



Servant Leadership: Biblical Evidences and Path to Organizational Effectiveness

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the concept of Servant Leadership through a biblical lens, examining its roots in the Old and New Testaments and its application in contemporary non-profit organizations. Using a qualitative approach combining literature review, biblical exegesis, and contextual analysis, the research investigates four major theoretical frameworks of Servant Leadership and their alignment with biblical principles. Key findings reveal strong parallels between modern Servant Leadership theories and biblical examples, particularly in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. The study identifies core characteristics of Servant Leadership, including humility, empowerment, and focus on others' growth, as deeply rooted in biblical narratives. Furthermore, the research demonstrates the positive impact of Servant Leadership on organizational effectiveness in churches, social foundations, and spiritual movements, evidenced by increased member engagement, improved service quality, and enhanced collaborative capabilities. This study contributes to the understanding of Servant Leadership as not merely a management technique but a biblically-grounded approach to leadership with significant implications for organizational practice and mission fulfillment in faith-based contexts.

INTRODUCTION

The concept of "Servant Leadership" was first introduced by Robert K. Greenleaf in 1970 in his essay titled "The Servant as Leader." Greenleaf defined "Servant Leadership" as a leadership philosophy that emphasizes service to others as the primary priority. According to this concept, a leader must first serve, and then leadership emerges as an aspiration to serve better. The essence of "Servant Leadership" is to place the needs of followers above the personal needs of the leader. This concept is rooted in strong ethical and moral values, making it a unique approach in the world of leadership (Spears, 2010).

In the context of contemporary leadership, "Servant Leadership" has gained significant attention from academics and practitioners. Research shows that this leadership style can increase job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and team performance. "Servant Leadership" is considered an effective approach in dealing with the complexity and rapid changes in the modern business environment. This concept emphasizes the development of followers' potential, encouraging their personal and professional growth. Additionally, "Servant Leadership" is believed to build a more ethical and sustainable organizational culture. In an era where transparency and accountability are increasingly prioritized, this approach offers relevant solutions (van Dierendonck, 2011).

From a believer's perspective, this concept has strong resonance with Christian teachings. Jesus Christ, as the primary example in the Christian faith, is often portrayed as a servant leader. The Bible presents various examples where Jesus demonstrates the principles of "Servant Leadership," such as when He washed the feet of His disciples. In the context of churches and faith-based non-profit organizations, "Servant Leadership" is viewed as a leadership model that aligns with spiritual values. The application of this concept in religious organizations can help bridge the gap between secular leadership theory and biblical principles. Therefore, further exploration of "Servant Leadership" from a theological perspective becomes highly relevant and important (Niewold, 2007).

The gap between secular leadership theory and biblical principles is increasingly evident in the

context of modern organizations. Transformational leadership theory, developed by Burns and Bass, emphasizes inspiring and motivating followers to achieve common goals. On the other hand, transactional leadership theory focuses on the exchange between leaders and followers, where performance is rewarded with rewards or punishments. Meanwhile, situational leadership theory introduced by Hersey and Blanchard teaches that leadership style should be adapted to the maturity level of followers. These theories, although effective in certain contexts, often lack emphasis on the ethical and service aspects that are central to biblical leadership principles (Northouse, 2018).

Authentic leadership theory, which emphasizes the honesty and integrity of leaders, may be closer to biblical values. However, there is still a significant gap between these secular theories and the leadership principles taught in the Bible. Biblical leadership, as exemplified by Jesus Christ, emphasizes service, self-sacrifice, and focus on the well-being of others. These principles often conflict with the more results-oriented or power-dominant approaches prevalent in secular leadership theory. This gap creates a dilemma for Christian leaders trying to apply their faith principles in the context of modern organizations. Therefore, there is an urgent need for research that can bridge this gap and integrate biblical principles into contemporary leadership theory (Huizing, 2011).

In the context of non-profit organizations, the need for ethical and effective leadership models becomes increasingly crucial. Non-profit organizations, including churches and Christian service institutions, face unique challenges in managing limited resources while maintaining the integrity of their mission. A leadership model that combines managerial effectiveness with strong ethics and a focus on service is highly needed in this context. Servant Leadership, with its emphasis on serving others and developing followers' potential, offers a promising framework to meet these needs. However, further research is needed to explore how Servant Leadership principles can be effectively applied in the context of non-profit organizations, especially in addressing challenges such as resource limitations, mission complexity, and the need to maintain volunteer motivation (Ronquillo, 2011).

This research has three main interrelated objectives. First, this study aims to explore in depth

the concept of "Servant Leadership" based on a biblical perspective, exploring its theological roots and relevance in the context of the Christian faith. Second, this research seeks to identify key principles of "Servant Leadership" found in the Old and New Testaments, mapping how this concept is articulated and exemplified in biblical narratives. Third, this study aims to analyze the practical application of "Servant Leadership" principles in the context of non-profit organizations, with a particular focus on churches and spiritual institutions, exploring how this concept can be applied to enhance leadership effectiveness and strengthen the mission of these organizations.

METHODS

This research adopts a qualitative approach with a focus on literature study and contextual analysis. The literature study involves in-depth exegesis of Bible texts relevant to the concept of servant leadership. Contextual analysis is conducted to understand the application of servant leadership principles in the context of contemporary churches and non-profit organizations. This approach allows for a comprehensive exploration of the servant leadership concept from theological and practical perspectives. Through a combination of biblical exegesis and contextual analysis, this research aims to bridge the gap between biblical leadership theory and leadership practice in modern organizations (Osmer, 2008).

The primary data source for this research is the Bible, covering relevant texts from both the Old and New Testaments. These texts are selected based on their relevance to the theme of servant leadership and are analyzed in their original languages (Hebrew and Greek) as well as modern translations. In addition, this research also uses theological and leadership literature as secondary data sources. This literature includes textbooks, scientific journal articles, and other academic publications that discuss servant leadership theory and its application in religious contexts. The use of these various sources allows for data triangulation to increase the validity and reliability of the research (Swinton & Mowat, 2016).

Data analysis in this research uses a hermeneutic approach for the interpretation of Bible texts and theological literature. This method involves a deep understanding of the historical,

linguistic, and cultural contexts of the analyzed texts. For data from contemporary leadership literature, thematic analysis is used to identify main patterns and themes. The analysis process involves coding, categorization, and interpretation of data to produce a deep understanding of the servant leadership concept. The results of the analysis are then integrated to produce a synthesis between biblical perspectives and practical applications in the context of modern organizations (Van der Ven, 1993).

RESULTS

Four Perspectives on Servant Leadership Characteristics

a. Greenleaf's Original Framework (1970s)

Robert K. Greenleaf, in his essay "The Servant as Leader" published in 1970, introduced the concept of Servant Leadership with the main premise that great leaders are those who serve first. Greenleaf asserted that the conscious choice to lead comes from those who have a natural tendency to serve. He wrote, "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." Greenleaf emphasized that the difference manifests in the care taken by the servant - to ensure that other people's highest priority needs are being served.

Greenleaf outlined that 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?" He extended this thinking to the impact on the least privileged in society, asking, "Will they benefit or at least not be further deprived?" Greenleaf argued that effective leadership is measured not only by the achievement of organizational goals but also by the personal and professional growth of those being led.

In Greenleaf's view, Servant Leadership also involves awareness of the broader social context. He stated, "The only authority deserving one's allegiance is that which is freely and knowingly granted by the led to the leader in response to, and in proportion to, the clearly evident servant stature of the leader." Greenleaf emphasized the importance of building trust through genuine service, which in turn creates a positive influence in society. He believed that servant leaders must have

long-term vision and the ability to see beyond day-to-day realities, considering the ethical and value consequences of their decisions on society as a whole.

b. Larry C. Spears' Theory (1995)

Larry C. Spears, building on Greenleaf's theory, identified ten core characteristics of Servant Leadership. The first two characteristics, Listening and Empathy, emphasize the importance of interpersonal understanding. Listening involves the leader's ability to listen attentively and understand others' perspectives. Empathy refers to the leader's ability to feel and understand others' feelings, creating deeper and more meaningful relationships with their followers. These two characteristics form the basis for effective communication and strong relationships in servant leadership.

The next characteristics, Healing and Awareness, relate to understanding oneself and others at a deeper level. Healing involves the leader's ability to help in the emotional healing of their followers, recognizing that many people face personal and professional challenges. Awareness encompasses awareness of internal and external situations, allowing leaders to understand the broader context of their actions and decisions. These characteristics enable leaders to create a supportive environment and understand the complex dynamics within their organizations.

Persuasion and Conceptualization are characteristics that focus on how leaders influence and guide. Persuasion emphasizes the importance of influencing through conviction rather than coercion or manipulation. Conceptualization involves the leader's ability to see the big picture and formulate long-term vision, allowing them to lead with a strategic perspective. These characteristics enable servant leaders to inspire and guide their followers toward common goals.

Foresight and Stewardship relate to the leader's responsibility for the organization's future and its resources. Foresight involves the ability to predict the outcomes of current decisions, allowing leaders to make wise choices. Stewardship emphasizes the leader's responsibility to serve and safeguard the resources entrusted to them, both human and material. These characteristics ensure that servant leaders act as responsible guardians of the organization and the people they lead.

The last two characteristics, Commitment to the Growth of People and Building Community, emphasize the leader's role in developing individuals and building strong relationships. Commitment to the Growth of People involves the leader's dedication to helping their followers develop personally and professionally. Building Community encompasses the leader's efforts to create a harmonious and supportive environment where all members of the organization can thrive and contribute. These characteristics affirm that servant leadership is not just about achieving organizational goals, but also about creating an environment where people can grow and succeed together.

c. The Five Characteristics, Barbuto and Wheeler's Perspective (2006)

Barbuto and Wheeler, through further research, identified five main characteristics of Servant Leadership that refine and develop previous concepts. The first characteristic, Altruistic Calling, reflects the leader's strong commitment to helping others, placing the needs of followers above their personal interests. Emotional Healing emphasizes the leader's ability to provide emotional support for followers, helping them overcome personal and professional challenges. Wisdom refers to the leader's deep insight and sharp understanding of people and situations, allowing them to make wise and contextual decisions.

The last two characteristics focus on the practical aspects of leadership. Persuasive Mapping describes the leader's ability to devise ways out of difficult situations through positive influence, combining conceptual skills with the ability to motivate and guide others. Organizational Stewardship emphasizes the leader's responsibility for the welfare of the organization and the wider community, reflecting a commitment to long-term sustainability and positive impact on society. Together, these five characteristics form a comprehensive framework for understanding and applying Servant Leadership in the context of modern organizations, emphasizing both interpersonal and strategic aspects of effective leadership.

d. *The Six Characteristics (Van Dierendonck, 2011)*

Dirk van Dierendonck identified six main characteristics of Servant Leadership that combine and synthesize elements from previous theories. The first two characteristics, Empowerment and Accountability, focus on the development and accountability of followers. Empowerment involves the leader's efforts to increase followers' sense of ownership and responsibility, encouraging them to take initiative and make their own decisions. This aligns with Greenleaf's concept of helping others become more autonomous. Accountability, on the other hand, emphasizes the importance of leaders in ensuring that followers are responsible for their actions. The combination of these two characteristics creates an environment where followers are given the freedom to develop, but within a clear framework of responsibility.

The next characteristics, Standing Back and Humility, reflect the leader's attitude that supports the growth of followers. Standing Back refers to the leader's ability to give followers opportunities to develop without being too dominant, creating space for them to demonstrate their potential. This aligns with Greenleaf's concept of helping others become "healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous". Humility describes humble leaders who acknowledge their mistakes and limitations. This characteristic emphasizes that servant leaders do not place themselves above others, but realize that they too are continuously learning and developing.

The last two characteristics, Authenticity and Interpersonal Acceptance, relate to the quality of relationships between leaders and followers. Authenticity emphasizes the importance of leaders showing honesty and openness in their leadership, acting in accordance with their values and beliefs. This creates trust and credibility that is important in leader-follower relationships. Interpersonal Acceptance refers to the leader's ability to accept others as they are without judgment, showing empathy and understanding towards differences and uniqueness of each individual. This characteristic allows leaders to build deeper and more meaningful relationships with their followers, creating a supportive environment where people feel valued and accepted. Together, these six characteristics form a comprehensive framework for Servant Leadership that combines aspects of empowerment,

accountability, support, humility, authenticity, and acceptance.

Old Testament Biblical Findings on Servant Leadership

The Old Testament presents various examples and teachings about servant leadership, although the term "Servant Leadership" itself is not explicitly used. Psalm 78:70-72 describes King David's leadership: "He chose David his servant and took him from the sheep pens... to be the shepherd of his people Jacob, of Israel his inheritance. And David shepherded them with integrity of heart; with skillful hands he led them." The Hebrew word for "servant" (ebed) here indicates someone who fully dedicates himself to the given task. "Integrity of heart" (lebab shalem) describes total integrity and dedication, while "skillful hands" (tebunot kappaw) refers to practical skills and wisdom. This verse portrays the ideal leader as someone who possesses a combination of godly character and high competence.

Isaiah 42:1 introduces the figure of the "Servant of the LORD": "Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him, and he will bring justice to the nations." The word "servant" (ebed) here has a deeper connotation, referring to someone specially chosen by God for a divine mission. The phrase "whom I uphold" (etmak-bo) indicates divine support and protection, while "my chosen one" (bechiri) emphasizes special selection by God. This verse depicts the servant leader as someone empowered by God and having a mission that transcends personal or national interests.

Jeremiah 3:15 states God's promise: "Then I will give you shepherds after my own heart, who will lead you with knowledge and understanding." The word "shepherds" (ro'im) here is a common metaphor for leaders in the Old Testament. "After my own heart" (kelibbia) indicates alignment with God's will and character. "Knowledge" (de'ah) and "understanding" (haskel) depict a combination of theoretical understanding and practical wisdom. This verse emphasizes that effective leaders are those who have character aligned with God and are equipped with necessary leadership skills.

Moses, as described in Exodus 32:11-14 and Numbers 12:3, presents a classic example of Servant Leadership in the Old Testament. In Exodus

32:11-14, Moses acts as a mediator between God and the people of Israel, pleading for God's mercy over their sin. The verb "plead" (chalah) indicates the intensity and sincerity of Moses' request. This action illustrates an important aspect of Servant Leadership: the willingness to stand in the gap between the highest authority (in this case, God) and those being led, even at personal risk. Numbers 12:3 states, "Now Moses was a very humble man, more humble than anyone else on the face of the earth." The word "humble" (anaw) here not only means humble, but also describes someone who is completely dependent on God and sensitive to the needs of others.

Queen Esther personified the principles of Servant Leadership through her courageous and self-sacrificing actions for the salvation of her people. When faced with the threat of annihilation against the Jewish nation, Esther demonstrated extraordinary courage by approaching the king uninvited, an act that could have resulted in the death penalty (Esther 4:11,16). Her courage reflects a servant leader's commitment to protect those they lead, even at personal risk. Esther also demonstrated deep empathy and concern for her people's suffering, as seen in her response to the news of Haman's decree: "The queen was deeply distressed and sent garments for Mordecai to put on" (Esther 4:4). Her ability to listen and accept advice from Mordecai (Esther 4:13-14) shows humility and readiness to learn, important characteristics of a servant leader.

Esther's strategy and diplomacy in influencing the king's decision illustrate a servant leader's wisdom in using their position and influence for the good of others. She carefully planned her approach, inviting the king and Haman to banquets she had prepared (Esther 5:4,8), creating the right opportunity to present her petition. Esther's self-sacrifice is evident in her words, "If I perish, I perish" (Esther 4:16), demonstrating her willingness to place her people's safety above her personal security. Finally, Esther's action in calling all the Jews in Susa to fast with her for three days (Esther 4:16) demonstrates her ability to build community and mobilize others for a common purpose. Through all these actions, Esther becomes an exemplar of Servant Leadership.

The Old Testament also records another biblical leadership figure who demonstrated the

principles of Servant Leadership through deep concern for his people and concrete actions to rebuild Jerusalem. Upon hearing about Jerusalem's pitiful condition, Nehemiah showed profound empathy, "When I heard these things, I sat down and wept. For some days I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven" (Nehemiah 1:4). His response did not stop at sorrow; he took the initiative to petition the king and lead the rebuilding efforts (Nehemiah 2:5-8). Nehemiah's vision and ability to inspire others is evident when he said to the people, "Come, let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem, and we will no longer be in disgrace" (Nehemiah 2:17). He not only gave directions but also worked alongside his people, showing humility and willingness to serve, "Neither I nor my brothers nor my men nor the guards with me took off our clothes; each had his weapon, even when he went for water" (Nehemiah 4:23).

Nehemiah's leadership was also characterized by integrity and justice. He refused to take advantage of his position, "Neither I nor my brothers ate the food allotted to the governor" (Nehemiah 5:14). He also actively opposed injustice and exploitation of the poor (Nehemiah 5:6-11). Nehemiah showed steadfastness in facing challenges and opposition, while still relying on God, as seen in his prayer, "Remember me with favor, my God" (Nehemiah 13:31). His ability to motivate and empower others is evident in the way he organized the wall's construction, giving responsibilities to various groups (Nehemiah 3). Through his visionary, integrity-filled, and service-focused leadership, Nehemiah successfully led the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the spiritual renewal of Israel, becoming a tangible example of Servant Leadership in the context of national and spiritual restoration.

King Solomon, in his prayer in 1 Kings 3:7-9, demonstrates the attitude of an ideal servant leader. He acknowledges himself as "only a little child" (na'ar qaton), showing humility and awareness of his limitations. His request for a "discerning heart" (leb shomea') to govern God's people illustrates the priority of a servant leader: not wealth or power, but the ability to serve effectively. Solomon's attitude contrasts sharply with the portrayal of non-servant leaders in Ezekiel 34:2-4, where the shepherds of Israel are criticized for "shepherding themselves" and not attending to the needs of the flock. This

difference emphasizes that in the Old Testament view, true leaders are those who prioritize the welfare of the people they lead over their personal interests.

The books of the Old Testament illustrate that the concept of Servant Leadership is not a modern innovation, but an ideal leadership that has long existed in the Judeo-Christian tradition. These leaders - **David, Moses, Esther, Nehemiah, Solomon**, and the Servant figure in Isaiah - demonstrate characteristics such as humility, devotion to God, concern for those being led, and willingness to sacrifice personal interests for the common good.

Biblical Evidence of Servant Leadership in the New Testament: Examples from Christ's Ministry and the Apostle Paul

The Apostle Paul demonstrated the principles of Servant Leadership through his ministry and teachings, which were full of love and sacrifice. In 1 Thessalonians 2:7-8, Paul describes his deep care for the congregation, stating, "But we were gentle among you, like a nursing mother taking care of her own children." Paul's willingness to serve selflessly is reflected in his statement in 2 Corinthians 12:15, "I will most gladly spend and be spent for your souls." Furthermore, his leadership that encouraged and empowered is evident in his advice to Timothy to be an example to believers (1 Timothy 4:12), showing his commitment to developing new leaders. Paul also emphasized the importance of building up and strengthening the congregation, as he expressed in Romans 14:19, "So then let us pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding."

Paul's example of sacrifice is clearly seen in the sufferings he endured for the sake of the Gospel, as he describes in 2 Corinthians 11:23-28, where he lists various hardships he faced in his ministry. However, amidst all this, Paul maintained a humble attitude, which he strongly taught in Philippians 2:3-4, "Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others." Paul held up Christ as the highest example of humility and service, calling his followers to imitate Christ's attitude (Philippians 2:5-8). Through his life and teachings, Paul set a high standard of Servant

Leadership, combining deep love, self-sacrifice, empowerment of others, and humility in his service to the church and the world.

The Center of Christianity is about Jesus Christ's Ministry. Mark 10:45 states, "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." This verse captures the essence of Jesus' mission and forms the basis for the concept of Servant Leadership in the Christian context. In the original Greek, the word "serve" (*diakoneo*) has the same root as the word "servant" (*diakonos*), emphasizing that service is the essence of Christ's identity and mission. The phrase "give his life" (*dounai ten psychen autou*) indicates the highest level of sacrifice, affirming that true leadership according to Jesus involves total self-sacrifice for the benefit of others.

John 13:14-15 depicts Jesus' symbolic act of washing His disciples' feet, a task usually performed by the lowest servant. Jesus says, "Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet." The word "should" (*opheilete*) in Greek carries the meaning of moral obligation, indicating that the act of serving is not an option but an obligation for Christ's followers. This act also becomes a powerful metaphor for the concept of empowerment in Servant Leadership, where the leader "cleanses" obstacles that prevent followers from reaching their full potential.

Philippians 2:5-7 provides a profound theological picture of Christ's *kenosis* (self-emptying): "In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant." The phrase "made himself nothing" (*heauton ekenosen*) describes Christ's voluntary act of relinquishing His divine rights. This becomes a radical model for Servant Leadership, showing that true leadership involves the release of status and personal rights to serve others.

Matthew 20:26-28 and 1 Peter 5:2-3 further reinforce this concept. Jesus teaches, "Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant," using the Greek words *diakonos* (servant) and *doulos* (slave), emphasizing that greatness in

God's Kingdom is measured by service, not status. Peter reminds church leaders to "Be shepherds of God's flock... not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not pursuing dishonest gain, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock." The word "examples" (*typoi*) indicates that Christian leadership should reflect Christ's own character and actions. Together, these verses form a strong theological basis for Servant Leadership, portraying it not just as a leadership strategy, but as a core calling for every follower of Christ.

DISCUSSION

Analysis of Four Servant Leadership Frameworks from a Theological Perspective

The four perspectives on Servant Leadership - Greenleaf, Spears, Barbuto & Wheeler, and Van Dierendonck - have strong resonance with biblical teachings on leadership. Greenleaf's basic concept of "servant first, then leader" reflects the example of Jesus Christ described in Philippians 2:7 as one who "made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant". Characteristics identified by Spears, such as listening and empathy, align with James 1:19's teaching about being "quick to listen, slow to speak". Healing and stewardship discussed by Spears have parallels with Jesus' ministry in healing the sick and His teaching on wise stewardship in the parable of the talents (Matthew 25:14-30).

Barbuto & Wheeler's perspective on altruistic calling and emotional healing finds its theological foundation in Jesus' teaching on loving one's neighbor (Mark 12:31) and His role as the Great Healer. The wisdom they emphasize is reminiscent of King Solomon and the teachings on wisdom in the book of Proverbs. Organizational stewardship aligns with the biblical concept of humans as stewards of God's creation (Genesis 1:28). Van Dierendonck's empowerment and accountability have a theological basis in Jesus' mission to set the captives free and give sight to the blind (Luke 4:18-19), as well as His teaching on accountability in the parable of the talents.

The characteristics of humility and authenticity identified by Van Dierendonck are very much in line with Christ's character as described in Philippians 2:5-8 and His teaching on being the "light of the world" (Matthew 5:14-16). Standing

back and interpersonal acceptance reflect Jesus' attitude in empowering His disciples and accepting those rejected by society. Overall, these four perspectives offer a rich framework for understanding leadership in light of biblical teaching, emphasizing that Christian leaders are called to serve with humility, wisdom, and love, while empowering others to reach their full potential in Christ.

Contextual Analysis of the Servant Leadership Concept in the Old Testament

The findings of this research reveal that the principles of servant leadership have long been embedded in the Judeo-Christian tradition, long before the term was coined by Greenleaf in 1970. As argued by Resane (2014), the concept of the leader as a servant in the Old Testament has a profound theological dimension, reflecting the relationship between leader, followers, and God. Figures such as **Moses, David, Esther, Nehemiah and Solomon** illustrate a leadership model that combines humility, wisdom, and devotion to God and His people. Laniak (2006) emphasizes that the shepherd-flock metaphor often used in the Old Testament not only describes the relationship between leader and followers but also emphasizes the leader's responsibility to protect, guide, and nurture those they lead. This aligns with the modern concept of Servant Leadership that emphasizes empowerment and follower development.

Furthermore, the study conducted by Bekker (2010) shows that the concept of the Servant of the LORD in the book of Isaiah provides a strong theological foundation for Servant Leadership. Bekker argues that this Servant figure, often interpreted as a prefiguration of Christ, sets a standard of leadership based on self-sacrifice and focus on the well-being of others. This is reinforced by Brueggemann's (1997) analysis of Old Testament theology, which emphasizes that leadership in the Israelite tradition was always understood in the context of a covenant with God, where the leader acts as God's representative in serving His people. Patterson (2003) connects this concept with contemporary Servant Leadership theory, showing that values such as justice, mercy, and humility emphasized in the Old Testament are key components of effective and ethical leadership models. Thus, understanding Servant Leadership in

the Old Testament not only provides historical and theological legitimacy for this concept but also enriches our understanding of its practical application in the context of modern leadership.

Theological and Missiological Implications of Christ's Servant Leadership Example

Christ's example in Servant Leadership has profound theological implications for our understanding of power and authority in the context of the Kingdom of God. As argued by Agosto (2005), Jesus' leadership model challenges dominant hierarchical structures and replaces them with a service-based model. This transforms the paradigm of power from domination to empowerment, reflecting the self-emptying (kenosis) nature of God in Christ. Theologically, this implies that true authority in the faith community is rooted in service and self-sacrifice, not in position or status. This implication urges church leaders to rethink their organizational structures and leadership practices, aligning them more closely with Christ's service-centered model (Niewold, 2007).

From a pastoral perspective, Christ's example in Servant Leadership offers a powerful framework for ministry and shepherding. As emphasized by Flaniken (2006), this model encourages church leaders to adopt a more holistic and people-centered approach in their ministry. This involves not only meeting the spiritual needs of the congregation but also attending to their emotional, social, and even material well-being. The pastoral implications include developing programs that empower church members, creating mentoring structures that encourage spiritual growth and leadership, and building a church culture that values service above status. It also means that church leaders need to develop skills in active listening, empathy, and coaching, which are key aspects of Servant Leadership (Farling et al., 1999).

Furthermore, the theological implications of Christ's example in Servant Leadership have significant impact on missiology and evangelism. As argued by van Dierendonck (2011), this leadership model offers a more authentic and relevant approach to reaching the contemporary world. In the context of mission, this means adopting a more collaborative and community-based approach, where mission and evangelism are

not only about verbal proclamation but also about demonstrating Christ's love through practical service. Pastorally, this encourages the development of outreach programs that focus not only on numerical church growth but also on community transformation through holistic ministry. These implications challenge the church to become agents of change in society, reflecting Christ's love and service in tangible and impactful ways (Greenleaf, 1998).

Application of Servant Leadership and its Influence on Non-Profit Organizational Effectiveness

Although transformational leadership theory is more frequently used in building non-profit and religious organizations, as stated by (Andarista & Kriswibowo, 2023), transformational leadership can anticipate better future conditions, making it an appropriate leadership model due to its adaptability to rapidly changing environments. It is also found that transformational leaders encourage creativity, provide constructive feedback, and promote extra effort to facilitate high-level tasks" (Piccolo and Colquitt in Umme et al., 2015, cited by Andarista & Kriswibowo, 2023). However, Servant Leadership is part of the biblical example and was practiced by Jesus Christ in reality.

The application of Servant Leadership in the church context has shown significant positive impact on organizational effectiveness. A study conducted by Resane (2020) revealed that churches implementing the Servant Leadership model tend to experience increased congregation participation and volunteer commitment. This is due to Servant Leadership's focus on individual empowerment and development, which aligns with the church's mission to nurture the spiritual growth of its members. Furthermore, Carter (2009) found that church leaders applying Servant Leadership principles are more effective in managing conflicts and building unity within the church community. The emphasis on service and humility characteristic of Servant Leadership helps create an inclusive and supportive culture in the church community.

Servant Leadership also plays a crucial role in improving the effectiveness of church programs and community engagement. Research by Eva et al. (2019) shows that churches led by servant leaders are more likely to develop programs responsive to

their community's needs. This is due to the servant leaders' ability to better listen to and understand the needs of others. Sendjaya and Pekerti (2010) also found that Servant Leadership in the church context encourages leadership development among congregation members, creating a strong leadership pipeline for church sustainability. This leadership model also increases trust between leaders and congregation members, which is essential for building a strong and effective faith community.

In the context of social foundations, Servant Leadership has been proven to increase organizational effectiveness through improved employee motivation and service quality. A study by Parris and Peachey (2013) shows that foundations implementing Servant Leadership experience higher levels of employee job satisfaction and lower turnover rates. This positively impacts the consistency and quality of services provided by the foundation. Schwarz et al. (2016) also found that Servant Leadership in foundations encourages innovation and creativity in problem-solving, enabling organizations to be more effective in achieving their goals. This approach also increases transparency and accountability in foundation management, which is important for building trust with donors and other stakeholders.

The application of Servant Leadership in other spiritual movements also shows positive impacts on organizational effectiveness. Research by Fry et al. (2017) on various spiritual movements found that Servant Leadership contributes to increased member engagement and commitment to the organization's mission. Leaders applying Servant Leadership principles are better able to inspire and motivate their followers to actively engage in achieving the movement's goals. Sendjaya et al. (2008) also observed that Servant Leadership encourages the development of a more ethical and value-oriented organizational culture in spiritual movements.

Furthermore, Servant Leadership has proven effective in facilitating interfaith and inter-organizational collaboration in the context of broader spiritual movements. A study by Washington et al. (2006) shows that servant leaders are more likely to build bridges between various traditions and groups, enhancing the effectiveness of joint efforts in social and humanitarian issues. Using the concept of Servant Leadership is also

important in interfaith dialogue, which must be conducted with respect and love, and must be friendly in nature. This will help reduce conflict and build good relationships between religious communities (Amtiran & Kriswibowo, 2024). Chen et al. (2015) also found that spiritual movement organizations implementing Servant Leadership are more adaptive to social and cultural changes, allowing them to remain relevant and effective in an ever-changing context. This leadership approach also encourages the development of a new generation of leaders with a strong service orientation, ensuring the sustainability and long-term impact of these spiritual movements.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussion presented, it can be concluded that the concept of Servant Leadership has strong roots in biblical tradition, both from the Old and New Testaments. The four perspectives of Servant Leadership discussed - Greenleaf, Spears, Barbuto & Wheeler, and Van Dierendonck - show strong resonance with the teachings and examples of leadership found in the Bible, especially in the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. Exegetical analysis of key texts in the Old Testament affirms that effective and godly leadership is not based on power or status, but on character shaped by relationship with God and commitment to serving others. This view provides a strong theological basis for the modern concept of Servant Leadership, demonstrating its enduring relevance in the context of faith and leadership practice. Analysis of the New Testament reveals that the principles of Servant Leadership, such as self-sacrifice, empowering followers, and focusing on the growth of others, have long been an integral part of the biblical understanding of effective and godly leadership.

The application of Servant Leadership in the context of non-profit organizations, particularly churches, social foundations, and other spiritual movements, shows significant positive impact on organizational effectiveness. Studies conducted by various researchers reveal that organizations implementing Servant Leadership principles tend to experience increases in member participation, volunteer commitment, employee job satisfaction, and service quality. Furthermore, Servant Leadership has proven effective in facilitating

interfaith and inter-organizational collaboration, as well as in developing a more ethical and value-oriented organizational culture. The theological and missiological implications of Servant Leadership are also significant, encouraging churches and faith-based organizations to adopt a more holistic and people-centered approach in their ministry, as well as to become effective agents of change in society.

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