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Servant Leadership and Cultural Characteristics as Predictors of Follower Engagement

Abstract

Servant leadership theory, introduced in the 1970s, has gained in popularity in recent years. Servant leadership's roots in serving, caring, and behaving ethically makes it a leadership model that is timely and relevant in light of today's global, organizational, and political challenges. Additionally, an engaged workforce is considered to be a key lever that organizations utilize to gain an advantage in the marketplace while disengaged employees present a significant cost to companies. Nevertheless, servant leadership's impact on organizations and specifically its ability to engage employees has received limited research. This quantitative study was undertaken in a multinational manufacturing organization and utilized survey instruments to examine individual contributors', or followers', perceptions of their immediate supervisor's servant leader characteristics and how these characteristics predicted engagement in their work. Furthermore, this study also examined cultural characteristics as predictors of follower engagement in the same context. The results of the study demonstrated that both servant leadership and cultural characteristics significantly contributed to the prediction, however, servant leadership significantly predicted more of the variance over and above cultural characteristics. Important then is understanding how servant leadership influences employee engagement as organizations establish presence in other parts of the world. It behooves leaders to acknowledge that their organizations' cultural surroundings can predict employee engagement. Of particular importance though, is recognizing that beyond these cultural influences, practicing a servant leadership management model can have an even greater influence on employee engagement. This study may assist other servant led, multinational, and multicultural organizations in informing how servant leadership and cultural characteristics serve as predictors of follower engagement. As a result of this study, recommendations for practice are provided including the adoption of the servant leadership model to have a positive impact on social justice.

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Servant Leadership and Cultural Characteristics as Predictors of Follower Engagement

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Submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree
Ed.D. in Executive Leadership

Supervised by

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Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. School of Education

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Dedication

I dedicate this research initiative to my mother, Candida, for braving the immigrant journey to this great country in hopes of a brighter future for her children. Although her mind is no longer with us, her uplifting personality, playfulness, and genuine love for all are ever-present. She is the consummate servant leader who endured years of hardship for my benefit. If there are any good things that are a part of me, they have emanated from her.

I am forever grateful to my wife, Christine, and sons, Christian, Sean, and Austin, for providing me the space and time to fulfill this dream. You provided me support that I had no right to ask of you. I am also appreciative of the photos that you shared with millions via social media of me fast asleep in my study space with my head resting on a book and mouth wide open.

My sister, Carmela, has been an uplifting inspiration since childhood. Although small in stature, she will always be my big sister who models unconditional love and care for others. I have wonderful childhood memories of her leading me in prayer at bedtime. I believe she recognized that prayers were very much needed in our home. She was diagnosed with cancer during this research initiative and continues to battle valiantly with a courageous smile and refreshing humor.

I owe special thanks to Oliver, my faithful, feline friend, who never left my side during the long, lonely nights of reading and writing. He insisted on periodic study

breaks which consisted of him coming down from the shoulder of the couch to place his velvety paws on my laptop keyboard and peering into the screen to ensure I was following APA guidelines.

I would like to thank my dissertation committee consisting of Dr. J. Jason Berman and Dr. Timothy Franz for their unwavering support and guidance. I will forever have fond memories of three follicly-challenged, middle-aged gentlemen sitting around a table, discussing scholarly things, and eating Milano cookies. Jason, I pray that the challenges that you have encountered are behind you now with smooth sailing ahead. Also supporting my research was Dr. Stephanie Townsend. She has been given a gift from above as her ability to educate is unsurpassed. I thank her for never making me feel that my questions were significantly off the mark even when they were.

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Finally, I would also like to express my profound and sincere gratitude to Stephen Macadam, President and CEO of EnPro Industries, for making his vision of servant leadership a reality for me and for thousands of my coworkers at EnPro Industries and Garlock Sealing Technologies.

Biographical Sketch

George Bovenzi is the Director of Quality and Continuous Improvement at Garlock Sealing Technologies, a division of EnPro Industries. Mr. Bovenzi grew up in Rochester, NY and graduated from the Aquinas Institute in 1980. He completed his Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering degree at General Motors Institute in Flint, MI in 1985. He returned to his Basilian educational roots and completed his Master of Business Administration degree at St. John Fisher College in 1994. Also at St. John Fisher College, he began his doctoral studies in September of 2014 in the Ed.D. program in Executive Leadership. Mr. Bovenzi pursued his research on servant leadership and employee engagement under the direction of Dr. J. Jason Berman and Dr. Timothy Franz and received his Ed.D. degree in 2016.

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Abstract

Servant leadership theory, introduced in the 1970s, has gained in popularity in recent years. Servant leadership's roots in serving, caring, and behaving ethically makes it a leadership model that is timely and relevant in light of today's global, organizational, and political challenges. Additionally, an engaged workforce is considered to be a key lever that organizations utilize to gain an advantage in the marketplace while disengaged employees present a significant cost to companies. Nevertheless, servant leadership's impact on organizations and specifically its ability to engage employees has received limited research. This quantitative study was undertaken in a multinational manufacturing organization and utilized survey instruments to examine individual contributors', or followers', perceptions of their immediate supervisor's servant leader characteristics and how these characteristics predicted engagement in their work. Furthermore, this study also examined cultural characteristics as predictors of follower engagement in the same context.

The results of the study demonstrated that both servant leadership and cultural characteristics significantly contributed to the prediction, however, servant leadership significantly predicted more of the variance over and above cultural characteristics. Important then is understanding how servant leadership influences employee engagement as organizations establish presence in other parts of the world. It behooves leaders to acknowledge that their organizations' cultural surroundings can predict employee engagement. Of particular importance though, is recognizing that beyond these cultural

influences, practicing a servant leadership management model can have an even greater influence on employee engagement. This study may assist other servant led, multinational, and multicultural organizations in informing how servant leadership and cultural characteristics serve as predictors of follower engagement. As a result of this study, recommendations for practice are provided including the adoption of the servant leadership model to have a positive impact on social justice.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Background

This study examined servant leadership and cultural characteristics as predictors of follower engagement. This chapter introduces the concepts of servant leadership and engagement and the relationship between these two variables. Cultural characteristics are also presented as predictors of follower engagement. Accordingly, the main sections of this chapter are the (a) problem statement, (b) theoretical rationale, (c) statement of purpose, (d) research questions, (e) potential significance of the study, (f) definitions of terms, and (g) chapter summary.

Servant leadership. Recent events such as the demise of organizations including Enron, WorldCom, Tyco, and Freddie Mac, growing global focus on our planet's environment, concerning worldwide humanitarian issues, and distrust of today's corporate and political leaders have fueled organizational interest in the servant leadership model. Servant leadership's roots in serving, caring, and behaving ethically makes it a leadership model that appears to be timely and relevant in light of these and other global challenges. Although the modern origins of servant leadership date back to the 1970s, it is still considered an emerging leadership approach. Nevertheless and even today, authors continue to debate over a common set of servant leadership characteristics. Liden, Wayne, Zhao, and Henderson (2008) provide a modern and descriptive view of servant leader dimensions. These are (a) conceptual skills, (b) empowering, (c) helping subordinates grow and succeed, (d) putting subordinates first, (e) behaving ethically, (f)

emotional healing, and (g) creating value for the community (Liden, Wayne, Zhao, & Henderson, 2008).

The term servant leadership was coined in 1970 and the concept has gained momentum in the last 15 years as a mainstream leadership approach (van Dierendonck, 2011). Robert K. Greenleaf originated the term and proposed the following definition:

The servant-leader is servant first. . . . It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. . . . The best test, and difficult to administer, is: Do those served grow as persons? Do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants? And, what is the effect on the least privileged in society; will they benefit, or, at least, not further be deprived? (1977, pp. 13-14)

At the core of this definition is the idea that the servant leader is genuinely concerned with serving followers and that the leader's interest in the organization is a secondary priority (Greenleaf, 1977). The servant leader does not direct followers but instead influences them by service (Stone, Russell, & Patterson, 2004). Organizational objectives are not of primary interest to the servant leader who trusts that followers who are being served will undertake actions in the best interest of the organization (Stone et al., 2004). The theory holds that those being served will grow, flourish, and serve others as a result (Greenleaf, 1977).

In summary, servant leadership is defined as a developing leadership theory focusing on altruism, the needs of followers, and moral, ethical, and spiritual values (Sendjaya & Sarros, 2002; Stone et al., 2004). "The servant-leader is servant first . . .

[and] ... that person is sharply different from one who is leader first” (Greenleaf, 1977, p. 13). Servant leadership “differentiates it[self] from most other models of leadership [since] the servant leader is mainly concerned with the development and growth of followers” (de Sousa & van Dierendonck, 2014, p. 880). Furthermore, Greenleaf (1977) believed that servant leadership extends into the communities and homes of the followers, supporting his theory that servant leaders are community builders as well. Ultimately, Greenleaf (1970) believed that the primary goals of servant leadership are to create healthy organizations that promote employee growth, improve organizational performance, and positively impact the communities surrounding them. Finally and in spite of its weak construct, servant leadership has become an engaging approach to leadership that holds considerable promise (Northouse, 2013). “As a viable leadership theory, servant leadership can perhaps provide the ethical grounding and leadership framework needed to help address the challenges of the twenty-first century [including] technological advancements, economic globalization ... rising terrorism, environmental degradation, ... [and the] threat of global warming” (Parris & Peachey, 2013, p. 390).

Engagement. In today’s competitive global environment, organizations are striving to gain every possible advantage to thrive, prosper, and, often times, to merely survive. An engaged workforce is considered to be a key lever that organizations utilize to gain an advantage in the marketplace. Employee engagement is the extent that employees are physically, emotionally, and cognitively attached to their work (Schaufeli, Salanova, González-romá, & Bakker, 2002). Concerning to organizations is the fact that fewer than 20% of workers are actively engaged in their work (Buckingham, 1999). Furthermore, Gallup has estimated that disengaged employees have cost United States

companies in excess of \$250 billion annually (Rath & Conchie, 2008). This low rate of engagement “represents a global crisis in productivity and worker well-being” (Attridge, 2009, p. 384).

The issue of disengaged employees is not limited to the United States and is in fact a worldwide problem (Attridge, 2009). Data from the 2005 Towers Perrin survey involving over 85,000 employees from 16 nations, indicate that only 14% of employees were considered to be highly engaged (Gebauer, Lowman, & Gordon, 2008). Whereas, 62% of employees were found to be moderately engaged and of even greater concern was that 24% of the workers were considered to be, in fact, disengaged (Gebauer et al., 2008).

Gallup studies provide evidence linking employee engagement to organizational results. These studies “showed that having a work environment that promoted positive employee engagement was consistently associated with beneficial outcomes, including reduced employee turnover, customer satisfaction, employee productivity, and company profit” (Attridge, 2009, p. 389). Other benefits resulting from employee engagement included improved organizational culture, increased employee loyalty, and improved revenue levels (Attridge, 2009).

Servant leadership as a predictor of follower engagement. The need for committed employees is steadily becoming an organizational necessity and as such, employee engagement has become a significant focus (Carter & Baghurst, 2014). Research confirms the favorable role of engagement for employee benefit and organizational performance (Halbesleben & Wheeler, 2008). As a result, researchers have expressed considerable interest in employee engagement as a key source of organizational sustainability (Schaufeli, Taris, & van Rhenen, 2008) and therefore

organizational leaders are challenged with understanding the antecedents of employee engagement as well as disengagement (Carter & Baghurst, 2014). “By understanding these key drivers, leaders can both drive performance and create an organizational culture that breeds commitment in all areas of success” (Carter & Baghurst, 2014, pp. 454-455). Nevertheless, the specific contexts and mechanisms through which different leadership theories affect engagement are still unclear (de Sousa & van Dierendonck, 2014). Therefore, there is considerable opportunity to add to this body of knowledge.

Although servant leadership theory was created by Robert Greenleaf in the 1970s, most research on this leadership model has been conducted within the past 15 years (van Dierendonck, 2011). In this timeframe, studies have been conducted to determine the various effects of servant leadership on followers in organizations. Nevertheless, engagement, as a follower outcome, has received recent yet limited research (Carter & Baghurst, 2014; De Clercq, Bouchenooghe, Raja, & Matsyborska, 2014; de Sousa & van Dierendonck, 2014; van Dierendonck, Stam, Boersma, de Windt, & Alkema, 2014). Through quantitative research methods, this research initiative reduces this gap by examining servant leadership as a predictor of follower engagement.

Cultural characteristics as predictors of follower engagement. Levels of employee engagement vary widely by global region and as such “examining cross-cultural differences in employee engagement is an opportunity for further research” (Attridge, 2009, p. 387). In light of this opportunity, this study examined servant leadership as a predictor of follower engagement within a multinational manufacturing company. This organization bases its culture on the servant leadership model where members of management are expected to serve the followers, or individual contributors,

of the organization. With over 1,800 employees, the company produces fluid sealing products and maintains 18 global manufacturing operations, sales offices, and distribution centers. This study focused on those manufacturing operations located in (a) Australia, (b) Canada, (c) China, (d) Germany, (e) Mexico, (f) Singapore, and (g) United States.

This study also examined cultural characteristics as predictors of follower engagement. The multinational footprint of the organization that served as the context of this study provided the opportunity to understand this relationship between cultural characteristics and follower engagement. Specifically, this research initiative drew upon results of the GLOBE study (House, 2004) to inform how cultural characteristics serve as predictors of follower engagement. The monumental GLOBE study (House, 2004) encompassed 62 societies around the world and investigated how cultural values are related to organizational practices, conceptions of leadership, economic competitiveness of societies, and the human condition of its members.

Additionally, researchers have identified various servant leadership characteristics within the GLOBE study and have proposed how these characteristics were endorsed by the various global cultures (Mittal & Dorfman, 2012). For example, egalitarianism and empowerment were supported most strongly by European cultures and least by the Confucian Asia cluster (Mittal & Dorfman, 2012). In summary, the GLOBE study results were utilized to examine cultural characteristics as predictors of follower engagement.

Problem Statement

Servant leadership theory has gained popularity in the last 15 years and has been the subject of considerable research in this timeframe (Parris & Peachey, 2013; van

Dierendonck, 2011). This leadership theory has resulted in various outcomes for followers in organizations where servant leadership is practiced. These outcomes include employee satisfaction (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006; Cerit, 2009; Mayer, Bardes, & Piccolo, 2008; Sun & Wang, 2009; West, Bocarnea, & Maranon, 2009), commitment (Carter & Baghurst, 2014; Cerit, 2010; Jaramillo, Grisaffe, Chonko, & Roberts, 2009b; Liden et al., 2008; van Dierendonck et al., 2014; West et al., 2009), and helping behavior (Hunter et al., 2013; Liden, Wayne, Liao, & Meuser, 2014; Neubert, Kacmar, Carlson, Chonko, & Roberts, 2008). Although some research has been conducted to inform the relationship between servant leadership and employee engagement (Carter & Baghurst, 2014; De Clercq et al., 2014; de Sousa & van Dierendonck, 2014; van Dierendonck et al., 2014), this research expanded on this body of knowledge via a study in a multinational manufacturing firm—a previously unstudied organizational setting. Furthermore, this initiative also adds to existing knowledge by examining cultural characteristics as additional predictors of follower engagement.

In summary, studies to examine servant leadership as a predictor of follower engagement have been conducted in various organizational settings including information technology (De Clercq et al., 2014), health care (van Dierendonck et al., 2014), and food service (Carter & Baghurst, 2014). Absent are similar studies conducted in the manufacturing business sector as well as studies that also introduce cultural characteristics as additional predictors of follower engagement. Therefore this study examined servant leader behaviors and cultural characteristics as predictors of follower engagement in a multinational manufacturing company.

Theoretical Rationale

Servant leadership provides the theoretical framework for this research problem. Servant leadership theory holds that leaders lead by serving and those being served grow and flourish (Greenleaf, 1977). While being served, followers are proposed to become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, and more likely themselves to become servants (Greenleaf, 1977). The servant leader's principle focus is the needs of the followers (Greenleaf, 1977). In fact, organizational objectives are not of primary interest to the servant leader who trusts that followers who are being served will undertake actions in the best interest of the organization (Stone et al., 2004). Ultimately, Greenleaf (1970) believed that the primary goals of servant leadership are to create healthy organizations that promote employee growth, improve organizational performance, and positively impact the communities surrounding them.

Greenleaf was greatly influenced by Herman Hesse's (1956) novel, *The Journey to the East*. In this fable, a band of travelers accompanied by their servant, Leo, embarked on a mythical journey to eastern lands. Leo saw to every need of the travelers and kept them entertained and in good spirits throughout the journey. When Leo became unexpectedly separated from the group, the travelers' plans fell into disarray and the expedition was abandoned. Later in life, one of the travelers discovered that Leo was actually the head of the league that sponsored their journey. In reality, Leo, appearing to be a menial servant, was actually the leader of the band of travelers. Greenleaf's theory was rooted in this same idea, namely, that leaders lead by serving.

Although Greenleaf's theory has been in existence for over 40 years, an agreed upon set of characteristics for the theory does not exist (van Dierendonck, 2011). Since its introduction, Greenleaf's theory has been considered to be loosely defined (Northouse, 2013). Numerous authors have attempted to translate Greenleaf's rather vague theory into key characteristics. Spears (1995) was one of the first to attempt to elucidate servant leadership theory and proposed that (a) listening, (b) empathy, (c) healing, (d) awareness, (e) persuasion, (f) conceptualization, (g) foresight, (h) stewardship, (i) commitment to the growth of people, and (j) building community are characteristics of a servant leader. These characteristics represent Greenleaf's foundational work on servant leadership theory (Northouse, 2013).

Other authors have offered various conceptualizations of servant leadership during the development of instruments to measure levels of servant leadership. For example, Barbuto and Wheeler (2006) in their development of a validated servant leadership instrument, proposed (a) altruistic calling, (b) emotional healing, (c) wisdom, (d) persuasive mapping, and (e) organizational stewardship as elements of servant leadership. A more contemporary view of servant leadership (van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2011) offers the conceptual elements of (a) standing back, (b) forgiveness, (c) courage, (d) empowerment, (e) accountability, (f) authenticity, (g) humility, and (h) stewardship. Numerous other authors have offered additional dimensions and while many propose common characteristics such as humility and empowerment, none characterize servant leadership the same way (Northouse, 2013).

In summary, Greenleaf's (1977) theory holds that leaders lead by serving and those being served grow and flourish. Furthermore, the theory also proposes that servant

leadership creates healthy organizations dedicated to the growth of its employees, improved organizational performance, and ultimately positive societal impact (Greenleaf, 1970). This servant leadership concept provided the theoretical framework for this research initiative.

Statement of Purpose

Using Greenleaf's theory of servant leadership, the purpose of this quantitative study was to examine how this theory serves as a predictor of follower engagement. An additional purpose was to understand how cultural characteristics may add to this prediction. This study was grounded in the postpositivist paradigmatic framework and data were collected through surveys which utilized validated instruments. Surveys were utilized to solicit respondents' feedback as to their experiences involving servant leadership and engagement.

Research Questions

The study was designed to explore the following research questions:

1. What is the effect of servant leadership on follower engagement in a multinational manufacturing firm?
2. How do the cultural characteristics of humane orientation, future orientation, societal in-group collectivism, and societal institutional collectivism affect the prediction of servant leadership on follower engagement?

Potential Significance of the Study

Organizations and employees are to benefit from this study. The need for committed employees is steadily becoming an organizational necessity and as such, employee engagement has become a significant focus (Carter & Baghurst, 2014). Studies

confirm the beneficial role of engagement for employees and organizations (Halbesleben & Wheeler, 2008). Gallup has estimated that disengaged employees have cost United States companies in excess of \$250 billion annually (Rath & Conchie, 2008). As a result, researchers have expressed considerable interest in employee engagement as a key source of organizational sustainability (Schaufeli et al., 2008) and therefore organizational leaders are challenged with understanding the antecedents of employee engagement (Carter & Baghurst, 2014). By understanding these antecedents, leaders can drive performance and an organizational culture of success (Carter & Baghurst, 2014). However, the specific contexts and mechanisms through which different leadership theories affect engagement are still unclear (de Sousa & van Dierendonck, 2014). Therefore, as servant leadership continues to gain popularity as a promising and relevant approach to leadership (Chiniara & Bentein, 2016; Northouse, 2013) and as employee engagement results in follower and organizational benefits (Halbesleben & Wheeler, 2008), it is advantageous for organizations to examine servant leadership as a predictor of follower engagement. Furthermore, as organizations grow their global footprint, examining how cultural characteristics can also predict engagement becomes vital. This study may assist servant led, multinational, and multicultural organizations in informing how servant leadership and cultural characteristics serve as predictors of follower engagement.

Definitions of Terms

Absorption – “characterized by being fully concentrated and deeply engrossed in one’s work, whereby time passes quickly and one has difficulties with detaching oneself from work” (Schaufeli et al., 2002, p. 75).

Assertiveness – “the degree to which individuals are assertive, confrontational, and aggressive in their relationships with others” (House, 2004, p. 30).

Behaving ethically – “interacting openly, fairly, and honestly with others” (Liden et al., 2008, p. 162).

Conceptual skills – “possessing the knowledge of the organization and tasks at hand so as to be in a position to effectively support and assist others, especially immediate followers” (Liden et al., 2008, p. 162).

Creating value for the community – “a conscious, genuine concern for helping the community” (Liden et al., 2008, p. 162).

Cultural characteristics – dimensions of a culture that make it possible to capture similarities and difference in norms, values, beliefs, and practices among societies.

Within the context of this study, the GLOBE Research Program identified (a) performance orientation, (b) assertiveness, (c) future orientation, (d) humane orientation, (e) societal institutional collectivism, (f) societal in-group collectivism, (g) gender egalitarianism, (h) power distance, and (i) uncertainty avoidance as nine distinct cultural dimensions (House, 2004) .

Dedication – being strongly involved in one’s work and experiencing “a sense of significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride, and challenge” (Schaufeli et al., 2002, p. 74).

Emotional healing – “the act of showing sensitivity to others' personal concerns” (Liden et al., 2008, p. 162).

Empowering – “encouraging and facilitating others, especially immediate followers, in identifying and solving problems, as well as determining when and how to complete work tasks” (Liden et al., 2008, p. 162).

Engagement – “a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption. Rather than a momentary and specific state, engagement refers to a more persistent and pervasive affective-cognitive state that is not focused on any particular object, event, individual, or behavior” (Schaufeli et al., 2002, p. 74).

Followers – employees or members of organization who hold non-managerial positions. Often referred to as individual contributors, followers typically perform the basic, foundational work in organizations.

Future orientation – “the extent to which individuals engage in future-oriented behaviors such as delaying gratification, planning, and investing in the future” (House, 2004, p. 30).

Gender egalitarianism – “the degree to which a collective minimizes gender inequality” (House, 2004, p. 30).

Helping subordinates grow and succeed – “demonstrating genuine concern for others' career growth and development by providing support and mentoring” (Liden et al., 2008, p. 162).

Humane orientation – “the degree to which a collective encourages and rewards individuals for being fair, altruistic, generous, caring, and kind to others” (House, 2004, p. 30).

Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) – “individual behavior that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system, and that in the aggregate promotes the effective functioning of the organization” (Organ, 1988, p.

4) and “individual contributions in the workplace that go beyond role requirements and contractually rewarded job achievements” (Organ & Ryan, 1995, p. 775).

Performance orientation – “the degree to which a collective encourages and rewards group members for performance improvement and excellence” (House, 2004, p. 30).

Power distance – “the degree to which members of an organization or society expect and agree that power should be stratified and concentrated at higher levels of an organization” (House, 2004, p. 12).

Putting subordinates first – “using actions and words to make it clear to others (especially immediate followers) that satisfying their work needs is a priority.

Supervisors who practice this principle will often break from their own work to assist subordinates with problems they are facing with their assigned duties.” (Liden et al., 2008, p. 162).

Servant leadership – a leadership theory and model created by Robert Greenleaf (1977) in which leaders lead by serving followers. The theory proposes that those led will become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, and more likely themselves to become servants of others (Greenleaf, 1977). The needs of followers are of primary importance to the servant leader who believes that followers will ultimately focus on organizational initiatives (Stone et al., 2004).

Societal in-group collectivism – “the degree to which individuals express pride, loyalty, and cohesiveness in their organizations or families” (House, 2004, p. 30).

Societal institutional collectivism – “the degree to which organizational and societal institutional practices encourage and reward collective distribution of resources and collective action” (House, 2004, p. 30).

Uncertainty avoidance – “the extent to which a society, organization, or group relies on social norms, rules, and procedures to alleviate unpredictability of future events” (House, 2004, p. 30).

Vigor – “characterized by high levels of energy and mental resilience while working, the willingness to invest effort in one’s work, and persistence even in the face of difficulties” (Schaufeli et al., 2002, p. 74).

Chapter Summary

This chapter has provided a backdrop for this study which examined servant leadership and cultural characteristics as predictors of follower engagement in a multinational manufacturing company. A historical perspective of servant leadership theory was provided as well as more recent conceptualizations of the theory. This chapter concluded with a discussion on the significance of this study and the potential benefits to organizations.

The remaining chapters of this dissertation have specific purposes. Chapter 2 provides a review of the literature regarding servant leadership and cultural characteristics as relating to follower engagement. Chapter 3 offers a detailed plan of the research design and methodology including context, participants, and data collection instruments. Chapter 4 presents a detailed analysis of the results and findings. Finally, Chapter 5 discusses the findings, implications, and recommendations for future research and practice.

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

Introduction and Purpose

This study examined servant leadership and cultural characteristics as predictors of follower engagement. As Chapter 1 has provided a foundational overview of servant leadership, engagement, and cultural characteristics, this chapter reviews the relevant literature associated with this research topic. Specifically, this chapter will demonstrate the topical analysis of related empirical studies and provide analyses of individual studies connected to this topic. This introduction and purpose section is followed by review of the literature and chapter summary sections.

Review of the Literature

This section highlights how existing studies have changed the state of the literature or confirmed prior findings with respect to servant leadership and cultural characteristics as predictors of follower engagement. This section provides the characteristics and a synthesis of the studies.

Characteristics of the included studies. In summary, 31 peer-reviewed, empirical studies that were undertaken during the years 1999 – 2016 and that appeared in English language, academic journals were included in this review. All of the research was conducted in organizational settings, broadly construed, in the United States and 16 other countries in Europe, Africa, South America, and the Pacific Rim. Data were collected mostly via survey instruments, though, notably one study relied on semi-

structured interviews to acquire information from respondents. The studies focused exclusively on servant leadership as a predictor of both individual and team or organizational outcomes.

A majority of the studies, specifically 22, were conducted in the United States and China. A total of four studies were conducted in Turkey and Indonesia and the balance conducted across eight other countries. Table 2.1 provides a summary of the countries where the studies were performed along with the number of studies from each country.

Table 2.1

Country of Study and Number of Studies from Each

| Country | Number of Studies |
|--|-------------------|
| United States | 17 |
| China | 5 |
| Indonesia | 2 |
| Turkey | 2 |
| Kenya, Philippines, Australia, Portugal, Ghana, Ukraine, Trinidad and Tobago, Canada | 8 |
| Not Identified | 1 |

The studies were conducted across a wide range of organizational settings, industries, or business sectors. Although five of the studies were conducted in the field of education, the balance took place in public service, government, food service, manufacturing, technology, and seven other organizational settings. Table 2.2 provides a summary of the organizational settings in which the studies took place and the number of studies within each. The data that informs the countries of study and the organizational

settings of the studies support the claim that the literature review process resulted in considerable breadth.

Table 2.2

Organizational Setting and Number of Studies from Each

| Area of Study | Number of Studies |
|--|-------------------|
| Education | 5 |
| Public Service, Government, Community Leadership | 3 |
| Food Service, Restaurants, Grocery Retail | 3 |
| Production, Manufacturing, and Distribution | 2 |
| Technology | 2 |
| Sales | 2 |
| Not-for-Profit | 2 |
| Financial, Banking | 2 |
| Retail, Religious, For Profit, Medical | 4 |
| Other or Not Identified | 9 |

Synthesis of the studies. This section provides a summary and synthesis of the peer-reviewed articles and the study contained within each. Although the search process targeted studies that focused on servant leadership and cultural characteristics as predictors of follower engagement, it was deemed important to include studies that focused on the relationships between servant leadership and other variables or outcomes as well. The literature described these outcomes, or dependent variables, as falling into

three distinct categories, namely, (a) the relationship between servant leadership and follower outcome variables, (b) the relationship between servant leadership and team-based outcome variables, and (c) the relationship between servant leadership and cultural characteristics. All correlations between variables mentioned hereafter were reported to be statistically significant ($p < .05$).

Relationship between servant leadership and follower outcome variables. The studies provided a variety of relationships between servant leadership and follower-based outcome variables within organizations. Four main variables relating to followers surfaced in the studies. These were follower (a) satisfaction, (b) commitment, (c) engagement, and (d) helping behavior.

Satisfaction. The studies informed that servant leadership had a positive impact on employee satisfaction (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006; Cerit, 2009; Mayer et al., 2008; Sun & Wang, 2009; West et al., 2009). The correlations between these two variables were found to range from weak to strong in magnitude ($r = .17 - .76$). In the educational field, school principals exhibiting servant leadership behaviors had a positive and significant impact on the level of teacher satisfaction (Cerit, 2009). In the same context, valuing employees and displaying authenticity, both servant leader characteristics, had positive correlations to employee satisfaction (Cerit, 2009). Similarly, community officials' ability to provide emotional healing to employees and specifically to foster spiritual recovery from hardship or trauma, also resulted in increased follower satisfaction (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006). Servant leaders fostered increased employee satisfaction in high technology, engineering, and manufacturing environments when they incorporated inputs from their followers in the development and implementation of shared

organizational vision (West et al., 2009). Finally, servant leaders satisfied the needs of working business undergraduates and ultimately improved their job satisfaction (Mayer et al., 2008).

There were four different and validated servant leadership instruments utilized in the studies that informed servant leadership as having a positive impact on employee satisfaction. Nevertheless, the most commonly used instrument was developed by Barbuto and Wheeler (2006) which utilizes subscales to measure 11 dimensions of servant leadership. Table 2.3 provides a summary of the specific servant leadership measures utilized in the studies and their frequency of use.

Noteworthy is that a majority of the studies informing servant leadership's relationship with employee satisfaction (Cerit, 2009; Sun & Wang, 2009; West et al., 2009) was conducted in countries other than the United States—an indication of the global interest in servant leadership theory. In summary, studies demonstrated that servant leadership promoted follower satisfaction. Furthermore, increased follower satisfaction was the most frequently reported outcome in the studies that comprise this literature review. Table 2.4 provides a summary of all studies uncovered in the literature review process.

Commitment. The studies demonstrated that servant leadership had a positive impact on employee commitment (Carter & Baghurst, 2014; Cerit, 2010; Jaramillo et al., 2009b; Liden et al., 2008; van Dierendonck et al., 2014; West et al., 2009). The correlations between these two variables were found to range from weak to strong in magnitude ($r = .18 - .83$). In the field of education, teachers experienced increased

Table 2.3

Measures Used in Studies and Frequency of Use

| Variable | Measure | Frequency |
|----------------------------|---|-----------|
| Servant Leadership | Ehrhart (2004) | 8 |
| | SL-28, Liden et al. (2008) or shortened version SL-7, Liden et al. (2015) | 6 |
| | Servant Organizational Leadership Assessment (SOLA), Laub (1999) | 4 |
| | Servant Leadership Behavior Scale (SLBS), Sendjaya, Sarros, and Santora (2008) | 2 |
| | Barbuto and Wheeler (2006) | 2 |
| | Servant Leadership Survey (SLS), van Dierendonck and Nuijten (2011) | 1 |
| | Reinke (2003) | 1 |
| | Reinke (2004) | 1 |
| | Hale and Fields (2007) | 1 |
| | Dennis and Winston (2003) | 1 |
| Dennis and Bocarnea (2005) | 1 | |
| Engagement | Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (original UWES 17 and shortened UWES 9 versions), Schaufeli and Bakker (2003) | 3 |

organizational commitment when their leaders were perceived to value employees, develop employees, and display authenticity (Cerit, 2010). Additionally, servant leadership also had a positive impact on salespersons' levels of commitment to their organization (Jaramillo et al., 2009b). The servant leadership model within this sales function manifested itself in the leader's concern for the well-being of salespersons resulting in an environment of organizational commitment (Jaramillo et al., 2009b). Furthermore, restaurant employees found themselves to be more committed to their work and company when they experienced servant leadership traits in their managers (Carter & Baghurst, 2014). The culture created by these serving managers not only strengthened employee-to-manager relationships but peer-to-peer relationships as well (Carter & Baghurst, 2014). In a production and distribution environment, employee commitment resulted when leaders behaved ethically and helped followers grow and succeed—two servant leader dimensions (Liden et al., 2008). Furthermore, doctors and nurses were more committed to their organizations when their servant leaders satisfied their psychological needs (van Dierendonck et al., 2014). Finally, Filipino professionals in engineering, manufacturing, and technology disciplines were more committed to their organizations when their leaders exhibited the servant leadership traits of service, humility, and vision (West et al., 2009).

Servant leadership instruments developed by Ehrhart (2004), Hale and Fields (2007), Laub (1999), and Liden et al. (2008) were utilized in the studies that informed servant leadership as having a positive impact on employee commitment. Conversely, one study utilized a qualitative methodology which included focus group interviews within a restaurant setting where commitment was a theme that surfaced (Carter &

Baghurst, 2014). Table 2.3 provides a summary of the specific servant leadership measures utilized in the studies and their frequency of use. Table 2.4 provides a summary of all studies uncovered in the literature review process.

Engagement. Employees whose managers exhibited servant leadership characteristics experienced increased levels of engagement (Carter & Baghurst, 2014; De Clercq et al., 2014; de Sousa & van Dierendonck, 2014; van Dierendonck et al., 2014). The correlations between these two variables ranged from weak to moderate in magnitude ($r = .19 - .49$). Employees in the information technology field who reported to servant leaders were more engaged in their work especially in conditions marked by high social interaction (De Clercq et al., 2014). Additionally, servant leaders created a family atmosphere within a restaurant setting which fostered employee engagement (Carter & Baghurst, 2014). Furthermore, this finding was also validated within a company merger environment of uncertainty where servant leader characteristics of empowerment, accountability, humility, standing back, stewardship, and authenticity resulted in engaged employees (de Sousa & van Dierendonck, 2014). Finally, servant leaders in the medical field inspired engagement in their doctors and nurses when they were perceived as being effective and as satisfying their followers' psychological needs (van Dierendonck et al., 2014).

Three servant leadership measures were utilized in the studies that informed servant leadership as having a positive impact on employee engagement, namely, the SL-28 (Liden et al., 2008), the SLS (van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2011), and Ehrhart's (2004) servant leadership instruments. Conversely, one study which utilized a qualitative methodology included focus group interviews within a restaurant setting with

engagement surfacing as a theme (Carter & Baghurst, 2014). All studies informing the relationship between servant leadership and employee engagement utilized the original or shorted version of the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale or UWES (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003). Table 2.3 provides a summary of the specific servant leadership and employee engagement measures utilized in the studies and their frequency of use. Table 2.4 provides a summary of all studies uncovered in the literature review process.

Helping behavior. Studies demonstrated that servant leaders elicited helping behaviors in their followers (Hunter et al., 2013; Liden et al., 2014; Neubert et al., 2008). The correlations between these two variables were found to range from weak to strong in magnitude ($r = .10 - .82$). Servant leaders in a retail business fostered favorable service climates resulting in helpful behaviors of followers (Hunter et al., 2013). In this same retail setting, servant leaders created a cycle of service by role-modeling servant behavior which in turn produced coworker helpful behavior (Hunter et al., 2013). Additionally, by creating a serving culture within a restaurant chain, servant leaders cultivated customer service helping behaviors in their followers (Liden et al., 2014). Finally, serving leaders created a promotion focus that resulted in helping behaviors with full time employees working in various capacities (Neubert et al., 2008). These studies that correlated servant leadership and helping behavior utilized the SL-28 (Liden et al., 2008) and Ehrhart's (2004) servant leadership instruments.

In summary, the studies demonstrated relationships between servant leadership and various follower-based variables. These variables included follower satisfaction, commitment, engagement, and helping behavior. Nevertheless, these outcome variables were not limited to these four detailed here. Servant leadership also positively influenced

employee creativity in finance, heavy manufacturing, telecommunications, and food service contexts (Liden et al., 2014; Neubart et al., 2008; Yoshida, Sendjaya, Hirst, & Cooper, 2014). These studies resulted in weak to moderate correlations between the two variables ($r = .10 - .44$). Additionally, servant leadership resulted in increased trust in academia and in various business sectors in southeastern United States (Joseph & Winston, 2005; Reinke, 2003; Reinke, 2004) with correlations between these two variables ranging from moderate to strong in magnitude ($r = .64 - .84$). Furthermore, serving leaders created improved role clarity in followers holding professional positions in the Philippines (West et al., 2009) with moderate correlations demonstrated between the two variables ($r = .47 - .67$). Servant leaders also influenced follower task performance through speed, initiative, and quality and quantity of work (Chiniara & Bentein, 2016) in a study that demonstrated a range of weak correlations ($r = .15 - .18$). Finally, servant leadership reduced turnover intentions in followers holding sales and food service positions (Jaramillo et al., 2009b; Liden et al., 2014). These studies resulted in negative correlations ranging from weak to moderate in magnitude ($r = -.26 - -.39$). Again, all aforementioned correlations were considered to be statistically significant ($p < .05$). Table 2.4 provides a summary of the studies that examined the relationships between servant leadership and follower outcome variables within organizations.

Relationship between servant leadership and team-based outcome variables.

Servant leaders influenced team-based outcomes within organizations. The two main relationships that surfaced in the research were found to exist between servant leadership and team performance or effectiveness and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB).

Team performance or effectiveness. Serving leaders had a positive impact on team performance or effectiveness (Hu & Liden, 2011; Irving & Longbotham, 2007; Liden et al., 2014; Schaubroeck, Lam, & Peng, 2011). The correlations between these two variables were considered to be moderate in magnitude ($r = .31 - .60$). In the Chinese banking industry, servant leaders had a positive impact on team performance by elevating team potency (Hu & Liden, 2011). Similarly, servant leaders, by creating a serving culture in a United States restaurant chain, improved team performance (Liden et al., 2014). Collaboration, a popular dimension of servant leadership theory, was a significant predictor of team effectiveness in an international nonprofit organization (Irving & Longbotham, 2007). In addition to collaboration, studies demonstrated that other servant leadership characteristics correlated moderately with team effectiveness. These were (a) providing accountability, (b) supporting and resourcing, (c) engaging in honest self-evaluation, (d) communicating with clarity, and (e) valuing and appreciating (Irving & Longbotham, 2007). Furthermore, servant leaders helped to liberate employees in ways that improved the performance of financial services team in the United States and Hong Kong. This was accomplished by encouraging followers to seek help and feedback, to propose innovative solutions to problems, to engage in boundary spanning behavior, and to voice concerns before they developed into crises (Schaubroeck et al., 2011). Finally and in this same financial services context, it was demonstrated that team member trust in servant leaders unleashed the potential in teams by giving them confidence to succeed (Schaubroeck et al., 2011). The studies that informed servant leadership as having a positive impact on team performance or effectiveness primarily

utilized the SL-28 (Liden et al., 2008) and the SOLA (Laub, 1999) servant leadership instruments.

Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). Servant leaders positively influenced team OCB (Chiniara & Bentein, 2016; Ehrhart, 2004; Hu & Liden, 2011; Walumbwa, Hartnell, & Oke, 2010). OCB involves actions that go beyond an employee's specified role requirements that are not formally recognized or rewarded by organizations (Organ, Podsakoff, & MacKenzie, 2006). The correlations between these two variables were considered to be weak to moderate in magnitude ($r = .13 - .64$).

Servant leadership created positive organizational climates that resulted in enhanced OCB in multinational companies in Kenya (Walumbwa et al., 2010). Within this study, commitment to supervisor, self-efficacy, procedural justice climate, and service climate mediated this relationship between servant leadership and OCB. Additionally, team members employed in a grocery store chain were more likely to act in ways to benefit their team and organization when their serving leader promoted growth and development (Ehrhart, 2004). Furthermore, servant leadership was also considered an antecedent to OCB in a study conducted in the Chinese banking industry (Hu & Liden, 2011). Finally, servant leaders influenced OCB through follower satisfaction (Chiniara & Bentein, 2016) in a Canadian technology design and manufacturing company. The studies that informed servant leadership as having a positive impact on helping behavior utilized the SL-28 (Liden et al., 2008), the SL-7 (Liden et al., 2015), and Ehrhart's (2004) servant leadership instruments.

In summary, two main relationships between servant leadership and teams-based outcomes surfaced in the studies. Specifically, servant leadership was positively

correlated with team performance or effectiveness (Hu & Liden, 2011; Irving & Longbotham, 2007; Liden et al., 2014; Schaubroeck, et al., 2011) and OCB (Chiniara & Bentein, 2016; Ehrhart, 2004; Hu & Liden, 2011; Walumbwa, et al., 2010). Nevertheless, these outcome variables were not limited to the two detailed here. In a moderately correlated relationship ($r = .59$), servant leadership also resulted in team potency in a Chinese banking industry (Hu & Liden, 2011). Interestingly, only one study positively correlated servant leadership with financial performance (Peterson, Galvin, & Lange, 2012). Although this moderately correlated relationship ($r = .30$) as measured in return on assets was not directly applicable to teams, it was closely related since it was an indication of performance at the organizational level. These aforementioned studies utilized the SL-28 instrument (Liden et al., 2008) and all correlations were proposed to be statistically significant ($p < .05$). Table 2.4 provides a summary of the studies that examined the relationships between servant leadership and team level variables within organizations.

In summary, the studies that informed servant leadership as having a positive impact on follower and team-based outcome variables predominantly utilized quantitative research methods. When taking into account that leadership was the general topic of research and the basis for this literature review, it was not surprising then that the uncovered studies primarily used quantitative methodologies within a postpositivist paradigmatic framework. Within the quantitative studies, the researchers used correlational in lieu of experimental or quasi-experimental designs where the SL-28 (Liden et al., 2008), the SL-7 (Liden et al., 2015), and Ehrhart's (2004) servant leadership instruments were the most commonly used measures of servant leadership. Finally, only

one study utilized a qualitative approach in the form of semi-structured focus group interviews.

Relationship between servant leadership and cultural characteristics. The studies informed relationships between follower perceptions of servant leadership and cultural characteristics (Hale & Fields, 2007; Mittal & Dorfman, 2012; Pekerti & Sendjaya, 2010). Accordingly, servant leadership was found to be more prevalent in certain cultures than others. For example, Ghanaians reported experiencing servant leadership behaviors significantly less frequently than study participants in the United States (Hale & Fields, 2007). Furthermore, Ghanaians reported that vision, considered to be a servant leader characteristic, had a strong relationship with servant leader effectiveness (Hale & Fields, 2007).

Additionally, research demonstrated that Australians and Indonesians share some servant leadership practices due to similarities in values such as community emphasis and mutual respect (Pekerti & Sendjaya, 2010). Nevertheless, there were cultural differences in their approach to servant leadership (Pekerti & Sendjaya, 2010). Specifically, Australian culture, which is characterized by independence, individualism, and ascription to low power distance, endorsed a more direct leadership style (Pekerti & Sendjaya, 2010). Conversely, Indonesians' acknowledgement of high power distance provided leaders the ability to exert more influence in leadership situations (Pekerti & Sendjaya, 2010).

Furthermore, various studies have utilized data from the GLOBE Research Program (House, 2004) to examine the relationship between servant leadership and cultural characteristics. This monumental study encompassed 62 societies around the

world and investigated how cultural values are related to organizational practices, conceptions of leadership, economic competitiveness of societies, and the human condition of its members (House, 2004). Researchers have identified specific servant leadership characteristics within the GLOBE study and have proposed how these characteristics were endorsed by various cultures (Mittal & Dorfman, 2012). For example, egalitarianism and empowerment were promoted most strongly by European cultures and least by the Confucian Asian cluster. In contrast, empathy and humility were found to be more prevalent in Southern Asian cultures than European cultures (Mittal & Dorfman, 2012).

In summary, studies examined the relationship between servant leadership and cultural characteristics. Servant leadership characteristics were found to be more prevalent in certain cultures. Additionally, servant leadership characteristics had varying degrees of endorsement from cultures around the world (Hale & Fields, 2007; Mittal & Dorfman, 2012; Pekerti & Sendjaya, 2010). Finally, the GLOBE study (House, 2004) demonstrated that various cultures around the world endorsed specific servant leadership characteristics. Consequently these studies informed why societies, cultures, and nations differ in their views and perceptions of servant leadership theory and practice. Table 2.4 provides a summary of the literature that examined the relationship between servant leadership and cultural characteristics.

Substantive gaps and recommendations for further research. This section describes the gaps and limitations of the studies and provides recommendations for further research.

Gaps and limitations. The major gaps and limitations in the studies were found in the areas of (a) methodology, (b) organizational and national settings, (c) limited financial-based results, and (d) use of data from the GLOBE Research Program (House, 2004).

Methodology. A significant limitation in 12 of the 31 studies was common-method bias. Common-method bias refers to a bias in the data due to something external to the measures (Burton-Jones, 2009). In other words, the measured difference is due to the study itself or it may be due to something other than the actual situation. These studies suffered from common-method bias since much of the data in these studies were obtained from a single source. Common method bias was also a concern as a result of the self-reporting mechanisms of many of the studies. Within these studies, leaders provided perceptions of their own leadership in lieu of followers' direct experiences of their leaders.

Also evident was the cross-sectional nature of various studies. A cross-sectional study refers to one that is conducted over a specific population at a point in time. Five studies suffered from this potential limitation. As a result, it was difficult to draw definitive causal conclusions from these cross-sectional studies.

Two studies utilized snowball sampling which is also referred to as chain-referral sampling. This sampling technique is characterized by study subjects recruiting future subjects from among their acquaintances (Huck, 2012). Consequently, it is difficult to make unbiased estimates from snowball sampling as randomization is compromised with this sampling technique (Huck, 2012).

Table 2.4
Summary of Studies

| Result Theme | Study | Sample | Measure | Result: Servant leadership influencing ... |
|---|---|--|---|--|
| Impact on Follower | Barbuto and Wheeler (2006) | 388 persons and 80 elected community officials from counties in the midwestern United States | Servant Leadership (SL) measure: Barbuto and Wheeler (2006) | Extra effort, satisfaction, perceived organizational effectiveness |
| | Carter and Baghurst (2014) | 11 employees from restaurant in Dallas | SL measure: focus groups | Engagement, loyalty, commitment, healthy work relationships, pursuit of organizational goals |
| | Cerit (2009) | 595 teachers in public primary schools in Duzce, Turkey | SL measure: SOLA, Laub (1999) | Job satisfaction |
| | Cerit (2010) | 563 teachers in primary schools in Turkey | SL measure: SOLA, Laub (1999) | Commitment |
| | De Clercq, Bouchenooghe, Raja, and Matsyborska (2014) | 263 IT professionals in the Ukraine | SL measure: SL-28, Liden et al. (2008) Engagement (E) measure: UWES 17, Schaufeli and Bakker, (2003) | Engagement, goal congruence, social interaction |
| | de Sousa and van Dierendonck (2014) | 1,107 employees for two merging companies in Portugal | SL measure: SLS, van Dierendonck and Nuijten (2011) E measure: UWES 9, Schaufeli and Bakker (2003) | Work engagement |
| | Hunter et al. (2013) | 425 followers, 11 store managers, and 40 regional managers from US retail organizations | SL measure: Ehrhart (2004) | Service climate, turnover intentions, helping behavior |
| | Jaramillo, Grisaffe, Chonko, and Roberts (2009a) | 501 salespersons drawn from a U.S. consumer panel | SL measure: Ehrhart (2004) | Customer orientation |
| | Jaramillo, Grisaffe, Chonko, and Roberts (2009b) | 501 salespersons drawn from a U.S. consumer panel | SL measure: Ehrhart (2004) | Organizational commitment, turnover intentions |
| | Joseph and Winston (2005) | 69 employed students in Trinidad and Tobago | SL measure: SOLA, Laub (1999) | Leader trust, organizational trust |
| | Mayer, Bardes, and Piccolo (2008) | 187 business undergraduates in south-eastern US university with work experience | SL measure: Ehrhart (2004) | Need satisfaction, job satisfaction |
| | Neubert, Kacmar, Carlson, Chonko, and Roberts (2008) | 250 individuals working full-time | SL measure: Ehrhart (2004) | Helping and creative behavior |
| | Reinke (2003) | 254 employees of a suburban county in Georgia | SL measure: Reinke (2003) | Trust |
| | Reinke (2004) | 254 employees of a suburban county in Georgia | SL measure: Reinke (2004) | Trust |
| | Sun and Wang (2009) | 209 paired supervisor-subordinate dyads from the Beijing region, China | SL measure: Barbuto and Wheeler (2006) | Satisfaction, perceived organizational support |
| van Dierendonck, Stam, Boersma, de Windt, and Alkema (2014) | 200 hospital employees (nurses and doctors) | SL measure: Ehrhart (2004) E measure: UWES 9, Schaufeli and Bakker (2003) | Engagement, commitment | |

Table 2.4 (continued)
Summary of Studies

| Result Theme | Study | Sample | Measure | Result: Servant leadership influencing ... |
|-----------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| Impact on Follower | West, Bocarnea, and Maranon (2009) | 164 respondents from professional organizations in the Philippines | SL measure: Hale and Fields (2007) | Organizational commitment, job satisfaction, role clarity, perceived organizational support |
| Impact on Follower and Team | Chiniara and Bentein (2016) | 247 supervisor-employee dyads in Canadian technology design and production company | SL measure: SL-28, Liden et al. (2008) | Employee task performance, OCB |
| | Liden, Wayne, Liao, and Meuser (2014) | 71 restaurant managers and 1,143 hourly employees from 76 restaurants in six US states | SL measure: SL-28, Liden et al. (2008) | Team serving culture, restaurant performance, employee performance, employee customer service behaviors, creativity, turnover intentions |
| | Liden et al. (2008) | 189 employees from a midwestern production and distribution company | SL measure: SL-28, Liden et al. (2008) | Organizational commitment, community citizenship behavior, in-role performance |
| Impact on Team | Yoshida, Sendjaya, Hirst, and Cooper (2014) | 154 teams working in various Indonesian and Chinese industries including finance, heavy manufacturing, and telecommunications | SL measure: SLBS, Sendjaya et al. (2008) | Employee creativity and team innovation |
| | Ehrhart (2004) | 120 departments with at least 5 respondents and their managers from a grocery store chain in the eastern region of the United States | SL measure: Ehrhart (2004) | Procedural justice climate, OCB |
| | Hu and Liden (2011) | 304 employees of five banks in China | SL measure: SL-28, Liden et al. (2008) | Team potency, team performance, OCB |
| | Irving and Longbotham (2007) | 719 participants from the U.S. division of an international nonprofit organization | SL measure: SOLA, Laub (1999) | Team effectiveness |
| | Peterson, Galvin, and Lange (2012) | 126 CEOs of medium size software and hardware technology enterprises | SL measure: modified SL-28, Liden et al. (2008) | Founder status, firm performance, and CEO narcissism |
| | Schaubroeck, Lam, and Peng (2011) | 999 employees in a multinational bank operating in the US and Hong Kong | SL measure: SL-28, Liden et al. (2008) | Team performance |
| | Walumbwa, Hartnell, and Oke (2010) | 815 employees and 123 supervisors in seven multinational companies in Kenya | SL measure: Ehrhart (2004) | OCB |
| Cultural Influence | Washington, Sutton, and Field (2006) | 283 employees rating 126 supervisors working at governmental organizations | SL measure: Dennis and Winston (2003) | Leader agreeableness, empathy, integrity, and competence |
| | Hale and Fields (2007) | 60 people from Ghana; 97 people from the United States; two thirds in both samples worked in religious organizations | SL measure: based on Dennis and Bocarnea (2005) | Leader effectiveness |
| | Mittal and Dorfman (2012) | GLOBE (17,000 managers from 951 organizations in 62 different societies and three different industries) | SL measure: 35 items from GLOBE leadership questionnaire relating to SL | Egalitarianism endorsed by European, empathy and humility endorsed by Southern Asian, moral integrity endorsed by all, and empowerment endorsed by Anglo cultures |
| | Pekerti and Sendjaya (2010) | Indonesia: 279 teaching faculty and administration staff of two educational institutions Australia: 190 employees of two for-profit and two not-for-profit organizations | SL measure: SLBS (Servant Leadership Behavior Scale), Sendjaya et al. (2008) Cultural difference measure: GLOBE research program | SL practiced in both nations yet SL characteristics weighted differently |

Thirty of the 31 studies utilized quantitative methods. Although the strength of these studies was rooted in their statistical foundation, they were limited by the closed-ended nature of the survey questions. This limitation resulted in the missed opportunity to benefit from the potential richness of data available via qualitative research methods. Additionally, these studies could have benefited from a mixed methods approach combining the advantages of both quantitative and qualitative methodologies.

One study utilized a qualitative approach and therefore experienced the potential for researcher bias. Although the potential richness of data obtained via qualitative research is deemed an advantage of this methodology, this approach also has inherent shortcomings such as researcher bias. This is concerning as “a researcher’s background and position will affect what they choose to investigate, the angle of investigation, the methods judged most adequate for this purpose, the findings considered most appropriate, and the framing and communication of conclusions” (Malterud, 2001, pp. 483-484). In addition, this study, which utilized a semi-structured focus group approach, suffered from the potential breach of confidentiality which could have affected subject responses. One-on-one interviews could have remedied this limitation.

Additional concerns related to methodology and specifically to sampling were uncovered in the studies. Two studies were heavily weighted with male participants. Although this is not a methodological limitation per se, it does limit the generalizability to other demographics. Furthermore, a number of the studies were limited by the narrowness of their sampling when sample size is important in statistically based studies. A concern is that too small of a sample will give a result which may not be sufficiently powered to detect a difference between the groups (Nayak, 2010). Conversely, too large

of a sample is also not recommended as it may be considered wasteful, in terms of time and money, and unethical when more subjects than required are recruited (Nayak, 2010). Finally, all quantitative studies identified in this literature review utilized one instrument as the basis of the study. Although these instruments had been validated, utilizing more than one instrument would have added to the depth of the study.

Organizational and national settings. The studies had limitations with respect to organizational and national settings. Specifically, they were heavily weighted in the field of education. Accordingly, Table 2.2 also provides insight to opportunities for future studies in a wide range of industries and business sectors including manufacturing, technology, sales, not-for-profit, banking, medical, and religious organizations.

Although the studies were conducted in 12 different countries, a majority of them took place in the United States and China. Studies could have been spread more evenly across the 12 nations and, more importantly, included other nations to lend universality to the results. Table 2.1 provides a summary of the countries where the studies were conducted.

Limited financial-based results. Another drawback of the studies was limited research with respect to financial results. A significant majority of the studies demonstrated outcomes such as satisfaction, commitment, and OCB. Only one study claimed that servant leadership was positively correlated with favorable financial performance, namely, return on assets. Future studies could focus on more financial-based outcomes such as revenues, costs, and margins.

Use of data from the GLOBE Research Program (House, 2004). The groundbreaking GLOBE study (House, 2004) assessed cultural aspects of 62 societies

around the world. Although the study provided invaluable information with respect to cultural values and leadership dimensions, the questionnaire used in this study was not designed to directly measure servant leadership (Mittal & Dorfman, 2012). Therefore, only a *theoretical* relationship between servant leadership and cultural characteristics was researched. A recommendation is to conduct studies that measure the *actual* relationship between servant leadership and cultural characteristics.

In summary, the existing studies experienced a number of gaps and limitations. These gaps and limitations were rooted in the areas of (a) methodology, (b) organizational and national settings, (c) financial-based results, and (d) use of data from the GLOBE Research Program (House, 2004).

Recommendations for further research. The gaps and limitations in the studies provided a springboard for future research recommendations. As such, additional research is recommended to address the gaps and limitations in the areas of (a) methodology, (b) organizational and national settings, (c) limited financial-based results, and (d) use of data from the GLOBE Research Program (House, 2004). Additionally, further research is recommended to address a variable correlation concern with the existing studies.

Methodology. There are opportunities for further research with respect to methodologies. In order to address common method bias, multiple sources of data could be introduced. Accordingly, further research in this area using dyadic or triadic data is recommended. Additionally, studies which obtain followers' direct experiences of their leaders, rather than leaders' perceptions of their own leadership, could result in more accurate measures of servant leadership. Furthermore, the limitations with respect to the

cross-sectional approaches in the existing research can be remedied via studies that utilize a longitudinal approach.

Sampling improvements can be incorporated into future studies. More balance with respect to the demographics and especially to the gender of study participants is recommended. Remedying the narrowness of sample sizes can be addressed by incorporating a larger yet appropriately sized sample. Randomizing the sampling can remedy the snowball sampling shortcomings.

A significant amount of research in leadership theory has fallen into the postpositivist paradigmatic framework which implies the use of quantitative methodologies. Not surprising then is the fact that 30 of the 31 studies uncovered in this literature review process utilized quantitative methods. Furthermore, servant leadership theory lacks a solid construct (Parris & Peachey, 2013) resulting in considerable debate over servant leader characteristics (van Dierendonck, 2011). A possible explanation as to the preponderance of quantitative studies on servant leadership theory is that researchers are attempting to address its weak construct by adding structure and validity to the theory via objective data from quantitative research. As a result, *qualitative* research with respect to servant leadership, and especially with respect to the relationship between servant leadership and employee engagement, is considered to be underdeveloped and in an embryonic state. This is certainly an area ripe for additional research. Furthermore, future research utilizing a mixed methods research approach could enhance statistically based quantitative studies with complimentary data gleaned from qualitative methods.

Organizational and national settings. Five studies identified in the article review process were conducted in the field of education. It is recommended that future studies

be concentrated in less researched industries, business sectors, and organizational settings such as manufacturing, technology, sales, not-for-profit, banking, medical, and religious organizations. Furthermore, since the majority of the studies took place in the United States and China, it is recommended that future studies be conducted in other countries to better understand if global cultural differences impact servant leadership as predictors of follower engagement.

Limited financial-based results. The uncovered studies provided very little organizational financial performance data resulting from servant leadership. Much of the research focused on outcomes such as satisfaction, commitment, and OCB and did not include studies demonstrating financial-based outcomes. Future studies which measure organizations' financial performance resulting from servant leadership are recommended.

Use of data from the GLOBE Research Program (House, 2004). The existing studies utilized data from the GLOBE Research Program (House, 2004). This monumental study focused on cultural values and general leadership dimensions in societies around the world. Nevertheless, the questionnaire used in the GLOBE study was not designed to directly measure servant leadership characteristics (Mittal & Dorfman, 2012). As a result, the studies provided *theoretical*—versus *actual*—results. Future studies which measure *actual* influences that cultural characteristics have on followers' views and perceptions of servant leadership are recommended.

Variable correlations. There were potential environmental influences in the studies that moderated the relationship between servant leadership and follower outcomes. For example, the studies demonstrated a wide correlation range ($r = .17$ to $.76$) between servant leadership and follower satisfaction. This implies that there were

potential environmental influences in the studies that moderated this relationship. Studies that identify and remedy these environmental influences comprise an area for future research. Table 2.5 provides a summary of these relationships including correlation descriptors and values.

Table 2.5

Servant Leadership Relationship Variables and Correlations

| Category | Outcome Variables | Correlation | <i>r</i> value |
|----------|----------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Follower | Satisfaction | Weak to strong | .17 – .76 |
| | Commitment | Weak to strong | .18 – .83 |
| | Engagement | Weak to moderate | .19 – .49 |
| | Helping behavior | Weak to strong | .10 – .82 |
| Team | Performance, effectiveness | Moderate | .31 – .60 |
| | OCB | Weak to moderate | .13 – .64 |

Note. OCB = Organizational Citizenship Behavior; all correlations statistically significant ($p < .05$).

In summary, there are numerous recommendations for future research resulting from the gaps and limitations found in existing studies. Many of the recommendations pertain to limitations in research methodologies. Notable is the absence of extensive research with respect to servant leadership as a predictor of follower engagement and especially in industrial and manufacturing organizational contexts. Also notable is the absence of research that informs cultural characteristics as additional predictors of follower engagement.

Chapter Summary

This chapter described the state of the science with respect to servant leadership and cultural characteristics as predictors of follower engagement using evidence obtained from an extensive review of the literature. A thorough literature review process was undertaken to uncover peer-reviewed articles containing empirical studies that inform this topic. In summary, 31 empirical studies within peer-reviewed articles were uncovered and 30 of these studies used quantitative research methodologies. The studies stretched over 12 countries and 12 different organizational settings, industries, or business sectors. The variables uncovered in the studies from a follower, or individual contributor, perspective included employee satisfaction, commitment, engagement, and helping behavior. From a team perspective these variables included team performance or effectiveness and OCB. The studies also uncovered different perspectives on how various cultures across the globe view and endorse servant leadership characteristics. These studies were based on data from the GLOBE Research Program (House, 2004).

This chapter provided a methodological review of the studies. Again, all but one study utilized quantitative research methods. The paradigmatic frameworks for the 30 quantitative studies and the single qualitative study were postpositivist and constructivist, respectively. Eleven validated instruments were utilized in these studies to measure servant leadership whereas two variations of a single instrument were utilized to measure engagement.

Gaps and limitations in the studies were identified as part of this literature review process. These gaps were predominantly concentrated in the methodologies of the studies. A significant limitation was common method bias as much of the data in the

studies were gleaned from single sources. Existing research also resulted in concerns regarding leader self-reporting study designs. Furthermore, another limitation was the cross-sectional approach of many of the studies which created concerns over causal conclusions. Other gaps and limitations uncovered in the studies included sampling considerations, the lack of financial-based analyses, and the use of GLOBE research data to inform theoretical versus actual outcomes.

Additionally, this chapter provided future research opportunities based on the identified gaps and limitations. Numerous methodological opportunities were proposed including improved sampling practices. Additionally, study designs which include followers' direct experiences of their leaders in lieu of leader self-reporting mechanisms were proposed. Finally, future studies were recommended that would examine servant leadership and cultural characteristics as predictors of follower engagement. Such studies may allow organizations to better understand whether servant leadership practices indeed predict follower engagement. Examining cultural characteristics as additional predictors of follower engagement will assist multinational and multicultural organizations pursuing a servant leadership management model.

In summary, the studies uncovered in this literature review process provided evidence of the positive impact that servant leadership has on follower satisfaction, commitment, engagement, and helping behavior. In addition, servant leadership was also found to positively impact team performance or effectiveness and OCB. Noteworthy though is the absence of research on how cultural characteristics affect the relationship between servant leadership on follower engagement and other team-based outcome variables. Existing studies have typically been conducted within a single nation setting

missing the opportunity to understand the relationship between servant leadership and follower engagement across countries and cultures. Furthermore, limited research has been conducted on this topic in a manufacturing context and most studies have utilized self-reported data to measure levels of servant leadership. Accordingly then and as presented in Chapter 1, this study was designed to address these concerns with the existing studies by exploring the following research questions:

1. What is the effect of servant leadership on follower engagement in a multinational manufacturing firm?
2. How do the cultural characteristics of humane orientation, future orientation, societal in-group collectivism, and societal institutional collectivism affect the prediction of servant leadership on follower engagement?

Chapter 3: Research Design Methodology

General Perspective/Introduction

Distrust in today's corporate and political leaders, growing economic unrest, concerns for the environment including global climate change, and worldwide humanitarian issues have increased organizational interest in the servant leadership model. Servant leadership's basic tenets of serving, caring, and behaving ethically make it a leadership model that seems fitting for today's organizational challenges (Chiniara & Bentein, 2016). Additionally, organizations have recognized the importance of engaged employees in achieving business success. As such, organizations with an established servant leadership management model, or those transitioning to one, may benefit from examining servant leadership as a predictor of employee engagement. Furthermore, multinational and multicultural organizations may further benefit from examining cultural characteristics as additional predictors of employee engagement.

This study utilized a quantitative research design that examined servant leadership and cultural characteristics as predictors of follower engagement in a multinational manufacturing firm. Specifically, a hierarchical multiple regression correlation study was conducted to examine the relationship between these variables. A multiple regression correlation study is widely recognized as an acceptable approach to analyzing data from a variety of research designs including those attempting to understand the relationship between predictor variables and outcome variables (Grimm & Yarnold, 1995). In this

study, the predictor variables were servant leadership and cultural characteristics with follower engagement as the outcome variable. In a hierarchical multiple regression correlation study, predictor variables are entered cumulatively according to a predetermined specified hierarchy which is dictated in advance by the purpose of the research (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). The predictor variables can be ordered with regard to their logically determined priority. Because hierarchical multiple regression studies require the researcher to determine the order of entry of the predictor variables in the study, this methodology typically adds to the researcher's understanding of the topic being studied (Cohen, 2003).

Cultural characteristics, as developed and defined by the GLOBE Research Program (House, 2004), served as the other predictor variables within this hierarchical multiple regression correlation study. The GLOBE Research Program (House, 2004) empirically established nine cultural dimensions that inform the similarities or differences in norms, values, beliefs, and practices among 62 societies and cultures around the world. These cultural dimensions or characteristics, as defined in Chapter 1, are (a) power distance, (b) uncertainty avoidance, (c) humane orientation, (d) societal institutional collectivism, (e) societal in-group collectivism, (f) assertiveness, (g) gender egalitarianism, (h) future orientation, and (i) performance orientation. Four of these nine cultural characteristics were included in this study since these offered considerable variation between the nations that comprise the context of this study. Specifically, (a) humane orientation, (b) future orientation, (c) societal in-group collectivism, (d) and societal institutional collectivism were the cultural characteristics included in the study.

Research Context

This study, which examined servant leadership and cultural characteristics as predictors of follower engagement, was conducted at Garlock Sealing Technologies (Garlock). Founded in 1887, Garlock is a \$300 million industrial fluid sealing products manufacturer headquartered in Palmyra, NY and a member of the EnPro Industries (EnPro) family of companies. With over 1,800 employees, Garlock has 12 manufacturing, sales, and distribution centers operating in eight different countries. The study was conducted in countries where Garlock maintains manufacturing operations, namely, (a) Australia, (b) Canada, (c), China, (d) Germany, (e) Mexico, (f) Singapore, and (g) United States.

In 2010, Garlock embarked on a transition from a traditional, command-and-control management style to a servant leadership based model. Although Garlock's and EnPro's financial health had been relatively strong prior to this change in leadership style, in 2008, newly appointed EnPro president and CEO, Stephen Macadam, introduced his servant leadership vision believing that leadership style change was necessary regardless of the organization's financial health. His motivation was fueled by the desire to value employees as human beings and not as mere means to profitability. Macadam's goal was to bring EnPro's family of companies, including Garlock, from a position of financial strength to a position where the development of employees would be equally as important as favorable financial performance. Within this transition to a serving culture, members of management, as servant leaders, would be expected to support those

followers who perform the basic, value-added work in the organization. Accordingly, the typical organizational, pyramid-like structure was inverted to display followers at the top.

Macadam provided insight as to his motivation to transition EnPro and Garlock to servant led organizations:

[The] transition started when I came to EnPro so it is rooted more in my beliefs about people and leadership than a need to improve financial or business performance. I have a deeply held fundamental belief in the inherent value of all human beings and that people can achieve much higher levels of performance than they normally believe they themselves can. People generally grow up in our society forming ego protective limiting beliefs about themselves that are a product of our cultural conditioning. An essential way of unlocking this latent potential in people is through servant leadership. A servant leader dedicated to helping others succeed and creating the conditions for the full release of human possibility provides the context and organizational environment for people to move toward their natural state of creativity, imagination, learning, experimenting, and changing their own lives (and their close network of contacts/colleagues) for the better. This improves everyone's life experience and also allows a company to be more successful. (personal communication, December 8, 2015)

Throughout the transition to a servant leadership model, followers within Garlock have expressed feelings of increased engagement in their work. As a result of Garlock's movement to a serving culture and this transition's effect on follower engagement, a study to examine servant leadership as a predictor of follower engagement was deemed relevant and beneficial. Additionally, this relationship had not been researched in this

context and therefore considerable knowledge was gained from this study. Furthermore, data gathered from respondents employed at the seven international Garlock sites allowed for the examination of cultural characteristics as additional predictors of follower engagement.

Research Participants

The sample was drawn from the follower or individual contributor population at the Garlock manufacturing facilities located in (a) Australia, (b) Canada, (c) China, (d) Germany, (e) Mexico, (f) Singapore, and (g) United States. The sample consisted of followers from any functional area in the organization (i.e., Operations, Engineering, Human Resources, etc.). The Garlock facility in the United States employs the largest number of followers, followed by the facilities in Mexico and Germany. Table 3.1 provides a summary of the total number of followers employed at each of the Garlock manufacturing locations.

A power analysis with a minimum power value of 0.80 was performed to determine the number of survey responses required for statistical significance. This power value was chosen due to its widespread acceptance by researchers as a value that results in statistically significant studies (Huck, 2012). Based on this power analysis, a total of 115 responses, or a response rate of 16%, across the seven manufacturing sites was required and based on previous Garlock survey statistics, this response rate was deemed feasible.

Instruments Used in Data Collection

Creswell (2014) posits that a survey provides a quantitative description of trends of a population by studying a sample of the population and that the sample results are

used to generalize or draw inferences to the population. As such, two surveys—one measuring servant leadership and the second measuring engagement—were used in the study to generalize the sample to the population and to examine the relationship between the variables. Both surveys were administered simultaneously to the followers at the seven Garlock sites outlined in Table 3.1. Paper surveys, in lieu of electronic surveys, were administered since hourly rated employees have traditionally expressed a preference for such surveys.

Table 3.1

Number of Followers by Garlock Location

| Garlock Manufacturing Location | Number of Followers |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| Australia | 29 |
| Canada | 59 |
| China | 30 |
| Germany | 79 |
| Mexico | 136 |
| Singapore | 28 |
| United States | 475 |
| Total | 836 |

The first survey instrument was used to measure followers’ perceptions of their immediate supervisor’s servant leadership characteristics. The SL-7 instrument (Liden et al., 2015), a shortened version of the SL-28 (Liden et al., 2008), was developed to measure seven specific servant leadership characteristics, namely, (a) emotional healing,

(b) creating value for the community, (c) conceptual skills, (d) empowering, (e) helping subordinates grow and succeed, (f) putting subordinates first, and (g) behaving ethically. The SL-7 (Liden et al., 2015) is a seven question validated instrument with a seven level Likert scale and with inter-item reliability values ranging from 0.76 to 0.86 (van Dierendonck, 2011). It is a public domain survey available in languages necessary to satisfy the requirements of six of the seven Garlock sites where the survey was administered. Prior to launching the research campaign, the SL-7 (Liden et al., 2015) was translated to German to satisfy the language requirements of the seventh and final Garlock site located in Germany. Validated survey translation protocols (Bernard, 1995) were adhered to in this process which included a translation from English to German followed by a back translation from German to English. The objective was to ensure that the back translation was almost identical to the original survey (Bernard, 1995).

The second survey instrument was used to measure followers' engagement in their work. The Utrecht Work Engagement Scale, or UWES (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003), was developed to measure engagement by using three scales as defined in Chapter 1, namely, vigor, dedication, and absorption. The UWES 9 (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003), a shorter version of the original UWES 17 (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003), is a nine question validated survey with a seven level Likert scale and with inter-item reliability values ranging from 0.80 and 0.90 (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003). No formal measure of validity was provided in the literature for either the SL-7 or the UWES 9, although the authors of both surveys state that the instruments have face and content validity (Liden et al., 2015; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003).

Prior to administering, the two surveys were combined for participant convenience and to facilitate an improved response rate. The resultant survey contained three additional sections. Accordingly, a demographics section as well as a section guaranteeing participant anonymity were included. Finally, upon completing the quantitative section of the survey, respondents were asked to share verbatim comments on their general perceptions of servant leadership and engagement via an open-ended question. These qualitative responses were translated to English, where necessary, and were used to supplement the quantitative data gathered from the survey responses.

Procedures Used for Data Collection and Analysis

Upon approval by the Institutional Review Board at St. John Fisher College, the survey was administered in June of 2016. The survey data were entered into the IBM SPSS Version 22.0 system. This software was used to interpret the results of the hierarchical multiple regression analysis and to generate variable correlation and multiple regression analyses tables summarizing the relationships between predictor and outcome variables.

Respondent bias was minimized by having a Garlock employee, other than the researcher and other than respondents' supervisors, administer the surveys. Having an administrative assistant administer the survey, for example, minimized respondent bias since the administrator did not have supervisory influence on the respondents.

Researcher bias was minimized by using the two instrument survey that provided numerical, quantitative data. Such data results in minimal variation in interpretation.

Chapter Summary

The research methodology guided the examination of servant leadership and cultural characteristics as predictors of follower engagement in a multinational manufacturing company. As servant leadership gains in popularity (Chiniara & Bentein, 2016; Northouse, 2013) and as empirical studies have demonstrated the organizational benefits of engaged employees (Halbesleben & Wheeler, 2008), this study was deemed relevant and added to the body of knowledge with respect to the relationship between these variables. Furthermore, as companies expand globally and grow multiculturally, examining cultural characteristics as additional predictors of employee engagement can lead to organizational advancements. The results may be generalized to multinational companies that are pursuing a servant leader management model and are interested in the relationship between this serving approach and follower engagement within their organizations.

Finally, this study used a hierarchical multiple regression correlation methodology. Multiple regression correlation studies are widely recognized as acceptable approaches to analyzing data from a variety of research designs (Grimm & Yarnold, 1995). As a result, this methodology was deemed appropriate to study the relationship between the predictor variables of servant leadership and cultural characteristics and the outcome variable of follower engagement.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine servant leadership and cultural characteristics as predictors of follower engagement. As servant leadership continues to gain in popularity over the past 40 years (Chiniara & Bentein, 2016; Northouse, 2013) and as empirical research has demonstrated the organizational benefits of engaged employees (Halbesleben & Wheeler, 2008), this study aids in understanding the relationship between these two variables. Furthermore, this study also serves to benefit organizations that operate in global, multicultural environments by examining cultural characteristics as additional predictors of employee engagement.

Beyond this introduction, this chapter has three main sections. First, it presents the data analysis and findings of the study. The research questions of the study are then addressed and the chapter concludes with a summary of the results.

Data Analysis and Findings

This section provides a summary of respondents' demographics as well as survey response rates by Garlock country of location. Additionally, the hierarchical regression analysis is presented. Finally, the illustrative respondent quotes from the survey are summarized.

Demographics. Data were collected from a sample of 282 Garlock individual contributors or followers. The sample consisted of 65% male and 35% female. Salaried

employees comprised 71% of the total responses although this figure is somewhat inflated as all employees at the Garlock site in Germany were considered to be of salaried status regardless of their position, whereas at other sites some of those positions were classified as hourly. Responses from the United States site comprised 47% of the total responses followed by the Mexican site at 16%. The Garlock sites in China and Australia provided the lowest number of responses—both comprising 5% of the total. The highest percentage of responses, namely 32%, was generated from production or manufacturing employees across the seven Garlock sites followed by customer service employees and sales employees at 13% and 10%, respectively. Garlock employees in a marketing role provided the lowest percentage of responses at 1%. Six percent of the responses were generated from employees performing various other functions in the organization including maintenance and tool fabrication. Table 4.1 provides a summary of the sample demographics.

Survey response rates. The overall response rate was 34%. In all, 282 responses were received from a potential pool of 836 followers at the seven Garlock sites. The Singapore site experienced the highest response rate of 79% while the United States site experienced the lowest response rate of 28%. Nevertheless, the greatest number of responses, namely 133, were generated by the United States site which is also the site with the greatest number of followers. Table 4.2 provides a summary of the survey response rates by Garlock site.

Hierarchical regression analysis. Inferential statistics were used to draw conclusions from the sample tested. Creswell (2014) posits that a survey provides a

Table 4.1

Sample Demographics

| Variable | % |
|------------------------------|----|
| Gender | |
| Male | 65 |
| Female | 35 |
| Status | |
| Salaried | 71 |
| Hourly | 29 |
| Location | |
| United States | 47 |
| Mexico | 16 |
| Germany | 11 |
| Canada | 8 |
| Singapore | 8 |
| China | 5 |
| Australia | 5 |
| Functional Area | |
| Production/Manufacturing | 32 |
| Customer Service | 13 |
| Sales | 10 |
| Engineering | 9 |
| Finance/Accounting | 9 |
| Purchasing/Supply Chain | 5 |
| Logistics/Shipping/Receiving | 5 |
| Information Technology | 3 |
| Product Line Management | 3 |
| Quality | 2 |
| Human Resources | 2 |
| Marketing | 1 |
| Other | 6 |

Note. N = 282.

Table 4.2

Survey Response Rates

| Country | Number of Responses | Number of Followers | Response Rate (%) |
|--------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Singapore | 22 | 28 | 79 |
| China | 15 | 30 | 50 |
| Australia | 13 | 29 | 45 |
| Germany | 32 | 79 | 41 |
| Canada (French speaking) | 23 | 59 | 39 |
| Mexico | 44 | 136 | 32 |
| United States | 133 | 475 | 28 |
| Totals | 282 | 836 | 34 |

quantitative description of trends of a population by studying a sample of the population. The sample results are used to generalize or draw inferences to the population (Creswell, 2014). As such, IBM SPSS was used to analyze the data collected from the survey and to generate the results of the study. Once the data from the survey were entered into SPSS, the database was screened and cleaned by running frequencies to identify and correct any invalid entries. Additionally, the mean scores for predictor variable, servant leadership, and outcome variable, follower engagement, were calculated. Finally, follower engagement was screened for its distribution and found to have both skew and kurtosis to be within acceptable limits of a normal distribution.

Once the data were screened and cleaned, a hierarchical regression was conducted to examine servant leadership and cultural characteristics as predictors of follower

engagement. The regression was conducted in a two block format where the four cultural characteristics of humane orientation, future orientation, societal in-group collectivism, and societal institutional collectivism were entered in the first block. Servant leadership was entered in the second block with follower engagement as the outcome variable. The explanation for this sequence lies in the definition of a hierarchical regression where the predictor variables are entered into the model in steps rather than all at the same time. The order in which predictor variables are entered is rationally determined based on a particular theory, empirical evidence, or the unit of analysis. Because cultural characteristics occurred at the level of society, they were entered together. The servant leadership variables occurred at the level of the organization, thus they were entered together. Cultural characteristics were entered first as a way of controlling for their effect prior to considering servant leadership. Therefore, the analysis first accounted for variability that was attributed to the cultural characteristics and then tested if there was enough variability left that servant leadership could make a significant contribution to the prediction of follower engagement.

Prior to conducting the hierarchical regression, a correlation analysis was performed on the variables. This was done to verify that at least most of the predictor variables were correlated with the outcome variable and that no predictor variables were too highly correlated with one another. The results showed that there was statistical significance between employee engagement and two of the cultural characteristics, namely, societal in-group collectivism and societal institutional collectivism. The results also indicated that employee engagement correlated with servant leadership. These findings provided validation to proceed with the hierarchical regression. Additionally,

although there were significant correlations among some of the predictor variables, only three of the 10 bivariate correlations were significant at low to moderate levels of magnitude. This indicated that the predictor variables were measuring sufficiently divergent constructs and, again, provided validation to proceed with the hierarchical regression. Cronbach's α coefficients for the employee engagement and servant leadership scales were found to be .94 and .87, respectively, indicating high levels of internal consistency. The correlations of the variables are summarized in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3

Correlations of the Variables in the Analysis

| Variable | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
|--|--------|--------|------|-------|-----|---|
| 1. Employee Engagement | | | | | | |
| 2. Humane Orientation | -.01 | | | | | |
| 3. Future Orientation | .06 | -.18** | | | | |
| 4. Societal In-group Collectivism | .17** | -.08 | -.03 | | | |
| 5. Societal Institutional Collectivism | -.17** | .30** | .10 | .56** | | |
| 6. Servant Leadership | .50** | .07 | -.01 | .12 | .02 | |

Note. N = 282. ** $p < .01$.

The results of the hierarchical regression analysis indicated that the cultural characteristics of humane orientation, future orientation, societal in-group collectivism, and societal institutional collectivism were significant predictors of follower engagement. Accordingly, these cultural characteristics accounted for 18% of the variance. Servant

leadership, also found to be statistically significant in predicting follower engagement, accounted for an additional 20% of the variance. Combined, these five predictor variables accounted for a total of 38% of the variance. In summary, the results indicate that the regression equation was statistically significant for predicting follower engagement and accounted for 38% of the variance. Both blocks of the regression significantly contributed to the prediction, however, servant leadership significantly predicted more of the variance over and above cultural characteristics. Table 4.4 provides the summary of the hierarchical regression.

Survey illustrative quotes. The survey included the following open-ended question for the purpose of gleaning illustrative quotes from respondents regarding their experience with servant leadership and engagement. This section will summarize the respondent quotes to this question.

Leadership at Garlock attempts to share power, to put the needs of others first, and to help others perform at high levels. The goal is to have employees who are enthusiastic and absorbed in their work. How well do these ideas match your experience at Garlock? Give some examples of how these ideas match or do not match your experience at Garlock.

There were a total of 124 illustrative respondent quotes from all seven Garlock sites. Some respondents expressed satisfaction and enjoyment in their experience with servant leadership. Others shared mixed or neutral feelings characterized by a combination of positive and negative attitudes. Finally, others expressed a negative experience. Consequently, the responses fell into three thematic areas:

Table 4.4

Multiple Regression Analyses of Employee Engagement Predicted by Humane Orientation, Future Orientation, Societal In-group Collectivism, Societal Institutional Collectivism, and Servant Leadership

| Predictors | Employee Engagement ^a | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|------|---------|----------|----------------|--------------|
| | B | SE | β | t | R ² | ΔR^2 |
| Block 1 | | | | | 0.18*** | 0.18*** |
| Humane Orientation | 0.39 | 0.13 | 0.19 | 3.04** | | |
| Future Orientation | 0.46 | 0.16 | 0.17 | 2.90** | | |
| Societal In-group Collectivism | 0.65 | 0.10 | 0.48 | 6.67*** | | |
| Societal Institutional Collectivism | -1.30 | 0.19 | -0.50 | -6.74*** | | |
| Block 2 | | | | | 0.38*** | 0.20*** |
| Humane Orientation | 0.29 | 0.11 | 0.14 | 2.60* | | |
| Future Orientation | 0.41 | 0.14 | 0.15 | 2.98** | | |
| Societal In-group Collectivism | 0.53 | 0.09 | 0.40 | 6.20*** | | |
| Societal Institutional Collectivism | -1.13 | 0.17 | -0.44 | -6.67*** | | |
| Servant Leadership | 0.47 | 0.05 | 0.45 | 8.97*** | | |

Note. SE = Standard Error. ^aF(5, 258) = 30.94, $p < .001$. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

1. Illustrations of the perceived benefits and value of servant leadership at Garlock.
2. Illustrations of neutral attitudes toward servant leadership at Garlock.
3. Illustrations of negative attitudes toward servant leadership at Garlock.

Illustrations of the perceived benefits and value of servant leadership at

Garlock. Follower perceived benefits and value of servant leadership included feelings

of being empowered, having a voice, growing, and succeeding. As a result, these illustrative quotes reflected a sense that employees are valued at Garlock and that the company is interested in their personal development. For example, one respondent expressed satisfaction from being inspired and having a voice in business matters.

People here are inspired to do well and to help others do well. This is an amazing culture that I am thrilled to be a part of. I know that I will be heard and my input is valued. I also feel that my future here is believed in—everyone is willing to teach. (Salaried employee, United States)

Additionally, being empowered to make decisions and encouraged to work as a team resulted in a positive experience by a respondent.

I especially value the support that I receive from my supervisor and immediate boss who allows me to make decisions in my work area freely and responsibly. Garlock always promotes teamwork and takes the opinions of all its employees into consideration in order to improve the work performed in the department. (Salaried employee, Mexico)

A respondent experienced freedom to perform the work while being able to secure direction when needed. “My superior gives me the freedom in my work while guiding me through when difficult situations arise” (Salaried employee, Singapore).

Finally, Garlock’s emphasis on the personal development of its employees was cited by respondents.

Garlock allows [for] personal development. The personal development is part of the concern of my supervisor and I feel it regularly. My goal is to do my job well

every day and giving the best of myself to my satisfaction. I have the support from my supervisor and I trust management. (Salaried employee, Canada)

Since joining the [team], [managers] have fully supported my personal development. I was allowed to learn a skill that was not part of my job title. From this I believe “we” as a team have accomplished the idea of the Dual Bottom Line [Garlock’s belief that employee development is equally important as company financial performance]. I was allowed to develop myself, all while the business unit benefitted from my learning. (Salaried employee, United States)

Illustrations of negative attitudes toward servant leadership at Garlock.

Negative attitudes toward servant leadership at Garlock were also found within the illustrative quotes. These included experiences of micro-management, favoritism, and the lack of priority for the needs of followers. Accordingly, one respondent expressed displeasure in being micro-managed.

[My] manager is too involved in day-to-day [activities]. He takes over when ... moderately difficult issues come up rather than relying on his team. He doesn’t give challenging work so it’s difficult to get absorbed in what you are doing. He is kind and caring but always seems stressed out, which trickles down. (Salaried employee, United States)

Concerns that managers are overly focused on their own career advancement and less on the needs of followers were expressed by a respondent.

Staff at the management level is eager to push their career. The price is paid by their employees in the form of knowledge and health. There is a big discrepancy

between the compan[y's] politics and the daily reality ... of the employees.

(Salaried employee, Germany)

Additionally, concerns over favoritism, negative attitudes, and poor work ethic were also shared.

I like working. I like to do a good job and take pleasure in giving my all to a company that cares about its employees. But [I] find it difficult to do that here in Garlock because the supervisor ... seems to show favor[itism] to individuals that want to have bad attitudes or poor work ethic. [This] is very discouraging and hurts the work that is needed to be done. (Hourly employee, United States)

Summary of illustrative respondent quotes. Chapter 1 provides a modern and descriptive view of servant leader dimensions which include (a) conceptual skills, (b) empowering, (c) helping subordinates grow and succeed, (d) putting subordinates first, (e) behaving ethically, (f) emotional healing, and (g) creating value for the community (Liden et al., 2008). Accordingly, the dimensions of empowering, helping subordinates grow and succeed, putting subordinates first, and allowing employees to have a voice were themes that surfaced within the respondent quotes of employees who perceived benefits and value of servant leadership. Not surprising then is the absence of these contemporary dimensions within the respondent quotes illustrating *negative* attitudes toward servant leadership at Garlock. In contrast, these quotes provided thematic elements of micro-management, favoritism, insufficient support for improvement ideas, and lack of focus on the needs of followers.

The illustrative respondent quotes provide support for the quantitative results of this study which indicate that followers are more engaged in their work when they report

to serving leaders. Accordingly, quotes reflecting respondents' perceived benefits and value of servant leadership at Garlock comprised the largest categorical group whereas respondent quotes illustrating negative attitudes toward servant leadership comprised the smallest categorical group. This is an indication that servant leadership is not a panacea for all business challenges at Garlock yet it has created a culture that is inclusive of the servant leadership dimensions of empowering, helping subordinates grow and succeed, and putting subordinates first (Liden et al., 2008). More importantly, while some respondents shared criticisms of their experiences as employees, the present data do not allow for drawing direct conclusions whether those criticisms reflect on servant leadership. Possibly the criticisms are in relation to other aspects of their work environment or that their supervisors are not effectively implementing the servant leadership model. Further training and support for supervisors and managers may be needed, for example, to ensure that they possess the attitudes and behavioral competencies necessary to implement servant leadership. Definitive recommendations will require further investigation into the nature of these criticisms.

Research Questions

The study was organized around the following research questions:

1. What is the effect of servant leadership on follower engagement in a multinational manufacturing firm?
2. How do the cultural characteristics of humane orientation, future orientation, societal in-group collectivism, and societal institutional collectivism affect the prediction of servant leadership on follower engagement?

Research question 1. What is the effect of servant leadership on follower engagement in a multinational manufacturing firm? Servant leadership was entered in the second block of the hierarchical regression as a predictor variable and employee engagement was identified as the outcome variable. The results of the study indicate that the hierarchical regression equation was statistically significant for predicting employee engagement and accounted for 38% of the variance. Servant leadership significantly contributed to the prediction that followers reporting to servant leaders are more engaged in their work.

Research question 2. How do the cultural characteristics of humane orientation, future orientation, societal in-group collectivism, and societal institutional collectivism affect the prediction of servant leadership on follower engagement? These four cultural characteristics were entered in the first block of the hierarchical regression as predictor variables and employee engagement was identified as the outcome variable. The results of the study indicate that these cultural characteristics significantly contributed to the prediction. Specifically, these cultural characteristics accounted for 18% of the variance.

Summary of Results

This chapter reported the findings of the study that examined servant leadership and cultural characteristics as predictors of follower engagement. Accordingly, the first research question asked for the effect of servant leadership on follower engagement in a multinational manufacturing firm. This relationship was tested using a hierarchical regression analysis. The results of the analysis demonstrated that the hierarchical regression equation was statistically significant for predicting employee engagement and

accounted for 38% of the variance. Servant leadership significantly contributed to the prediction that followers with servant leaders are more engaged in their work.

The second research question asked whether the cultural characteristics of humane orientation, future orientation, societal in-group collectivism, and societal institutional collectivism affected the prediction of servant leadership on follower engagement. This relationship was also tested using a hierarchical regression analysis. The results of the study demonstrate that these cultural characteristics significantly contributed to the prediction. Specifically, these cultural characteristics accounted for 18% of the variance. Nevertheless, servant leadership significantly predicted more of the variance over and above these cultural characteristics

This chapter also provided a summary of illustrative quotes from survey respondents on the topics of servant leadership and employee engagement. When taking into consideration the results of the statistical analysis of this study as well as these illustrative quotes, there were three main themes that emerged from this study. First, a servant leadership management model resulted in engaged followers. Second, servant leadership is a management model that when applied in various cultures around the globe, predicted follower engagement over and above the cultural characteristics of those geographic areas. Finally, servant leaderships resulted in positive reactions in followers. These included having one's input valued, being involved in a learning environment, being empowered to make decisions, feeling supported in one's work, and experiencing leadership support for one's personal development.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Introduction

The study examined servant leadership and cultural characteristics as predictors of follower engagement. The results of the hierarchical linear regression indicate that the specific cultural characteristics of humane orientation, future orientation, societal in-group collectivism, and societal institutional collectivism significantly contributed to the prediction of follower engagement. However, servant leadership significantly predicted more of the variance over and above these cultural characteristics.

This chapter discusses the findings of the study as relating to the research questions:

1. What is the effect of servant leadership on follower engagement in a multinational manufacturing firm?
2. How do the cultural characteristics of humane orientation, future orientation, societal in-group collectivism, and societal institutional collectivism affect the prediction of servant leadership on follower engagement?

Beyond this introduction section, this chapter includes the major headings of (a) implications of findings, (b) recommendations, (c) strengths and limitations, and (d) conclusion.

Implications of Findings

Based on the study's findings, this section presents the implications as pertaining to (a) servant leadership and engagement in multi-national organizations, (b) servant leadership dimensions impacting engagement, and (c) servant leadership's impact on followers beyond engagement.

Servant leadership and engagement in multi-national organizations. The results of this study demonstrate a positive relationship between servant leadership and follower engagement thus indicating that servant leadership is a leadership model that supports positive employee engagement. Understanding what influences employee engagement, such as servant leadership, is beneficial as disengaged employees have a meaningful cost to organizations. Gallup, for example, has estimated that disengaged employees cost United States companies in excess of \$250 billion annually (Rath & Conchie, 2008). Furthermore, the issue of disengaged employees is not limited to the United States and is in fact a worldwide problem (Attridge, 2009). This low rate of engagement "represents a global crisis in productivity and worker well-being" (Attridge, 2009, p. 384). Additionally, Gallup studies provide evidence linking employee engagement to organizational results. The findings from these studies "showed that having a work environment that promoted positive employee engagement was consistently associated with beneficial outcomes, including reduced employee turnover, customer satisfaction, employee productivity, and company profit" (Attridge, 2009, p. 389). Other benefits resulting from employee engagement included improved organizational culture, increased employee loyalty, and improved revenue levels (Attridge, 2009). The findings of this study are consistent with those of past studies, as

described in Chapter 2, which demonstrated servant leadership as having a positive impact on employee engagement.

Furthermore, the results of the study demonstrate that servant leadership predicted more of the variance of follower engagement than did cultural characteristics. This supports servant leadership as a model by which leaders in multinational and multicultural firms can positively influence follower engagement within their global sites. As such, this is relevant in light of servant leadership's recent rise in popularity (Chiniara & Bentein, 2016; Northouse, 2013). Accordingly, distrust of today's corporate and political leaders, global economic unrest, concerns for the environment and especially climate change, and worldwide humanitarian issues have increased interest in the servant leadership model. Servant leadership's basic tenets of serving, caring, and behaving ethically make it a leadership model that seems fitting for today's organizational challenges. Furthermore, as companies expand globally, they should expect that their managers' servant leadership practices are stronger predictors of follower engagement than the cultural characteristics of the countries in which they operate. Indeed, servant leadership transcends beyond cultural differences. As such, this study proposes that multinational organizations who employ a servant leadership management model can expect cultural differences to play less of a role in follower engagement.

Servant leadership dimensions impacting engagement. In a general sense, multinational corporations should expect their employees to be more engaged in their work when operating within a servant leadership culture that includes such dimensions as conceptual skills, empowering, helping subordinates grow and succeed, putting subordinates first, behaving ethically, emotional healing, and creating value for the

community (Liden et al., 2008). For example, servant leaders possess conceptual skills in the form of organizational knowledge that allows them to effectively support and assist followers (Liden et al., 2008). They are aggressive in removing obstacles that hinder progress and they coach followers in strategies to address future roadblocks on their own.

Servant leaders empower followers to improve their workplace by identifying and solving problems (Liden et al., 2008). Empowering followers to make decisions that impact the future of their business is a foundational characteristic of a servant leader. Servant leaders encourage followers to vet new ideas, experiment, and take calculated risks. Implementing new concepts that may not necessarily provide the exact desired results still translates to progress for servant leaders. Ultimately, empowerment results in employees solving problems to make their organizations more competitive. This is especially beneficial to multinational organizations attempting to compete at the global level.

Servant leaders help followers grow and succeed. They demonstrate genuine concern for others' career development and growth by providing support and mentoring (Liden et al., 2008). For example, within Garlock's dual bottom line culture, employee development is equally important as sound financial performance. This is somewhat unique within a manufacturing company since such organizations are often characterized as having traditional, hierarchical management structures. Companies that employ this top-down approach to management typically make employee development a lower priority. In contrast, servant leaders emphasize the importance of their followers' training and development needs.

Servant leaders, via actions and words, place the needs of their followers ahead of their own (Liden et al., 2008). Accordingly, employees at Garlock are encouraged to pursue their full release of human possibility or, in more simple terms, to find one's purpose in life through work. Servant leaders at Garlock attempt to make this concept a reality. For example, an employee who performed factory floor manufacturing duties expressed a passion for recycling, being environmentally green, and reducing his carbon footprint. As such, his home and farm site included a wind turbine, solar panels, and a geothermal heating and cooling system. As result of his interest in this area, he was encouraged by his supervisor to join the Energy Team at Garlock where he became a consistently strong contributor. His involvement with this team motivated him to participate in other continuous improvement team initiatives. In the spirit of servant leadership, his interests and desires were placed ahead of those of his supervisor.

Servant leaders practice ethical behaviors (Liden et al., 2008). By behaving ethically, servant leaders pursue openness, fairness, and honesty in their interactions with followers. Leaders who behave ethically create a serving environment and a moral culture within organizations.

Servant leaders provide emotional healing by showing sensitivity to followers' personal concerns (Liden et al., 2008). They recognize that their followers are humans before they are employees. Similar to the human hierarchy of needs as theorized by Maslow, employees have basic needs to be met by the organization. These include fair wages, a safe work environment, and a voice in business matters. Servant leaders realize that these follower needs are a priority and must be met. Furthermore, they recognize

that followers have difficulty in engaging in workplace improvement initiatives when their basic needs are not fulfilled.

Servant leaders respect the communities surrounding their organization (Liden et al., 2008). They recognize that their organization coexists in partnership with community members. Servant leaders strive to be good neighbors to the local community by treating their employees as community members with respect, by supporting community events, and by being environmentally friendly. They encourage their followers to become involved in community initiatives such as removing litter from neighborhood roads, mentoring in local schools, and hosting career informational sessions for community job searchers. Servant leaders recognize that follower involvement in these community events fosters follower involvement in the workplace.

Servant leadership's impact on followers beyond engagement. The illustrative quotes from the study's survey respondents on the topics of servant leadership and employee engagement were insightful. Quotes which expressed perceived benefits and value of servant leadership comprised the largest categorical group within the responses. In contrast, quotes which communicated negative attitudes towards servant leadership comprised the smallest categorical group. As such, these illustrative respondent quotes provided support for the quantitative results of this study which indicate that followers are more engaged in their work when they report to serving leaders. Yet these illustrative quotes provided additional insight as to the influence of servant leadership on organizations. Beyond follower engagement, this qualitative data informed that servant leadership created a culture of empowering followers, helping subordinates grow and succeed, and providing followers the opportunity to have a voice in organizational

matters. Followers expressed appreciation for servant leaders who empowered them to freely and responsibly make decisions concerning their work. Additionally, they shared satisfaction that their growth and personal development were a priority for their supervisor. Finally, followers felt that their servant leaders provided them a voice in business matters and that their opinions were being taken into consideration. Followers acknowledged that they were being heard and that their input was valued.

In summary, servant leadership is a leadership model that can be employed by different industries or business sectors operating in different cultures and regions of the world to have a positive influence on follower engagement. Because engagement has been demonstrated to have a positive impact on individuals and organizations, the adoption of a servant leadership model will posture organizations for success. This is a significant implication and one that organizations should acknowledge as they grow multinationally and multiculturally and as they strive to compete globally.

Recommendations

Based on this study's findings, this section provides substantive and methodological recommendations and concludes with recommendations for practice.

Substantive recommendations. There are six substantive recommendations related to the continued study of servant leadership. First and to address a gap in existing studies, research should be expanded to industries and business sectors beyond manufacturing. Future research should be conducted in technology, sales, not-for-profit, and financial organizational settings since there is scant research in these areas as described in Chapter 2. Accordingly, servant leadership is not a model that is exclusive to any organizational setting. In fact, upon review of the dimensions of servant

leadership (Liden et al., 2008), it becomes clear that the model can be applied across numerous organizational settings. As such, leaders within these other industries or business sectors are to benefit from further research on this topic. Second, future studies should be conducted across a wider range of organizational levels as this study focused exclusively on followers, or those at the working level, within the organization. A review of organizational structures informs that individual contributors, or followers, are not the only employees who report to a supervisor. Supervisors report to managers who in turn report to directors and so on. As such, understanding if reporting to a servant leader predicts follower engagement at all levels of the organization should provide a more comprehensive view of servant leadership's influence across the entire organization. Third, future studies should shift focus from followers in an organization to the organization itself. Accordingly, these studies should examine servant leadership's relationship with organizational measures such as productivity, efficiency, and profit. In more simple terms, future studies could inform whether servant leadership impacts the bottom line of companies as well as other key organizational measures.

Fourth, studies should be more evenly distributed across the globe. Although servant leadership is considered a universal management model, a preponderance of studies, as described in Chapter 2, have been conducted in the United States and China. Furthermore, leadership problems are not exclusive to United States or Chinese organizations. Therefore, future studies that are better distributed across the globe should provide worldwide leaders more comprehensive and regionally focused understandings of the relationship between servant leadership and follower engagement.

Fifth, future studies within multinational organizations should focus on servant leadership's influence on follower outcome variables beyond engagement such as satisfaction, commitment, performance, and retention. Engagement should not be the only focus of leaders interested in the development and growth of their employees. For example, employees who experience satisfaction and commitment contribute to organizational success. Furthermore, understanding the influence of servant leadership on employee performance and retention can also provide organizations with a competitive advantage. Nevertheless, this study focused exclusively on engagement as the follower outcome. A strongly recommended successor to this study then is to examine servant leadership's relationship with other important follower outcomes that can contribute to organizational success.

Sixth and most importantly from a substantive perspective, future studies should inform whether there is a reciprocal impact on supervisors who practice servant leadership. Recall that this study demonstrated that followers are more engaged in their work when reporting to servant leaders. In contrast, this recommendation is to study whether supervisors who practice servant-based leadership report higher levels of personal engagement. Accordingly, this recommendation results in a different research question for future studies: Do supervisors who practice servant leadership report higher levels of their own engagement among those whom they supervise than do supervisors who practice other forms of leadership?

Methodological recommendations. In addition to these substantive recommendations, future research should also attend to two methodological issues. First, future studies should utilize different servant leadership and follower engagement

instruments for comparison purposes. The results of those studies should be compared to those of this study to understand whether they are instrument dependent. Additionally, the full, or longer versions, of both the SL-7 and UWES 9 instruments should be used, again, to understand whether the results are instrument dependent. Although reliable and valid, the shorter versions of the instruments may not have garnered as much insight into the nuances of servant leadership and follower engagement as the full versions of these measures.

Second, qualitative methodologies should be utilized in future studies on this topic. A preponderance of studies, as described in Chapter 2, have utilized quantitative methods. Conversely, qualitative studies could inform lived experiences of servant leadership. Additionally, trends and themes resulting from these lived experiences could be gleaned via these qualitative methods. Comparing quantitative and qualitative study results would be informative. The resulting data could be analyzed and compared to inform whether the data supports or contradicts the other. Finally, qualitative studies, as a result of their less structured approach, could provide more detail and insight to the challenges faced by both leaders and followers within a servant leadership environment. These studies should provide an opportunity to gather rich information that may not surface via more structured and rigid quantitative methodologies.

Finally, future studies should avoid leader self-reporting mechanisms and instead focus on followers' perceptions of their leaders as this study did. The data that informed this study was based on observable data, namely, followers' direct experiences of leaders rather than on leaders' perceptions of their own leadership. Future studies that follow

this research design will result in more accurate measures of employee perceptions of servant leadership and engagement.

Recommendations for practice. The findings of this study have resulted in the recommendations for practice. First, the adoption of a servant leadership model will have a positive influence on social justice. Servant leadership practices within organizations will have a favorable impact on employees as well as communities. Within a serving organizational culture, employees can expect fair wages for their services. They will be empowered to make decisions that impact their workplace. Their voices will be heard and their ideas vetted. Furthermore, training and development of employees will be a priority for the organization's servant leaders who will express sincere concern for employee needs. In summary, servant leaders recognize that their followers are employees as well as community members and they understand that the fair and respectful treatment of employees will have a positive impact on social justice.

A second recommendation for practice outlines the steps that organizations should take in pursuing a servant leadership management model. The first step is based on leadership and involves establishing and communicating a clear vision and direction (Blanchard, 2015). Members of the organization need to understand the vision and goals since through this understanding, they have an opportunity to be a part of the process to achieve the vision. The second step refers to the servant component of the model which is that leaders must recognize that they work for their direct reports. Therefore, their challenge and obligation is to help direct reports to live according to the vision and to pursue organizational goals (Blanchard, 2015). The final step in this transition to a serving organization is to pursue the seven dimensions or basic building blocks of servant

leadership to improve employee engagement. Accordingly, the organization's leaders should practice conceptual skills, empower, help subordinates grow and succeed, put subordinates first, behave ethically, provide emotional healing, and create value for the community (Liden et al., 2008). As provided in Chapter 3, these steps are consistent with those undertaken by Stephen Macadam, president and CEO of Garlock's parent company, EnPro Industries. First, Macadam shared his beliefs in the inherent value of all human beings and in doing so established a very specific vision. He was clear in his expectation that leaders lead by serving. Second, upon communicating this vision, he challenged all managers to unlock the latent potential in employees through servant leadership. His expectation was that leaders are dedicated to helping others succeed and to creating the conditions for the full release of human possibility. As such, tenets of Blanchard's (2015) theory can be witnessed in practice at Garlock.

Finally, adopting a servant leadership model is a recommended leadership practice for organizations around the world. Leaders across the globe stand to benefit from practicing servant leadership in their organizations. This study has added to the body of knowledge informing servant leadership's influence on employee engagement. As such, servant leadership is a leadership model that can be applied to different industries or business sectors operating in different cultures and regions of the world to have a positive influence on follower engagement. Because engagement has been demonstrated to have a positive impact on individuals and organizations, the adoption of a servant leadership model will posture organizations for success. This is significant finding and one that organizations should recognize as they grow multinationally and multiculturally and as they strive to prosper at a global level.

Strengths and Limitations

There were strengths and limitations of this study. A notable strength was its international context. The study was conducted at Garlock sites in seven countries across four continents. This multinational sample provided considerable depth to the data. It also increased the external validity of the study and the ability to generalize the findings to multiple geographic settings. Additionally, the multinational context of the study facilitated the examination of servant leadership across cultures. Furthermore, within the hierarchical regression, the effects of cultural characteristics were considered separate from the effects of servant leadership. This provided a more nuanced understanding of the distinctive roles each set of variables played in predicting follower engagement.

The manufacturing setting of this study comprised another strength. By contrast, a preponderance of studies on this topic, as described in Chapter 2, were conducted in the areas of education, public service, and food service. Therefore, this study extended the body of literature with respect to servant leadership within the manufacturing business sector.

The data that informed this study was based on observable data. The study generated follower or rater reported data on servant leadership and engagement which is in contrast to the multitude of studies, as described in Chapter 2, that typically used leader self-reported data. This study based on followers' direct experiences of leaders rather than on leaders' perceptions of their own leadership, resulted in a more accurate measure of employee perceptions of servant leadership and engagement.

This study included qualitative respondent perceptions of servant leadership and employee engagement which were gathered via the responses to the open-ended question

of the survey. These illustrative respondent quotes provided support for the quantitative results of this study which indicated that followers are more engaged in their work when reporting to servant leaders. This open-ended question, in the spirit of qualitative research, provided the respondents the opportunity to express feelings and opinions that may have otherwise been restricted due to the more structured, quantitative nature of the study.

As with any study, there were limitations to this one. First, the study used brief or shortened measures for servant leadership and employee engagement. Although these instruments are reliable and valid, they may not have garnered as much insight into the nuances of cultural differences as the full versions of the measures. Accordingly, a study utilizing the longer versions of both instruments would remedy this limitation.

Additionally, the surveys were administered at a time when Garlock was experiencing unfavorable global financial performance resulting from soft markets and weak sales. As such, the resulting atmosphere of employee concern across all Garlock sites may have created respondent bias. Conducting the study during a time period of more stable business conditions and financial performance would address this limitation.

Conclusion

This study examined servant leadership and cultural characteristics as predictors of follower engagement. The results indicated that cultural characteristics significantly contributed to the prediction. However, servant leadership significantly predicted more of the variance over and above cultural characteristics. The major implication to draw from these results was that while there were cultural differences impacting employee engagement, servant leadership played a greater role. This supports the importance of

servant leadership and demonstrates that implementation of a servant leadership model can promote increased employee engagement across different industries and business sectors as well as across cultures and global regions.

This study resulted in recommendations for practice. Organizations are encouraged to pursue a servant leadership model to positively impact social justice. Servant leaders' fair and respectful treatment of employees as community members will have a positive impact on surrounding communities thus ultimately promoting social justice. Additionally, basic steps are recommended for organizations planning to pursue a servant leadership model. The most important step being the establishment and communication of a clear servant leadership vision. Finally, a recommended leadership practice is for world-wide organizations to embrace servant leadership in an effort to engage employees and pursue organizational success.

There were strengths and limitations of this study. The multinational sample provided considerable depth to the data and the international context of the study allowed for the examination of servant leadership across cultures. The methodological imitations of the study were related to alternative versions of the survey instruments and the timing of the study.

In summary, the results of this study were consistent with previous studies that demonstrated a positive relationship between servant leadership and employee engagement (Carter & Baghurst, 2014; De Clercq et al., 2014; de Sousa & van Dierendonck, 2014; van Dierendonck et al., 2014). This is significant since studies have proposed the positive impact of employee engagement on organizations. Nevertheless, this study added to the body of knowledge by introducing cultural characteristics as an

additional predictor of employee engagement. Although cultural characteristics served as predictors of employee engagement, servant leadership played a greater role in predicting whether employees were more engaged in their work. This was a notable outcome of the study and relevant in light of global expansion being undertaken by countless organizations. Indeed, as companies expand their global footprint and establish presence in other parts of the world, it behooves them to acknowledge that the culture surrounding their new operations can predict employee engagement. Of particular importance though, is recognizing that beyond these cultural influences, practicing a servant leadership management model can have an even greater influence on employee engagement. This is an important finding of the study and one that organizations should acknowledge as they encounter different regions and cultures while expanding their global presence.

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Appendix

Servant Leadership and Follower Engagement Survey

Your participation in a short survey will be greatly appreciated. As Garlock continues to pursue a Dual Bottom Line culture, understanding if we are making progress toward a servant leadership management style is important. Also, whether our transformation has had an effect on your work engagement is equally important. This survey contains 16 questions and should take you approximately five minutes to complete. Please do not write your name anywhere on the survey to ensure that your responses will be anonymous and confidential. You may skip any questions you don't want to answer or stop the survey at any time. A summary of the responses can be obtained upon conclusion of the study by contacting the researcher.

| <i>In the following seven questions, think of your immediate supervisor, manager, or team leader; that is, the person to whom you report directly. Please select your response from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree and enter a check mark in corresponding space to the right of each question.</i> | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Slightly Disagree | Neutral | Slightly Agree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|--|-------------------|----------|-------------------|---------|----------------|-------|----------------|
| My manager can tell if something work-related is going wrong. | | | | | | | |
| My manager makes my career development a priority. | | | | | | | |
| I would seek help from my manager if I had a personal problem. | | | | | | | |
| My manager emphasizes the importance of giving back to the community. | | | | | | | |
| My manager puts my best interests ahead of his/her own. | | | | | | | |
| My manager gives me the freedom to handle difficult situations in the way that I feel is best. | | | | | | | |
| My manager would not compromise ethical principles in order to achieve success. | | | | | | | |

| <i>The following nine statements are about how you feel at work. Please read each statement carefully and decide if you ever feel this way about your job. If you have never had this feeling, check the "Never" box to the right statement. If you have had this feeling, indicate how often you feel it by checking the box to the right of the statement that best describes how frequently you feel that way.</i> | Never | Almost never (a few times a year or less) | Rarely (once a month or less) | Sometimes (a few times a month or less) | Often (once a week) | Very often (a few times a week) | Always (every day) |
|---|-------|---|-------------------------------|---|---------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------|
| At my work, I feel bursting with energy. | | | | | | | |
| At my job, I feel strong and vigorous. | | | | | | | |
| I am enthusiastic about my job. | | | | | | | |
| My job inspires me. | | | | | | | |
| When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work. | | | | | | | |
| I feel happy when I am working intensely. | | | | | | | |
| I am proud of the work that I do. | | | | | | | |
| I am immersed in my work. | | | | | | | |
| I get carried away when I'm working | | | | | | | |