## Instructor Assigned Essay or Project

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| Course Learning Journal |

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November (20, 2023)

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The Church's Obligation Through Servant Leadership For Social Change

**Introduction**

In today's world, leadership is highly valued and often pursued. However, not all leaders are created equal. From my personal experience, I strongly believe that persuasive communication can produce better and longer-lasting results when leadership is based on kindness and servanthood. This is because when leaders approach their roles with humility, they tend to focus more on the needs and perspectives of their audience, and this ultimately leads to better outcomes. On the other hand, leaders who are only interested in wielding their power and authority often overlook the needs and perspectives of those they lead. They tend to be more concerned about imposing their will on others, which can lead to resentment and resistance. It is important to note that leaders who prioritize servanthood over authority are powerful tools to influence the attitudes and behaviors of others.

The idea of servant leadership is gaining momentum in today's world as people begin to realize the true value of kindness and empathy in leadership. Therefore, I strongly argue that leadership based on servanthood is not only effective but also necessary for the growth and success of any organization or community. behaviors and attitudes that transform individuals, families, and society. In Mark 3:17, Jesus was involved in changing individual disciples and families. John and James were brothers, the sons of Zebedee. This amazing pair of self-centered and self-serving brothers became faithful and selfless servants of Jesus. Along the way, they had much to overcome, beginning with themselves. The result was complete loyalty and service to the master all the way. Mark 1:16–20; Matthew 4:18–22; Luke 5:2-11, Peter was fishing with his brother Andrew. Jesus famously said, “Come, follow me, and I will make you fishers of men,” and Peter and Andrew immediately left their nets and followed him. Look at the pattern here of Jesus calling these families to follow Him so He could make them fishers of men. Paul was an individual who had no family mentioned when he came to follow Jesus. Back to the point that Jesus wants to change individuals and families to change society.

1. **Personal Experience**

While servant leadership and persuasive communication may be effective in some instances, they don't always guarantee success. As the founder and director of a faith-based organization, Grace Sufficient Organization (GSO), I have found that even with the best of intentions, there will always be people who will oppose your ideas, no matter how clear and convincing your arguments are. Sometimes, people's opinions are so entrenched that no amount of persuasive communication will sway them. Moreover, in some cases, modifying the message to fit the audience's unique requirements and preferences might not be practical. For instance, if the message goes against the audience's core beliefs, then it is unlikely that they will be persuaded, no matter how well the message is presented.

In addition, while it is important to bring about change, it is equally important to maintain the integrity and reputation of the organization. Traditional organizations would worry about being mindful of their brand image to ensure that their stakeholders perceive them positively. While faith-based organizations are committed to bringing about positive change, they also need to ensure that they are not alienating their audience or damaging their reputation. The motivation behind the avoidance approach is discussed in the article "Servant Leadership and Follower's Voice: The Roles of Followers Felt Responsibility for Constructive Change" (2019). The statements made by the author, Ghulam Ali, and the peers raise an important point about the influence of servant leaders on individuals who are avoidance-motivated and tend to use prohibitive forms of voice since it is easy to see how such individuals may perceive that servant leaders have a lower level of influence on them. However, I would argue that this perception is misguided and based on a narrow understanding of what it means to be a servant leader.

Research has shown that servant leaders can be highly effective in motivating and engaging their team members, including avoidance-motivated ones. This is because servant leaders prioritize the needs of their team members and create a supportive environment where individuals feel valued and heard. By doing so, they inspire trust and loyalty in their team members, leading to increased influence and effectiveness. Leaders need to understandir team members' motivations and communication styleir team members' motivations and communication styles, but this does not mean they should change their leadership approach to cater to every individual's preferences. Instead, leaders should create a open communication and collaboration culture where all team members feel empowered to voice their concerns and ideas. This approach will improve the effectiveness of servant leaders and benefit the organization as a whole. While the concerns raised by the authors, Ghulam Ali, and his peers are valid, I strongly believe that servant leaders can be highly influential and effective in motivating and engaging their team members, regardless of their communication styles. Servant leaders prioritize the needs of their team members and work towards creating a collaborative and supportive environment that empowers every member to contribute and thrive. This leadership style is not just about giving orders but also about leading by example and making sure that everyone has a voice in the decision-making process. In my opinion, servant leadership is essential for the growth and success of any organization, as it promotes a culture of inclusivity and mutual respect. Therefore, I respectfully disagree with the authors' stance and firmly believe that servant leadership is a valuable approach that every leader should strive to emulate.

1. **Essential Elements of Servant Leadership**

This article appears in Google Scholar as ‘*Characteristics of Servant Leadership Can Supplement Army Leadership Requirements’* (2019). Uddin Shahin, an Army commander and general staff member at College Fort Leavenworth in Kansas, states for his thesis at North Georgia College and State University, Dahlonega, GA, that the role of a leader is to decide on strategy, give instructions, and set the direction, or to serve as a facilitator to assist the group in achieving common objectives. Servant leaders are frequently described as prioritizing their followers' personal and professional development needs above all else. "Servant leadership" concerns how leaders treat their subordinates and the outcomes that are likely to emerge. "It requires being honest with the followers and treating them fairly as a leader; it's easy to fall into the trap of thinking that leadership is about having power and control over others. However, servant leadership provides a different perspective on what it means to be a leader. One of their defining behaviors and skills is their ability to listen to and develop long-term relationships with their followers. Servant leadership should be a key characteristic of all leaders. Some may argue that servant leadership goes against the grain of a hierarchical leader-centric organization like the military or a corporation. After all, we want our leaders to lead rather than follow. However, even in a hierarchical organization, leaders must serve as servants of the profession. This is because the success of a team or organization is dependent on the well-being and welfare of its members. By putting their followers' needs and concerns above their own, servant leaders can create a high-functioning, motivated, engaged, and productive team. Robert K. Greenleaf, the father of the term "servant leadership," developed the concept during his forty years of employment at AT&T. According to Greenleaf, leaders must put their followers' welfare and well-being first. This means attending to their needs and concerns and prioritizing their growth and development. Servant leaders can create a culture of trust, respect, and collaboration where everyone feels valued and heard. An article from Ministry Magazine discusses how preaching or speaking can be used to persuade others. According to the article, the ancient Greeks regarded public speaking as an art form and believed there were three ways to persuade people. My opinion is that if you want to achieve effective communication, you must incorporate logos, pathos, and ethos, according to Carlos on Transforming Ethos.

In the realm of communication, it is fascinating to observe how logos and pathos work together to persuade the audience. Logos relies on logical reasoning and sound arguments to convince the audience, while pathos appeals to the audience's emotions and feelings to create a connection with the message to bring about transformation. In the book 'Transforming Ethos' by Rocco Carlo, ethos refers to the audience's perception of the speaker's personality. This perception plays a vital role in determining the message's trustworthiness and credibility. According to Carlo, the three elements of logos, pathos, and ethos must be skillfully combined to create a message that resonates with the audience and motivates them to take action. The absence of any of these elements may result in a less compelling, less convincing, or less impactful message on the audience.

In the context of social change, it is critical to remember that personal behavior plays a significant role in shaping students' perceptions of the message. When it comes to bringing about social change, we should keep in mind that our behavior can greatly impact how students perceive and act upon our message. As change agents, we need to be aware of our actions, as they can greatly influence the audience's reception and implementation of our message.

**Servant Leadership and Culture Collaboration**

The ‘*Handbook of Religion and Communication by John Wiley & Sons* includes considering cultural background in communicating, which will lead a servant leader to bridge the gap between cultures, tribes, races, and social classes by listening more to get to understand so you may help more. This is something to watch closely; otherwise, we leave some out. Ignoring cultural differences can lead to the exclusion and perpetuation of stereotypes, further deepening the divide between different groups. We should strive to be understanding and respectful of others' cultural backgrounds. By doing so, we can foster greater understanding and build stronger communities.

We all must try to bridge the gap between different groups, regardless of our backgrounds or beliefs. We must embrace our differences and work together towards a common goal of unity and acceptance. Leaders can create a culture of excellence where everyone feels empowered and motivated to achieve their goals. So, let's embrace servant leadership and become leaders that our followers deserve.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, while servant leadership and cultural understanding are certainly important concepts, it is important to approach these ideas with a critical eye and consider the potential downsides and limitations. While the idea of serving others and bridging cultural divides may seem appealing, it is important to recognize that these goals can be challenging to achieve and may not always lead to the desired outcomes. By acknowledging the potential drawbacks of these approaches, we can develop a more nuanced and effective approach to leadership and community-building that takes into account the complex realities of our diverse world. While striving for unity and understanding is important, it is important to recognize and respect the differences between individuals and groups and develop a more nuanced understanding of what it means to be an effective leader in today's world. Ultimately, by embracing a more critical and thoughtful approach to these concepts, we can build stronger, more resilient communities that are better equipped to face future challenges. The article ‘*Effectiveness of Transformational Leadership among Different Cultures’* by Poturak, M., adds to the cultural arguments; he says, ‘On one hand, the growing body of literature argues for the effectiveness of transformational leadership. On the other hand, cultural background impacts this leadership style differently. Further, he explains culture as shared assumptions, beliefs, attitudes, or beliefs that help individuals or groups respond to various actions or events they face daily. Besides, leadership is the art of influencing others to achieve desired objectives in organizations. On one hand, the growing body of literature argues for the effectiveness of transformational leadership.

Culture is what makes us who we are, what we do, how we talk, relate, dress, and how we live our daily lives; culture is our DNA. Simply respecting cultures is very important when practicing servant leadership, whereas ordinary leadership does not care much about it. The key concepts or theories in transformational leadership are creating a vision to model and transform others to become change agents in society, which means justice as a ministry of philosophers in environmental justice. According to Jae Webb, he argues, “I call this the practice of *co-laborating* with the marginalized and oppressed. In this paper, I present two such co-laborers who have engaged in the work of field philosophy for environmental justice as servant-leaders.” Whereas traditional leadership focuses on the success of the company or organization, servant leadership puts employees first to grow the organization through their commitment and engagement. When implemented correctly, servant leadership can help foster trust, accountability, growth, and inclusion in the workplace.

Last but not least, Asi shows in the article ‘*International Journal of Leadership’* (2018*)* that it is clear from biblical foundations that Jesus Christ personified the idea of a servant leader in Matthew 20:25–28 (NIV): 25 But Jesus called them to Himself and said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those who are great exercise authority over them. 26 Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave—just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve and to give His life a ransom for many.” The above scripture notifies mankind that it is the fundamental duty of the leader not to head for exercising authority or power. Being the Son of God by Himself, Christ Jesus never felt the need to exercise the power but to serve the need with His compassionate love and merciful grace to mankind. He just accomplished his duty by instructing the leaders to serve first rather than be leaders. provides a firm foundation for a paradigm shift in organizational leadership in terms of servant leadership, whereas traditional organizational leaders do the opposite to lord over.

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