



SERVANT LEADERSHIP IN INDIAN NGOs

ABSTRACT THESIS

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BY

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Introduction

Leadership has fascinated many students in history. This is not surprising. After all “Everything rises and falls on Leadership” (Maxwell, 2007). Many theories on Leadership have emerged over a period of time. Some of them are Great Man theory, Trait theory, Contingency theory, Situational theory, Behavioral theory, Participative theory, Management theory and Relational theory. Along with the theories on Leadership, the Leader behaviour was also studied in depth. The leader behaviour came to be known as the Leadership Style. Historically, many Leadership Styles have been propounded and studied. They include Charismatic, Autocratic, Persuasive, Consultative, Democratic and Delegative styles.

The search for a “better form of leading” has continued through the years. Recent studies indicate the emergence of two styles that could be termed as Non Leader centric styles. These are Transformational Leadership and Servant Leadership styles. **Servant Leadership**, simply put, is leading by serving. This style focuses on the physical, emotional and growth needs of team members. This style becomes a tool for emotional healing and sustained relationship building through practice of the attributes like Healing, Stewardship, Foresight, Conceptualisation, Commitment to the growth of others, Persuasion, Empathy, Awareness, Listening and Building Community.

The idea of Servant as a Leader is not new. Wikipedia, the free online encyclopedia (2009) states that Chanakya or Kautilya, the famous strategic thinker from ancient India, wrote about servant leadership in his 4th century B.C. book Arthashastra: *"the king [leader] shall consider as good, not what pleases himself but what pleases his subjects [followers]". "the king [leader] is a paid servant and enjoys the resources of the state together with the people"*.

The concept of “Servanthood” was propounded in *The Holy Bible*, by Jesus Christ. This has been followed by some, in their private and public lives, in Churches and other religious institutions. This concept became a Corporate term, when Greenleaf (1970) popularised it using the term “Servant Leadership”. Greenleaf (1977) explained that *The servant- leader is a servant first. It begins with the natural feeling that one wants*

to serve. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. The best test is: Do those served grow as persons; do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants?"

The **Non Profit sector**, also popularly known as the **NGOs**, has gained substantial significance in the world and has come to be known as the Third sector (Kramer, Ralph M, 2000). This sector has grown to have considerable significance in the affairs of the world by addressing various humanitarian, environmental, economic, religious and other causes. It is as unlikely that modern democracies could function without a third sector to bridge the gap between government and the people as without a free press (Taylor,1995).

There are a large number of NGOs operating in India. Some of them are part of large international organisations, but a vast majority of them are small organisations making an impact locally. They have played some key roles in Rural and community development in India (Alliband, 1983; Tripathi, Kala, Mishra, & Patni, 1991)

However there are only a handful of empirical studies done on this combination of Servant Leadership and Leadership in NGOs.

Literature review

The literature for this study was reviewed in three sections. **First Section** focused on Leadership in general. In this section, a review of literature on different theories on Leadership was carried out. The evolution of leadership ideas was examined taking stock of *theories, styles* and *eras*. Literature beyond the theories and styles was examined next. A compilation of attributes of *Excellent Leadership* was attempted then. The intertwining of Power and Spirituality with Leadership was also explored. Then, role of Altruism, Ethics and Moral Values was perused. In the **second section**, focus was on Servant Leadership. Servant Leadership has emerged as a viable alternative to the use of power and a practical way of implementing high Moral and Ethical standards in Leadership. It has high spiritual context also. In this section, elements of Servant Leadership as they appeared in Scriptures were perused. This exercise was done in the Secular realm as well. Cases of successful organisations formally practicing Servant

Leadership were examined next. Then, studies that have empirically measured Servant Leadership and its attributes were perused. The impact of Servant Leadership on employees of an organisation was explored next. In the **third section**, an attempt was made to take stock of literature available on the NGO sector. First, literature focusing on emergence of NGO sector as a key sector was perused. The importance and impact of Leadership in NGOs was explored next. Approaches employed to measure the impact of an NGO were examined next. This was done since one of the objectives of this study was to explore the parameters that impact the performance of NGOs. The challenges of measuring the impact of NGOs using outcome measures was examined, followed by the existing studies on the impact of NGO leadership on its employees and volunteers on parameters like their performance and motivation.

King (1990) provided an overview of the various leadership *eras*. Carlyle (1888) proposed the *Great Man theory*, centered around the greatness of the person on whom leadership gets thrust upon. Galton (1869) opined that leadership is due to certain *traits* that a person possesses. Lewin, Lippitt & White (1939) looked at the behaviours that made a leader. The *behavioural theories* were bolstered by the works done at the Ohio State university and University of Michigan. Fiedler (1957) was one of the major proponents of the *Contingency theory*. Hersey & Blanchard (1969) proposed the *Situational theory*, and McGrath (1962) propounded the *Functional Leadership theory*. Burns (1978) came out with the *Transactional theory*, and then brought out the *Transformational Theory*. Lewin et al (1939), Tannenbaum and Schmidt (1957), and Goleman (2000) proposed different behavioral patterns christened as *leadership styles* running across the various Theories of leadership. The search for excellence in leadership continued all through. Authors like Mintzberg (1969), Khandwalla (1962), Collins (2001), Maxwell (2008), Barney (2010) etc looked at various leadership aspects and proposed various attributes of excellent leadership. The use and misuse of power was a theme of many studies. Mills (1956) used the term *Power Elite* to describe leaders. Barnard (1938) initiated the discussion on the Bottoms-up model of authority, where the power was not necessarily at the top. Follett (1973) exhorted leaders to get away from the *power-over* mindset to the *power-with* mindset. McClelland & Burnham (1995) studied the advantages of *Socialised power* over *Individualized/Personal power*.

Many authors like Dasgupta (2001), Mishra (2001), Chakraborty (2001), etc studied the use of power as suggested by Indian scriptures and Indian leaders. The linkage of leadership with spirituality, altruism and ethics was the next concept that this study examined. Cifrino (1959) and Conger (1994) advocated the need for inculcating spirituality in business leadership. Khandwalla (2008) studied the path of corporate spirituality. Cuilla (1998), Singh (2001) and Sendjaya (2005) explored the requirement of Ethics in leadership. Khandwalla (2008) and Sharma (2010) highlighted the need for altruism in leaders. The search for a leadership form which uses power appropriately, had the elements of spirituality, altruism and ethics, led researchers to focus on Servant Leadership.

Servant Leadership theme has appeared prominently in ancient literature and scriptures, - be it Hindu, Islam or Christian. However attempts to explore the practice of servant leadership in professional organisations started with Greenleaf's (1970) work. He coined the term "Servant Leadership", after reading the Novel *Journey to the East* by German novelist Hermann Hesse (1956). He wrote the first article *Servant as a Leader* in 1969. He persisted with the idea and through his deep involvement with the colleges and universities in the late 1960s and early 1970s, during the period of campus turmoil in the US, succeeded in getting attention to this concept. This spread sporadically to other communities like churches and foundations.

The concept attracted attention from well known leadership thinkers like Covey (1994), DePree (1989), etc. "The Servant Leadership concept is a principle, a natural law," wrote Covey (2004), "and getting our social value systems and personal habits aligned with this ennobling principle is one of the greatest challenges of life". Blanchard (2001) went to the extent of admitting that Situational Leadership is a Servant Leadership Model.

Spears (1998, 2001) came up with a set of 10 Servant Leadership Attributes and characteristics. There has been a number of studies on the subject after that, both theoretical and empirical, and it has come to be established as a distinctive leadership approach. Graham (1991) established that Servant leadership differed from other prominent leadership theories, especially Transformational Leadership. Laub (1999) provided a summary of Servant Leadership Characteristics, compiling the works done

by a number of authors. Ehrhart (2004) noted that Servant-leadership could be distinguished from another major theory of leadership, leader-member exchange (LMX). Liden, Wayne, Zhao and Henderson (2008) established that Servant Leadership was distinct from other prominent leadership theories, and a Servant leader was close to the “Socially oriented Transformational Leader” (Bass , 1997. p131), who morally uplifted the followers.

The first known attempt to apply Servant Leadership in Corporate world was in TDIndustries - a Fortune 500 company. It has been one of the top ten companies to work for in America for several years. It was also listed by Levering and Milton (1993) in their study on *The 100 Best Companies to Work for in America*. Spears (2001) noted that TDIndustries believed that *“Trustworthiness which requires character and competence, can only flourish with leadership that trusts, supports and encourages”*. Spears (2001) listed other organisations that succeeded using Servant Leadership principles. Further to this, Frick (2004 and 2009) and Glashagel (2009) also studied various organisations that implemented Servant Leadership and had been successful in business as a result of such implementation.

The early proponents of Servant Leadership were not in favour of “measuring” Servant leadership attributes. The focus was on experiential understanding of the concept. Frick (1998) believed that if servant leadership was reduced to a collection of admirable qualities and learned skills that were displayed in organisational settings, it was all too easy to forget that servant leadership was, first about deep identity. In view of these arguments, most of the early writings on Servant leadership have been based on anecdotal observations, personal testimonies and reflections.

However, a body of researchers argued against this view and attempted measuring Servant leadership attributes. Laub (1999) developed an Instrument, the Servant Organizational Leadership Assessment (OLA) which assessed the presence or absence of Servant Leadership Characteristics in an organisation. The OLA provided opportunity for everyone in the organisation to participate in the assessment including, top leaders, managers and people in the workforce. One of the potential goals of Laub (1999) in doing the 360 degree assessment was to help leaders to understand the differences in perception of the different levels and roles in the organisation. The OLA

is a 60 item, Likert-scale instrument that was research based and also included a separate 6-item Job Satisfaction scale.

Page and Wong (2000) argued that the apprehensions of Frick (1998) can be easily addressed by reminding people that high standards serve the dual purpose of encouraging the pursuit of excellence and monitoring progress. They told that the popular appeal of Servant Leadership has not translated into academic respectability, primarily because of lack of a research base. They were also encouraged by the fact that even in 1996, the study by Freeman, Knott and Schwartz (1996) revealed about 80 inventories and questionnaires that measure leadership and different aspects of leadership behaviour, ranging from Leadership styles to Leadership Practices. Building on the works of Clark, Clark and Campbell (1992), which proved that leadership characteristics can be measured and studied scientifically, Page and Wong (2000) developed a Self assessment model for measuring Servant leadership attributes. Liden et al (2008) developed a multilevel assessment tool, as part of their study. This was a 28 item scale based on 9 dimensions of Servant Leadership. Their research was based on the responses provided by the employees, and supervisors in the organisation about Servant Leadership Characteristics they see in the leaders (managers) in the organisation. Sendjaya, Sarros, and Santora, (2008) developed and validated a multidimensional measure of servant leadership behaviour (Servant Leadership Behaviour Scale). They used both qualitative and quantitative studies to establish preliminary psychometric properties for the new 35-item, six-dimension measure.

The impact of Servant Leadership on employees has been a topic of interest. Dannhauser (2007), Ehrhart (2004) and Winston (2004) were some of the researchers who explored the relationship between practice of Servant Leadership and the impact on employee aspects like trust, team commitment, effectiveness, organisation citizenship behaviour, and morale. Liden et al (2008) noted strong positive correlation of Servant Leadership with employees' performance, their commitment and community citizenship behaviour.

NGO sector is growing in significance. Clotfelter and Ehrlich (1999) opined that non profit sector is central to furthering democracy and search for social justice. Berger (2003) highlighted the role of religious NGOs in the welfare of the society. By the very

nature of its activities, NGOs appear as an ideal place for practicing Servant Leadership concepts. Clohesy, William W (2000) stated that, Altruism in TSOs (Third sector organisations) meant, first, the provision of service in ways that were respectful of persons, rather than impersonal or standardized, even if this was quantitatively less efficient. NGOs do not work for bottom line and this is a perfect fit for the Servant Leadership setting. Spears, (2001) stated that one cannot approach Servant Leadership with the sole purpose of improving the bottom line. Spears (2001) quoted Jack Lowe, the former CEO of TDIndustries as saying *“If you do Servant Leadership for the Bottom line, you have already blown it”*. Burkhart and Spears (2001) explored the application of Servant Leadership concepts in the Philanthropic organisations. Keller (2007) proposed that servant leadership theory aligned well with philanthropic activities whereby philanthropists became servant donors. McCann (2006) studied a Catholic Charitable agency and established that the principles of servant-leadership could be integrated into the operations of different organizations. Klamon (2006) noted the concept of climate for servanthood as "normative collective servant-leadership behavior" in Social organisations, acknowledged the centrality of the role organizational members played in shaping climate and culture, and simultaneously drew attention to the opportunity for social enterprise leaders to grow into a more complete model of servant leader. The review brings forth the point Servant Leadership has potential to play a prominent role in motivating the employees of NGOs. The practice of this class of leadership is expected to be of more impact for NGO sector.

The following **conclusions** were drawn from the review of literature.

- There is a continuing search for understanding “excellence in leadership, both at Individual levels and at organisational levels
- Servant Leadership has emerged as a distinct paradigm that might provide answers to this quest for Excellence in Leadership
- Servant Leadership has been practiced in many successful organisations, and is a suitable model for corporates
- Since the “followers” feel taken care of under Servant Leadership, they feel motivated to achieve more for the organisation, do more for the community around them, and create a positive organisational climate

- This higher level of motivation and positive organisational climate can result into higher organisational performance.
- In line with other leadership attributes, Servant Leadership is a suitable subject for empirical studies and its attributes can be measured.
- Validated tools are available for measuring Servant Leadership attributes
- Validated approaches are available for studying the interrelationships between Servant Leadership attributes and other employee parameters like On-the-Job performance, Organisational Commitment and Community Citizenship Behaviour.
- NGOs have an important role to play in the development and well being of humanity. They complement the efforts by the Government, Public sector and Private sector organisations.
- While external factors like funding and policies play an important role in the overall effectiveness of NGOs, management/leadership of the organisation is equally important.
- NGOs are subject to increased level of public scrutiny and the need for transparency and ethical leadership is on the rise.
- The measurement of Leadership effectiveness of an NGO using outcome measures is difficult and no established methods are available.
- However, the measurement of Leadership effectiveness using impact on employees is a feasible proposition.
- There is a need for developing leadership skills among NGOs
- Servant Leadership could be a natural fit for the NGO sector, considering its focus on Social impact and Community relationships.
- When leaders in NGOs demonstrate Servant Leadership characteristics, it impacts the employees' motivation to perform and hence the NGOs are expected to make a greater impact.

The study of available literature brought out the following **Research Gaps**

- There is no known study on Servant Leadership in India, and hence there is no known study of Servant Leadership in NGOs in India

- There is limited research on the application of Servant Leadership in the NGO or Non Profit Sector world wide
- The relationship between various demographic variables in NGOs and Servant Leadership has not been studied.

Scope of the Study

The scope of the study is limited to the NGOs operating in the *Humanitarian fields*. These NGOs focus on providing *Health Care services* to Human beings, *living assistance, emotional, financial and physical care* for the Old, destitute, children and the handicapped. These NGOs also focus on *Education Services, housing and other shelter schemes*, and other humanitarian services like *counseling and/or rehabilitation services* for depression, abuse, suicidal tendencies, anxiety etc.

Objectives of the Study

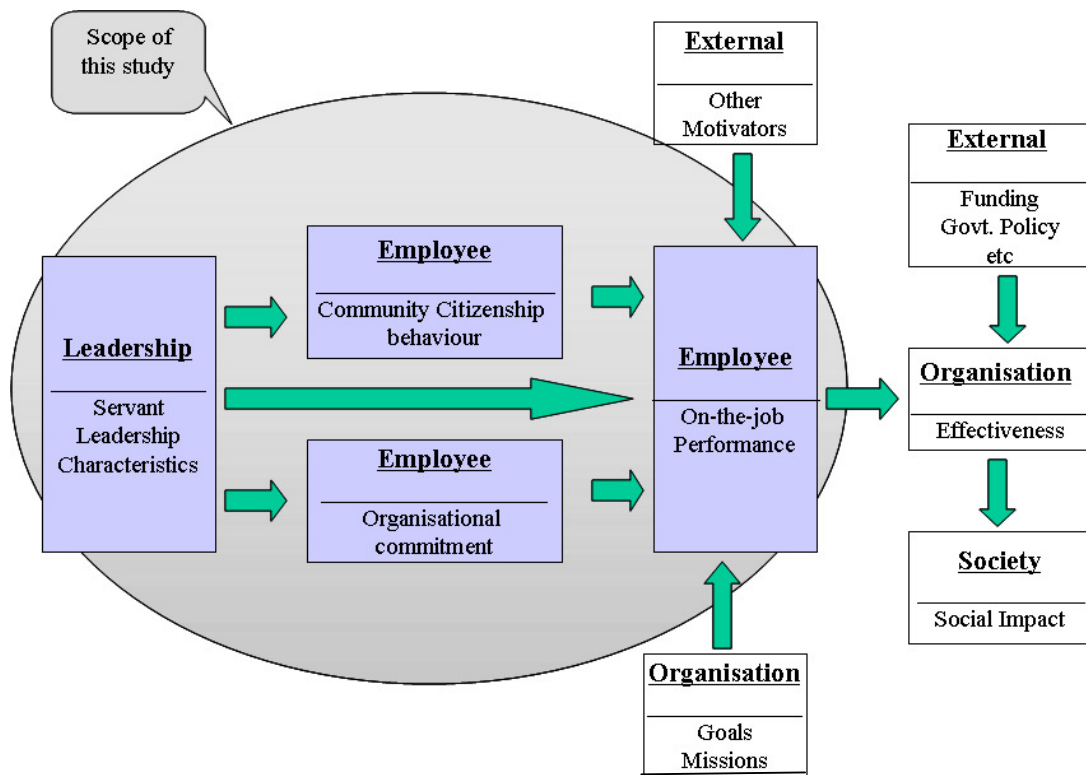
This study was aimed at

- Measuring the prevalence of Servant Leadership characteristics in the Humanitarian NGOs operating in India,
- Exploring correlation and/or impact between Servant Leadership and employee aspects like their Organisational Commitment (OC), Community Citizenship Behaviour (CCB) and On-the-Job Performance (OJP).
- Identifying differences if any, among the NGOs, based on their geographical spread, i.e., local vis-à-vis global, on the practice of Servant Leadership.
- Identifying differences if any, between the NGOs funded by Govt. and those that do not receive Govt. funding, on the practice of Servant Leadership.
- Exploring relationships between the demographic variables like, education, gender, religion, income, size of the organisation, etc on the perception of Servant Leadership in the NGOs.
- Identifying any mediating effects that Organisational Commitment, Community Citizenship Behaviour and On-the-Job Performance have on each other

Conceptual Model

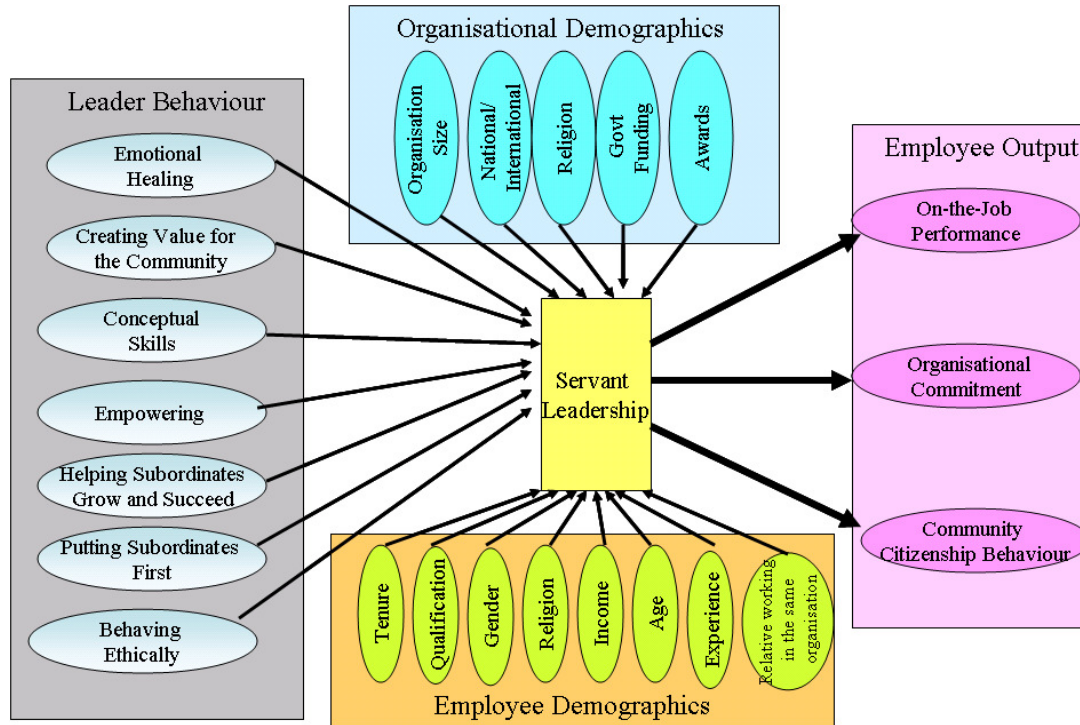
Based on the Literature available and researcher's own understanding of the organisations, two models were proposed for the study. These models are shown in Fig 1 and Fig 2

Fig 1: Conceptual Model 1



In this model, a) the Servant Leadership Characteristics is the Independent variable and b) Employee Organisational commitment, c) Employee Community Citizenship behaviour, and d) Employee on-the-job performance are the dependent variables.

Fig 2: Conceptual Model 2



In Model 2 a) the Servant Leadership Characteristics is the Independent variable and b) Employee Organisational Commitment, c) Employee Community Citizenship behaviour, and d) Employee on-the-job performance are the dependent variables. In addition a number of demographic parameters act as independent variables impacting servant leadership and the Employee outcome measures (On-the-Job performance, Organisational Commitment and Community Citizenship behaviour)

Hypotheses

Based on the Research Questions and the number of variables we have in the study, the Hypothesis has been grouped into three main categories. Within each of the main groups it has further been grouped into four sub groups each. The groups are listed below (the numbers in parenthesis indicate the number of hypotheses in each sub category) Table 1 gives the distribution of Hypotheses

- H1: Hypotheses focusing on differences
 - H11: Servant leadership (7)

- H12: On-the-Job Performance (7)
- H13: Organisational Commitment (7)
- H14: Community Citizenship Behaviour (7)

A sample Hypothesis under this category is given below

Hypothesis 11a : There is no significant difference in the demonstration of servant leadership in an Indian humanitarian NGO based on the region of operation of the organisation (Local Vs International)

- H2: Hypotheses focusing on correlations
 - H21: Servant leadership (8)
 - H22: On-the-Job Performance (7)
 - H23: Organisational Commitment (6)
 - H24: Community Citizenship Behaviour (5)

A sample hypothesis under this category is given below

Hypothesis 21a : There is no significant correlation between Servant Leadership and on-the-job- performance of employees in Indian Humanitarian NGOs

- H3: Hypotheses focusing on Impact/Influence
 - H31: Servant Leadership (3)
 - H33: Organisational Commitment (1)
 - H34: Community Citizenship Behaviour (2)

A sample hypothesis under this category is given below

Hypothesis 31a: There is no significant impact/influence of Servant Leadership on On-the-Job Performance of employees in Indian Humanitarian NGOs.

Table 1: Hypotheses

Hypotheses	Demographics/ Variables	SL	OJP	OC	CCB
Hypothesis based on differences (H1)	Region	H11a	H12a	H13a	H14a
	Govt Funded	H11b	H12b	H13b	H14b
	Founder's faith	H11c	H12c	H13c	H14c
	Area of Operation	H11d	H12d	H13d	H14d
	Qualification	H11e	H12e	H13e	H14e
	Religion	H11f	H12f	H13f	H14f
	Gender	H11g	H12g	H13g	H14g
Hypotheses based on Correlations (H2)	Tenure	H21a	H22a	H23a	H24a
	Size	H21b	H22b	H23b	H24b
	Income	H21c	H22c	H23c	H24c
	Age	H21d	H22d	H23d	H24d
	Experience	H21e	H22e	H23e	H24e
	OJP	H21f	-	-	-
	OC	H21g	H22f	-	-
	CCB	H21h	H22g	H23f	-
Hypotheses based on Impact/ Influence (H3)	OJP	H31a	-	H33a	H34a
	OC	H31b	-	-	H34b
	CCB	H31c	-	-	-

Development of a Scale

Based on the review of literature on Servant Leadership focusing on different assessment scales, a 28 item scale developed and validated by Liden et al (2008) was selected for adaptation in Indian context. Its content validity was assessed by a panel of Indian experts. The words used in scale were modified to suit Indian culture, and the scale was then reduced to a 21 item scale covering seven dimensions. This scale was then subjected to quantitative validation using statistical analysis on pilot responses obtained from 48 respondents across 8 organisational units. The scale was analysed for *Variation, Meaning, Redundancy, Scalability, Non Response, Reliability* and *Validity* using appropriate statistical tools. The potential use of the scale in assessing relationship between *Servant Leadership* and Employee aspects like *On-the-job performance, Organisational Commitment* and *Community Citizenship Behaviour*, was studied. Results confirmed that the scale was suitable to measure Servant Leadership in the Indian context, and can be used for testing different hypothesis related with prevalence and impact of Servant Leadership in Indian organisations.

Pattern of Analysis

Data analysis was undertaken to describe the information, test the hypotheses and to arrive at conclusions. Descriptive statistics (Trochim, 2000; Lewin, 2005) are used to describe the basic features of the data in the study. Percentages, Frequency distributions, central tendencies and measures of dispersion were used to describe the data. Mean scores were calculated for each item after assigning values to the responses. Higher the score, the higher was the respondent's disposition/ perception of the attribute being measured. These mean values were used to interpret the prevalence of Servant Leadership in the NGOs. Additionally the number of responses for *Strongly Agree* and *Agree* (Scores of 6 and 7) were counted and their percentage calculated against the total response number. This gave us an idea of the respondent's strength of agreement with the prevalence of Servant Leadership attribute. This exercise was repeated for the top 3 scores namely; *Slightly Agree*, *Agree* and *Strongly Agree* (scores of 5, 6 and 7). This result was used to interpret the total percentage of respondents who report the demonstration of Servant Leadership in their organisations.

General procedures for Hypothesis Testing recommended by Malhotra (2007) were used to test the hypotheses. Inferential Statistics (Trochim, 2000; Barnes & Lewin, 2005) was used to explore differences, explore the nature and extent of relationships and to classify and to make predictions. To test the hypotheses based on differences, t-test and ANOVA were conducted based on the group size. Correlation analysis was attempted to find out the relation between the Attributes and the dependent variables, among the dependent variables themselves, and to find out the relationship with demographic variables which are not grouped but are continuous values (example age, tenure, income, experience, size of the organisation etc.).

Regression analysis was carried out to establish the level of impact of Servant Leadership Attributes on the employee parameters namely; OJP, OC and CCB. Mediation analysis was attempted to find if any of the dependent variables played a mediating role in the impact that SL has on OJP. Structural equation Modeling (SEM) was employed to confirm the analytical models worked out for the study, and also to measure the impact of SL on OJP, OC and CCB. SEM was also used to find assess any impact among the dependent variables of OJP, OC and CCB.

Key Highlights and Managerial Implications

- This study substantiates the presence of Servant Leadership in Indian NGOs working for Humanitarian causes. Out of the seven dimensions of Servant Leadership, the results indicated a prevalence of as many as six of them among the NGOs studied.
- The dimension of *Putting Subordinates first* was relatively less prevalent dimension of Servant Leadership in Indian NGOs.
- This study indicated a positive correlation and impact between *Servant Leadership* and *On-the-Job performance, Organisational Commitment & Community Citizenship Behaviour*.
- Organisational Commitment emerged as a key element in this study. Servant Leadership is found to have the maximum impact on *Commitment*. *Organisational commitment* on the other hand is reported to have a positive impact on *Performance* of employees. Thus the effect of Servant leadership on performance gets significantly enhanced when the organisation reports higher *Organisational Commitment*.
- *Community Citizenship Behaviour* came out as a minor and potentially unimportant factor in this study. It is reported to be least impacted by Servant Leadership. It is also reported to have least impact on *Commitment* and *Performance* of employees.
- This study focused on application of the Servant Leadership concept in organisations operating in different geographical regions. The findings suggest that employees in international organisations observe lower levels of Servant Leadership behaviour from their local leaders. National level organisations reported a higher level of Servant Leadership behaviour.
- National level organisations also reported a higher score on aspects of *Emotional Healing, Creating Value for the Community* and *Putting Subordinates First*.
- International organisations were seen to be stronger on the dimension of *Empowering*. International organisations also report higher levels of *Commitment* to the organisation from their employees.

- It is worth noting that *Conceptual skills* emerged as the key dimension of Servant Leadership in the Indian humanitarian NGOs. This is the highest observed attribute. Additionally this study confirms that *Conceptualisation*, among all the Servant Leadership attributes, has the highest impact on the *Performance* of employees. This attribute also impacts *Organisational Commitment*.
- Christian organisations and Christian leaders were reported to exhibit higher levels of Conceptual skills within Indian NGOs.
- Ethical Behaviour stood out as an attribute that impacts *Performance* as well as *Commitment* positively. In the case of *Organisational Commitment*, *Behaving ethically* has the highest impact among all other Servant leadership attributes.
- Female employees see less of ethical behaviour in their leaders.
- Analysis across source of funding indicated a difference among organisations that receive funding from the Government, and those that do not. Organisations that receive funding from Government exhibited lower levels of Servant Leadership.
- Organisations operating in the educational field reported higher levels of *Community Citizenship Behaviour* of employees. In addition, leaders of NGOs working in the educational field are found to exhibit higher levels of *Emotional healing* and *Helping their Subordinates Grow and Succeed*.
- It is noted that there is difference in the way employees perceive Servant leadership when the analysis was carried out as per educational attainments. Employees with higher qualifications report higher levels of *Servant Leadership*, better *Performance*, and higher *Commitment* to the organisation.
- Early tenured employees and employees who are young see less of Servant Leadership in their leaders.
- Bigger organisations report lower levels of Servant Leadership.
- A vast majority of organisations classified themselves as religious in this study with only a small number of organisations classifying themselves as secular. However this study did not report any difference in the practice of Servant leadership or the outcome variables like *Performance*, *Commitment* and *Community Service* as per the religious faith of the organisations.

Based on the key findings certain recommendations are arrived for the NGO leaders, policy makers and employees. These recommendations are summarised in Table 2.

Table 2: Key Findings and Recommendations

Key findings	Recommendations
SL is prevalent in Indian NGOs	Nurture this more. Demonstrate more. Integrate this into the mission statement
Putting Subordinates first is the least observed attribute	Inculcate the culture of self sacrifice
Positive correlation and impact of SL on OJP, OC and CCB. Max impact on OC. OC impacts OJP	Make SL an integral part of performance and retention initiatives
International organisations show lower SL. National organisations show higher SL, Healing, etc	Sharing and networking platforms on leadership aspects
Conceptual skills scores high. Impacts OJP and OC	Nurture this skill
Christian organisations and Christian leaders exhibit more conceptualisation	Interfaith forums, Visits, Job shadowing, Stretch assignments, Job rotation etc
Educational Field organisations show higher CCB, Healing etc	Sharing and networking platforms on leadership aspects
Ethical Behaviour positively impacts OJP and OC	Ethics to be built into the core of the organisation through various means
Government funded organisations show lower SL	Consciously practice SL in such organisations.
Higher qualified employees perceive more SL	Implement Education assistance programs
Early Tenure employees and younger employees perceive lower SL	Implement SL training at all levels including entry level and induction training. Have more “leader connect” sessions
Bigger organisations report lower SL	Town hall meetings, all hands meetings etc, backed up by real demonstration of SL

- Source: Researcher’s distillation

Other results are summarised in Table 3.

Table 3: Conclusions of results

	Difference Based							Correlation Based							Impact Based			
	Region	Govt Fund	Faith	operation Founder	Area of	Qualificatio	Religion	Gender	Tenure	Size	Income	Age	Experience	OJP	OC	CCB	OJP	OC
	✓ Significant Difference ✗ No Significant Difference							↑ Significant Positive correlation ↓ Significant Negative correlation ✗ No significant Correlation							★ Strong Impact ☆ Weak Impact			
SL	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	↑	↓	↑	↑	✗	↑	↑	↑	★	★	☆
OJP	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗	✓	✗	↓	✗	✗	↓	-	↑	✗			
OC	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	↑	✗	↑	↑	✗	↑	-	↑	★		
CCB	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	↑	↓	✗	✗	✗	✗	↑	-			

Thus, it is inferred that the practice of Servant Leadership is overall beneficial to the organisations. The employees exhibit better commitment to the organisation and are likely to perform better in their jobs, when they see their leaders demonstrate Servant Leadership behaviour. The employees also become better community citizens under Servant Leaders. This study therefore suggests greater spread of Servant Leadership across the Humanitarian NGOs.

Contributions from this study

- This is the maiden study on Servant Leadership in Indian NGOs.
- A list of “26 Characteristics of Excellent Leaders” is compiled, grouped into 3 major categories i.e., *Thinking related*, *People related* and *Character related*. These 26 Characteristics could be used in Leadership development programs in organisations.
- A list of 28 Servant Leadership Attributes is compiled, grouped into 3 major categories i.e., *Thinking related*, *People related* and *Character related*. These 28 attributes could be used Servant leadership implementation and Leadership Development programs .
- A measurement scale to assess *Servant Leadership*, *On-the-Job performance* *Organisational Commitment*, and *Community Citizenship behaviour* is developed and validated for Indian context. This is the first such scale now available in India. This scale can be used for further studies.
- A new model of Servant Leadership and its impact on organisational aspects is presented and validated through statistical methods. This model could be used as a basis for leadership development activities in organisations.
- A number of recommendations are provided for Leaders, policy makers, and employees of NGOs. They are a pointer for NGOs on where to focus their leadership development efforts and provides guidance for investing in areas which will make the maximum impact for the organisation.

Limitations of the Study

The study has the following limitations

- The sampling plan used is non- probabilistic and hence the inferences need to be seen in the light of this. Efforts were made to ensure representative nature of the samples, but no claim is being made to the randomness of the sample.
- The language of the questionnaire is English, and hence only employees who could understand English participated in the survey. Assisted translation was permitted in the cases where the responses where collected personally by the

Research Assistant. A validated translation process was not part of the research design. Translation was not practical in this case, since the study was done across India.

- Just like in any other survey, the risk of response bias exists for this study. The employees have been assured of confidentiality of the responses to reduce the response bias.
- Though efforts were made to include all religious faiths, only two major religious groups were represented (Christian and Hindu)

Directions for future research

- More studies be carried out using the measurement scale developed and the scale be modified for a 360 degree assessment of Servant Leadership and its impact on employee motivation factors.
- The study may further be extended to organisations in the for-profit sector, and NGOs in other fields
- It will be interesting to study international organisations across various geographies they operate in.
- Study correlations and impact of Servant Leadership on outcome measures of organisations, both Non-profit and for-Profit.
- A deeper study of specific dimensions of Servant Leadership could be carried out.
- A focused study on Community Citizenship Behaviour in different organisations is recommended.