Antecedents and Outcomes of Servant Leadership

Understanding the Effects of Leader Motivation, Character, and Perceived Organizational Support

— Kevin J. Hurt and Matthew Heath

The modern business environment is fast-paced, uncertain, and in a constant state of change (Bandy, 2015; Becker & Huselid, 1999; Jennifer & Paul, 2008; Veliyath & Shrivastava, 1996). Successfully guiding the organization through such hypercompetitive conditions is a challenging endeavor (D'Aveni, 1995; Singleton & Nissen, 2014). With the pressure placed on a firm's leadership to achieve profits, particularly those in the short-term, many leaders often turn to power-centric, autocratic leadership styles to direct the firm's operations (Keith, 2012). Since executive rewards are often quite robust and typically tied to the achievement of organizational goals, the temptation to manipulate the organization's subordinates for personal interest is ever looming in perilous proximity to the leadership position. The financial scandals of Enron, Arthur Andersen, Tyco, and WorldCom are but a few reminders of the problems associated with opportunism by leaders focused on advancing their own interests.

This type of self-centered focus within an organizational framework, particularly from those in a leadership position, is what Robert K. Greenleaf, the modern visionary who brought historically relevant concepts of servant leadership to the forefront within modern organizational contexts, deemed unacceptable (Greenleaf, 1970). Scholars and practitioners have increasingly begun turning to servant leadership with the hope that its focus on leader selflessness can increase our understanding of, and potentially provide a resolution to, the unethical character issues associated with leadership failures of the past (Chacksfield, 2014; Liden, Wayne, Liao, & Meuser, 2014; Russell & Stone, 2002; van Dierendonck, 2011).

In this manuscript, we review the literature on servant leadership and character, and extend our understanding of servant leadership by integrating the two domains into a theoretical model building upon Greenleaf's (1970) contention that a servant leader is one who desires to serve first, and Page and Wong's (2000) description of character in servant leadership. Character, which is defined as the mixture of traits, values, and virtues that determine the makeup of a person (Gandz, Crossan, Seilts, & Reno, 2013), has been conceptualized as the heart of a servant leader and put forth as the central most important aspect motivating a servant leader's behavior (Page & Wong, 2000). We build on this assertion by viewing character from a virtues perspective, i.e., through the concept of biblical love, and contend that biblical love is important in servant leadership because possessing a heartfelt

desire to serve the legitimate needs of others and to prioritize others' needs over self-interest is considered a primary difference between servant leadership and other leadership theories (Greenleaf, 1970; Keith, 2012; Stone, Russell, & Patterson, 2004). Specifically, we view character through the lens of theological virtues (i.e., biblical love) and posit that biblical love acts as both a moderating and mediating influence between the leader's motivation-type (i.e., ecosystem and egosystem) and servant leadership.

Ecosystem motivation is characterized as considering the needs of others over self, whereas egosystem motivation is focused on the self (Crocker & Canevello, 2008). While servant leadership maintains that leaders subordinate their interests for those of their followers, sacrificing self-interest may not be a natural act (Carter & Baghurst, 2013). Thus, we depict a path by which selfish motives (i.e., egosystem) may be transcended and aligned with those of servant leadership. Finally, we contend that the relationship between servant leadership and organizational goals is achieved, at least in part, through the mediating influence of follower perceptions of organizational support. We have portrayed our conceptual model in Figure 1.

Servant leadership is characterized as a compassionate and relational approach to leadership, and defined as an "understanding and practice of leadership that places the good of those led over the self-interest of the leader" (Laub, 2004, p. 8). Although Greenleaf (1970) described the theory over 40 years ago, the lack of a universal definition and measurement

instrument hindered empirical examinations of the construct. Thus, most leadership researchers turned their attention to the more popular charismatic and transformational leadership styles (Bass & Bass, 2008). Those with an interest in advancing servant leadership focused on refining its definition and developing a valid and reliable measurement instrument (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006; Graham, 1991; Laub, 2004; Liden, Wayne, Zhao, & Henderson, 2008; Sendjaya, Sarros, & Santora, 2008; van Dierendonck, 2011). While the construct still lacks a universally accepted definition, there has been a rise in servant leadership studies in the past 20 years (Parris & Peachey, 2012).

Empirical evidence has positively linked servant leadership to numerous individual and organizational outcomes (Chen, Zhu, & Zhou, 2015; Jones, 2012; Liden et al., 2014; Rivkin, Diestel, & Schmidt, 2014). Yet, research on servant leadership's antecedents remains sparse (Peterson, Galvin, & Lange, 2012). Van Dierendonck (2011) conceptualized individual characteristics and cultural factors as antecedents of servant leadership; however, the most fundamental requirement of the servant leader was identified as their desire to serve (Greenleaf, 1977). Only one study considered the effects of character, which was broadly defined as "what kind of people we are" (p. 2), stating further that "our motives stem from our character" (p. 3) (Page & Wong, 2000). Whom the leader chooses to serve, and how a leader chooses to serve, may have a significant impact on a leader's ability to attain organizational objectives. Thus, it

would benefit practitioners to know what aspects of an individual's character lead to servant leadership and how servant leadership can be developed within an individual, particularly if those presently within the organization tend to be self-focused.

It has been suggested that servant leaders subordinate personal and organizational goals to that of meeting the needs of their followers (Keith, 2012; Spears, 2004). Yet, Kessel Stelling Jr, who is the Chairman and Chief Executive Office of servant leadership, states that the organization cannot serve anyone if it does not make a profit (personal communication, February 6, 2014). Thus, it is important to understand how servant led organizations achieve their goals when the first priority of the servant leader is service to his or her subordinates.
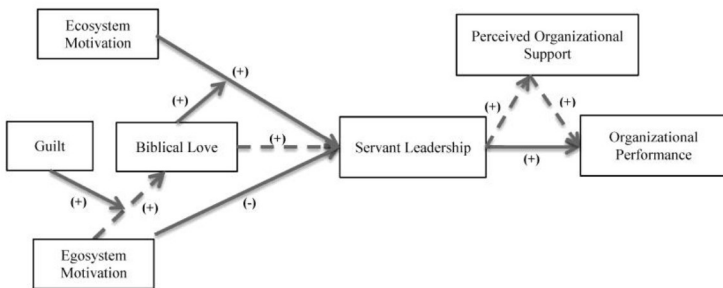

Figure 1. Theoretical model of servant leadership antecedents, perceived organizational support, and organizational performance.

THEORY AND PROPOSITION DEVELOPMENT

History of Servant Leadership

After 40 years of corporate experience, Greenleaf (1970) believed there was a better approach to leadership, one that was not autocratic and power-centric. Greenleaf's approach consisted of the leader subordinating self-interest in favor of making service of others' needs a top priority (Spears, 2004). Greenleaf is credited with the servant leadership movement, having introduced the concept of servant leadership into the organizational context through three foundational essays that he wrote in the 1970's: *The Servant as Leader* (1970)*, The Institution as Servant* (1972)*,* and *Trustees as Servants* (1974). He developed his theory of servant leadership having been inspired by Herman Hesse's novel, *Journey to the East*. In Hesse's story, a party of travelers (i.e., members of the Order) embarks on a journey seeking their own ends. A beloved and unassuming servant named Leo sustains the group's spirit but the group falls into disarray when Leo suddenly disappears. After returning from the journey and reuniting with Leo, the narrator discovers that Leo was actually the head of the Order. During the journey, Leo's true status as leader was disguised but his true character was transparent and it is because of his character that he was able to lead the group most effectively by serving them (Tidball, 2012). The moral of the story is that the great leader is seen as servant first, which is the key to the leader's greatness (Keith, 2012).

Since the founding of the Greenleaf Center, servant

leadership has gained momentum within the business community as a relevant business philosophy related to employee development, employee satisfaction, and community well being (Blanchard, 2002; Covey, 1998; Keith, 2012; Turner, 2003). Many well known companies have adopted servant leadership as their corporate philosophy, including Synovus Financial Corporation, the Men's Wearhouse, Southwest Airlines, and TD Industries (Spears, 2004). Those in academic circles have also turned their attention to servant leadership theory attempting to understand how focusing on the needs of others can truly lead to the attainment of the end state of an organization (Jones, 2012; Liden et al., 2014; Peterson et al., 2012; Rivkin et al., 2014). What the evidence is clearly beginning to show is that servant leadership is a viable and positive approach to leadership that is applicable across cultures and contexts (Chen et al., 2015; Parris & Peachey, 2012). Furthermore, evidence is emerging that servant leadership may have greater predictive ability than other contemporary leadership theories (Peterson et al., 2012). We submit that this is so in part because servitude, i.e., attending to the legitimate needs of others, is universally valued (Keith, 2012).

The servant leader, as the name suggests, is a servant first and then because of that servant nature, a leader next (Greenleaf, 1977). True leadership emerges from one whose primary motivation is a deep and sincere desire to serve or help others (Spears, 2004). Servant leadership emphasizes increased service to others, a holistic approach to work, promoting a

sense of community, and the sharing of power in decision-making (Spears, 2004). Greenleaf describes servant leadership in the following way:

> It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. He is sharply different from the person who is leader first, perhaps because of the need to assuage an unusual power drive or to acquire material possessions. . . The difference manifests itself in the care taken by the servant-first to make sure that other people's highest priority needs are being served. 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 be further deprived? (Greenleaf, 1977, pp. 13-14)

A servant-leader is simply a leader who is focused on serving others (Keith, 2012). A servant leader's mission in life is not necessarily material achievement for his or her self but rather to meet the needs of others and it is this mission to put others first that allows servant leaders to find meaning and satisfaction in life (Keith, 2012). Servant leadership scholars portray servant leadership as focusing on objectives beyond the organization, i.e., the follower and the community (Graham, 1991; Keith, 2012; Sendjaya et al., 2008; Spears, 2004).

The motivation orientation of a leader is an important

aspect influencing behavior and interactions with others and is perhaps the most influential distinguishing factor separating servant leadership from other theories of leadership (Stone et al., 2004). Researchers contend that servant leaders place the needs of others above their own (Graham, 1991; Page & Wong, 2000; Spears, 2004), i.e., they have an ecosystem motivational orientation. Crocker, Olivier, and Nuer (2009) use the ecosystem as a metaphor to explain that individuals operating from this motivational perspective are genuinely other-oriented, seeing themselves and their needs as being part of a larger system of interconnected people; each with their own equally important and valid needs. Those inclined to concern themselves with others are more likely to engage in pro-social behaviors, prioritizing the needs of others as a way of ensuring everyone's well being (Gerbasi & Prentice, 2013). It is important to note that an ecosystem motivational orientation is not entirely selfless; rather, self is part of a larger picture and self-needs are accounted for by first meeting the legitimate needs of others in collaborative efforts towards positive outcomes (Crocker et al., 2009).

In direct contrast to an ecosystem perspective, egosystem motivational orientation is characterized as being self-centered with little to no consideration of the needs of others (Crocker, 2011). People with an egosystem motivational perspective tend to view relationships as zero-sum games; thus, the egosystem leader is more competitive and less cooperative in their interactions with others (Crocker & Canevello, 2008). Whether one engages in ecosystem or egosystem behaviors, the decision

is ultimately a conscious one made by the leader (Gerbasi & Prentice, 2013). Thus, the following propositions are put forth:

Proposition 1: There is a positive relationship between ecosystem motivational orientation and servant leadership.

Proposition 2: There is a negative relationship between egosystem motivational orientation and servant leadership.

Character in Leadership

Character influences behavior, allows a leader to do what is appropriate regardless of circumstances, and is at the very core of servant leadership (Gerard, 2014; Page & Wong, 2000). In the following paragraphs we draw attention to the complexity of character by highlighting varying definitions of the construct and noting that virtues are common in many character depictions. Thus, we explore the virtue of biblical love and make a case that it plays an important role in servant leadership.

The challenge for leaders has always been one of determining how to mobilize others to willingly put effort towards accomplishing agreed upon goals (Kouzes & Posner, 2002). Traditional leadership paradigms place the leader at the top of the pyramid, in a command and control perspective, implicitly assuming that causality (e.g., attitudes and behavior) flows from leader to follower (Yukl, 2006). The leader, by nature of his or her position, has the ability to punish or reward, exercise autocratic directives telling subordinates what to do and how to do it, and correct an individual's job performance (Bass & Bass, 2008). While one can find examples where top-down leadership has been effective

within the organization (Lorinkova, Pearsall, & Sims Jr, 2013; Martin, Liao, & Campbell, 2013), it has not prevented abuses of power and leadership, which has led to damaged leader-subordinate relationships, corporate scandals, and the demise of corporations (Cohen, 2014; Farh & Chen, 2014; Lian, Brown, Ferris, Liang, Keeping, & Morrison, 2012). Presumably, the heads of many corporate scandals were, by all accounts prior to the rise of the scandal, people of high intelligence and character. Yet, they each succumbed to greed, took their eyes off of the organization and those it served to focus on personal gain (Thompson, Grahek, Phillips, & Fay, 2008). Why?

Many of the leadership failures of the past, and certainly those highlighted by corporate scandals, can be attributed to greed, hubris, arrogance, and a fundamental lack of honor, honesty, and humility (Banks, 2008; Falk & Blaylock, 2012). The late General Norman Schwarzkopf attributed ninety-nine percent of leadership breakdowns to failures of character, not competence (Schwarzkopf, 1998). Any would be challengers to Schwarzkopf's perspective need only look at the esteemed educational backgrounds of those individuals involved in the corporate scandals that shook Wall Street to realize that competence was not among the problems associated with the financial crises that occurred.

Character is foundational to effective leadership (Gandz et al., 2013). Yet, leadership effectiveness has largely been attributed to the individual leader's capacity, i.e., intelligence, technical knowledge and skills, not to the leader's character

(Judge, Colbert, & Ilies, 2004; Rockstuhl, Seiler, Ang, Van Dyne, & Annen, 2011; Thompson et al., 2008). A lack of character has often been associated with failures of leadership (Schwarzkopf, 1998; Thompson et al., 2008). Character has the potential to shield individuals and organizations from cataclysmic failures while simultaneously bolstering increased followership (Grahek, Thompson, & Toliver, 2010; Thompson et al., 2008). However, character also has the potential to lead to disastrous outcomes. As such, it is a multifaceted concept requiring further scrutiny.

Numerous definitions of character have been put forth in the literature. Leonard (1997) defined it as those "aspects of personality that are learned through experience, through training, or through a socialization process" (p. 240). Gandz et al (2013) defined it as a mixture of traits, values, and virtues. Nash (1996) described character as the integration of an individual's formative communities, virtues, and personal life story. Riggio and Reichard (2008) approached character in ethical leadership, grounding their description of character in terms of cardinal virtues. The United States Army refers to character as a person's moral and ethical qualities, which helps determine what is right and gives a leader the motivation to do what is appropriate in all circumstances (Gerard, 2014). As evidenced, character is a complex construct lacking an agreed upon definition (Thompson & Riggio, 2010). Though complex, a reference to virtues is common in many of the definitions cited above and merits further consideration.

Individuals and their respective traits are morally basic to

virtue ethicists (Ciulla, Martin, & Solomon, 2014). Riggio and Reichard (2008) purposefully attempted to divorce their depiction of character from any religious connotations. However, the Catholic priest St. Thomas Aquinas identified three theological virtues (i.e., faith, hope, and charity) (Reichert, 2015), which we consider essential to an individual's character. Since these theological virtues are also identified in the Holy Bible, we turn to that text for a greater understanding.

A Biblical Perspective of Character

The concept of servant leadership has frequently been tied to religious theology as many major religions (e.g., Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism) and non-religious philosophies (e.g., Taoism) include service as part of their doctrine (Sendjaya et al., 2008). Common to each of these approaches is the central thread that a leader has an internal conviction to serve a higher power, and through the effort to be obedient to that higher power, serves other people (Sendjaya et al., 2008).

We review servant leadership from a Judeo-Christian perspective, focusing on the life of Jesus Christ, who is often referred to as a powerfully effective servant leader due to the nature of His teachings (Atkinson, 2014; Hunter, 2004; Keith, 2012). In fact, the life of Jesus Christ has often been portrayed as the epitome of true servant leadership (Chung, 2011; Tidball, 2012). In the gospel of Mark, Jesus discussed the difference between the autocratic natures of the times and servant leadership:

You know that those who are considered rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many. (Mark 10: 42-44, NKJV)

This was a new concept for those living under the Roman Empire. During the time of Christ's life, power resided with the Roman emperors. Jesus himself had no lawful power; however, he did have authority and influence (Hunter, 1998). Over 2,000 years after his death, Jesus continues to have influence on individual lives, as Christianity remains the single largest world religion accounting for just over 30 percent of the global population (Maoz & Henderson, 2013). Having heard Jesus' words, the disciples were left to ponder how to resolve the paradox of simultaneously being both servant and leader (Tidball, 2012). Yet, the answer should have been evident in Jesus' teachings about humility, service, and forgiveness, which were virtues exemplified in his character and demonstrated throughout his ministry (Manz, 2011).

While Greenleaf (1970) is attributed with modern servant leadership theory, servant leadership itself is not a new concept. Jesus' life illustrated the importance of an individual's character; and he taught his disciples that great leadership was achieved through the path of service, not through command and control tactics or charismatic sources of inspiration (Manz,

2011). Throughout many of Jesus' teachings, he demonstrated the value of being a humble servant (Manz, 2011). For example, before the feast of the Passover, Jesus filled a basin with water and washed his disciples' feet, instructing them that they too should humbly serve others (John 3: 2-17, NKJV). While humility was a key characteristic of Jesus, a more comprehensive understanding of character can be obtained by reviewing contemporary theory and biblical scriptures.

Servant leadership theorists have listed numerous characteristics (e.g., empathy, humility, authenticity, empowering, selflessness, covenantal) that embody the servant leader (Barbuto, 2006; Keith, 2012; Laub, 2004; Liden et al., 2008; Sendjaya et al., 2008; Spears, 2004; van Dierendonck, 2011). While there is considerable overlap in most contemporary depictions, to date there is no universally accepted description of the servant leader's character (Parris & Peachey, 2012). One thing that does appear constant in the composition of a servant leader is that the desire to serve others is genuinely heartfelt and the first prerequisite of being a servant leader (Greenleaf, 1970; Page & Wong, 2000). William Turner (2003) describes this as the love that a leader has for his or her followers.

The term love conjures up images of soft, emotional feelings. However, Turner (2003) describes love as simply a commitment to care. St. Thomas Aquinas listed charity (i.e., love) as one of three fundamental theological virtues. Of the three theological virtues, i.e., faith, hope, and love, the greatest is love (1 Corinthians 13:13, NKJV). Hunter (2004) refers to 1 Corinthians

for a biblical characterization of love, which includes: patience, kindness, humbleness, respectfulness, selflessness, forgiveness, honesty, and commitment (1 Corinthians 13: 4-7, NKJV). Each of these characterizations describe an action and if, as Turner (2003) suggests, love is a commitment to care about others, then the love that is at the foundation of servant leadership is not about feelings; rather, it is about actions (Hunter, 2004). Furthermore, if love is in fact an action, then it can be developed and increased through repetition and practice. As Aristotle once suggested, we are what we repeatedly do; thus, excellence is not an act but a habit. Therefore, we assert that while one cannot force upon someone the desire to become a heart-felt servant leader, through repetitious execution of biblical love (i.e., patience, kindness, humbleness, respectfulness, selflessness, forgiveness, honesty, and commitment), one's character can be trained and aligned with that of a true servant leader.

The Moderating and Mediating Role of Biblical Love

Our first proposition made a conceptual link between ecosystem motivational orientation and servant leadership. We propose that the presence of biblical love moderates this relationship given that a moderator effect is said to occur when the strength or direction of a relationship is affected by the presence of a third variable (Baron & Kenny, 1986). Jesus taught that individuals should love one another (John 15:12, NKJV). A servant leader operating from an ecosystem motivational perspective is naturally inclined to care about something larger than his or her self (Russell & Stone, 2002;

Spears, 2004). As such, the servant leader is effective because he or she loves others enough to extend his or her self for their benefit, which strengthens interpersonal relationships built on trust (Crocker et al., 2009; Hunter, 1998; Turner, 2003).

Our second proposition implied a conceptual link between egosystem motivational orientation and servant leadership. A leader operating from an egosystem motivational perspective is focused on his or her own personal needs, largely excluding the needs of others (Crocker & Canevello, 2008). Thus, the egosystem-oriented individual fails to see his or her self as a part of the greater interdependent society (Gerbasi & Prentice, 2013). The selfishness of the egocentric individual is the antithesis of what Jesus was teaching about loving others. A love for others may promote the greatest social good and by its very nature, biblical love is manifested in loving action (Birx, 2014; Fehr, 2009). As such, we contend that a selfish leader would have no desire to practice acts of kindness, humbleness, patience, respect, forgiveness, honesty, selflessness, or commitment towards others (i.e., biblical love). Thus, we advance the following proposition:

Proposition 3: There is a negative relationship between egosystem motivational orientation and biblical love.

Having asserted that egosystem motivational orientation is negatively related to biblical love and servant leadership, we further argue that biblical love can play a mediating role in the relationship between egosystem motivational orientation and servant leadership since mediation occurs when a third variable accounts for the relation between a predictor and a

criterion (Baron & Kenny, 1986). The logical question to ponder is how can one be a servant leader from an egosystem motivational perspective when there is also a negative relationship between egosystem motivational orientation and biblical character? Certainly this appears to be counterintuitive and in violation of Greenleaf's (1977) contention that servant leadership begins with a desire to serve and a willingness to subordinate self-interests for the well being of others. What Greenleaf described is consistent with an ecosystem motivational orientation.

Greenleaf (1970) stated that the decision to lead was a conscious choice. However, it has been noted that servant leadership may also begin with a desire to lead and then a conscious choice is made to incorporate a serving attitude (van Dierendonck, 2011). We contend that the egosystem motivational leader, whose primary focus is on his or her own desires (Crocker & Canevello, 2008), would first choose to lead out of selfish inspiration. We also assert that a leader with an egosystem motivational orientation can make a conscious determination to serve others through the practice of biblical love. The question remains, why would a leader with self-interest goals choose to adopt a serving attitude? We turn to the literature on self-conscious emotions for a plausible explanation.

Self-conscious emotions play an important adaptive role in social interactions by influencing moral behavior (Tangney, 1999). Guilt is a self-conscious emotion often experienced when an individual perceives his or her actions have violated

moral standards, communal norms, or caused someone harm; and, guilt is most likely to occur when there is a likelihood of future encounters with others (Lewis, 2008; Nelissen, Breugelmans, & Zeelenberg, 2013). Guilt has been linked to prosocial behavioral intentions (Tangney & Dearing, 2003), altruism (Johnson, Kim, & Danko, 1989), empathy and perspective taking (Cohen, Panter, & Turan, 2012), and emotional dissonance that motivates reconciliation of wrongful interactions towards another (Schmader & Lickel, 2006; Tangney, Wagner, Fletcher, & Gramzow, 1992). Individuals who are prone to experiencing guilt are viewed as more effective in their leadership roles than their guilt free counterparts because leaders who experience guilt feel compelled to act on the interests of their followers rather than their own personal needs (Schaumberg & Flynn, 2012). Thus, guilt is a constructive mechanism by which people change their behavior to align with communal norms that establish mutual concern, respect, and positive treatment devoid of self-interested returns (Baumeister, Stillwell, & Heatherton, 1994). Since guilt triggers a conscious decision on the part of a leader to reconcile what they perceive as wrongful actions on their part, we assert that they are more likely to engage in actions that show a commitment to care for others, i.e., biblical love. Therefore, we put forth the following proposition:

Proposition 4: Guilt moderates the relationship between egosystem motivation orientation and biblical love such that the negative relationship between egosystem motivation orientation and biblical love is reversed.

Leaders who posses an inclination, or willingly make a deliberate attempt, to love his or her followers may diminish selfish desires and develop a virtuous attitude giving rise to servant leadership behaviors (van Dierendonck & Patterson, 2014). It is important to recognize that egosystem behaviors are not entirely self-centered as self-sacrifice often serves self-image goals (e.g., desire to be liked, admired, or needed) (Crocker, 2011). From an egosystem perspective, servant leaders may ultimately be serving their own interests given that servant leadership can be quite self-fulfilling in terms of one's happiness (Keith, 2012). Thus, a leader who consciously makes an effort to develop a higher level of biblical love is more likely to achieve transcendence of egosystem motivation in the pursuit of a service orientation. Servant leadership's transcending properties are rooted in common themes (e.g., benefitting others, service to others, doing good to others) found throughout the Christian context (Keith, 2012). In summary, we expect ecosystem and egosystem motivational orientation will directly and indirectly influence servant leadership. We anticipate biblical love acting as a moderator and mediator between motivation orientation and servant leadership. Thus, the following propositions are put forth:

Proposition 5: Biblical love moderates the relationship between ecosystem motivational orientation and servant leadership such that the positive relationship between ecosystem motivational orientation and servant leadership is strengthened.

Proposition 6: Egosystem motivational orientation is positively related to servant leadership through the mediating mechanism of biblical love.

Servant Leadership, Perceived Organizational Support, and Organizational Performance

There are an increasing number of empirical studies positively linking servant leadership to individual- and team-level outcomes (Carter & Baghurst, 2013; Chen et al., 2015; Liden et al., 2014; Rivkin et al., 2014); but few studies have empirically linked servant leadership to organizational-level results (Jones, 2012; Peterson et al., 2012). Jones (2012) found a positive association with servant leadership and enhanced profits through reduced customer turnover and increased organizational trust; while Peterson (Peterson et al., 2012) found a positive association between servant leadership of the CEO and firm performance (i.e., return on assets). Additionally, numerous practitioners endorse servant leadership as an effective form of leadership (e.g., Kessel Stelling Jr., CEO Synovus; Dan Amos, CEO AFLAC, personal communication February 6 and March 11, 2014 respectively) and each year an increasing number of organizations on the Fortune 100 list advocate the practice of servant leadership (Lichtenwalner, 2015). In 2015, five of the top ten companies on Fortune's 100 best companies to work for were identified as servant led organizations. Clearly, there is a need for additional empirical studies linking servant leadership with organizational outcomes; however, the

preliminary empirical evidence and endorsement from CEO's whose companies are among Fortune's top-ranked suggests that servant leadership has a direct positive relationship with organizational performance. We now turn our attention to the indirect effects of servant leadership on organizational performance.

Perceived organizational support encompasses employee perceptions concerning the extent to which an organization cares about their well-being and values their contributions (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). The servant leaders' emphasis on the growth and development of their employees, along with their moral and just approach towards relationship building is associated with increased follower trust, employee engagement, and stronger ties to the organization (Carter & Baghurst, 2013; Savage-Austin & Honeycutt, 2011). The effect of servant leadership on the followers is a reciprocal exchange whereby employees, having a heightened sense of feeling valued and being empowered, are inspired to willingly put forth effort directed at the goals of the organization (Greenleaf, 1998; Liden et al., 2008; Peterson et al., 2012; van Dierendonck, 2011). Thus, employees who perceive a high degree of organizational support are more satisfied with their jobs, have a heightened sense of affective commitment, a greater desire to remain with the organization, and engage in extra-role behaviors more frequently (Chen, Eisenberger, Johnson, Sucharski, & Aselage, 2012; Eisenberger, Armeli, Rexwinkel, Lynch, & Rhoades, 2001; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Zhou & Miao, 2014). We reason that perceived

organizational support mediates the relationship between servant leadership and organizational performance. As such, the following propositions are put forth:

Proposition 7: Servant leadership is positively related to organizational performance

Proposition 8: Servant leadership is positively related to organizational performance through the mediating mechanism of perceived organizational support

DISCUSSION

Greenleaf viewed the servant leader as 'primus inter pares', i.e., first among equals using their authority instead of power, to get things done (Keith, 2012; van Dierendonck, 2011). As a viable model for leading the modern organization, servant leadership has received a surge of interest from practitioners and academicians alike, particularly over the past 20 years (Chen et al., 2015; Graham, 1991; Peterson et al., 2012; Spears, 2004; Turner, 2003). Yet, the tenets of servant leadership espoused by Greenleaf (1977) have been around since biblical times.

In this study, we developed a theoretical model expanding on Greenleaf's depiction of the servant leader, contributing to our understanding of servant leadership in several ways. Greenleaf felt particularly strong about the notion that servant leadership began with a leader's motivation to serve (Keith, 2012; Spears, 2004). Our model considers Greenleaf's statement about a leader's desire to serve from two motivational perspectives, i.e., ecosystem- and egosystem-motivational orientations. Every study we reviewed portrayed

the servant leader as a selfless individual placing the needs of the led over self (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006; Laub, 2004; Liden et al., 2014; Russell & Stone, 2002; Sendjaya et al., 2008). It is unclear, but implied, in each of these depictions that the servant leader is completely selfless. Our model accounts for this possibility, but reality may be quite different as servant leadership may not be innate (Carter & Baghurst, 2013). People are more likely to behave in ways that are in agreement with self- (e.g., egosystem motivation), as opposed to other-interest (Crocker & Canevello, 2008; Gerbasi & Prentice, 2013). As such, we advance the notion that servant leaders may not be entirely selfless, allowing for their needs to be achieved by meeting the needs of others (Crocker, 2011).

Our model also draws attention to the importance of leadership character, which is considered to be a primary motive of a leader's actions (Page & Wong, 2000). Without a universally accepted definition, we described character from a theological perspective given that Jesus' teachings are commonly referenced as best examples of servant leadership (Hunter, 2004; Keith, 2012; Sendjaya et al., 2008). Specifically our concept of character focused on the model of biblical love (i.e., patience, kindness, humbleness, respectfulness, selflessness, forgiveness, honesty, and commitment), which one could conclude was the ultimate source of strength in Jesus' leadership philosophy (Manz, 2011). Furthermore, by describing biblical love as an action, not an emotion, we provide a means by which the character of an individual can be developed and aligned with that of servant leadership, which is

consistent with Greenleaf's (1977) assertion that conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. Our model depicts a conceptual path by which egosystem-oriented leaders might transcend selfish motives to align themselves with servant leadership. This is an important aspect of our model as people are most likely to fully engage and follow leadership whom they view as having good character; and, good character in leadership may thwart opportunism associated with many corporate scandals (Ciulla et al., 2014; Cohen, 2014; Grahek et al., 2010).

Finally, we theoretically depicted direct and indirect links between servant leadership and organizational performance, addressing a key criticism that a primary focus on followers jeopardizes goal accomplishment (Johnson, 2001) by showing that employees respond favorably when the organization demonstrates an interest in their development and well-being. Thus, we show that the end state of the organization (e.g., improved organizational performance) can be achieved through a leadership focus on followers. Many power-centric leaders succumb to the myth that they must be all-knowing and all-powerful; however, servant leadership may provide a mechanism transcending these beliefs through development of followers into autonomous moral agents (Graham, 1991; Manz, 2011). Given that people are generally in accordance with Kant's second categorical imperative (Bowie, 2014), studies reveal that followers reciprocate dignified and ethical interactions of their leaders with positive engagement in the workforce and commitment to the organization's objectives

(Carter & Baghurst, 2013; Liden et al., 2014; Liden et al., 2008; Peterson et al., 2012; van Dierendonck, 2011).

CONCLUSION

Limitations and Future Direction

Given the relatively few studies that have considered the antecedents of servant leadership (Peterson et al., 2012; van Dierendonck, 2011), this is an area needing more attention. We introduced motivation orientation as a precursor to servant leadership; however, there is a need to further understand why some people are more inclined to be ecosystem oriented. For example, are there aspects of the individual's character that predestine them down an ecosystem path? Or, does the degree of interdependence in the workforce foster the development of ecosystem motives?

Most researchers have relied on Greenleaf's writings in the 1970's to assess those qualities within people that align with the principles of servant leadership, namely the heartfelt desire to serve. While Page and Wong (2000) conceptualized the individual's character as central to that desire to serve, one has been left to conclude that a leader either has that desire or not. We believe people can have a change of heart; thus, an egosystem-oriented leader could potentially transcend selfish interests through a focus on character development. We introduced the self-conscious emotion of guilt as a triggering mechanism between a leader's egosystem motivational orientation and biblical love. It would benefit practitioners to know how other self-conscious emotions (e.g., shame) influence

a commitment to biblical love. We also identified eight characteristics of biblical love that we consider fruitful for future research. It would be helpful to know whether a single aspect of character, a certain combination, or all eight biblical characteristics are equally important to servant leadership.

As scholars seek to gain a deeper understanding of servant leadership, future research in the field should be careful not to exclude the construct from historical and biblical teaching. Many religious doctrines include service to others as a fundamental aspect of their philosophy (Keith, 2012; Sendjaya et al., 2008). Furthermore, when people talk about servant leadership, Jesus is often the model referenced (Keith, 2012; Sendjaya et al., 2008; Tidball, 2012). In this paper, we focused solely on a Judeo-Christian perspective of service. As such, our concept of biblical love is derived from a Christian orientation. Whether, and to what extent, biblical love is portrayed in other religious doctrines is an area for future research.

It is important to note that Greenleaf did not depict servant leadership as a religious doctrine. People may align, or choose not to align, with various theologies. In either case, acts of kindness, humbleness, patience, respect, forgiveness, honesty, selflessness, and commitment towards others are not solely reserved for those with religious beliefs but can also be practiced in a secular context. Thus, people can still be trained from a secular perspective utilizing the distinctiveness of character development referenced by biblical teaching. Further research should seek to determine the effectiveness of this character development and training.

We agree that servant leadership comes from the heart (Greenleaf, 1977; Page & Wong, 2000), but substance cannot be ignored. To be a leader in the 21st century requires competence and character (Schwarzkopf, 1998). Ken Blanchard was quoted as saying,

> I want to make it clear that when we are talking about servant leadership, we aren't talking about a lack of direction. In fact, the leader who fails to give direction fails as a servant of the body he is called to serve. (Tidball, 2012, p. 39)

People want a leader to provide direction and this is an aspect of leadership where servant leaders can take a very top-down approach (Hunter, 2004). Despite people's natural disposition to be inner focused (Gerbasi & Prentice, 2013), most organizational cultures are built upon a structure that requires a leader. Since organizations cannot solely rely on those most naturally inclined to be leaders, they must have effective means by which to develop and train someone for a leadership position. Many organizations are equipped to provide competence training, but not necessarily character training. One of the great secrets of servant leadership is this; "when you are behaving as if you love someone, you will presently come to love that person" (Hunter, 2004, p. 111). If Aristotle's contention that one becomes what one habitually practices is true, then there is hope of a future with servant leadership as a prevalent model for organizations.

––––––––––

References

Atkinson, W. P. (2014). The trinity and servant-leadership. *Evangelical Review of Theology, 38*(2), 138-150.

Bandy, M. M. (2015). Pivoting: Leveraging opportunities in a turbulent health care environment. *Journal Of The Medical Library Association: JMLA, 103*(1), 3-13.

Banks, S. P. (2008). *Dissent and the failure of leadership*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar.

Barbuto, J. E., & Wheeler, D.W. (2006). Scale development and construct clarification of servant leadership. *Group & Organization Management, 31*(3), 300-326.

Baron, R. M., & Kenny, D. A. (1986). The moderator-mediator variable distinction in social psychological research: Conceptual, strategic, and statistical considerations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 51*(6), 1173-1182.

Bass, B. M., & Bass, R. (2008). *The bass handbook of leadership: Theory, research, and managerial applications* (4 ed.). New York: Free Press.

Baumeister, R. F., Stillwell, A. M., & Heatherton, T. F. (1994). Guilt: An interpersonal approach. *Psychological Bulletin, 115*(2), 243-267.

Becker, B. E., & Huselid, M. A. (1999). Overview: Strategic human resource management in five leading firms. *Human Resource Management, 38*(4), 287.

Birx, E. (2014). *Selfless love: Beyond the boundaries of self and other*. Boston: Wisdom Publications.

Blanchard, K. (2002). Foreword. In L. C. Spears & M. Lawrence (Eds.), *Focus on leadership: Servant leadership for the twenty-first century*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Bowie, N. E. (2014). Respecting the humanity in a person. In J. B. Ciulla, C. Martin & R. Solomon (Eds.), *Honest work: A business ethics reader*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Carter, D., & Baghurst, T. (2013). The influence of servant leadership on restaurant employee engagement. *Journal of Business Ethics, 124*(3), 453-464.

Chacksfield, E. (2014). Servant leadership. *Training Journal*, 60-63.

Chen, Z., Eisenberger, R., Johnson, K. M., Sucharski, I. L., &

Aselage, J. (2012). Perceived organizational support and extra-role performance: Which leads to which? *The Journal of Social Psychology, 149*(1), 119-124.

Chen, Z., Zhu, J., & Zhou, M. (2015). How does a servant leader fuel the service fire? A multilevel model of servant leadership, individual self identity, group competition climate, and customer service performance. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 100*(2), 511-521.

Chung, Y. S. (2011). Why servant leadership? Its uniqueness and principles in the life of Jesus. *Journal of Asia Adventist Seminary, 14*(2), 159-170.

Ciulla, J. B., Martin, C., & Solomon, R. (2014). *Honest work: A business ethics reader*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Cohen, E. (2014). Arthur Andersen refugees reflect on what went wrong. In J. B. Ciulla, C. Martin & R. Solomon (Eds.), *Honest work: A business ethics reader* (3 ed., pp. 139-140). New York: Oxford University Press.

Cohen, T. R., Panter, A., & Turan, N. (2012). Guilt proneness and moral character. *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 21*(5), 355-359.

Covey, S. (1998). Foreword. In L. C. Spears (Ed.), *Insights on leadership: Service, stewardship, spirit, and servant leadership*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Crocker, J. (2011). Safety in numbers: Shifting from egosystem to ecosystem. *Psychological Inquiry, 22*(4), 259-264.

Crocker, J., & Canevello, A. (2008). Creating and undermining social support in communal relationships: the role of compassionate and self-image goals. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 95*(3), 555-575.

Crocker, J., Olivier, M. A., & Nuer, N. (2009). Self-image goals and compassionate goals: Costs and benefits. *Self and Identity, 8*(2-3), 251-269.

D'Aveni, R. A. (1995). Coping with hypercompetition: Utilizing the new 7S's framework. *Academy of Management Executive, 9*(3), 45-60.

Eisenberger, R., Armeli, S., Rexwinkel, B., Lynch, P. D., & Rhoades, L. (2001). Reciprocation of perceived organizational support. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 86*(1), 42-51.

Falk, C. F., & Blaylock, B., K. (2012). The H factor: A behavioral explanation of leadership failures in the 2007-2009 financial system meltdown. *Journal of Leadership, Accountability & Ethics, 9*(2), 68-82.

Farh, C. I., & Chen, Z. (2014). Beyond the individual victim: Multilevel consequences of abusive supervision in teams. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 99*(6), 1074-1095.

Fehr, B. S. (2009). Prototype analysis of the concept of compassionate love. *Personal Relationships, 16*(3), 343-364.

Gandz, J., Crossan, M., Seilts, G., & Reno, M. (2013). Leadership character and corporate governance. *Ivey Business Journal, 77*(3), 15-22.

Gerard, R. (2014). The role of character in effective leadership. *Military Review, 94*(5), 44-49.

Gerbasi, M. E., & Prentice, D. A. (2013). The Self- and other-interest inventory. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 105*(3), 495-514.

Graham, J. W. (1991). Servant leadership in organizations: Inspirational and moral. *The Leadership Quarterly, 2*(2), 105-119.

Grahek, M. S., Thompson, A. D., & Toliver, A. (2010). The character to lead: A closer look at character in leadership. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 62*(4), 270-290.

Greenleaf, R. K. (1970). *The servant as leader*. Westfield, Indiana: The Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership.

Greenleaf, R. K. (1977). *Servant leadership: A journey into the nature of legitimate power and greatness*. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press.

Greenleaf, R. K. (1998). *The power of servant-leadership*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler.

Hunter, J. C. (1998). *The servant: A simple story about the true essence of leadership*. New York: Crown Business.

Hunter, J. C. (2004). *The world's most powerful leadership principle: How to become a servant leader*. New York: Crown Business.

Jennifer, R., & Paul, G. (2008). From learning organization to practically wise organization. *Learning Organization, 15*(5), 356-372.

Johnson, C. E. (2001). *Meeting the ethical challenges of leadership*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Johnson, R. C., Kim, R. J., & Danko, G. P. (1989). Guilt, shame and adjustment: A family study. *Personality and Individual Differences, 10*(1), 71-74.

Jones, D. (2012). Does servant leadership lead to greater customer focus and employee development? *Business Studies Journal, 4*(2), 21-35.

Judge, T. A., Colbert, A. E., & Ilies, R. (2004). Intelligence and leadership: A quantitative review and test of theoretical propositions. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 89*(3), 542-552.

Keith, K. M. (2012). *The case for servant leadership*. Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership.

Kouzes, J. M., & Posner, B. Z. (2002). *The leadership challenge* (3 ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Laub, J. (2004). *Defining servant leadership: A recommended typology for servant leadership studies.* Paper presented at the Servant Leadership Roundtable.

Leonard, H. S. (1997). The many faces of character. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 49*, 235-245.

Lewis, M. (2008). Self-conscious emotions: Embarrassment, pride, shame, and guilt. In M. Lewis, J. M. Haviland-Jones & L. F. Barrett (Eds.), *Handbook of emotions* (3 ed., pp. 742-756). New York:NY: Guilford.

Lian, H., Brown, D. J., Ferris, D. L., Liang, L. H., Keeping, L. M., & Morrison, R. (2012). Abusive supervision and retaliation: A self-control framework. *Academy of Management Journal, 57*(1), 116-139.

Lichtenwalner, B. (2015). Servant leadership companies list. Retrieved from http://modernservantleader.com/featured/servant-leadership-companies-list/

Liden, R. C., Wayne, S. J., Liao, C., & Meuser, J. D. (2014). Servant leadership and serving culture: Influence on individual and unit performance. *Academy of Management Journal, 57*(5), 1434-1452.

Liden, R. C., Wayne, S. J., Zhao, H., & Henderson, D. (2008). Servant leadership: Development of a multidimensional measure and multi-level assessment. *The Leadership Quarterly, 19*(2),

161-177.

Lorinkova, N. M., Pearsall, M. J., & Sims Jr, H. P. (2013). Examining the differential longitudinal performance of directive versus empowering leadership in teams. *Academy of Management Journal, 56*(2), 573-596.

Manz, C. C. (2011). *The leadership wisdom of Jesus: Practical lessons for today* (3 ed.). San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc.

Maoz, Z., & Henderson, E. A. (2013). The world religion dataset, 1945–2010: Logic, estimates, and trends. *International Interactions, 39*(3), 265-291.

Martin, S. L., Liao, H. U. I., & Campbell, E. M. (2013). Directive versus empowering leadership: A field experiment comparing impacts on task proficiency and proactivity. *Academy of Management Journal, 56*(5), 1372-1395.

Nash, R. J. (1996). *"Real world" ethics: Frameworks for educators and human service professionals*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Nelissen, R. M. A., Breugelmans, S. M., & Zeelenberg, M. (2013). Reappraising the moral nature of emotions in decision making: The case of shame and guilt. *Social & Personality Psychology Compass, 7*(6), 355-365.

Page, D., & Wong, T. P. (2000). A conceptual framework for measuring servant-leadership. In S. Adjibolooso (Ed.), *The human factor in shaping the course of history and development* (pp. 69-110). Lanham, MD: University Press of America.

Parris, D. L., & Peachey, J. W. (2012). Building a legacy of volunteers through servant leadership: A caus - event. *Nonprofit Management and Leadership, 23*(2), 259-276.

Peterson, S. J., Galvin, B. M., & Lange, D. (2012). CEO servant leadership: Exploring executive characteristics and firm performance. *Personnel Psychology, 65*, 565-596.

Reichert, S. P. (2015). What are the three theological virtues? *About Religion*. Retrieved from http://catholicism.about.com/od/beliefsteachings/f/FAQ_Theo_Virtue.htm

Rhoades, L., & Eisenberger, R. (2002). Perceived organizational support: A review of the literature. *Journal of Applied*

Psychology, 87(4), 698-714.

Riggio, R. E., & Reichard, R. J. (2008). The emotional and social intelligences of effective leadership: An emotional and social skill approach. *Journal of Managerial Psychology, 23*(2), 169-185.

Rivkin, W., Diestel, S., & Schmidt, K.-H. (2014). The positive relationship between servant leadership and employees' psychological health: A mult-method approach. *German Journal of Human Resource Research, 28*(1-2), 52-72.

Rockstuhl, T., Seiler, S., Ang, S., Van Dyne, L., & Annen, H. (2011). Beyond general intelligence (IQ) and emotional intelligence (EQ): The role of cultural intelligence (CQ) on cross-border leadership effectiveness in a globalized world. *Journal of Social Issues, 67*(4), 825-840.

Russell, R. F., & Stone, A. G. (2002). A review of servant leadership attributes: Developing a practical model. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal, 23*(3), 145-157.

Savage-Austin, A. R., & Honeycutt, A. (2011). Servant leadership: A phenomenological study of practices, experiences, organizational effectiveness, and barriers. *Journal of Business & Economics Research, 9*(1), 49-54.

Schaumberg, R. L., & Flynn, F. J. (2012). Uneasy lies the head that wears the crown: The link between guilt proneness and leadership. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 103*(2), 327-342.

Schmader, T., & Lickel, B. (2006). The approach and avoidance function of guilt and shame emotions: Comparing reactions to self-caused and other-caused wrongdoing. *Motivation & Emotion, 30*(1), 42.

Schwarzkopf, N. (1998). A lesson in leadership [Video file]. Retrieved February 26, 2015, from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZgWCdqKYY-k

Sendjaya, S., Sarros, J. C., & Santora, J. C. (2008). Defining and measuring servant leadership behavior in organizations. *Journal of Management Studies, 45*(2), 402-424.

Singleton, J. A., & Nissen, L. M. (2014). Future-proofing the pharmacy profession in a hypercompetitive market. *Research In Social & Administrative Pharmacy: RSAP, 10*(2), 459-468.

Spears, L. C. (2004). Practicing servant leadership. *Leader to Leader, 34*(7), 7-11.

Stone, A. G., Russell, R. F., & Patterson, K. (2004). Transformational versus servant leadership: A difference in leader focus. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal, 25*(4), 349-361.

Tangney, J. P. (1999). The self-conscious emotions: Shame, guilt, embarrassment and pride. In T. Dalgleish & M.J. Power (Eds.), *Handbook of cognition and emotion* (pp. 541-568). Chichester, England: Wiley.

Tangney, J. P., & Dearing, R. L. (2003). *Shame and guilt*. New York: Guilford Press.

Tangney, J. P., Wagner, P., Fletcher, C., & Gramzow, R. (1992). Shamed into anger? The relation of shame and guilt to anger and self-reported aggression. *Journal of personality and social psychology, 62*(4), 669.

Thompson, A. D., Grahek, M., Phillips, R. E., & Fay, C. L. (2008). The search for worthy leadership. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 60*(4), 366-382.

Thompson, A. D., & Riggio, R. E. (2010). Introduction to special issue on defining and measuring character in leadership. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 62*(4), 211-215.

Tidball, D. (2012). Leaders as servants: A resolution of the tension. *Evangelical Review of Theology, 36*(1), 31-47.

Turner, W. B. (2003). Ten characteristics of a servant leader [CD ROM]. Columbus, GA. Columbus State University.

van Dierendonck, D. (2011). Servant leadership: A review and synthesis. *Journal of Management, 37*(4), 1228-1261.

van Dierendonck, D., & Patterson, K. (2014). Compassionate love as a cornerstone of servant leadership: An integration of previous theorizing and research. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *128*(1), 119-131.

Veliyath, R., & Shrivastava, P. (1996). Hypercompetition: Managing the dynamics of strategic maneuvering. *Academy of Management Review, 21*(1), 291-294.

Yukl, G. (2006). *Leadership in Organizations* (6 ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall.

Zhou, Y., & Miao, Q. (2014). Servant leadership and affective commitment in the Chinese public sector: The mediating role of perceived organizational support. *Psychol Rep, 115*(2), 381-395.

_____

Kevin J. Hurt, PhD (University of Texas-Pan American) is an Assistant Professor of Management at the Turner College of Business at Columbus State University. Prior to Academics, he worked for 15 years with two Fortune 500 companies in the fields of banking and manufacturing. His primary research interests include servant leadership, conflict, and human resource management. His work has been published in the Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies, Human Resources Development International, and the Journal of Management & Entrepreneurship. He has also presented his research at the Academy of Management, European Academy of Management, Southern Management Association and various regional conferences. He has been recognized as an Outstanding Reviewer by the Academy of Management OB division, and is a recipient of the Graduate Faculty of the Year award at CSU. Finally, he served 6 years in the United States Marine Corps, 4th Marine Division, where he was nationally recognized for his leadership abilities.

CPT Matt Heath was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the Infantry Branch in 2008 from Clemson University in South Carolina with a degree in Financial Management. He holds a Master of Science in Organizational Leadership from Columbus State University. He served as an infantry Platoon Leader in Bravo Company and afterwards as the Executive

Officer in Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1-504 PIR, 82nd ABN at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. He has served as a Ranger Instructor and is currently assigned to "The Rock," 2-503D IN, 173rd (A) at Caserma Del Din, Vicenza, Italy, serving in a second command in Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1-503D IN, 173rd (A).