Perspectives on Servant-Leadership & Spirit in Organizations

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The precepts of servant-leadership, described by Robert K. Greenleaf, are the focal points around which this study was conducted. The study was designed to gain a measure of the extent of servant-leadership and personal aspects of spirit within the organizations, rather than as an attempt to measure the servant-leadership and spirit of certain organizational leaders. The quantitative study was designed to enhance understanding of servant-leadership and spirit in organizations.

Background

In the 1960s and 1970s, Greenleaf (1977) described a "crisis of leadership" wherein society's institutional administrators were choosing the wrong kind of leaders (p. 4). The crisis, Greenleaf noted, developed from an inappropriate focus of administrators who placed too much importance on perfection, too much attention on analytical problem solving, and too much emphasis on self-protection and self-aggrandizement (pp. 10-11). In response to the crisis, Greenleaf, a man committed to transforming the institutions of our society into more caring and societally-serving organizations, proposed an alternative leadership theory, *servant-leadership,* which focuses on the "application of the philosophy of service to the practice of leadership" (Spears, 1998, p. xi); wherein the notion of service was connected to the "deepest yearnings of the human spirit" (p. xii), making the primary motivation for the servant-leader a choice to serve. From this notion of servanthood emerged certain concepts, values, and skills, some of

which are described by Spears (1995) as listening, empathy, healing, aware-ness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to people, and community building (pp. 5-7). These concepts, values, and skills are now being prescribed as desirable leadership characteristics for the modern era (Spears, 1998).

A review of the business and educational literature found that the pre-disposition and core concepts embedded in Greenleaf's philosophy are fun-damental prescriptions for the twenty-first century leader (Bennis & Mische, 1995; Bennis & Nanus, 1998; Block, 1987; Covey, 1992; Drucker, 1999; Jaworski, 1996; Kelly, 1999; Senge, 1997; Spears, 1995; Spears, 1998; Thompson, 2000; Wheatley, 1994; Zohar, 1997, 2004). Much of the leadership literature advocates for the adoption of the concepts of servant-leadership by organizational leaders; however, little research had been con-ducted on the characteristics of servant-leaders. From the results of qualita-tive studies (Larkin, 1995; Taylor-Gillham, 1998; Van Kuik, 1998; Wheaton, 1999), it was evident that some organizational leaders were mod-eling servant-leadership characteristics; however, there was little quantita-tive research designed to assess servant-leadership characteristics (Livovich, 1999) as described by Spears (1998).

A quantitative study by Laub (1999) defined critical aspects of ser-vant-leadership for the purpose of gaining a measure of the extent of ser-vant-leadership in organizations. From his research Laub developed the Organizational Leadership Assessment (OLA) instrument, designed to assess the presence of servant-leadership in an organization by surveying members from the various levels of the entire organization. As servant-leadership is fundamentally a relational theory, it makes sense that research should include the perspectives of the leadership group as well as perspec-tives of employees throughout the organization. It seemed appropriate that evidence of core aspects of the practice and application of servant-leader-ship should be found through assessing all members of the organization. Laub's definition (presented below) addressed six of the core actions that servant-leaders and servant-organizations are perceived to practice. This

study was thus undertaken using Laub's OLA instrument in an effort to support and further the findings on servant-leadership in organizations.

An important topic area in which the business and educational research was almost nonexistent was that of spirit with regard to servant-leadership, even though Greenleaf often stressed the importance of spirit. Greenleaf (1996) defined spirit as "the animating force that disposes persons to be servants of others" (p. 11). He proposed that spirit provides the servant-leader with the necessary motive, inner strength, and integrity required to serve others authentically (p. 125). In a qualitative study, Taylor-Gillham (1998) indicated that the spirit of the personal self and the spirit of intent to serve others in a mutual purpose are two aspects of spirit imbedded in the concept of servant-leadership (p. 35). Aspects of the human spirit, then, should be implicitly and perhaps explicitly present along with the characteristics of servant-leaders; therefore, a more explicit acknowledgment of spirit and its importance to servant-leadership warranted further investigation.

The importance of spirit in organizations is well acknowledged. A review of the management and leadership literature found that spirit is not only considered to be a necessary aspect of leadership and more expressly of servant-leadership, but is also considered to be a vital aspect of human and organizational well being (Berends, 1990; Bolman & Deal, 1995; Conley & Wagner-Marsh, 1998; Covey, 1998, 1999; Gardiner, 1998; Greenleaf, 1977, 1996, 1998; Hunter, 1998; Markham, 1999; Owen, 1999; Palmer, 1998; Rieser, 1995; Scherer, 1993; Spears, 1998; Taylor-Gillham, 1998; Thompson, 2000; Spitzer, 2000; Zohar, 1997, 2004). Nevertheless, at the time of this study, it was not possible to identify quantitative research that had been done to assess whether a relationship existed between spirit and servant-leadership. Thus, further investigation into the nature of spirit and its association with servant-leadership seemed justified.

A search of previously developed instruments identified the Personal Development Inventory (McMahon & Wilson, 1999) to be an informative instrument for quantitatively measuring personal aspects of spirit. The Per-

sonal Development Inventory (PDI) was somewhat compatible in vocabulary and design with Laub's instrument, as it was designed to assess aspects of spirit within the constructs of personal awareness, alignment, and empowerment. A review of the literature revealed that the concepts of awareness, alignment, and empowerment are themes similar to concepts Greenleaf and others described (Connors, 1999; Covey, 1999; Greenleaf, 1996, 1977; Gardiner, 1998; Hawley, 1993; Koopman, 1999; Millman, 1995; Moore, 1992; Owen, 1999; Palmer, 1998; Weiser; 1999; Zukav, 1989). The concepts appeared time and again in reference to spirit in organizations, were prevalent in organizational literature, and seemed familiar to most people who work in organizations.

The PDI assesses one of two aspects of spirit referred to in Taylor-Gillham's (1998) study. The PDI is designed to assess "the spirit of the personal self"; however, it does not address the "spirit of intent to serve others in a mutual purpose." An instrument designed to assess aspects of the spirit of the personal self was judged to be enough to begin the research on spirit and servant-leadership and was used in this study to search for a relationship between personal aspects of spirit and the characteristics of servant-leadership defined by Laub (1999).

In acknowledgement that the OLA and the PDI instruments were designed to measure very different phenomena, and out of an endeavor to further establish a connection between organizational aspects of life at work and personal aspects of spirit, the notion of congruity was considered as a possible link between work life and personal life. The idea of assessing congruity was stimulated by literature that suggested there was movement toward more holism in the work environment, and from Greenleaf's views on healing and community building, and from the notion that both organizational and personal transformation arise from the spiritual level (Lee & Zemke, 1995; Greenleaf, 1977; Zohar, 1996). In the context of the two primary instruments, congruity might serve as a link connecting work life and personal dimensions of spirit. Three constructs of congruity were therefore added to the PDI instrument as a possible assessment of the rap-

port between personal life and work life. Because of this change and to avoid future confusion, the adjusted instrument was renamed the Dimensions of Spirit instrument for the purpose of the study.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to assess a variety of organizations to discover the perceived extent of servant-leadership characteristics; to discover whether a relationship existed between personal dimensions of spirit and servant-leadership; to discover whether there was congruity between personal dimensions of spirit and work life; and to discover whether differences existed in perceived characteristics of servant-leadership, personal dimensions of spirit, and congruity based on personal and organizational demographics.

The research questions for this study include the following: 1) to what extent do organizations and their leaders today exhibit the characteristics of servant-leadership? 2) Is there a significant relationship between servant-leadership and personal dimensions of spirit in the organizations? Is there congruity between personal dimensions of spirit and one's perceptions of life and work in organizations? 3) Are servant-leadership, spirit, and congruity perceived differently by employees within the organization based on different personal demographic characteristics such as (a) gender, (b) age, (c) level of education, (d) ethnic origin; and different organizational demographics (e) organizational type, (f) years with the organization, and (g) position or role? To address these questions, two survey instruments were combined: the Organizational Leadership Assessment and the Dimensions of Spirit instrument (OLA-DS).

Definitions

Servant-leadership

Servant-leadership (as defined by Laub, 1999) is an understanding and

practice of leadership that places the good of those led over the self-interest of the leader. Servant-leadership promotes the valuing and development of people; the building of community; the practice of authenticity; the providing of leadership for the good of those led; and the sharing of power and status for the common good of each individual, the organization as a whole, and those served by the organization.

Accordingly, Laub developed the OLA instrument with subscales for each of the following six constructs:

> 1) Values people by (a) believing in people, (b) serving other's needs before his or her own, and (c) receptive, non-judgmental listening. 2) Develops people by (a) providing opportunities for learning and growth, (b) modeling appropriate behavior, and (c) building up others through encouragement and affirmation. 3) Builds community by (a) building strong personal relationships, (b) working collaboratively with others, and (c) valuing the differences of others. 4) Displays authenticity by (a) being open and accountable to others, (b) a willingness to learn from others, and (c) maintaining integrity and trust. 5) Provides leadership by (a) envisioning the future, (b) taking initiative, and (c) clarifying goals. 6) Shares leadership by (a) facilitating a shared vision, (b) sharing power and releasing control, and (c) sharing status and promoting others. (Laub, 1999, p. 83)

The servant-organization

The servant-organization is an organization in which the characteristics of servant-leadership are displayed through the organizational culture and are valued and practiced by the leadership and workforce (Laub, 1999, p. 83).

Professional Development Inventory

The three constructs of alignment, awareness and empowerment make up the context of the Professional Development Inventory.

Alignment is (a) seeking balance in life including mind, body, spirit, and work, play, family, (b) seeking fulfillment from life, (c) living in gratitude and acceptance of what life offers, (d) being at peace with a sense of self-acceptance and self-love, (e) living aligned with one's values and beliefs with honesty. Awareness is (a) perceiving meaning and purpose in life, (b) seeing value in new opportunities, (c) being aware of one's own feelings and thought, (d) being aware of the spiritual dimension in terms of something greater than self and the experience of contemplation, prayer, and/or meditation, (e) sensing a connectedness of self with others and something greater. Empowerment is (a) reaching out to others with affection, (b) allowing others to know one's real-self by being open and self-assured, (c) being open to feedback and listening openly and with confidence, (d) being aware of one's personal power and sense of choice, (e) seeking resolution, taking action and risks, and living passionately. (C. McMahon, personal communication, March 14, 2000)

Congruity

For the purpose of this study, congruity in the context of servant-leadership and dimensions of spirit means that there is corresponding harmony between one's perceptions of one's personal life and one's work life. In other words, the personal internal experiences are consistently lived out in the external work environment. Three congruity statements were developed: A) My sense of fulfillment in life is congruent with my sense of fulfillment at work; B) The organizational environment enhances my overall sense of wholeness; and C) How I perform and relate at work is similar to my life in general.

METHODOLOGY

The study was a cross-sectional analysis of servant-leadership and spirit in organizations. The basic units of analysis were individual respondents who were members of an organization. A representative sample of a variety of organizations was surveyed. The objective was to survey an organization or a representative group within an organization to obtain a

perception of the servant-leadership and dimensions of spirit within the organization.

A non-probability convenience sample was utilized for the purpose of the study. Organizations with five or more employees comprised the heterogeneous sample. The sample consisted of voluntary participants who worked in a variety of organizations at all levels, including top management, middle management, lower management, and regular employees, as well as volunteers.

The overall OLA instrument reliability scores for Laub's (1999) study (alpha .9802) and for this (Horsman, 2001) study (alpha .9870) were similar, as were the reliability scores of the six constructs. Findings with regard to means and standard deviations of each of the six OLA subscales—Values People, Develops People, Builds Community, Displays Authenticity, Provides Leadership, and Shares Leadership—were relatively consistent with Laub's (1999) study.

The Dimensions of Spirit instrument is an unpublished survey instrument designed to be used as a pre-test and a post-test for participants of spirit enhancement workshops. The Dimensions of Spirit instrument was designed to assess an individual's personal sense of spirit within the workplace (McMahon, March 14, 2000, & Wilson, May 9, 2000, personal communication). The original overall reliability score for the McMahon & Wilson (alpha .9306) and this (Horsman, 2001) study (alpha .9494) were similar, as were the reliability scores of the constructs.

The statistics derived from the survey responses were used to make inferences about the general population. Efforts to generalize measures of the characteristics of servant-leaders and spirit to a large population are superficial at best; however, even superficial measures can provide valuable information where previously little or none existed. The survey was helpful in establishing the existence of servant-leadership in organizations, and beneficial in describing and identifying some of the features of servant-leadership and the degree to which they were present in the organizations studied.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents a condensed edited selection of the findings and discussion sections of the original study. The OLA-DS instruments were used to survey members of 34 organizations of various organizational types, yielding 608 usable survey instruments. The six organizational types were educational, government, health care, for profit, non-profit, and religious. Participating organizations were located in Alberta, Canada, and in the states of California, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington. Organizations participated in entirety, or as a unit or group from within the larger organization.

Research Question One: To what extent do organizations and their leaders today exhibit the characteristics of servant-leadership? The data collected from the OLA portion of the survey showed the perceived extent of servant-leadership in the organizations studied. The overall mean score for the 34 organizations was 214.74 out of a possible score of 300 (with a standard deviation of 45.58). This mean is an overall measure of the extent to which servant-leadership was perceived to exist in the 34 organizations studied. The mean score was slightly lower proportionally than that of Laub's (1999) revised instrument, which had a mean of 223.74 (with a standard deviation of 41.08). OLA instrument item-to-item correlations were computed (see Table I). All items correlated and were positive, and all were significant at p < .01. The lowest item-to-item correlated was .26 and the highest was .80. Laub's findings differed in that the lowest correlation item from his field test was .41 and the highest was .79. Generally, the OLA instrument demonstrated consistent results between the two studies.

Table I
The OLA means and standard deviations for the Laub and Horsman studies

Study	n	Min	Max	Mean	Std
Laub (1999) field test	828	74	370	278.77	48.78
Laub (1999) revised instrument	828	60	300	223.79	41.08
Horsman (2001)	540	60	300	214.74	48.57

The differences in the lower mean score for this study compared with Laub's study may have occurred for several reasons. Possibly the organizations in this study were less familiar with concepts of servant-leadership. Laub (1999) noted that a possible weakness of his study was that many of the organizations that participated knew him and/or were familiar with servanthood concepts (p. 86). In this study, on the contrary, almost none of the organizational members knew the researcher, and the researcher was not familiar with the philosophy or practices of the organizations studied. Another possible explanation for the slightly lower score for this study is that it worked with a somewhat older sample (62% were over forty, compared with 47% for Laub's study). In both studies younger people were found to score the instrument higher than did older people. A further explanation for the different results is that there was a different percentage mix of organizational types between the two studies, which may have produced some differences. In brief, the difference in the mean scores between Laub's study and this study is likely due to a combination of the reasons presented above.

Slight differences aside, Laub's study and this study together substantiate that servant-leadership as defined was perceived to exist in the organizations studied. Convincing evidence for this assertion rests in the fact that the data represents the general perception of all who worked in the 34 organizations, as 70% of the information gathered in this study came from the workforce, while 30% came from supervisors, middle managers, and top leadership.

In a follow-up article, Laub (2005) indicated that the average score on the OLA instrument is 3.64 out of a possible 5 (on a Likert scale). The average score for the 34 respondent organizations that took part in this study was 3.58, slightly lower than the overall average. More significantly, Laub (2005) indicated that a score of 4 (out of a possible 5) on the OLA "is the score for identifying an organization as Servant" (p. 161). Accordingly, using 4 as the breakpoint reveals how many organizations can be identified as "Servant" (servant-organizations). Twelve (34%) of the 34

organizations that participated in this study, representing 5 types of organizations, had an overall score at or above the breakpoint and therefore were considered to be *servant-organizations*.

The breakpoint was subsequently applied as a standard to each of the six subscales of the designated twelve *servant-organizations*. The subscales are shown in Table II and marked with an asterisk if they were at or above the break point. Three organizations consistently scored at or above the break point for all six variables. Further examination shows that the variable *Values People* was the single variable that sustained a score at or above the breakpoint for each of the 12 servant-organizations. Valuing people appears to be a predominant construct of servant-leadership.

Table II
Sub-scores of the 12 servant-organizations at or above the break

The OLA sub-scales	12 servant-organizations designated by number												
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
Builds Community	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	11
Develops People	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*		*	*	10
Displays Authenticity	*		*	*			*	*	*	*	*	*	9
Provides Leadership			*	*		*	*	*					5
Shares Leadership	*			*			*	*	*	*	*	*	8
Values People	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	12

The breakpoint was met in a decreasing amount of cases for the other five variables. Interestingly, of the six constructs, *Provides Leadership* met the break point in the fewest cases. This observation may indicate a difference in the understanding and expectations of providing servant-leadership between the workforce and middle and upper management. An implication for those organizations desiring to raise awareness and the practice of servant-leadership is to focus training, for top leadership,

management, and the workforce, on aspects of providing leadership—namely by envisioning the future, taking initiative, and clarifying goals.

In response to the first research question, approximately one-third of the organizations studied were found to be servant-organizations. An evident implication of these finding is that aspects of servant-leadership are likely being practiced in many organizations. These findings lend credence to the claim that servant-leadership may become a 21st century model of leadership (Spears, 1998).

Research Question Two DS: Is there a significant relationship between servant-leadership and personal dimensions of spirit in the organizations studied? The Dimensions of Spirit instrument was used to search for a relationship between personal dimensions of spirit and servant-leadership. Data from 590 respondents produced an overall mean score of 164.77 out of a possible 210 with a standard deviation of 22.58. The findings were consistent with McMahon & Wilson's (1999) field test sample of 256 respondents with a mean score of 162.19 and a standard deviation of 20.94. The two studies appear to have produced consistent results. Correlations run between all 30 items showed that the items correlated with the DS instrument as a whole. All items were positive and all were significant at p < .01.

The means for the variables *Awareness*, *Alignment*, and *Empowerment* were within 1.5 points of McMahon and Wilson's (1999) field test, and the standard deviations were within .5 of the field test. Correlations were computed for the three DS subscales (*Awareness*, .873; *Alignment*, .815; *Empowerment*, .748). Each subscale correlated with all others; all correlations were positive and all were significant at p < .01. The positive correlation indicates that a linear relationship exists between subscales.

A two-tailed Pearson's correlation was computed to determine whether there was a relationship between servant-leadership and the three personal dimensions of spirit in the organizations studied. A significant positive correlation of .240 was found between the OLA instrument and the DS instrument (p < .01). Thus, a statistically significant relationship between

servant-leadership and personal dimensions of spirit was found to exist. The correlation coefficient is low, and although the positive correlation between the levels of servant-leadership and personal dimensions of spirit is significantly different from zero, it is not a strong association, as only 6% of the variance in the OLA total score is directly associated with the DS total score variance.

Using a similar breakpoint to that used for the OLA, a breakpoint of 5.6 (out of a possible 7 on a Likert scale) was assigned to indicate the presence of *spirit-carriers*—servants who nurture the human spirit (Greenleaf, 1996, p. 48) in organizations. The findings showed that 9 of the 34 organizations met the breakpoint. Of those 9 spirit-carrier organizations, 5 were from the group of 12 servant-organizations identified earlier. The results show that almost half of the servant-organizations indicated the presence of spirit-carriers in their organizations.

What might explain the low correlation, given that Greenleaf (1996) specifically defined spirit as "the animating force that disposes persons to be servants of others" (p. 11)? The way in which the OLA and the DS instruments were separately conceptualized may partly explain the low correlation. This might best be described as the difference between doing and being. By design, the OLA focuses outward from the individual's perspective on the organization, the leadership of the organization, and the respondent's role in the organization. In practice, the OLA measures what an organization's leadership is perceived to do, whereas the DS instrument is designed to assess each person's perception of spiritual well being based on the variables of personal awareness, alignment, and empowerment. Beazley (2003) suggests, "Servant-leadership is a state of mind, a philosophy of life, a way of being" (p. 10). From this perspective, the DS instrument might be considered an assessment of aspects of being rather than doing.

A further explanation is that perhaps the low correlation simply reflects a half or some proportion of the measure of the influence of spirit in servant-leadership. As stated earlier, the DS instrument was designed to

measure aspects of "the spirit of the personal self" and does not include the "spirit of intent to serve others in a mutual purpose" (Taylor-Gillham, 1998, p. 35). Greenleaf (1996) indicated that spirit is "the drive behind the urge to serve, the force that takes one into an active role as servant" (p. 81). If the spirit of this drive could be captured in an assessment instrument and the measurements included in a way complementary with the DS instrument, perhaps more of the aspects of the human spirit active in servant-organizations might be found. On the other hand, perhaps it would be simpler to design a new instrument that combines an assessment of both aspects of spirit present in servant-leadership. Either way, the development of a research instrument that assess the *spirit of intent to serve others in a mutual purpose,* or both aspects of spirit, seems warranted.

Another plausible explanation for results showing a low correlation between servant leadership and the aspects of spirit is that conceivably, much of the phenomenon of spirit present in servant-led organizations may be too indistinct and ephemeral to effectively measure empirically; thus, the findings might indicate that the theory in the literature cannot yet be well supported by empirical data. The multidimensional nature of spirit may require a different approach altogether.

In conclusion, this quantitative study showed that high levels of personal aspects of spirit can be found in some organizations, and specifically in some servant-organizations. Although not definitive, the findings do lend some credence to Greenleaf's (1996) assertion that spirit is an integral aspect of servant-leadership (p. 11). The finding does support the notion of a relationship between servant-leadership and spirit, and the positive correlation indicates that greater levels of servant-leadership may reflect higher levels of personal dimensions of spirit, and vice-versa. The fact that a significant positive relationship was found to exist between the OLA and the DS scores, on this first attempt at searching for the spiritual aspect of servant-leadership, calls for more research. The notion of organizational spirit associated with servant-leadership in this context requires further articulation, conceptualization, and development.

The second part of research question two concerned the construct of Congruity. *Is there congruity between personal dimensions of spirit (DS) and organizational life and work (OLA)?* Out of 602 respondents, the overall mean for Congruity, having a potential minimum possible score of 3 and a maximum of 21, was 14.83 and the standard deviation was 3.48. The Congruity questions were tested for item-to-item correlations. All three questions correlated, all were positive, and all were significant at $p < .01$. The lowest item-to-item correlation was .55 and the highest correlation was .68. Congruity between personal life and work life was found and was treated as a separate subscale.

Correlations between Congruity and the OLA (.504 at $p < .01$) and the DS (.511 at $p < .01$) instruments were conducted. Congruity was found to exist between personal dimensions of spirit and the work life of the respondents. Correlations were computed between Congruity and the six OLA subscales and the three DS subscales. The correlations were all positive and significant at $p < .01$. Between all 9 subscales, the item-to-item correlations ranged from .448 to .496, indicating that there were moderate positive correlations between Congruity and all of the servant-leadership and the dimensions of spirit subscales.

Congruity may be a new value construct for organizational assessment. Congruity correlations between the perceived presence of servant-leadership characteristics and dimensions of spirit were positive and evenly distributed at approximately .50. The positive correlation implies that improvements in one's work life might be reflected in improvements in one's personal life and vice versa. Thompson (2000) indicated that the movement toward Congruity reflects a natural search for meaning in work and personal life:

> [T]here is a need in almost all of us for a sense of connectedness and purpose in the events of our outer lives, and a deeply rooted desire for our inner lives to have a harmonious connection to a higher source of meaning and value. (p. 3)

Thompson suggests that the movement toward congruity is a natural human movement toward greater and greater harmony.

Another overtone of Congruity could be described as a flow between work life and home life. Helgesen (1995) indicated that today there is much more of a flow between work life and home life compared with the compartmentalization experienced in times when the hierarchy was more rigid (pp. 30-33). Helgesen referred to the flow between work life and home life as integration; the harmony of Congruity, then, may be a lens through which to view the integration of work life and personal life. The concepts of harmony and flow both support the overall conceptualization of the OLA instrument and the DS instrument, and the findings indicate that Congruity may be a useful subscale that has implications for organizational life and personal life. In conclusion, the concept of Congruity added information to the study and further research on the construct is warranted.

Research Question Three: Are servant-leadership, spirit, and congruity in organizations perceived differently by employees with different personal demographic characteristics, and different organizational demographics? The summary findings presented are focused only on the significant differences found in education levels and position roles for both the OLA and DS instruments.

Respondents in this study who were more highly educated tended to score the OLA and DS higher. Respondents with the highest education category (master's or doctoral degrees) on average scored the instruments significantly differently; they perceived more characteristics of servant-leadership and dimensions of spirit in their organizations than did respondents with no graduate degree. It is probable that aspects of the concepts and practice of servant-leadership (and therefore dimensions of spirit) were learned in their educational programs and this influenced the awareness, understanding, and perceptions of the respondents with graduate degrees in this study.

Whether in business for profit, community service, education, health care, or religion, those with graduate degrees likely experienced more train-

ing or exposure to self-development of servant-leadership characteristics and dimensions of spirit (alignment, awareness, and empowerment) concepts than did those with less education. A recent study by Livovich (1999) provides some support for the influence of higher learning. Using a different scale and different variables, Livovich found that superintendents of educational institutions who had a doctoral degree, along with other factors, reflected greater servant-leader characteristics (p. 1). The finding may indicate that attaining a graduate degree influences one's perception, understanding, and practice of servant-leadership characteristics.

For variable Position/Role, the OLA-DS instrument was divided into 3 groups, Top Leadership, Management/Supervisor, and Workforce. In the study top leaders and managers tended to score the OLA-DS higher than did the workforce. Although Top Leadership represented 8% of the respondents, their mean score was the largest, and the standard deviation was less than that of the other two groups, analysis showed top leadership scored the instrument significantly differently than did the workforce.

Laub's (1999) results were similar. He suggested that top leaders are insulated from the realities faced by their management and workforce; he proposed that to become better servants, top leaders needed to be aware that management and the workforce are experiencing the organization less positively than they are (p. 85); however, the experience and exposure of upper management may have given these leaders a clearer and more global conceptualization of the organization. Helgesen (1995) indicated that top leaders interact more with other leaders and the community and develop networks of relationships outside of the organization, and thus they may simply be more aware of how the organization functions (pp. 24-25). As a result, experience and exposure may have fostered more awareness of the concepts and information concerning servant-leadership and dimensions of spirit for those who led at the top echelon. In conclusion, a higher level of education and increased organizational experience and exposure may have enhanced the perceptions of servant-leadership characteristics and personal dimensions of spirit for those surveyed in the top leadership roles.

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