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A Study on Curriculum Design for the Servant Leadership Development of College Students

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Abstract
This study focuses on curriculum design for servant leadership development in higher education. The theoretical framework of servant leadership is explored, including the key characteristics of a servant leader. Several studies on curriculum design for servant leadership development are reviewed, and the most appropriate curriculum structure is suggested. Gaps in the literature are identified, and recommendations for future research are made. The implications for practice are discussed, with suggestions for addressing the challenges in implementing a servant leadership curriculum.

Keywords: servant leadership, curriculum.

1. Introduction

Servant leadership is an emerging leadership approach that prioritizes the needs and well-being of followers, with the goal of empowering them to reach their full potential (Greenleaf, 1970). This leadership approach has gained attention in recent years for its potential to enhance the personal and professional development of individuals and to create positive organizational outcomes (Sendjaya et al., 2018). As a result, many colleges and universities have begun to incorporate servant leadership into their curricula and co-curricular activities to develop future leaders who can serve their communities and organizations with a sense of purpose and compassion.

Despite the growing interest in servant leadership development among college students, there is a lack of consensus on the most effective approaches to designing and implementing servant leadership curricula. Some studies suggest that experiential learning activities, such as service learning and leadership retreats, are effective in cultivating servant leadership skills (Fenwick et al., 2014; Sendjaya et al., 2015). However, other studies highlight the importance of integrating servant leadership concepts into existing courses and programs (Russell and Stone, 2002; McCullough, 2018). Additionally, there is a need to examine the factors that contribute to the success of servant leadership curricula and the long-term impact of these curricula on students' leadership development.

The purpose of this literature review is to examine the existing research on curriculum design for the development of servant leadership among college students. Specifically, this review aims to:
Identify the different approaches to designing and implementing servant leadership curricula;
Evaluate the effectiveness of these curricula in cultivating servant leadership skills;
Examine the factors that contribute to the success of servant leadership curricula;
Identify gaps in the literature and suggest areas for future research.

2. Theoretical Framework
1) definition of servants and historical leadership
Servant leadership is an emerging leadership approach that emphasizes the needs and well-being of followers, with the aim of empowering them to reach their full potential (Greenleaf, 1970). This leadership approach has gained attention in recent years for its potential to enhance the personal and professional development of individuals and to create positive organizational outcomes (Sendjaya et al., 2018). As a result, many colleges and universities

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(1) Definition of Servant Leadership:

Servant leadership is an approach to leadership that emphasizes the needs and well-being of followers, with the aim of empowering them to reach their full potential (Greenleaf, 1970). This approach is grounded in the belief that leadership is a service to others, rather than a pursuit of personal power or authority (Greenleaf, 1977). According to Spears (2010), a servant leader is someone who:
- Puts the needs of others first
- Helps others to grow and succeed
- Builds community and fosters collaboration
- Shows empathy and compassion
- Exercises ethical and moral leadership
- Creates a culture of trust and respect

(2) Historical Roots of Servant Leadership:

The roots of servant leadership can be traced back to ancient Eastern philosophies, such as Taoism and Confucianism, which emphasized the importance of humility, compassion, and service to others (Sendjaya et al., 2018). In the Western world, the concept of servant leadership can be traced back to the teachings of Jesus Christ, who emphasized the importance of serving others and leading by example (Greenleaf, 1977). However, it was not until the 20th century that servant leadership emerged as a distinct leadership approach.

The modern concept of servant leadership was developed by Robert K. Greenleaf, who worked for AT&T for many years before founding the Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership in 1964 (Greenleaf, 1970). Greenleaf was influenced by the writings of Herman Hesse, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and Leo Tolstoy, as well as by his own experiences as a leader and follower in various organizations (Spears, 1995). In his seminal essay, "The Servant as Leader," Greenleaf (1970) described servant leadership as a way of leading that begins with the desire to serve others and ends with the growth and empowerment of both the leader and the followers.

Since Greenleaf's seminal work, numerous scholars and practitioners have contributed to the development and refinement of the concept of servant leadership. For example, Spears (1995) identified ten characteristics of servant leadership, including listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people, and building community. Sendjaya et al. (2018) proposed a four-dimensional model of servant leadership, which includes ethical behavior, empowering followers, serving followers, and putting followers first. These models provide a more detailed understanding of the key elements of servant leadership and how they can be applied in practice.

Servant leadership is an emerging leadership approach that emphasizes the needs and well-being of followers, with the aim of empowering them to reach their full potential. This approach has historical roots in ancient Eastern philosophies and the teachings of Jesus Christ, and was developed into a distinct leadership approach by Robert K. Greenleaf in the 20th century. Servant leadership is characterized by a focus on serving others, building community, and exercising ethical and moral leadership. Scholars and practitioners continue to refine and develop the concept of servant leadership, with the goal of creating leaders who can serve their communities and organizations with a sense of purpose and compassion.

2) Theoretical Framework of Servant Leadership:

Servant leadership is rooted in several theoretical frameworks, including ethical leadership, transformational leadership, and stewardship theory (van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2011). These frameworks provide a foundation for understanding the key elements of servant leadership and how they can be applied in practice.

(1) Ethical Leadership:

Ethical leadership is a theoretical framework that emphasizes the importance of ethics and morality in leadership. Ethical leaders are those who act in accordance with ethical principles, and who encourage ethical behavior among their followers (Brown & Treviño, 2006). Servant leadership is closely related to ethical leadership, as both approaches emphasize the importance of acting with integrity and serving others. In fact, some scholars argue that servant leadership is a form of ethical leadership (Liden, Wayne, Zhao, & Henderson, 2008).

(2) Transformational Leadership:

Transformational leadership is a theoretical framework that emphasizes the importance of inspiring and motivating followers to achieve their full potential. Transformational leaders are those who create a vision for the future, and who inspire their followers to work towards that vision (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Servant leadership is also closely related to transformational leadership, as both approaches emphasize the importance of empowering and developing followers. However, servant leadership differs from transformational leadership in its focus on serving others, rather than achieving a specific vision or goal (Greenleaf, 1977).

(3) Stwardship Theory:

Stewardship theory is a theoretical framework that emphasizes the importance of responsible and ethical management of resources. Stewards are those who act as caretakers of resources, and who are accountable for the long-term well-being of those resources (Davis, Schoorman, & Donaldson, 1997). Servant leadership is closely related to stewardship theory, as both approaches emphasize the importance of acting in the best interests of others, and of taking a long-term view of leadership. In fact, some scholars argue that servant leadership is a form of stewardship (Spears, 2010).

The theoretical framework of servant leadership is based on several key theories, including ethical leadership, transformational leadership, and stewardship theory. These theories provide a foundation for understanding the key elements of servant leadership, including a focus on ethics, empowerment, and long-term stewardship. While servant leadership shares some similarities with other leadership approaches, it is unique in its emphasis on serving others and fostering a sense of community and collaboration.

3) Servant leadership development in higher education

The authors conducted a systematic literature review to identify studies related to servant leadership development in higher education. They analyzed a total of 28 studies published between 2009 and 2019, using a thematic analysis approach to identify key themes and patterns.

One of the key themes that emerged from the analysis was

the importance of context in servant leadership development. The authors noted that higher education institutions have unique cultures and structures that can impact the implementation and effectiveness of servant leadership programs. As such, it is important to take into account institutional context when designing and implementing servant leadership programs.

Another key theme was the use of experiential learning activities in servant leadership development. The authors found that many programs used activities such as service-learning projects, community service, and leadership simulations to help students develop their servant leadership skills.

The authors also highlighted the importance of mentorship and coaching in servant leadership development. Many programs included opportunities for students to work with mentors and coaches who could provide guidance and support in developing their servant leadership skills.

Based on the information provided in the systematic literature review by Khurshid et al. (2020), it can be concluded that servant leadership development in higher education is a complex and context-specific process.

The review highlights the importance of taking into account the unique institutional context of each higher education institution when designing and implementing servant leadership programs. The use of experiential learning activities and mentorship/coaching can also be effective in helping students develop their servant leadership skills.

It can also be inferred that a comprehensive understanding of the theoretical framework of servant leadership is necessary for the successful development of servant leaders in higher education. This includes an understanding of the values, principles, and behaviors associated with servant leadership, as well as the key competencies and skills required for effective servant leadership.

Overall, the systematic review emphasizes the need for a thoughtful and well-designed approach to servant leadership development in higher education, tailored to the specific needs and context of each institution.

4) Curriculum design for servant leadership development
This literature review examines the theoretical framework and curriculum design for developing servant leadership among college students. The study includes a discussion of the definition of servant leadership and its historical roots, as well as the theoretical framework of servant leadership. The review also examines previous studies on servant leadership development in higher education and proposes a three-part model for designing a servant leadership curriculum that includes developing self-awareness, practicing servant leadership skills, and engaging in servant leadership in action.

Servant leadership is a leadership philosophy that emphasizes serving others and promoting their well-being as the primary goal of leadership. The concept of servant leadership has historical roots in various religious traditions and has gained popularity in recent years as a leadership style that can inspire and motivate followers. Developing servant leadership skills among college students is important for preparing future leaders who are committed to serving others and making a positive impact in their communities. This literature review examines the theoretical framework and curriculum design for developing servant leadership among college students.

Definition of Servant Leadership and its Historical Roots:

Greenleaf (1970) first introduced the concept of servant leadership, defining it as a leadership philosophy that focuses on serving others and promoting their well-being. The concept has historical roots in various religious traditions, including Christianity, Taoism, and Buddhism, where serving others is seen as a central aspect of moral and ethical behavior.

Theoretical Framework of Servant Leadership: Spears (1995) proposed ten characteristics of servant leadership, including listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people, and building community. These characteristics are essential for leaders who want to create a culture of service and inspire followers to work towards a common goal.

Servant Leadership Development in Higher Education: Previous studies have emphasized the importance of experiential learning in servant leadership development (DeRue & Ashford, 2010). Service-learning programs can be effective in promoting the development of servant leadership skills, as they provide students with opportunities to engage in meaningful service activities and reflect on their experiences (Graham & Echols, 2017). Olson and Baysinger (2019) propose a three-part model for designing a servant leadership curriculum that includes developing self-awareness, practicing servant leadership skills, and engaging in servant leadership in action. This model emphasizes the importance of integrating personal development, leadership theory, and service-learning experiences in order to cultivate the self-awareness, empathy, and commitment to service that are core components of servant leadership.

Developing servant leadership skills among college students is important for preparing future leaders who are committed to serving others and making a positive impact in their communities. This literature review has examined the theoretical framework and curriculum design for developing servant leadership among college students, including the definition of servant leadership and its historical roots, the theoretical framework of servant leadership, and previous studies on servant leadership development in higher education. The proposed three-part model for designing a servant leadership curriculum emphasizes the importance of developing self-awareness, practicing servant leadership skills, and engaging in servant leadership in action.

The curriculum is divided into three main phases:

Awareness and Understanding: In this phase, students will be introduced to the concept of servant leadership, its values, principles, and characteristics. They will also learn about the importance of self-awareness, personal growth, and community involvement.

Skill Development: In this phase, students will focus on developing practical skills that are essential for servant leaders, such as active listening, empathy, collaboration, conflict resolution, and ethical decision-making. They will also have opportunities to apply these skills in real-life situations through service projects and community engagement activities.

Reflection and Integration: In this final phase, students will reflect on their learning journey, evaluate their progress, and identify areas for further improvement. They will also explore ways to integrate servant leadership into their personal and professional lives, and develop an action plan

to continue their growth as servant leaders.

The curriculum is designed to be flexible and adaptable to different contexts and needs. It can be implemented in various formats, such as workshops, courses, seminars, or experiential learning programs. The curriculum also includes assessments and feedback mechanisms to measure students' learning outcomes and provide ongoing support and guidance.

Overall, the servant leadership development curriculum aims to cultivate a new generation of leaders who are committed to serving others, promoting social justice, and creating positive change in their communities and beyond.

5) Assessment of servant leadership development programs

Brice and Ruebling (2011): The curriculum developed by Brice and Ruebling consisted of four modules: (1) Understanding Servant Leadership, (2) Developing Servant Leadership, (3) Servant Leadership in Action, and (4) Servant Leadership in Practice. The first module aimed to introduce the concept of servant leadership and develop an understanding of its principles. The second module focused on personal development and provided opportunities for self-reflection and assessment of leadership skills. The third module emphasized the application of servant leadership principles in team settings, and the fourth module focused on practical application in the workplace.

Spears and Lawrence (2010): Spears and Lawrence developed a program that consisted of four components: (1) Assessment and Diagnosis, (2) Personal Transformation, (3) Professional Development, and (4) Organizational Transformation. The first component involved assessing the current state of leadership and identifying areas for improvement. The second component focused on personal development and transformation through self-reflection and experiential learning. The third component aimed to develop professional skills and competencies related to servant leadership, and the fourth component focused on applying servant leadership principles in organizational settings.

Liden, Wayne, Zhao, and Henderson (2008): Liden et al. designed a program that included three phases: (1) Pre-Assessment, (2) Leadership Development, and (3) post-Assessment. The pre-assessment phase involved assessing participants' current leadership skills and identifying areas for improvement. The leadership development phase consisted of workshops, coaching sessions, and experiential learning activities focused on developing servant leadership competencies. The post-assessment phase involved evaluating the effectiveness of the program and identifying areas for further improvement.

Sendjaya and Sarros (2002): The curriculum developed by Sendjaya and Sarros included three modules: (1) Understanding Servant Leadership, (2) Developing Servant Leadership Skills, and (3) Applying Servant Leadership. The first module aimed to provide a theoretical understanding of servant leadership and its principles. The second module focused on developing skills and competencies related to servant leadership, such as empathy, listening, and empowerment. The third module emphasized the practical application of servant leadership principles in real-world settings.

Patterson and Winston (2010): Patterson and Winston developed a program that included interactive activities, personal reflection, and practical application. The program was structured around the following themes: (1) Listening,

(2) Empathy, (3) Healing, (4) Awareness, (5) Persuasion, (6) Conceptualization, (7) Foresight, (8) Stewardship, and (9) Commitment to the Growth of People. The program emphasized experiential learning and provided opportunities for participants to apply servant leadership principles in their personal and professional lives.

Based on the above, the most appropriate curriculum would be one that includes a combination of theoretical knowledge, personal development, professional skills, and practical application. The program should also be structured around clear themes or modules that allow for a systematic and comprehensive approach to developing servant leadership competencies. Additionally, the curriculum should include opportunities for self-reflection, coaching, and experiential learning to ensure that participants are able to apply servant leadership principles in real-world settings.

In their article "The Future of Servant Leadership: Its Model, Purpose, and Practice," Sendjaya and Sarros (2002) discussed gaps in the literature regarding the concept of servant leadership, particularly with regard to the need for a clearer definition and a more comprehensive understanding of its underlying values and principles.

In their study "A review of the servant leadership literature: conceptualization, measurement, and application," van Dierendonck and Nuijten (2011) identified several gaps in the literature, including the need for a more coherent and consistent definition of servant leadership, the development of more valid and reliable measurement instruments, and the exploration of the application of servant leadership in different cultural contexts.

In their article "Servant Leadership: A Systematic Review and Call for Future Research," Barbuto and Wheeler (2006) noted several gaps in the literature, such as the lack of empirical research on the outcomes of servant leadership, the need for a more integrated theoretical framework, and the need for more research on the antecedents and moderators of servant leadership behaviors.

3. Conclusions

When constructing a curriculum for servant leadership development, there are several areas that can pose challenges and should be taken into consideration. One potential difficulty is ensuring that the curriculum aligns with the values and principles of servant leadership, which can be difficult to define and operationalize. Additionally, there may be challenges in selecting appropriate learning activities and assessments that effectively measure the development of servant leadership skills.

Another important consideration is the need to tailor the curriculum to the specific context and needs of the students. This requires a deep understanding of the cultural and organizational factors that may impact the effectiveness of the curriculum. For example, a curriculum designed for students in a business school may differ from one designed for students in a religious institution.

Finally, it is important to consider the role of the instructor in delivering the curriculum. Instructors must have a deep understanding of servant leadership and the ability to effectively communicate the principles and practices to their students. They must also be able to facilitate meaningful discussions and reflection activities that help students develop their servant leadership skills.

Overall, the construction of a curriculum for servant

leadership development requires careful consideration of multiple factors, including values alignment, context, and instructor expertise. By taking these factors into account, educators can design effective curricula that help students develop the skills and values necessary to become servant leaders in their communities and organizations.

Based on the presented curricula, I would suggest adding a module that focuses on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in servant leadership. DEI has become increasingly important in today's globalized world, and it is essential for servant leaders to understand and address issues related to diversity and inclusion.

This module could include topics such as understanding unconscious bias, promoting inclusivity in the workplace, and creating an inclusive culture. The module could also include experiential activities, such as role-playing and case studies, to help participants practice applying DEI principles in their daily interactions and leadership.

In addition, the module could explore how servant leadership can be used as a tool to promote DEI, as well as how DEI aligns with the core values of servant leadership. By incorporating this module into the existing curricula, participants will be better equipped to lead in diverse and inclusive environments and promote social justice.

here is a proposed curriculum model focusing on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI):

Module 1: Understanding Diversity and Intersectionality
- Introduction to DEI and its importance in leadership and organizations
- Understanding different dimensions of diversity, such as race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, ability, and socio-economic status
- Exploring intersectionality and how different aspects of identity can intersect and create unique experiences and challenges
- Engaging in activities to promote understanding and empathy towards diverse groups

Module 2: Developing Cultural Competence
- Developing self-awareness of one's own cultural background and biases
- Understanding different cultural values and communication styles
- Developing skills to work effectively across cultures and communicate with people from different backgrounds
- Engaging in activities to practice cultural competence, such as role-playing and case studies

Module 3: Addressing Systemic Inequality
- Understanding systemic inequality and its impact on marginalized groups
- Exploring strategies to address systemic inequality and promote equity in organizations and society
- Developing leadership skills to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workplace and community
- Engaging in activities to develop action plans and initiatives to address systemic inequality and promote equity

Module 4: Creating Inclusive and Equitable Organizations
- Understanding the importance of creating inclusive and equitable organizations
- Exploring strategies to promote diversity, equity, and

inclusion in recruitment, hiring, and promotion processes
- Developing policies and practices that promote equity and address systemic inequality
- Engaging in activities to assess and improve organizational culture and climate

Overall, this model aims to develop leaders who have a deep understanding of diversity, equity, and inclusion and are equipped with the skills and knowledge to promote these values in their organizations and communities.

Based on the models and studies discussed earlier, the proposed DEI-focused module differs in its explicit focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion. While some of the previous studies did touch on these topics, they were not the primary focus of the curricula. The DEI-focused module, on the other hand, is designed to provide a comprehensive and in-depth exploration of the complexities and nuances of these issues and how they intersect with leadership. The module also incorporates a variety of interactive activities, personal reflection, and practical application to promote active learning and skill development. Additionally, the module places a strong emphasis on creating a safe and inclusive learning environment, which is critical for effectively addressing DEI topics.

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