is an intentional change process through which leaders and followers, joined by a shared purpose, initiate action to pursue a common vision” (p.5). He suggests that there are two groups of individuals that gravitate toward the servant leadership model; there are those that find servant leadership aligning with what they believe is the right way to lead, and those that feel servant leadership works well in organizations by producing desirable results. Laub acknowledges that organizations could operate as servants or as autocrats, but suggests in reality many companies are in the middle:

However, most organizational leadership is neither autocratic or servant. By focusing only on these two extremes of leadership we are missing the reality in which most workers experience their organizations. The reality is that most organizations today operate with a paternalistic view of leadership and that, more than any other reason, hinders them from becoming true servant organizations (p. 2).

Laub (2003) developed the OLA model based upon a three-part Delphi survey

using fourteen authorities in the field of servant leadership. He found that servant leaders value people, develop people, build community, display authenticity, provide leadership and share leadership. These six elements provide a descriptive framework for defining servant leadership (Laub, 2004).

Page and Wong (2000) advocate the benefits of servant leadership. They define a servant leader as a “leader whose primary purpose for leading is to serve others by investing in their development and well being for the benefit of accomplishing tasks and goals for the common good” (p.70). In addition, they have provided a conceptual picture of leadership called Expanding Circles of Servant Leadership (Page & Wong). They propose that at the center is character (a servant’s heart) and from there the circle goes outward, like a bull’s eye, to include relationships (edifying others), leadership tasks (doing the work of a leader), leadership process (improving organizational processes) and leadership role models (impacting society and culture).

Rinehart (1998) provides another helpful perspective on servant leadership. He contends, “in servant leadership, serving is the expression of leadership, regardless of how people follow. Serving is both the end as well as the means” (p. 41). Servant leadership is not only concerned with producing results, but also with serving for the inherent value and good in itself.

A more recent influential leader, Steven Covey, echoes these sentiments on servant leadership. He suggests that there are eight characteristics of people who are principle-centered leaders. He suggests that leaders: (a) are continually learning, (b) are service-oriented, (c) radiate positive energy, (d) believe in other people, (e) lead balanced lives, (f) see life as an adventure, (g) are synergistic, and (h) exercise for self-renewal (Covey, 1991). Covey’s training seminars encourage leaders to work from a mindset of

self-transcendence; he suggests one needs to be mindful and appreciative of the other people in a shared working environment. In essence, one needs to serve others.

Patterson (2003) contributes to a current theoretical understanding of servant leadership, purporting that servant leadership includes the virtues of love, humility, altruism, vision, trust, empowerment and service. Patterson also strongly suggests that servant leadership is not merely a subset of transformational leadership; because the “focus of the [transformational] leader is on the organization, or organizational objectives”, whereas the focus of the servant leader is “on the followers”(p.2). Winston (2003) extends Patterson’s model by addressing the response of followers to a leader that serves:

The followers Agape love results in an increase in both the commitment to the leader and the follower’s own self-efficacy. The higher levels of commitment and self efficacy results in a higher level of intrinsic motivation that leads to a higher level of altruism toward the leader and the leader’s desire to see the organization do well. This leads to higher levels of service to the leader (p. 6).

This leader-follower cycle tends to spiral upward and is moderated by a maturity factor (Winston).

In several ways, servant leadership resembles transformational leadership; however, there are distinct and substantial differences between the two approaches. In 1991, Graham described servant leadership as follows:

Servant leadership encourages followers’ intellectual and skill development and enhanced moral reasoning capacity so followers become autonomous moral agents. In the workplace, servant leaders are sensitive to the needs and desires of organizational stakeholders, hold themselves accountable, and encourage the intellectual and moral development of those around them. (p.105).

In 2004, Ehrhart, reflecting on the work of Graham (1991), eloquently describes

the fundamental differences between servant leadership and transformational leadership:

First, servant leadership acknowledges the responsibility of the leader not just to the organization's goals and to the personal development of followers, but also to a wider range of organizational stakeholders. Second, servant leadership adds a moral compass to the idea of transformational leadership. The primary allegiance of transformational leaders is clearly to the organization (or to themselves) rather than to follower autonomy. Servant leaders, on the other hand, want their subordinates to improve for their own good, and view the development of the follower as an end in and of itself... (p.69).

The principles, theories and definitions involved in servant leadership outlined by many prominent researchers in this field all resonate with a similar message: Servant leadership is about distancing oneself from using power, influence and position to serve self and abuse others. Instead, a servant leader aspires to a position where these instruments are used to empower, enable and encourage those that are within their circle of influence.

Servant leadership and employee meaning. Today's generation longs to be engaged in meaningful work that contributes to a worthy cause. No longer are employees satisfied with toughing-it-out in a job that is meaningless for them just because they are financially or otherwise rewarded. Page (2000) argues that servant leaders are positioned well to enable workers to derive meaning in their work:

Even the most mundane work can be imbued with meaning by great leaders and, by sharing even tedious tasks within a context of an inspirational mission, people will be anxious to play their part in the overall accomplishment of a worthy objective. That objective is more important than making money (p. 3).

The yearning for meaning can be best satisfied within servant leadership because of its primary focus on serving others rather than self so that they may feel good about themselves and grow to their fullest potential. In too many organizations, management has created a sterile and passionless environment (p.9).

Tom Terez (2000) has uncovered 22 meaning keys for a meaningful workplace based on analysis of extensive interviews and focus groups with a collective work experience of over 3000 years. These meaning keys are divided into 5 key units:

1. Mission keys (valuing the opportunity to make a difference).
2. People keys (valuing the people that make the difference).
3. Developmental keys (valuing personal growth and development of people).
4. Community keys (valuing togetherness and collective efforts).
5. Me keys (valuing the individual).

The major thrusts of servant leadership would appear to be conducive in creating an environment where a meaningful workplace would thrive and grow.

Servant leadership and reduction of toxic emotions. Many of the characteristics that Greenleaf highlights as important for servant leaders have also been endorsed by Peter Frost (2003). Although Frost does not refer directly to the term of servant leadership, he does support the notion that leaders must be sensitive and attuned to the needs of workers, and, in particular, negative emotions. He exhorts leaders to respect individuals, to be compassionate and empathic, to put people first, and to create an environment where value alignment between the employee and employer can take place.

Through analysis of numerous interviews conducted with workers and leaders in a variety of organizations, Frost (2003) relays negative consequences that result from leaders not treating their workers with respect, compassion and value. Frost found when leaders were not serving the individuals and addressing their emotional needs and filtering their toxic emotions, these individuals would often burnout, leave the company, or become very unproductive. Such consequences have a severe effect on the overall functioning of any company.

Clearly, external and internal forces are at play within the workplace. For example, an employee may have just lost a loved one, experienced a divorce, or received a negative prognosis on a health concern. These emotions are then carried into the workplace, and can certainly become toxic, if they are not dealt with in a responsible and caring manner. If the supervisor involved is completely insensitive to an employee needing a day off to attend a loved one's funeral, then toxic emotions such as anger and resentment are likely to develop. Servant leaders, who by definition care about individuals, would ensure that the employee gets the time off they need to attend the funeral. There is a short-term cost associated with this approach, as the employer has just lost one day of work from an employee. However, this short-term loss pales in comparison with the long-term costs that would be incurred by the corporation if toxic emotions began to grow within an employee who felt uncared for and unsupported. In fact, the poison of these growing toxic emotions could lead to burnout, and possibly even the loss of a good employee. When employees are dealing with negative emotions, it is important for servant leaders to have the foresight to not compromise sustainability for short-term gain.

Morely (2003) provides a vivid example of servant leadership in which an officer returned to work only four months after having a baby. Her supervisor allowed her to go home to attend to and feed her newborn when necessary. The officer in this situation felt supported by her supervisor and therefore engaged in her work. Allowances such as the ones this supervisor provided have the potential to reduce and prevent toxic emotions in subordinates.

Servant leadership and human resource development. Another area where servant leadership is linked to emotional well-being is in human resource development. At the

heart of servant leadership is the desire for leaders to see employees develop, grow and reach their full potential. There is certainly a limit to what a leader can do for an employee; however, the leader has significant power to create an environment in which an employee can flourish. This undoubtedly requires courage on the part of the supervisor, as some employees may simply surpass the leader in creativity and productivity. The antithesis of this approach is to control, oppress and limit employees; if a leader is insecure and fearful of employees developing, this is often the case. A recently published study by Ehrhart (2004) looks specifically at servant leadership as an antecedent of unit-level organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). OCB is defined as “behaviors that maintain the social and psychological environment supporting task performance” (p.63). A general measure of servant leadership is used in Ehrhart’s study, based on “seven major categories of servant leadership; forming relationships with subordinates, empowering subordinates, helping subordinates grow and succeed, behaving ethically, having conceptual skills, putting subordinates first, and increasing value for those outside of the organization” (p.73). The results show that when leaders took responsibility to work for the good of their employees (i.e. scored high in servant leadership), the units responded with higher overall helping and conscientious behaviors.

More specifically, servant leaders should be attuned to the skill sets, passions, and interest of employees, and assess these attributes in relation to their current job description. A skilled servant leader will have the ability and willingness to redirect an employee that would be better-suited to another job, or give the employee opportunities to explore and use their areas of expertise. When an employee is already filling a position and making a contribution, but would be better-suited in another job, the supervisor is faced with a difficult decision. The employee would benefit from the new job, and the

institution would likely benefit, but the supervisor would lose the valuable contribution of the employee and would be forced to train a new person to replace them. The servant leader in this scenario would do what is optimal for both the individual and the institution, thus preventing employee stagnation and burnout.

Servant leadership and employee uncertainty/fear. A substantial amount of uncertainty and rapid change takes place within our organizations today. Higgins and Duxbury (2002) summarize these workplace changes:

Nationally [In Canada], the 1990's were a decade of turbulence for working Canadians as companies downsized, rightsized, restructured and globalized. The recession of the early 1990's was followed by the "jobless recovery" of the mid 1990's and job security was the issue that absorbed many working Canadians and their families (p. 2).

Many individuals have a propensity to worry and ruminate in the face of change and uncertain times. The reality of the situation in most organizations is that change will continue to be a major factor, especially in light of technological advancement and globalization. Many individuals simply cannot cope with the ramifications of these changes, and end up burning out. Servant leaders can play a pivotal role in this situation, initiating clear, candid and open communication with employees. Often fear is rooted in the unknown, but leaders can mitigate this by strategically including employees in important discussions and decision-making.

Servant leadership in action. Numerous corporations and institutions have embraced the servant leadership approach with considerable success. Ruschman (2002) looks at servant-led organizations that have made the *Fortune* magazines "100 Best" list, which is a ranking of the 100 best companies to work for in America. Several of the top twenty companies ranked in the 2001 issue of *Fortune* magazine formally embrace the

servant-leadership within their corporate culture:

1. Southwest Airlines (ranked by *Fortune* as #4), a \$ 5-billion airline transportation company known for its low-cost, no-frills, on-time flights (and wonderful sense of humor), based in Dallas, Texas.
2. TDIndustries (ranked by *Fortune* as #6), a \$170-million national mechanical construction and service firm with its headquarters in Dallas, Texas (TDIndustries has been in the top 10 of the list four years in a row).
3. Synovus Financial Corporation (ranked by *Fortune* as #8), a multifinancial services company based in Columbus, Georgia, with over \$13.7 billion in assets (p. 124).

Ruschman (2002) describes Southwest Airlines as a company that empowers employees to solve problems, encourages pilots and executives to help clean planes and load baggage, and creates culture committees to keep a positive spirit alive within the numerous employees. Herb Kellecher, CEO of Southwest Airlines offers these thoughts on hiring practices, captured by Ruschman :

We are trying to find out what people are like at the center of their being – whether they have a sense of humor, whether they have a servant-leadership attitude and mentality, whether they have the capability of being leaders too. You hire somebody for one job, but we're looking for the capability and the leadership qualities that will enable them to rise through the ranks (p. 130).

WestJet Airlines Ltd., based in Calgary, Alberta, has in many ways modeled their business after Southwest Airlines, and is another company that has done remarkably well in a very tough market. Davis (2004) makes these comments:

The down-to-earth approach has helped WestJet carve out an impressive, profitable presence in an otherwise unforgiving industry. In the eight years since the discount carrier's inaugural flight, the company has grown to control 25% of the domestic market [in Canada], posted 28 consecutive quarters of

profitability in an industry splattered in red ink, boasts annual revenue of \$860 million and a stock price that has never faltered since the company went public in 1999. WestJet is not a freak of nature, but a gleaming example of a business run right. Not by applying esoteric management strategies that would impress Harvard MBA's, but by using simple tactics and principles that transfer to any business (p.22).

The prevailing approach that WestJet takes that aligns with the principles of servant leadership include (a) having a CEO that will model service, treating their employees as the number one priority, (b) utilizing a profit sharing plan that allows employees to share in the financial rewards, (c) empowering the front line workers to utilize their judgment to make decisions that will respond to the various and unpredictable needs of customers, and (d) hiring employees that have great attitudes and removing employees that are toxic to the positive work culture.

Servant leadership and Christianity. A comprehensive discussion of servant leadership requires an examination of the biblical model of servant leadership, epitomized by the life of Jesus Christ. Although there have historically been many fine examples of servant leaders, the life of Christ stands out as an impeccable and timeless example; He has a tremendous legacy in the wake of such a short existence. Sendjaya & Sarros (2002) highlight the importance of Jesus Christ as a model of servant leadership:

As appealing and refreshing as Greenleaf's conceptualization of servant leadership is, Greenleaf is not the individual who first introduced the notion of servant to everyday human endeavor. It was Christianity's founder, Jesus Christ, who first taught the concept of servant leadership. From the narrative accounts of his life in the Bible, it is evident that servant leadership was taught and practiced more than two thousand years ago (p. 1).

The notion that Christ modeled leadership through servanthood is wholeheartedly endorsed by Wilkes (1998), in that "He [Christ] led first as servant to his Father in heaven, who gave him his mission" (p.10). Wilkes (1998) provides a clear example from

the life of Christ that epitomizes his mission. Jesus stood among his disciples and defined greatness with these words: “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many” (NIV, Mark 10:45). Russell (2003) also supports the notion that Jesus embodied servant leadership, pointing to the parallel scriptures in Matthew 20:20-28 and Mark 10:35-45, where Jesus addressed the request of James and John to sit in a place of honor with Christ. Russell identifies three important messages that Christ delivers in this passage. First, Russell describes the nature of worldly human leadership as one of “wielding power, often through fear, coercion or manipulation” (p.4), as supported by the passage in Mark 10:42 where Christ states: “The Gentiles lord it over them.” Secondly, the prerequisite for greatness is based on service as supported by Christ’s statement: “Whoever wants to be first must be slave of all” (NIV, Mark 10: 43). The third critical message is that, “He did not come to be the king served by others but rather to be the servant of humanity (p.5), as supported by the words of Christ in Mark 10:45.

Through in-depth analysis of the leadership style of Jesus Christ, Wilkes (1998) suggests there are 7 timeless principles that describe how Christ led which can be used as guidelines for servant leadership development:

1. Jesus humbled himself and allowed God to exalt him.
2. Jesus followed his Father’s will rather than a position.
3. Jesus defined greatness as being a servant.
4. Jesus risked serving others because he trusted that he was God’s Son.
5. Jesus left his place at the head table to serve the needs of others.
6. Jesus shared responsibility and authority with those he called to lead.
7. Jesus built a team to carry out a worldwide vision (p. 25-26).

Christ did not identify himself as a ruler, king or emperor, but as a servant, and it is in recognition of this assertion Sims (1997) urges a reexamination of power and

leadership. Sims posits that:

Servanthood is the biblical key to God's identity. Jesus, born in the starkest simplicity, went about the servant work of teaching, healing, feeding, with eager compassion for the socially marginalized of his culture; the women, the children, the poor, the dying, and the dead. Repeatedly he risked the wrath of powerful religious authorities by rebuking the moral and social pretensions of the self-important (p. 16).

“The idea of Jesus as Chief Executive Officer (CEO)” inspired Jones (1995) to describe how Jesus modeled leadership and how leaders can use Christ as a guide for leadership development. Her idea is based on the premise that Christ (a) trained twelve humans that have had a tremendous influence on the world, (b) worked with a rather ordinary group of people, leading them to accomplish extraordinary things, and (c) intended his example of leadership to be put into use today.

Blanchard and Hodges (2003) highlight the legacy of Christ as servant, reminding us that we “have more in Jesus than just a great spiritual leader: we have a practical and effective leadership model for all organizations, for all people, for all situations” (p.10). Christ did not chase after the corner office, first class travel or power. He went about his business by surrounding himself with his disciples and pouring his life into theirs as an investment. Jesus said, “The son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve.” (NIV, Matthew 20: 28). Christ was simultaneously a great leader and a committed servant.

Job Burnout

Prevalence and impact. The primary focus of historical research on burnout centers on the service-related professions such as teachers, doctors, social workers, nurses and policemen. The premise is that these professions typically involve working under conditions requiring continuous investment of “emotional, cognitive and even physical energy” to serve clients, patients or students; these expectations often lead to a process of

“emotional exhaustion, mental weariness, and physical fatigue” (Shirom, 2003, p.2).

More recently, other types of careers such as management, sales or accounting have been recognized as also possessing risk factors for burnout. In an attempt to remain competitive corporations of many different stripes have placed tremendous demands on their employees through methods such as downsizing.

There appears to be a growing number of individuals burning out in the workplace. There are likely many factors contributing to this situation. Shirom (2003) elucidates the context of this increasing problem in a recent review on job-related burnout:

Burnout is likely to represent a pressing problem in the years to come. Competitive pressures in the manufacturing industry that originate in the global market, the continuing process of consumer empowerment in service industries, the rise and decline of the high-tech industry are among the factors likely to affect employees' levels of burnout in different industries. In addition, employees in many advanced market economies experience heightened job insecurity, demands for excessive work hours, the need for continuous retraining in the wake of the accelerating pace of change in informational technologies, and the blurring of the line separating work and home (p.24).

In their 2003 survey, Watson Wyatt Worldwide found that “fewer than half of survey participants engage in health initiatives that specifically target employees' psychological health (p. 7). Of particular interest was the respondents' prediction of the greatest health and productivity challenges of the next five years. “Nearly four out of ten (38 percent) expect stress and burnout to be critical issues...” (Watson Wyatt Worldwide, p. 14). It seems clear from this survey that psychological concerns such as burnout are real threats to organizational well-being and productivity, and that institutions generally are not in a position to address these issues effectively, as they have very few strategies in place to combat compromised psychological health.

A survey conducted by the Cancer Care Ontario's Systemic Therapy Task Force, using the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) and the General Health Questionnaire (GHQ) found that medical personnel "[were] experiencing burnout and high levels of stress and that large numbers [were] considering leaving or decreasing their work hours"(Grundfeld, Whlean, Zitzelsberger, Willan, Montesanto & Evans, 2000, p. 167). Of the 681 participants, more than one-third had high levels of Emotional Exhaustion and low levels of Personal Accomplishment (Grundfeld et al.). Understanding some of the theoretical underpinnings of this phenomenon will help us grasp the antecedents, consequences and cures.

Theory and definition. Experts in the field have generally agreed upon the definition of burnout. "Burnout may be defined as a state of physical, emotional and mental exhaustion that results from long-term involvement in work situations that are emotionally demanding" (Schaufeli & Greenglass, 2001, p. 501). Three separate components comprise burnout: (a) emotional exhaustion, (b) cynicism, and (c) professional efficacy. In 2001, Schaufeli and Greenglass defined these as follows: (a) Emotional exhaustion refers to feelings of being emotionally over extended and drained by others, (b) Cynicism refers to a callous response toward people who are recipients of one's service and (c) Professional Efficacy refers to a decline in one's feelings of competence and successful achievement in one's work (Schaufeli & Greenglass, p. 501). These three factors are embedded within the phenomenon of burnout as measured by the MBI-GS. Although burnout represents a negative psychological state, the positive flipside of this state is job engagement (Maslach, Schaufeli, and Leiter, 2001). Another model of burnout, the Pines Burnout Model, defines this negative psychological state as the "state of physical, emotional and mental exhaustion caused by long-term involvement in

emotionally demanding situations” (Shirom, 2003, p. 7). The Shirom-Melamed Burnout Model characterizes burnout as a state where one feels “depleted of physical, emotional, and cognitive energies” (Ibid, p.8).

Shirom (2003) argues that the most sensible theoretical view of stress and burnout is based on the Hobfoll’s Conservation of Resources (COR) theory. According to the COR theory, “when individuals experience loss of resources, they respond by attempting to limit the loss and maximize the gain of resources”; furthermore, the COR theory postulates that resource-related stress occurs under three main conditions: (a) when resources are threatened, (b) when resources are lost, and (c) when individuals invest resources and do not reap the anticipated rate of return” (Shirom, p. 11). Individuals feel burnt out when there is a continuous net loss, which cannot be replenished.

Situational and internal causes. Research has pointed to both situational and individual factors as antecedents of job burnout (Maslach, Schaufeli, and Leiter, 2001). According to Maslach et al. “research has found that situational and organizational factors play a bigger role in burnout than individual ones” (p.418).

Some theorists propose that individual traits predispose certain individuals to burnout through interaction with organizational factors (Shirom, 2003). For example, “when a major slump moves management to require that all employees increase their input of available personal energy and time to ensure the organization’s survival, those employees who possess high self-esteem are less likely to experience burnout as a result.”(p.15).

Other individual factors that have been found to be predictors of burnout “include demographic variables (such as age or formal education), enduring personality traits, and work related attitudes” (Maslach, et al., 2001, p. 409). Shirom (2003) also notes that

individual traits of self-esteem, hardiness and optimism are important factors relating to burnout.

External factors include variables such as job characteristics (job demands, social support from peers, managerial support, feedback, participation in decision making), occupational characteristics (care giving or teaching roles), and organizational factors (fairness and equity, downsizing/mergers) (Maslach et al., 2001). Interaction between these factors, in addition to individual factors creates a complex milieu for burnout. However, it appears that one of the most salient influential factors is leadership.

Leadership influences at a number of levels. For example, a CEO of a large company will set the tone and influence the environment of every employee, creating either a positive and productive environment or a negative and destructive one. While senior management within a corporation may explicitly support a particular philosophical approach, this does not ensure that this will be followed by the unit managers or front-line supervisors.

It is these lower-level managers, supervisors, and leaders directly responsible for a handful of employees who possess the most potential for change. They have the power to buffer or enhance upon the leadership that is given from higher management. They are in a position to greatly influence the lives of those employees working directly for them, independent of what is happening at the senior level. They are generally responsible for making many decisions, and often have the power to make or break individuals. They often regulate access to the many resources that employees need to maintain and enhance performance, and will use their position to interpret institutional vision, goals, and policies. They appear to be the gatekeepers for a small group of employees. In the eyes of many employees working for an institution, the key person in their work world is their immediate supervisor.

If one recognizes that supervisors are in a tremendous position of influence when it comes to the employees they are responsible for, then one needs to be cognizant that this influence can be either positive or negative. Jeff Morely (2003) recently completed a semi-structured study with RCMP officers from the greater Vancouver area. The study took a qualitative approach to answer the following question: “What are the critical incidents contributing to or detracting from RCMP officers being meaningfully engaged in their work?” (Morely, p. 8). Morely acknowledges the difficulty in defining workplace engagement, and part of the purpose of the qualitative study was to evaluate what workplace engagement meant to the participants. Morely offers this definition:

At a conceptual level the construct of workplace engagement may include sub-constructs such as motivation, commitment, satisfaction and loyalty. The converse of engagement is disengagement. This construct could conceptually include sub-constructs such as stress, burnout, boredom, or disinterest (p.13).

Of the 370 incidents that were elicited from the RCMP officers, 197 were incidents that helped officers experience meaningful engagement in their work, and 173 were incidents that hindered officers in experiencing meaningful engagement in their work. All the critical incidents were grouped into 19 categories based on the nature and meaning of the incident. The primary categories identified were supervision, police incidents, perceived organizational support, transfer, personal circumstances, and peers.

The most significant and salient finding was related to supervision. This category represented 30% of the total incidents, 19% higher than the second most important category. Within the category of supervision, there were 52 incidents that were considered engaging, and 57 that were considered disengaging. Disengaging incidents included supervisors not doing their jobs, blatant sexual harassment, supervisory inaction, and permitting inexperienced officers to work in an area with no experience.

Conversely, supervisors also had the power to help officers feel engaged. One officer, after reflecting on several different supervisors, concluded, “My desire to work was very strongly influenced by who I worked for.” Other engagement-supporting actions included in this category ranged from supervisors giving freedom to officers to do their job to supervisors that were positively involved in the lives of the officers. It is interesting to note that the category of perceived organizational support, which reflected support from senior management ranked fifth in the percentage of total incidents. It is clear from this study that the influence of supervision is overwhelmingly important to employees; it is this influence which led to employees feeling either engaged or disengaged. Maslach et al. (2001) emphasizes that “lack of support from supervisors is especially important” (p.407) among factors leading to burnout.

Coady and Kent conducted a study in 1990 which contributes to the theory that supervisory support effects burnout of staff. In this study with 151 social workers across 45 states in the US, it was found that “workers who perceive their supervisor as supportive have less potential for burnout” (p. 116). While this study did not measure servant leadership directly, it did measure the aspect of supporting one’s staff, which is a central and important component of servant leadership. Although leadership is just one of many external factors impacting burnout, it does appear to be a leading and primary factor affecting burnout of staff through direct and indirect impacts.

Assessment Methodology

The validity of a test is defined by how well it measures what it actually intends to measure. One of the inherent difficulties related to self-reporting is social desirability. When looking at servant leadership in particular, some of the characteristics are rather altruistic and generally attractive and desirable, while and others are the opposite,

denoting undesirable attributes. Therefore, leaders may rate themselves much higher than their actual practice or disposition in some areas and under-rate themselves in other areas because they unintentionally want to be seen in a good light. Streiner and Norman (1995) relate that certain attributes are more likely than others to elicit erroneous self-report:

Among the “socially desirable” ones apt to lead to over reporting are being a good citizen (e.g. registering to vote and voting, knowing issues in public debates), being well-informed and cultured (e.g. reading newspapers and books, using the library, attending cultural activities), and having fulfilled moral and social responsibilities (e.g. giving to charity, helping friends and relatives (p. 45).

To address this concern, this study will utilize the rating of others on a particular leader. This may provide a more representative picture of the leader’s servant qualities. This study also evaluates the variation among the raters’ rating of the leaders, as well as the variation between the rater’s scores and the leaders’ self-assessment.

This principle of social desirability may also apply at the corporate level. A company may claim to be fully utilizing the servant leadership approach, but when this is actually measured and quantified in their leaders, characteristics of servant leadership may be found lacking.

Leadership and Job Satisfaction

Because leadership is one of the key factors impacting an organization, research has been carried out to evaluate its possible effects on job satisfaction (Jaskyte, 2003). In a significantly relevant study, Thompson (2002) used a cross-sectional survey design within a church related university to assess the perception of servant leadership characteristics and job satisfaction with 116 participants. Servant leadership was measured using the Organizational Leadership Assessment (OLA) and job satisfaction was measured using the Short Form of the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ).

A “Pearson Correlation revealed that the total OLA scores and the MSQ were significantly related, $r(114) = +.704$ $p < .01$, two tails” (p.76). Thompson concluded that this relationship could be regarded as a strong association. In another similar quantitative study with a non-traditional college in the USA, Drury (2004), using the Organizational Leadership Assessment (OLA) with a sample size of 170 employees, “found a statistically significant and positive relationship between job satisfaction and servant leadership” (p.1).

In a recent work by Laschinger, Finegan, Shamian and Wilk in 2004, “a longitudinal predictive design was used to test a model linking changes in structural and psychological empowerment to changes in job satisfaction” (p.527). Laschinger et al. provide an excellent description of structural empowerment, which aligns closely with servant leadership, and, in particular, empowering others:

Power is *on* when employees have access to lines of information, support, resources, and opportunities to learn and grow. When these *lines* or sources of power are unavailable, power is off and effective work is impossible. These lines of power are sources of ‘structural’ empowerment within the organization. According to Kanter, the mandate of management should be to create conditions for work effectiveness by ensuring employees have access to the information, support, and resources necessary to accomplish work and that they are provided ongoing opportunities for development. Employees who believe their work environment provides access to these factors are empowered (p. 528).

Psychological empowerment differs from structural empowerment in that it represents the psychological state of the employees that experience being empowered (or not), or the reaction of employees to structural empowerment conditions (Laschinger, et al., 2004). In the study, carried out with a cohort of 185 staff nurses randomly selected

from a list of 600 nurses from the College of Nurses of Ontario, a statistically significant and positive correlation ($r = .7$) was found between Job Satisfaction Change and Structural Empowerment Change. Laschinger et al. more specifically reports: “Staff nurses in this study felt that changes in access to structural empowerment strongly affected their feelings of empowerment and satisfaction with their job across a 3-year time frame” (p.538). Surprisingly, there was no support for changes in psychological empowerment predicting job satisfaction.

Another study with nurses as the sample population, conducted by Upenieks (2003), provides corroboration of results found by Laschinger et al. (2004). In this quantitative and qualitative study, a total of 305 nurses were used from a potential pool of 700 from four hospitals in the USA. Upenieks provides a concise and clear conclusion to the study:

The results of the study suggested that access to certain factors, such as opportunity, information, and resources, influenced clinical nurse effectiveness. It also was demonstrated that clinical nurses...experience higher levels of empowerment and job satisfaction...due to their greater access to work empowerment structure within their practice environments (p. 96).

In another exploratory study conducted by Jaskyte (2003) using 41 employees representing all organizational levels of a public housing authority, “It was hypothesized that employees’ perceptions of organizational arrangements, job characteristics, between leadership behavior would be related to their job satisfaction and commitment. “ (p.25). The aspects of leadership behavior measured included production orientation, goal setting, problem solving, control of work, subordinate relations, consideration and participation. Through multiple regression, Jaskyte found that the only significant predictor of both job satisfaction and commitment was leadership behavior. Further

analysis showed that participation and production orientation components of leadership behavior were significant predictors of job satisfaction, explaining 64.3% of its variance. This study demonstrates the powerful influence that leadership has on employee job satisfaction.

A correlational research study conducted by Egley in 2003 explored the relationship between the Invitational Leadership styles of high school principals in the state of Mississippi and teacher job satisfaction. A total of 283 participants were used from a total of 77 school districts. Servant leadership mirrors the definition of Invitational Leader as outlined by Egley :

Invitational Leadership is a refreshing change from the standard theories of leadership that emphasized the process of influencing others through the use of power to an alternative leadership style that promotes collaboration and shows consideration and respect for individuals in the education system (p. 57).

The Leadership Survey Instrument was used to measure leadership style and behavior and, in particular, evaluated components such as trust, respect, optimism and intentionality. A statistically significant relationship was found between Professionally Inviting Behaviors and Teacher Job Satisfaction ($r = .50$), which indicates that 25% of the variance for teacher job satisfaction is explained by the professionally inviting behaviors of the principle. This study confirms what Jaskyte (2003), Smith and Rutigliano (2003) Laschinger, et al.(2004) & Upenieks (2003) have all found through empirical research: the powerful influence of leadership within the organizational setting on the satisfaction level of employees.

METHODS

Participants

The criteria for organizations involved in this study were as follows: (a) mid-to large-sized organizations (to ensure adequate sample opportunities), (b) organizations located in the lower mainland of British Columbia or Alberta, and (c) organizations willing to partner in the research and allow their employees to be surveyed. Three organizations volunteered to partner in the study. Two of these participant organizations explicitly endorse servant leadership principles and the other does not. This determination was based on discussions the principle researcher initiated with senior management personnel within each organization. The leadership approach of the organization was reviewed against the principles of the servant leadership approach, and the principle researcher made a judgment call as to how the organization would be categorized for the purposes of this study. As this may be sensitive information for participating organizations, specific details of categorization will not be revealed.

The first research partner is a Christian university college in Edmonton, Alberta with approximately 650 students. Those given the opportunity to participate formed the administrative arm of the university college which includes human resources, student development, finance, development and senior administration, but not the academic faculty.

The second research partner is a publicly funded Kindergarten through grade 6 school in Calgary, Alberta. The school has approximately 500 students with 32 staff members. The staff is comprised primarily of teachers; however, there are also several senior administrators and some administrative support staff.

The third research partner is a publicly traded forest products company that is

considered an industry leader. The division has approximately 120 employees, the majority of whom are professionals.

One hundred and forty five individuals participated in total, comprised of 69 individuals from the forest products company, 46 individuals from the university college and 30 individuals from the public school. The total participation rate was extremely high at 94.2 %, involving 145 out of a possible 154 participants, with the forest products company contributing at 92 % (69 out of 75 employees), the university college contributing at 97.9 % (46 out of 47 employees) and the public school contributing at 93.8 % (30 out of 32 employees). Of the 140 participants that identified their sex, 48.6%, or 68 individuals, were male and 51.4 %, or 72 individuals, were female. The average age of the participants was 40 and their ages ranged from 23 to 67.

Materials

The following tools were utilized:

1. Demographic Information form (see Appendix A)
2. Maslach Burnout Inventory – General Survey (MBI-GS) (see Appendix B)
3. Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) (see Appendix C)
4. Servant leadership Profile – Revised (SLP- Revised) – Self Assessment (see Appendix D)
5. Servant leadership Profile – 360 (SLP – 360) – Other Assessment (see Appendix E)

The Demographic Information form collected information from all participants regarding age, sex, and occupation level.

The MBI – GS, a 16 item assessment, specifically measures three separate components of job burnout: (a) emotional exhaustion, a negative factor referring to

feelings of being emotionally over-extended and drained by others, (b) cynicism, a negative factor referring to a callous response toward people who are recipients of one's service and (c) professional efficacy, a positive factor referring to one's feelings of competence and successful achievement in one's work (Schaufeli & Greenglass, 2001, p. 501). There has been approximately 25 years of research on job burnout, and the "Maslach Burnout Inventory is currently the most widely used research instrument to measure burnout, and is used in over 90% of empirical research" (Schaufeli and Enzmann, 1988). Schaufeli et al. (2000) provides an excellent summary of the Maslach Burnout Inventory – General Survey (MBI – GS):

The MBI – GS measures respondents' relationship with their work on a continuum from engagement to burnout. Engagement is an energetic state in which one is dedicated to excellent performance of work and confident of one's effectiveness. In contrast, burnout is a state of exhaustion in which one is cynical about the value of one's occupations and doubtful about one's capacity to perform. Burnout, as measured by the MBI – GS is thought to share many features with that measured by the MBI, with the major difference being that the MBI – GS does not focus primarily on the service relationship, but on the performance of the work in general (p. 20).

Job satisfaction was measured using the short form (20 items) of the MSQ. Each item on the MSQ refers to a reinforcer in the work environment. Three subscales comprise the MSQ: (a) intrinsic job satisfaction, (b) extrinsic job satisfaction and (c) general job satisfaction (Weiss, et al., 1967). The MSQ is currently one of the two most popular measures of job satisfaction (Spector, 2003). This assessment tool, when compared with another popular job satisfaction survey called the Job Description Index, is a "shorter measure that has also had a great deal of psychometric evaluation and provides an assessment of intrinsic satisfaction, extrinsic satisfaction, and overall job satisfaction" (Parsons, 1995).

The SLP-R and the SLP – 360 were the leadership assessment tools used in this study. There are 7 factors in the 62 items Servant Leadership Profile for both the 360-degree and self-assessment (Wong, 2004). The seven factors are:

1. Empowering and developing others
2. Power and Pride
3. Serving others
4. Open, participatory leadership
5. Inspiring leadership
6. Visionary leadership
7. Authentic/Courageous leadership

Procedure

A quantitative design was used to test the four hypotheses. Survey questionnaires provided the medium for gathering data, and the data was gathered in field settings for three separate institutions across Alberta, Canada. Each of the four hypotheses was analyzed statistically in a different manner due to the varied nature of the questions. Ethical considerations were paramount given the sensitivity of the research questions relating to leadership style and employee burnout and satisfaction. The Canadian Psychological Association Code of Ethics was followed during this study. In addition, an Ethics Committee at Trinity Western University approved the design and methodologies according to stringent research ethical guidelines.

Once an organization had indicated a willingness to participate in the study, a copy of the approved thesis proposal was either forwarded to the institutional representative of the participating institution or a direct presentation was made by the principal researcher to the organizational representative or the senior management team.

The leaders were asked to fill out an additional survey, the revised SLP, for the purposes of self-assessment.

In the case of the forest products company and the university college, the principal researcher met with potential participants in person and administered the surveys directly, primarily through staff meetings. For the sake of convenience in the case of the grade school, the school principal administered the surveys after the principal researcher provided instructions. In each data collection scenario, each potential participant was given an informed consent form (See Appendix F), approved for use by the Ethics Review Board at Trinity Western University. This form outlined the researcher's commitment to confidentiality and the study's limits to confidentiality. The content of the letter made it clear that the researcher would welcome any questions pertaining to the study. The letter also stressed that participants were free to abstain from participating if they so desired. If the participant agreed to participate, they signed the consent form and then continued by filling out the surveys. To provide some incentive for participating, a random draw was made for a \$50 gift certificate at a local restaurant, and three winners were chosen, one from each organization.

To protect the anonymity of individuals participating in the study, all results were reported as group averages. All questionnaires were evaluated for completeness. Missing values were corrected by using a value randomly selected from an individual for the particular item that was missing. A descriptive exploratory analysis using scatter grams was carried out using SPSS looking at the data for outliers. SPSS was used to conduct that data analysis.

RESULTS

No participants were completely discarded from the database; however, not all of the individual surveys and key demographic information was provided, which reduced the sample size depending on the type of data analysis that was carried out. In eight cases the name of the supervisor was not mentioned, in three cases the SLP –R was not filled out, in eight cases the MBI – GS was not filled out and in eight cases the SLP – 360 was not completed. Two general trends are apparent regarding the missing data:

1. a greater reluctance to fill out burnout information compared to job satisfaction.
2. a greater reluctance to fill out the SLP - 360 survey compared to the self-assessment survey.

Relationship Between Servant Leadership and Burnout (Hypothesis 1)

Correlation coefficients were computed among the seven Servant Leadership subscales, the three Job Burnout subscales, and the three Job Satisfaction subscales. Table 1 represents the combined results of all three participant organizations. In general, the correlation results show that when subordinates perceived their supervisor or leader as having high levels of the positive characteristics of servant leadership, they also reported higher levels of Professional Efficacy, Job Satisfaction (Intrinsic, Extrinsic and General), as well as lower levels of Cynicism and Exhaustion. If subordinates perceived their supervisor as having high levels of the negative characteristics of leadership, Power and Pride, they were more likely to report lower levels of their own Professional Efficacy, Job Satisfaction (Intrinsic, Extrinsic, and General) and higher levels of Cynicism and Exhaustion.

The results of the relationship between the Servant Leadership subscale (SLP - 360) and Emotional Exhaustion (as gauged by MBI - GS) presented in Table 1 show that none of the correlations were statistically significant. Correlations were deemed significant at the .05 level, after making a Bonferroni correction for family-wise error rates. All Servant Leadership subscale (SLP - 360) correlations other than Power and Pride (SLP – 360), were in the positive direction. The smallest effect size was for Empowering Others (SLP - 360) which accounts for 3.6% ($r=.19$, r squared = .04) of the variance in Emotional Exhaustion (MBI - GS), which leaves 96.4 % of the variability still to be accounted for by other variables. The largest effect size was for Serving Others (SLP - 360) which accounts for 5.3% ($r=.23$, r squared = .0529) of the variance in Emotional Exhaustion (MBI - GS), leaving 94.7 % of the variability still accounted for by other variables. Although not statistically significant, the results of the correlational trends suggest that if subordinates perceive their supervisor or leader as having high levels of the positive characteristics of servant leadership and low levels of Power and Pride (SLP – 360), they will also report lower levels of Emotional Exhaustion (MBI - GS), but if they perceive their supervisor as having high levels of the Power and Pride (SLP – 360) and low levels of the positive characteristics of servant leadership, they will report higher levels of Emotional Exhaustion (MBI - GS).

The results of the correlational analysis presented in Table 1 show that six out of the seven correlations between the Servant Leadership subscales (SLP - 360) and Cynicism (MBI - GS) were statistically significant, registering greater than or equal to .20. Correlations were deemed significant at the .05 level, after making a Bonferroni correction for family-wise error rates. The correlation between Power and Pride (SLP - 360) and Cynicism (MBI - GS) was positively correlated, while all the other correlations

were negative. The only non-significant correlation was between Inspirational Leadership (SLP - 360) and Emotional Exhaustion (MBI - GS). The smallest effect size was for Inspirational Leadership (S-P - 360) which accounts for 4.0% ($r=.20$, r squared = .04) of the variance in Cynicism (MBI - GS), leaving 96% of the variability to be accounted for by other variables. The largest effect size was for Visionary Leadership (SLP - 360) which accounts for 16% ($r=.40$, r squared = .16) of the variance in Cynicism (MBI - GS), which leaves 84% of the variability still accounted for by other variables. In general, the results suggest that if subordinates perceive their supervisor or leader as having high levels of the positive characteristics of servant leadership and low levels of Power and Pride (SLP – 360), they will also report lower levels of Cynicism (MBI - GS), but if they perceive their supervisor as having high levels of Power and Pride (SLP – 360) and low levels of the positive characteristics of servant leadership, they will report higher levels of Emotional Exhaustion (MBI - GS).

The results of the correlational analysis presented in Table 1 show that five out of the seven correlations between the Servant Leadership Subscales (SLP – 360) and Professional Efficacy (MBI – GS) were statistically significant and greater than or equal to .19. Correlations were deemed significant at the .05 level, after making a Bonferroni correction

11Table 1

Intercorrelations Among Servant Leadership subscales (S-L) for Burnout and Job Satisfaction (J-S) for all Participants

Scale/Subscale	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1. S-L (Empowering Others)	–	-.47*	.86*	.89*	.92*	.78*	.83*	.96*	-.19	-.39*	.31*	.53*	.73*	.60*
2. S-L (Power & Pride)		–	.51*	-.61*	-.43*	-.27*	-.54*	-.61*	.22	.28*	-.26*	-.41*	-.42*	-.41*
3. S-L (Serving Others)			–	.85*	.83*	.74*	.84*	.93*	-.23	-.34*	.19	.47*	.65*	.51*
4. S-L (Participatory)				–	.83*	.68*	.86*	.94*	-.19	-.37*	.31*	.55**	.70*	.60*
5. S-L (Visionary)					–	.80*	.82*	.93*	-.20	-.40*	.27*	.51*	.70*	.57*
6. S-L (Inspirational)						–	.77*	.80*	-.10	-.20	.22*	.42*	.62*	.48*
7. S-L (Authentic)							–	.91*	-.21	-.37*	.28*	.51*	.69*	.56*
8. Burnout (Exhaustion)									–	.56*	-.21*	-.30*	-.31*	-.32*
9. Burnout (Cynicism)										–	-.42*	-.66*	-.48*	-.65*
10. Burnout (Productivity)											–	.51*	.36*	.49*
11. Intrinsic Satisfaction												–	.74*	.96*
12. Extrinsic Satisfaction													–	.86*
13. General Satisfaction														–

Note. *Correlation is significant at the .05 level, after making a Bonferoni correction for family-wise error rates.

for family-wise error rates. The correlation between Power and Pride (SLP - 360) and Professional Efficacy (MBI - GS) was negatively correlated, while all the other correlations were positive. The only non-significant correlation was between Serving Others (SLP - 360) and Inspirational Leadership (SLP - 360). The smallest effect size was for Power and Pride (SLP - 360) which accounts for 6.8 % ($r = -.26$, $r^2 = .07$) of the variance in Professional Efficacy (MBI - GS), which leaves 93.2 % of the variance still to be accounted for by other variables. The largest effect size was for Empowering Others (SLP - 360) which accounts for 9.6 % ($r = .31$, $r^2 = .09$) of the variance in Professional Efficacy (MBI - GS), which leaves 90.4 % of the variability still accounted for by other variables. In general, the results suggest that if subordinates perceive their supervisor or leader as having high levels of the positive characteristics of servant leadership and low levels of Power and Pride (SLP - 360), they will also report higher levels of Professional Efficacy (MBI - GS), but if they perceive their supervisor as having high levels of Power and Pride (SLP - 360) and low levels of the positive characteristics of servant leadership, they will report lower levels of Professional Efficacy (MBI - GS).

Relationship Between Servant Leadership and Job Satisfaction (Hypothesis 2)

The results of the correlational analysis presented in Table 1 show that seven out of the seven correlations between the Servant Leadership subscales (SLP - 360) and Intrinsic Job Satisfaction (MSQ) were statistically significant and greater than or equal to 0.41. The correlation between servant leadership (Power and Pride (SLP - 360) and Intrinsic Job Satisfaction (MSQ) was negatively correlated, while all the other correlations were positive. The smallest effect size was for Power and Pride

(SLP - 360) which accounts for 16.8 % ($r = -.41$, r squared = .16) of the variance in Intrinsic Job Satisfaction (MSQ), which leaves 83.2 % of the variability still to be accounted for by other variables. The largest effect size was for participatory leadership which accounts for 30.3 % ($r = .55$, r squared = .30) of the variance in Intrinsic Job Satisfaction (MSQ), which leaves 69.7 % of the variability still accounted for by other variables. The results suggest that if subordinates perceive their supervisor or leader as having high levels of the positive characteristics of leadership and low levels of Power and Pride (SLP – 360), they will also report higher levels of Intrinsic Job Satisfaction (MSQ), but if they perceive their supervisor as having high levels of Power and Pride (SLP - 360) and low levels of the positive characteristics of servant leadership, they will report lower levels of Intrinsic Job Satisfaction (MSQ).

The results of the correlational analysis presented in Table 1 show that seven out of the seven correlations between Servant Leadership subscales (SLP - 360) and Extrinsic Job Satisfaction (MSQ) were statistically significant and greater than or equal to .42. The correlation between servant leadership Power and Pride (SLP - 360) and Extrinsic Job Satisfaction (MSQ) was negatively correlated, while all the other correlations were positive. The smallest effect size was for Power and Pride (SLP - 360) which accounts for 17.6 % ($r = -.42$, r squared = .18) of the variance in Extrinsic Job Satisfaction (MSQ), which leaves 82.4 % of the variability still to be accounted for by other variables. The largest effect size was for Empowering Others (SLP - 360) which accounts for 53.3 % ($r = .73$, r squared = .5329) of the variance in Extrinsic Job Satisfaction (MSQ), which leaves 46.7 % of the variability still accounted for by other variables. In general, the results suggest that if subordinates perceive their

supervisor or leader as having high levels of the positive characteristics of servant leadership and low levels of Power and Pride (SLP – 360), they will also report higher levels of Extrinsic Job Satisfaction (MSQ), but if they perceive their supervisor as having high levels of Power and Pride (SLP – 360) and low levels of the positive characteristics of servant leadership, they will report lower levels of Extrinsic Job Satisfaction (MSQ).

The results of the correlational analysis presented in Table 1 show that seven out of the seven correlations between Servant Leadership subscales (SLP - 360) and General Job Satisfaction (MSQ) were statistically significant and greater than or equal to .41. The correlation between servant leadership Power and Pride (SLP - 360) and General Job Satisfaction (MSQ) was negatively correlated, while all the other correlations were positive. The smallest effect size was for Power and Pride (SLP - 360) which accounts for 16.8 % ($r = -.41$, r squared = .17) of the variance in General Job Satisfaction (MSQ), which leaves 83.2 % of the variability still to be accounted for by other variables. The largest effect size was for Empowering Others (SLP - 360) which accounts for 36.0 % ($r = .60$, r squared = .36) of the variance in General Job Satisfaction (MSQ), which leaves 64.0 % of the variability still accounted for by other variables. The results suggest that if subordinates perceive their supervisor or leader as having high levels of the positive characteristics of servant leadership and low levels of Power and Pride (SLP – 360), they will also report higher levels of General Job Satisfaction (MSQ), but if they perceive their supervisor as having high levels of Power and Pride (SLP – 360) and low levels of the positive characteristics of servant leadership, they will report lower levels of Extrinsic Job Satisfaction (MSQ).

Discrepancy Between Self and Other Reporting on Servant Leadership (Hypothesis 3)

T tests were conducted to evaluate the third hypothesis that self-reported scores would differ significantly from subordinate scores for the Servant Leadership subscales (SLP - 360). To address the issue of independence, which is a basic assumption for *t* test statistical analysis, scores (SLP – 360) of subordinates who were also leaders were eliminated from the sample. The results in Table 2 show that for six of the seven positive Servant Leadership subscales (SLP - 360), self reported scores (SLP – R) were significantly higher than subordinate scores (SLP – 360), and in the case of the only nonsignificant comparison, Visionary Leadership (SLP - 360), the self score (SLP – R) was still higher than the subordinate score (SLP – 360). Self reported scores for Power and Pride were lower and significantly different compared to subordinate scores. For Power and Pride, the self reported scores ($M = 1.77, SD = .72$) were higher than the subordinate scores ($M = 2.90, SD = .91$), and the *t* test was significant, $t(27) = -5.23, p = .000$. Therefore, we can conclude that in general, self reported scores (SLP – R) were significantly higher compared to subordinate scores (SLP – 360), and that leaders were more generous in their scoring compared to their subordinates for all Servant Leadership subscales. The *t* test for Visionary Leadership was the only nonsignificant result, and according to Cohen (1988), the statistical power for this test was .30.

Table 2

T tests for Comparing Self Reported (SLP – R) vs. Subordinate Reported (SLP – 360)

Groups on the Servant Leadership Subscales.

Domain	Self-Reported Group n = 28		Subordinate Reported Group n = 28		<i>t</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
1. Empowering Others	5.65	.86	5.07	.98	2.61*
2. Power and Pride	1.77	.72	2.90	.91	-5.23**
3. Serving Others	5.60	.80	5.05	.90	2.49*
4. Participatory	6.08	.57	5.65	.80	2.43*
5. Visionary	5.27	1.03	4.88	1.19	1.68
6. Inspirational	5.66	.93	5.18	0.83	2.27*
7. Authentic	5.89	.80	5.40	.80	2.17*
* $p < .05$. ** $p < .001$. (one-tailed)					
n=number, M=mean, SD=standard deviation					

The results in Figure 1 show that for the positive Servant Leadership subscales, 19 out of 21 times, leaders rated themselves higher than their subordinates rated them. Only in one institution (See Figure 1) were the subordinate ratings (SLP – R) higher than the leaders’ self-rating (SLP – 360), for Visionary Leadership and Inspirational Leadership. For Power and Pride, leaders consistently rated themselves lower compared to the subordinate rating. In general, these conclusions support that leaders tend to rate themselves much more favorably than do subordinates, which reflect social desirability.

The results also suggest that the company that did not explicitly endorse the servant leadership approach had higher levels of discrepancies on all subscales,

compared to companies that do endorse the principles of servant leadership. This indicates that leaders tend to be more realistic about their leadership characteristics if the company as a whole has adopted the servant leadership approach.

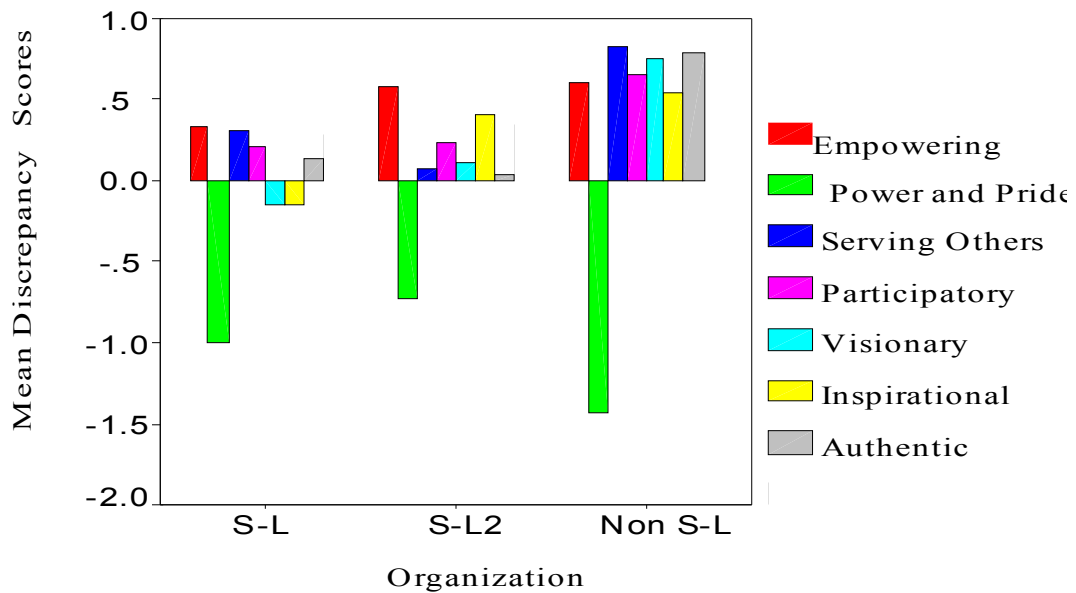


Figure 1. Mean discrepancy scores for Servant Leadership subscales across the three organizations.

Organizational Leadership Approach Impacts (Hypothesis 4)

Three one-way multivariate analysis of variances (MANOVA) were

conducted to test the fourth hypothesis and determine the effects of the overall organizational leadership approach (explicit endorsement of servant leadership and non-explicit endorsement of servant leadership) on the dependent variables of Servant Leadership, Job Burnout and Job Satisfaction.

Servant leadership. The results supported the hypothesis as a significant difference was found, Wilks' $\Lambda = .82$, $F(7, 132) = 3.64$, $p < .001$, indicating that we can reject the null hypothesis that the population means on the Servant Leadership Subscales (SLP – 360) are the same for organizations that explicitly endorse the servant leadership approach compared to organizations that do not. The multivariate $\eta^2 = .176$ indicates 18% of multivariate variance of the servant leadership characteristics are associated with the group factor.

Analyses of variances (ANOVAs) on each Servant Leadership Subscale (SLP - 360) were conducted as follow-up tests to the MANOVA. Each ANOVA was tested at the .05 level. See Table 3 for the means (M) and standards deviations (SD) of the Servant Leadership subscales (S–P - 360) along with the results of the ANOVAs. The univariate ANOVA's were significant for all seven Servant Leadership subscales (S–P - 360). See Figure 2 for mean scores on subscales between groups.

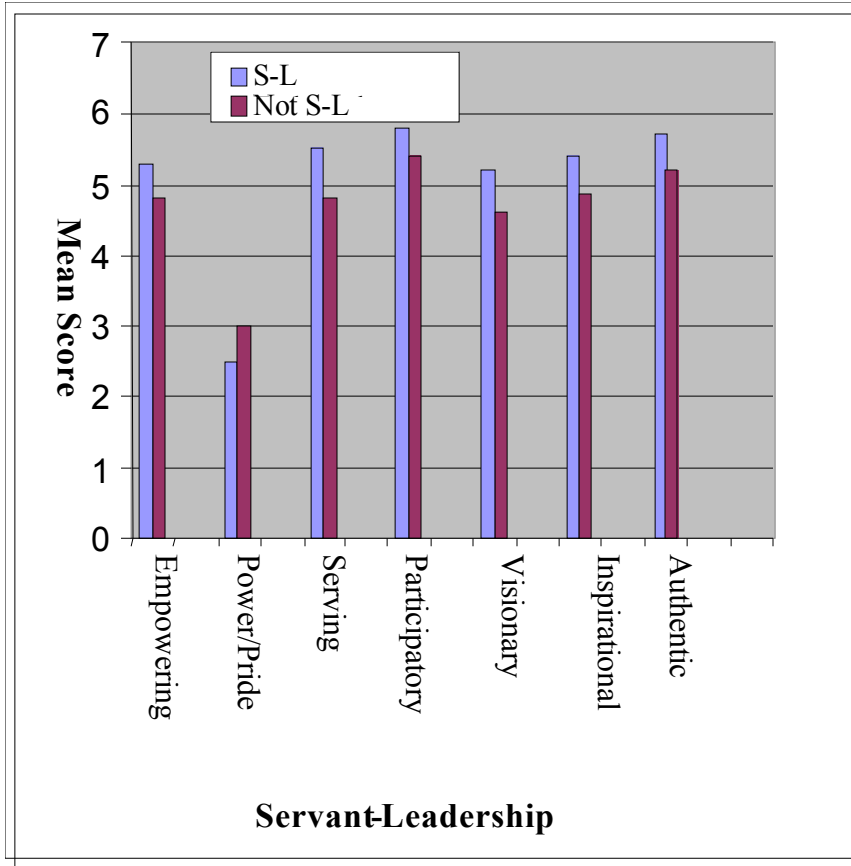


Figure 2. Mean scores for Servant Leadership subscales (SLP - 360) across groups that explicitly endorse servant leadership and ones that do not.

Table 3

Univariate ANOVAs Comparing Groups on the Servant Leadership (S-L)

Subscales (SLP –360).

	Explicit S-L Endorsement Group <i>n</i> = 73		Non Explicit Endorsement Group <i>n</i> = 67		<i>F</i> (1, 138)
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
Empowering Others	5.26	1.39	4.82	0.99	4.54*
Power and Pride	2.51	1.05	3.0	1.05	7.90*
Serving Others	5.47	1.18	4.77	.82	16.68***
Participatory	5.82	1.21	5.38	.96	5.63**
Visionary	5.16	1.56	4.64	1.23	4.71**
Inspirational	5.44	1.16	4.92	1.03	7.96**
Authentic	5.74	1.11	5.18	.99	9.99**
* <i>p</i> < .05. ** <i>p</i> < .01. *** <i>p</i> < .001					
n=number, M=mean, SD=standard deviation					

Job Burnout. A significant difference was found, Wilks' $\Lambda = .93$, $F(3, 133) = 3.45$, $p < .05$, indicating that we can reject the null hypothesis that the populations means on the job burnout subscales are the same for organizations that explicitly endorse the servant leadership approach compared to organizations that do not. The multivariate $\eta^2 = .072$ was moderately strong and indicates 7 % of multivariate variance of the Job Burnout subscales (MBI- GS) are associated with the group factor.

Analyses of variances (ANOVAs) on each Servant Leadership subscales (SLP –360) were conducted as follow-up tests to the MANOVA. Each ANOVA was tested

at the .05 level. See Table 4 for the means and standards deviations of the Job Burnout subscales (MBI – GS) along with the results of the ANOVAs. The univariate ANOVA’s were significant for all 3 Job Burnout Subscales (MBI – GS).

Table 4

Univariate ANOVAs Comparing Groups on the Job Burnout subscale (MBI – GS).

Subscales

	Explicit S-L Endorsement Group <i>n</i> = 70		Non Explicit Endorsement Group <i>n</i> = 67		<i>F</i> (1, 135)
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
Emotional Exhaustion	2.31	1.34	2.87	1.21	6.51*
Cynicism	1.49	1.23	2.12	1.41	7.87**
Professional Efficacy	4.9	.77	4.59	1.03	4.14*
* <i>p</i> < .05. ** <i>p</i> < .01. *** <i>p</i> < .001					
n=number, M=mean, SD=standard deviation					

Job Satisfaction. The results support the hypothesis as a significant difference was found, Wilks' $\Lambda = .89$, $F(3, 141) = 5.96$, $p < .01$, indicating that we can reject the null hypothesis that the populations means on the job satisfaction subscales are the same for organizations that explicitly endorse the servant leadership approach compared to organizations that do not. The multivariate $\eta^2 = .113$ was moderately strong and indicates 11 % of multivariate variance of the Job Satisfaction Subscales (MSQ) is associated with the group factor.

Analyses of variances (ANOVA) on each subscale of job satisfaction were conducted as follow-up tests to the MANOVA. Each ANOVA was tested at the .05 level. See Table 5 for the means (M) and standards deviations (SD) of the Job Satisfaction subscales (MSQ) along with the results of the ANOVAs. The univariate ANOVA's were significant for all three Job Satisfaction Subscales (MSQ).

Table 5

Univariate ANOVAs Comparing Groups on the Job Satisfaction Subscales (MSQ).

Subscales

	Explicit S-L Endorsement Group <i>n</i> = 76		Non Explicit Endorsement Group <i>n</i> = 69		<i>F</i> (1, 143)
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
Intrinsic	4.92	.52	4.63	.65	8.88**
Extrinsic	3.75	.65	3.46	.70	6.71*
General	4.06	.46	3.85	.52	6.41*

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$

N=number, M=mean, SD=standard deviation

DISCUSSION

Servant leadership and Job Burnout/Job Satisfaction (Hypothesis 1 and 2)

Leadership does matter when it comes to the emotional well-being of employees. Maslach (2003) has emphasized the importance of situational variables (e.g. workload demands, social support) over individual variables (e.g. personality) in predicting job burnout, and the need to have a good fit between the person and the environment. Leadership is considered a situational variable, and the results presented here support the assertion that servant leadership is a strong predictor of job burnout and job satisfaction. Employing the servant leadership approach seems to positively optimize the interpersonal fit between a leader and their subordinate(s). The servant leadership approach provides the foundation for a functional, healthy and productive working relationship between leaders and employees.

Empirical research has found leadership style to be a strong antecedent to job burnout (Coady & Kent, 1990; Feldman, 1990; Shirom; 2003), job satisfaction (Jaskyte, 2003; Laschinger, et al., 2004; Upenieks, 2003) and organizational citizenship behavior (Ehrhart, 2004). Moreover, the research within the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) by Morely (2003) provides evidence supporting the role that supervisors play as key influencers of subordinate's engagement. The results of this study corroborate this research, and, in particular, provide specific support for the servant leadership approach as relating to both job satisfaction and job burnout.

The correlational results between servant leadership and job satisfaction were much stronger than the correlations between servant leadership and job burnout. This

may reflect the presence of other variables, both situational and individual, that likely play a stronger role in influencing job burnout.

The presence of the positive aspects of servant leadership are not sufficient in predicting burnout and job satisfaction, as there must also be the absence of the negative aspect of leadership. This is critical consideration, as much research to date has not focused on measuring the positive aspect of leadership. Although it is likely a rare situation to have a leader score high on the positive aspects of leadership and then to also score high on the negative aspect of leadership, it is certainly possible, and our research suggests that both aspects need always be addressed when assessing, diagnosing, researching and developing leadership.

Self versus Other Assessment (Hypothesis 3)

The phenomenon of social desirability has been well researched and comes into play in a significant manner when assessing leadership (Streiner & Norman, 1995). The results suggest that leaders are not immune to social desirability, and in general rate themselves in a much more positive manner than do their subordinates. These results also reflect the phenomena of self-attribution bias, which is the tendency to attribute one's own behavior to situational factors but others' behaviors to their dispositions (Zuckerman, 1975). This was particularly evident for the Power and Pride (S-P - 360) measure, where the discrepancies were the strongest. The results were consistent across all three organizations, although the strongest discrepancies between self and other assessment were evident in the organization that did not explicitly endorse servant leadership. Although self-assessments can be useful, the results suggest that 360 feedbacks are also critical in gauging leadership style. This may prove to be a more costly, time-consuming process, but it is certainly worthy of

consideration, especially in dealing with organizations that do not explicitly endorse servant leadership.

The reluctance of subordinates to give honest feedback to their superiors is another area of concern and consideration. Protecting the anonymity and confidentiality of participants in the 360 feedback process is highly recommended, unless there is high level of trust between employees and leaders in the organization.

Organizational Servant Leadership Endorsement (Hypothesis 4)

Frost (2003) impressively argues that emotional pain or toxic emotions in the workplace can be perpetuated by organizations that do not place a priority on having individuals within the organization work as “toxin handlers”. These “toxin handlers” are exhorted by Frost to help process these emotions in a manner that respects the dignity, value and personhood of the individual, or face the inevitability of individuals burning out or becoming less productive. The results presented here support the notion that the organizational approach to leadership can significantly shape the internal institutional leadership and personal effectiveness culture. In the organizations that explicitly endorsed the servant leadership approach, there was a significant difference in the levels of servant leadership, job burnout and job satisfaction compared to the one institution that did not explicitly endorse the servant leadership approach. These results suggest that, in general, toxic emotions are being processed much more effectively in the servant leadership endorsing organizations. In essence, these institutions appear to have healthier work cultures. It is certainly possible to have strong organizational support for a particular leadership approach, and yet to not see this approach embraced throughout all levels of the organization, as it may not always trickle down through the ranks, especially if leadership

development training is not offered or is ineffective.

Historical leadership paradigms embraced by certain managers may also lead to a resistance of the strategic leadership approach. Strong business-driven outcomes, such as shareholder return, may also play a role in leaders taking on a diminished servant-led approach. Finally, individual leaders may vary greatly in their personal endorsement of a particular leadership approach, and this personal bent may be stronger and more influential than the leadership approach endorsed by the organization. However, the organizational research partners that endorsed servant leadership, exhibited, at least on an aggregate level, higher levels of the positive qualities of servant leadership and lower levels of Power and Pride, in comparison to the organization that did not endorse the servant leadership approach. This speaks to the influence of senior management setting the tone for the rest of the organization

There are some key distinctions about the organizational research partners that should be noted. The two organizations that explicitly endorsed the servant leadership approach were educational non-profit institutions, whereas the organization that did not explicitly support the servant leadership approach was a publicly traded, for-profit organization. The respective operating climates are quite different, in that the publicly traded corporation is more exposed to the financial demands of meeting shareholder return, and competing with other publicly traded corporations for capital. There is no doubt that competition would also exist in the educational institutions, but probably not to the same degree. Perhaps some businesses believe that the servant leadership approach is not conducive to meeting bottom line goals. On the surface this may look to be true, as the approach is heavy on investing in the human resource; however, the results of this study suggest that there is an indirect link between the

servant leadership approach and profitability. If employees experience less burnout, and are more satisfied and more productive, this should lead to enhanced opportunities for profitability, as employees should be operating more effectively and efficiently. Absenteeism, sick leave as well as and short- and long-term disability should also decrease with engaged employees, leading to significant cost savings. Rath (2004) states that “positive leaders deliberately increase the flow of positive emotions within their organization...because it leads to a measurable increase in performance” (p.3).

Research Implications for Leadership Development

Corporations, governments and churches are facing challenges today as consumers, citizens, and members seem to want everything cheaper and faster. Governments are downsizing and corporations are reeling from the mounting pressure to create shareholder value. Leaders are playing an even greater role as mediators between the corporation's expectations and the reality of what employees can deliver. Leaders have a unique and glorious opportunity to empower, develop and invest in their staff, or they can do the opposite and use their power in self-serving ways, causing pain, suffering and turmoil. What will it be? Winum (2003) suggests that leadership development has never been more pronounced than it is today. It seems clear that leadership development will play an increasingly significant role in encouraging organizations to meet their institutional mission. This study has made some key contributions to the leadership development field. The results provide sound empirical evidence for the importance of the leaders' role, and the benefits of endorsing a servant leadership approach. Based on the results, there is a clear impetus for engaging in the process of servant leadership development, at all levels of the

organization. If senior management can be trained to implement servant leadership, there will be benefits to all leaders throughout the organization. However, there is also the opportunity to enhance the effectiveness of the servant leadership approach even with those companies that explicitly endorse the servant leadership approach, as the results show that maximum levels of servant leadership are not being attained. Extrapolating the correlation results would suggest that the incremental enhancement of servant leadership qualities would directly benefit the organization by enhancing the level of job satisfaction and decreasing the level of job burnout. Not only does the research provide an impetus for implementing leadership training, it also provides a basis for using assessments in training.

Leadership training in servant leadership can be enhanced by using both the SLP-R and the SLP- 360. These surveys can be used to assess servant leadership scores across the seven Servant Leader factors for both individuals and for organization units (individual aggregate scores). Training programs can be designed to address individual and/or organizational needs to maximize the effectiveness of an organizations' training budget. For example, assessment results may suggest that a particular unit within an organization is ranked lower than other organization units, therefore, priority for leadership training could be given to that particular unit. Furthermore, assessment results could indicate that a particular servant leadership factor was ranked considerably lower than all the other factors (e.g. Empowering Others) or higher (e.g. Power and Pride), and thus, priority could be given to leadership development in these areas. Assessment could also examine the rankings among the various organizational levels. If senior management rates were low, leadership development could focus on this group, as it would be prudent to have the

senior management fully engaged and modeling the appropriate leadership style. This, in turn, would enhance the ability of lower level leaders to engage in the process.

Research Implications for Counseling Psychology

The counseling psychology profession is likely to continue seeing a large number of individuals who are experiencing high levels of burnout or job dissatisfaction, Grundfeld, et al. (2000) found that over one third of medical personnel research participants in Ontario were experiencing high levels of emotional exhaustion. Historical research has pointed to both internal (e.g. personality) and external (work overload, social conflict, lack of critical information, lack of necessary tools, lack of time, leadership) that impact the burnout of individuals (Maslach, 2003; Shirom, 2003). This study has illuminated the importance of leadership as a critical factor, and, in particular, the power of the servant leadership model. This should aid the counseling profession in evaluating the primary causes of burnout, and provide another option for evaluation. The relationship between a subordinate and a boss can be a major stressor, and counselors should be fully aware of this. Helping professionals and their clients could certainly benefit from using the Servant Leadership Profile 360 as an assessment tool to help quantify the perception a subordinate has of their leader.

Moreover, helping professionals who are aware of the importance of the therapeutic alliance for therapy outcomes will likely be able to see how analogous this concept is to the relationship between a leader and a subordinate. According to Horvath (2001), the therapeutic alliance, which has often been used synonymously with the therapeutic relationship, is inclusive of:

The positive affective bonds between client and therapist, such as mutual

trust, liking, respect, and caring. Alliance also encompasses the more cognitive aspects of the therapy relationship; consensus about, and active commitment to, the goals of therapy and to the means by which these goals can be reached. Alliance involves a sense of partnership in therapy between therapist and client, in which each participant is actively committed to their specific and appropriate responsibilities in therapy, and believes the other is likewise enthusiastically engaged in the process. The alliance is a conscious and purposeful aspect of the relation between therapist and client (p. 365).

It is not a stretch to see the commonalities between the therapeutic alliance and the relationship between a servant leader and a subordinate. These commonalities include: respect, caring, trust, goal alignment and responsibility. It is equally clear, based on “two decades of empirical research” that the alliance in therapy is linked to therapy outcome (Horvath, 2001, p.365). A helping professional that is able to build a strong therapeutic alliance with a client substantially increases the opportunity for a positive therapeutic outcome. Horvath (2001), through a meta-analysis of over 90 independent outcome alliance relationship clinical investigations, found that “over half of the beneficial effects of psychotherapy accounted for in previous meta-analyses are linked to the quality of the alliance” (p.366). Through conceptual extrapolation, a leader who is able to develop a strong and functional relationship with a subordinate through servant leadership will enhance the opportunities for that subordinate to be satisfied with their job, engaged and productive. In other words, servant leadership can lead to positive outcomes for employees, just as a strong therapeutic alliance leads to positive outcomes in therapy. The results of this study have been conceptually informative to the empirical research on the therapeutic alliance.

Limitations

General limitations. Given the research design, causality cannot be assumed. If one wants to explore causation questions such as “What are the causes of servant leadership?” or “What treatment can cause a person to increase the qualities of servant leadership?”, experiments would have to be carried out that manipulate independent variables, randomly assign subject to treatment conditions, and have control groups. The conclusions about the results are limited to discussion of the strength, direction, and statistical significance of the relationships between variables and the differences between group means.

Threats to Statistical Conclusion Validity. A potential source of error in this study is in the reliability of measures. There is a concern with the SLP-R and the SLP 360 as these are relatively new measurement instruments and the reliability and validity of these measures have not been proven to the same degree as the MBI-GS. Of particular concern is the SLP 360 as factor analysis had not been carried out to confirm that the same factors relevant to the SLP-R are also pertinent. The MBI-GS and the MGS have been around for many years and have been tested in numerous studies.

Threats to Internal Validity. Internal validity may be fundamentally threatened due to the fact that there was not very much control in this study. There was no control group, no randomization of participants, and no manipulation of an independent variable; therefore, the influence of other extraneous variables on the relationships found could be very high. Selection could also be a major threat to internal validity in this study, related to the fundamental differences that could exist between the groups (institutional research partners). There may also be confounding

variables, unaccounted for, influencing the results.

Threats to Construct Validity. Given how new the SLP-R and the SLP 360 are as measurements of servant leadership, construct validity is threatened by the possibility that the instrument is not measuring what it intends to measure. The level of confidence for these new servant leadership assessment tools as measurement tools would increase if there were more studies confirming the criterion, content and construct validity of the measure.

Threats to External Validity. Considering that this study is classified as a field study, the external validity should be relatively high. There is a strong case for the ability to generalize from our findings because we utilized data from real organizations, and were able to obtain a high percentage of participants from each institution. However, when generalizing the findings to other populations (e.g. government organizations or churches) and to other settings (institutions from other countries), one must exercise caution.

Future Research – Organizations

Expanding this type of research to include other types of organizations, both servant-led and not, such as governments, churches and charities, would be beneficial in enhancing the ability to generalize the results. Moreover, international institutions could also be studied to determine if the same type of trends are evident. In addition, continued work on comparing servant-led organizations with non servant-led organizations would increase the level of confidence in understanding the true effectiveness of the servant leadership approach in operational settings.

Future Research - Meaning and Spirituality

Servant leadership seems to be the manifestation in an applied and practical

manner, of a deeper motivation or character quality. It is analogous to the manifestation of tree growth, which is driven by the tree receiving water, light and nutrients. When one looks at the history of heinous acts that humans are capable of committing in the name of progress, religion or nationality, one cannot ignore the propensity that humans have to act in ways which are the antithesis of servant leadership.

Once the realization that one wants to be a servant leader occurs, how does one actually transform that wishful cognition into action? It is analogous to the incongruence that many people face when they know they should do something (e.g. stop smoking) but can't actually do it. Marshall (1991) hits the mark as he passionately describes the difficulties we face when attempting to become servant leaders:

We come now to the second and equally important question 'How do you do it?' or more accurately, since we are talking about a nature or character, 'How do you get it?' Unless we can answer this question satisfactorily, seeing an ideal that seems unattainable will either frustrate us, or we will fall into the error of thinking that if we only understand the concept we can do it, or be it (p.74).

Page and Wong (2000) also echo the same sentiment when they reflect on the process of becoming a servant leader:

Several authorities on servant leadership have suggested that to learn servant leadership, individuals need to undergo a journey of self-discovery and personal transformation. The secrets of servant leadership are gradually revealed to them through listening to their inner voices as well as the voices of those who have discovered truth (p.70).

Harold Koenig (2002) urges those retiring to find purpose and meaning in their retirement by utilizing ones gifts and abilities in service to others, instead of the

alternative, which is to seek pleasure and leisure. He suggests that growing spiritually will help individuals act in a congruent and meaningful ways. He states:

Something else is required to change and transform people so they are willing and able to stop focusing on themselves and to start focusing on the needs of others. In my opinion, nothing comes even close to spirituality in enabling that transformation. Spirituality is motivating, energizing, and inspiring, and so developing spiritually can make a real difference (p. 115).

It seems clear that there is a link between meaning, spirituality and servant leadership, and further study in this area could prove to be very beneficial and valuable.

SUMMARY

The results presented here empirically quantify the relationship between Servant leadership, Job Burnout and Job Satisfaction. When there is the presence of the positive aspects of servant leadership, and the absence of Power and Pride, subordinates report higher levels of Job Satisfaction, Professional Efficacy, and lower levels of Emotional Exhaustion and Cynicism. This corroborates the theoretical musings of Greenleaf (1977) in which he purports the benefits to employees and organizations where leaders' employ a style of leadership that gravitates to the service of subordinates by forming quality relationships with them and helping them grow

and develop.

The need to combat the growing emotional and psychological instability in organizations is highlighted by the Watson Wyatt (2003) survey, which found high rates of negative psychological conditions. The humanistic approach to servant leadership can counteract the growing emotional and psychological crisis that many employees are facing.

Although there are certainly limitations and challenges to this study, the opportunities generated, the knowledge gained, and the lessons learned seem to outweigh these drawbacks. The impact of leadership style cannot be underestimated as a driving force for employee engagement. This study has contributed to both the psychological and leadership literature in a meaningful way, and bodes well for future studies that attempt to integrate the two fields of study in research. We hope our work has opened the door to a flood of new possibilities that will be of value to individuals, organizations, and to society. It is imperative that we move forward and face the challenges ahead, for in doing so, we will surely reach our goals; and that is to make a meaningful contribution to individuals, institutions and to society as a whole. Servant leadership appears to play an important role in this mission.

Many have left their mark on history in astonishing ways, but Jesus Christ exemplified servant leadership in unparalleled ways, choosing service over power, love over hate, and self-transcendence over personal gain – touching the lives of all those he encountered. We should find strength from and follow the example of His life. Greenleaf (1977) also leaves us with a great challenge when he asks us:

Who is the enemy? Who is holding back a more rapid movement to the better society that is reasonable and possible with available resources (p.58)?.... In short, the enemy is strong natural servants who have the

potential to lead but do not lead, or who choose to follow a nonservant. They suffer. Society suffers. And so it may be in the future (p. 59).

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APPENDIX A

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

APPENDIX B

MASLACH BURNOUT INVENTORY – GENERAL SURVEY

APPENDIX C

MINNESOTA SATISFACTION QUESTIONNAIRE

APPENDIX D

SERVANT LEADERSHIP PROFILE – REVISED

APPENDIX E

SERVANT LEADERSHIP PROFILE – 360

APPENDIX F

PROJECT CONSENT FORM