Servant Leadership
A Necessity For Competitive Advantage

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Abstract
A leader is the one who guides, motivates and supports his/her followers for attainment of desired goal in the work organizations. Leadership is not only important for attainment of goal but also to avail competitive advantage effectively. The major leadership styles like Situational, Participative, Nurturant task, Transformational are being followed by managers to manage workforce. Servant leadership is one of the emerging styles, pioneered by Greenleaf in 1970. A Servant leader emphasizes on empathy, compassion towards subordinates and influences their minds to make positive action.

Align to this view objectives of the research paper is to study the importance of servant leadership in gaining the advantage at max in the competitive era. The researchers have taken an honest attempt to review and analyze fifty years of literature and to construct a felicitous conceptual model on the base on analysis. Last but not the least the paper includes significant suggestions to meet the need of dynamic Business Environment for Effective Business sustaining.

Keywords: Leadership, Servant leader, Business Sustainability, Competitive advantage, work environment

Introduction
Leadership is the driving force for determining organization success or failure. The Leader is responsible for creating a suitable work culture for their subordinates to successfully attain the organizational goal by efficient utilization of all the available resources. The leadership style possessed by the leader is his/her main strength. This leadership style acts as a catalyst in the work environment. Since ages, different leadership styles like: Situational, Participative, Nurturant task, Transformational and transactional are found to be dominate styles for managing work organizations. One such style is Servant Leadership which is a bit ignored in managing the organizations in the competitive era.

The concept of servant leadership can be described as a leader’s intention to serve his/her followers. A servant leader is first a servant to the followers and then a leader. The term “servant leadership” was coined by Greenleaf, R.K. in year 1970. The philosophy of servant leadership emphasizes on the natural feeling of compassion and love to serve the subordinates should come naturally from the heart of leader/manager in the work organization. It is this quality of a leader that contributes to his/her greatness. A servant leader is sharply different from other leaders who are a leader first. A leader who is a leader first and the one who is a servant first are actually two extreme type of leadership styles, between these extremes there are various blends of these two extremes that are the part of infinite human behavior. The basic difference between the servant leadership and other leadership styles lies in the care taken by the leader who is a servant first. This is known as intentions to serve; this intention can help the leader to serve the highest priority of needs of the followers. A servant leader is the one who focuses on the growth and the well-being of his/her followers.

Objectives
Align to the explanation the objectives of this research paper are:

a) To study the importance of servant leadership in gaining the advantage at max in the competitive era.
b) To analyze the recent trends with the help of research literature in the field of Servant Leadership.
c) To construct a conceptual model of Servant Leadership on the basis of research review
d) To give suggestions and implicational guidelines for Human Resource Management.

Review of Literature
The researchers have studied fifty years of past researches in the field of Servant Leadership and its application in the work organizations. These researches are being analyzed systematically for the purpose of understanding the importance and implication of Servant Leadership in the current organization.

National Researches
A research was carried out with the purpose to empirically study the perspective of engineering students on servant leadership of teachers. Samples from students of various engineering colleges were collected with the help of questionnaire method. By analyzing the data the
researchers found that factors such as age, location of residence affects their perception of servant leadership of engineering teachers. However factors such as gender and education level do not affect their perception. (Bhandarker, B.N., Narkhede, B.E., Bhagat, M. 2017)

Another Indian research was carried out with the objective to study the impact of servant leadership and trust in leadership on the creativity of employees. The researchers took the dyadic samples of forty eight teams. It was concluded that servant leaders builds trusts in their followers which enhances the employee creativity. (Jaiswal, N.K., Dhar, R.L. 2015)

A research was conducted by Kashyap, V., Rangekar, S in 2014 to study the relationship between employers brand Perception and perceived employee retention. The researchers have studied the moderating role of servant leadership in this relationship. This research concluded that when servant leadership style followed by the leader there is positive relationships between employer brand perceptions and perceived employee retention intentions.

Another research was done in 2011 by Kantharia, B.N. The author had aimed to understand the deeper meaning of servant leadership with reference to Indian ethos. Servant leadership is compared with transformational leadership. It was concluded that servant leadership is congruent to organizational growth.

**International Researches**

A research was carried out, its objective was to assess the influence of two distinct leadership styles (entrepreneurial and Servant) on organizational commitment and innovative behavior of the employees. The data was collected from three countries, namely Australia, Canada and U.K. The results show that servant leadership predicts the organizational commitment more strongly than entrepreneurial leadership. However entrepreneurial leadership predicts innovative behavior more strongly than servant leadership. (Newman, A., Neesham, C., Manville, G., & Tse, H.H. 2017).

According to a recent research in 2017 by Robins, A around 75% of the employees leaves the organization because they want to get rid of their poor bosses. Because poor leadership styles of managers organizations suffer from the ever growing problem of employee retention.

A research article was written, this it depicts the lessons that are extracted from lives of famous servant leaders namely Mother Teresa, Mahatma Gandhi and Martine Luther King. The author of this research article has noted certain similarities among these servant leaders. All of these leaders held principled beliefs and ideals, had passion for a cause, all of them had perseverant and resilient qualities and they all faced challenges and obstacles in their respective endeavor. The author has also specified that servant leadership can have a potential impact on various aspects of organizations such as increased in organizational trust, greater citizenship behavior, higher level of organizational commitment and job satisfaction and enhanced team effectiveness. (Baldonado, A.M. 2017)

Another research was conducted with the objective to investigate the effect of servant leadership attitude of government employees and their productivity. The findings reveal that servant leadership develops employees’ trust in leadership, enhances procedural justice and organizational citizenship behavior. This study shows that public sector leaders who possess this leadership style can provide better work environment to their subordinates. (Shim, D.C., Park, H.H., Eom, T.H. 2016)

Another study was conducted, it’s the purpose was to formulate the theory for non-profit organizations in Indonesia. This theory was created by empirically testing the effect of servant leadership, job satisfaction and policy governance to organizational performance. It concludes that servant leadership and policy governance has positive effect on performance, however servant leadership is not able to support the effect of job satisfaction on performance. (Augustine, Y., Muslimah, S. 2016)

A research was done by Grisaffe, D.B., VanMeter, R., Chonko, L.B. in 2016 with the objective to study the role of servant leadership in dynamic business environment. The authors have posited that servant leadership distinctive is hierarchically built on transformational characteristics. These transformational characteristics are themselves built on transactional characteristics. This research concludes that sales leaders at higher level of hierarchy possess servant leadership style and can lead to higher job satisfaction, performance, citizenship behavior. The results imply that sales organizations can get multi-faceted benefits through servant leadership.

Another research was conducted, its purpose was to study the relation between servant leadership and leader-member exchange (LMX). The researchers have done the validation of seven factors of servant leadership namely: empowerment, accountability, standing back, humility, authenticity, courage, interpersonal acceptance and stewardship. A successful validation of all these factors was done. It was concluded that motivation-to-serve and servant leadership made significant and independent contribution to the variance in leader-member exchange, further clarifies the pathway between servant leadership and leader-member exchange. (Amah, O.E. 2015)
The objective of this study was to study the influence of spiritual values of servant leaders on employees’ autonomous motivation and well-being. This study was conducted in China by Chen, C.Y., Chen, C.H & Li, C in 2013. It was concluded that spiritual values of servant leader, perceived by the subordinate successfully predicted the subordinates’ motivational autonomy and well-being.

Another research was conducted in 2013 by Lynch, J. A. & Friedman, H. H. with the aim to study the effect of spirituality on servant leadership. The author concludes that adding spirituality can enhance the effectiveness of servant leader. In fact a true servant leader is also spiritual in approach.

A research was carried out with the purpose to study the effect of servant leadership and organization trust on communication. This research shows that there is a positive relationship between servant leadership and organizational trust and with leader trust. Organizational communication as moderator the intensity of this relationship was increased. Rezaei, M., Salehi, S., Shafiei, M., & Sabet, S. (2012)

A study was carried out with the purpose to understand the relationship between servant leadership and organizational citizenship behavior. It was concluded that commitment to the supervisor, self-efficacy, procedural justice climate, and service climate partially mediated the relationship between servant leadership and organizational citizenship behavior. Fred, W., Chad, H., Adegoke, O. (2010)

A research was conducted in educational sector to study the relationship between servant leadership and teachers’ job satisfaction. This research was carried out in Turkey. It was concluded that there is a strong positive relationship between servant leadership and teacher’s job satisfaction. Cerit, Y (2009)

Another research was conducted with the objective to study the relationship between servant leadership and job satisfaction with organizational justice perspective. The findings concluded that servant Leadership is linked with job satisfaction. Satisfaction of employees’ needs and organizational justice plays mediating role in this relationship. Mayer, D.M., Bardes, M. & Piccolo, R.(2008)

A meta-analysis of servant leadership was done. With the help of this meta-analysis it was concluded that Servant leadership requires us to develop the ability to be fluid both/and thinkers and encourages managers not to settle for the less complex thinking. (Anzalone, F.A. 2007)

Interpretation and Discussion Based on Research Review
The researchers have review and analyzed previous researches in the field of servant leadership. It has been found that servant leadership is an integral part of workplace and has a positive impact on many variables: organizational commitment, job satisfaction, organizational citizenship behavior, organizational justice, trust, creativity and performance, to name a few. Jaiswal, N.K., Dhar, R.L. 2015, Newman, A., Neesham, C., Manville, G., & Tse, H.H (2017); Baldonado, A.M (2017); Shinn, D.C., Park, H.H., Eom, T.H (2016); Augustine, Y., Muslimah, S. (2016); Rezaei, M., Salehi, S., Shafiei, M., & Sabet, S. (2012).

Some of the researches have also found that spiritual values of servant leader perceived by the subordinate successfully predicted the subordinates’ motivational autonomy and well-being and adding spirituality factor in servant leadership can enhance the effectiveness of a servant leader Chen, C.Y., Chen, C.H & Li, C (2013); Lynch, J. A. & Friedman (2013). All the factors mentioned above makes a servant leader more impactful and lead to organizational growth Kantharia, B.N (2011). Servant Leadership is also applicable in the educational sector as it results in teachers’ job satisfaction Cerit, Y (2009).

Conceptual Model Based on Research Review
The researches have made an attempt to create a conceptual model of servant leadership my reviewing and analyzing the researches carried out in the respective field.

a) This model of servant leadership depicts that a true servant leader has intentions to serve his/her subordinates and is spiritual in nature. Adding spirituality factor in servant leadership can enhance its efficiency Lynch, J. A. & Friedman (2013); Chen, C.Y., Chen, C.H & Li, C (2013).
c) All these above mentioned above combined with spiritual values of a servant leader results in motivational autonomy and well-being of the employees Chen, C.Y., Chen, C.H & Li, C (2013). Servant Leadership also enhances the trust and employee creativity Jaiswal, N.K., Dhar, R.L. (2015).

Suggestions and Implication

a) Servant Leaders in work organization builds trust among employees. This trust can enhance good work relationship among the leaders. The trust and complete delegation enhance the ability, proficiency and creativity of the employees.
b) Most of the employees leave the organization because of poor leadership in the organizations today. The research review suggests Servant leaders can solve this problem by improving employee retention.
c) Numerous researches have emphasized that servant leaders have empathy towards their subordinates; this quality of a Servant leader can drive the organization towards long term success. Keeping view the dearth of researches, the review research can give the insights to the HRM professionals to prepare long term strategy to tackle the ever growing problem of employee retention in the work organizations today.
d) All the qualities of Servant Leaders help the organization to gain the competitive advantage for maintaining employee well-being.

Conclusion

In today’s competitive work environment, Servant Leadership is a style of leadership that is essential for in making the workforce satisfied, committed, and motivated. These leaders can enhance the creativity and innovation of employees which can help the workforce to get rid of job monotony. Hence the Servant leadership can solve the problem of employee retention by building trust, compassion, love and empathy towards their workforce.

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