

**Viterbo University
Master of Arts
in
Servant Leadership
Colloquium Research Abstracts**

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**Servant Leadership. A Pain in the Altruism
by Teresa Erickson**

The colloquium paper titled, "Servant Leadership. A Pain in the Altruism", was conceived to answer the question: Why does a servant make the conscious choice to lead when they recognize that making the choice will likely include personal persecution, pain,

suffering, and/or hardship? The assertion proposed was that servant leaders are self-sacrificing altruists. Also hypothesized was that as a result of making the altruistic choice to lead, while facing personal sacrifice or pain, the servant leader would become more genuinely altruistic and create noteworthy impacts on those being served.

The research method for this project employed interviews with five persons who served in altruistic leadership roles for which self-sacrifice was anticipated. The outcomes appear to support the assertions made. Furthermore results exhibited not only the enhancement of altruistic characteristics but also growth in the ten servant leadership characteristics commonly referred to by the Greenleaf Foundation. The implications of this study suggest if the servant will step up to practice leadership in altruistic acts, regardless of the personal costs, those persons will cultivate a more genuine altruistic nature. This will lead to a ripple effect of more altruistic acts being done and ultimately make the world a better place.

Exploring the Relationship between Characteristics of Servant Leadership and Elements of Interpersonal Forgiveness

by Laurie Finn

The relationship between characteristics of servant leadership and elements of interpersonal forgiveness was explored through a review of the literature and interviews of ordained clergy. Research identified healing as a characteristic of servant leadership. While research showed that forgiveness is essential to the healing process, there was little consensus about whether repentance, restitution, and reconciliation are essential elements of forgiveness. Four ordained Protestant clergy from eastern Iowa were interviewed regarding their understanding of servant leadership, their conceptualization of the healing process, and their interpretation of elements of healing. The study focused on clergy as servant leaders because they engage in healing ministry, walking with others on their forgiveness journeys. Interviewed clergy identified reconciliation as an essential element of forgiveness. Interview responses indicated that clergy have a solid understanding of servant leadership and they share an interpretation of the healing process as including relational healing and a move toward experiencing wholeness. The clergy agreed that “letting go,” identified by them as an element of forgiveness, is essential to healing. The responses

affirm the relationship between characteristics of servant leadership and elements of interpersonal forgiveness.

Does Servant Leadership Have Bounce: Is There a Relationship between Resilience and Servant Leadership? **by Debra Gillman**

Resilience has been described in the parlance of academic research as “...a broad conceptual umbrella, covering many concepts related to positive patterns of adaptation in the context of adversity” (Masten & Obradovic, 2006). In everyday life, it is often expressed as the ability to “bounce back.” While resilience would seem an important asset in the practice of servant leadership, it remains largely unexplored in the literature. This study seeks to remedy this oversight by exploring research on the nature and characteristics of resilience and servant leadership to determine a possible connection between the two. Of interest is how a better understanding of resilience might inform the practice of servant leadership, and strategies of particular benefit to servant leaders. This inquiry is advanced by a literature review and with research conducted through a series of in-depth interviews. As a pilot study, the research findings suggest a relationship between resilience and servant leadership that is positive and reciprocal. Discussion of these results considers potential implications and additional research opportunities. A final summary offers the author’s perspective on the significance of this study and its prospective application.

SERVANT LEADERSHIP CHARACTER TRAITS AND THE EARLY CHILDHOOD LITERATURE: A FAIRYTALE? **by Sherry Picha**

ONCE UPON A TIME, character development was taught in the home. A child’s early education came from parents, grandparents, extended family, community members and religious leaders.

Character education of today is very different. The responsibility still falls upon the primary caregiver, but the definition of the primary caregiver has evolved. Many families are looking to daycare centers. In today’s society, it is not uncommon for both parents to be working outside of the home.

Early childhood experts are also beginning to identify the need for character development curriculum in early childhood programs. Court and Rosental identified that children's attitudes and moral worlds are shaped through books and stories (Court and Rosental, 408). It is because of this trend that it makes sense to ask if Servant Leadership characteristics are prevalent in children's literature. This study will evaluate if there is a hidden curriculum in children's literature: one of character education.

A Process of Discovery: Exploring the Relationship between Servant Leadership and Patient and Family Centered Care
by Anne Stekel

The aim of this paper is to explore the relationship of servant leadership and patient and family centered care. When servant leadership is studied, one can see a natural overlap with patient and family centered care. Both ideas/constructs contain characteristics such as listening, healing, and empowerment. A literature review of servant leadership and patient and family centered care, suggests a relationship appears to exist.

Through a content analysis using the servant leadership characteristics of empowerment, listening and healing and Gundersen Lutheran's philosophy of patient and family centered care, results are presented that discuss a common thread supporting a relationship between the two ideas/constructs. In the discussion section of this paper, the findings and implications are examined, followed by discussion of practical ways in which servant leadership can influence and support the implementation of patient and family centered care.

Male Graduates of Viterbo University's Master of Arts in Servant Leadership Program and Workplace Communication
by James Stolpa, MASL

The motivation to do this research is threefold and deals with the Viterbo University's Master of Arts in Servant Leadership (MASL) program and its ability to change the way men act and communicate in the workplace. The results of the research provide information to

men and their employers of the benefits of the program, as well as to Viterbo University for curriculum modification and marketing purposes.

Male graduates of the program were surveyed using self-evaluated qualitative and quantitative questionnaires addressing servant-leadership characteristics of listening, empathy, awareness, persuasion, and commitment to the growth of others in the workplace, as well as verbal, written and non-verbal forms of workplace communication.

The results of the research indicates Viterbo University's Master of Arts in Servant Leadership program affects positive change in servant-leadership characteristics and workplace communication in men who have completed the MASL curriculum.

Words, Welfare, and Wisconsin Works: The language of welfare reform and the language of servant leadership by Robert Toomey

Words matter. The language of the Wisconsin Works (W-2) program, Wisconsin's welfare-to-work program, is examined through content analysis of the program's policies, procedures, history, and participant feedback and surveys. The content analysis method includes word clouds, a web-based software language analysis tool. Similarly, the language of servant leadership is analyzed. Finally, the language of welfare reform is compared with the language of servant leadership.

The objectives of the W-2 program -- ending dependency, promoting the value of work, developing people's skills -- are similar to what Robert Greenleaf set forth as the essence of servant-leadership: to ensure "people's highest priority needs are being served," and asking: "Do those served grow as persons . . . become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous...?" However, the language of the welfare reform system -- policies, procedures, forms, publications -- can impede, instead of enable, the critical person-to-person interaction that is the core of human services.

Language is how people relate to each other: how we treat each other; how we speak of, to, and with one another. With our words we influence one another, we affect perceptions, and we create realities.

LEADERSHIP IN TRANSITIONAL SOCIETIES: A CASE OF POST GENOCIDE IN RWANDA

by Rosine Urujeni

The Purpose of this study is to examine the intersections between practices of Servant Leadership and practices of reconciliation in the aftermath of genocide in Rwanda. This study introduces practices, concepts and characteristics for the applicability of servant leadership in a community. The philosophical/ theological commitments of the Rwandan reconciliation process was pioneered among other organizations by a faith-based organization called Prison Fellowship Rwanda which I will emphasize their work in this essay.

Servant leadership and reconciliation both have a vast literature, but very little research has been done on the potential of S.L. to inform processes of reconciliation in the aftermath of massive human rights violence.

PFR's vision is to rebuild the Rwandan community while reconciling the community. One of its statements is to use restorative justice in order to tell the truth, to apologize, to forgive, and to deal with conflict management by implementing development activities among the community. PFR's work is especially aiming for a social transformation for the common good by involving perpetrators and victims together on the understanding of apology, forgiveness, cohabitation, development, etc. This reconciliation process is based on the understanding that a transitional society would implement reconciliation through the serving those in need and envisioning/implementing a team work spirit which leads to cohabitation/building peace.