Role of a Servant leader in the Society & Economy

Dr. Abdul Rahman
Asst. Prof. in Commerce
Govt. PG College, Sambhal.(U.P.)

Abstract: Human resource is an important part of the organisation and the effective utilisation of human resources depends on the management. The management may get good results in the organisation by applying two methods, firstly by exercising its authority and secondly by winning support of the people in the organisation. The second method has an important effect on the people as it promotes the feelings of motivation. It is only possible when a manager becomes the leader in the real sense and influences the behaviour of people in desired direction.

Key words: Servant leader, Participative leader, culture of trust, humility, Persuasive, Passion, Self -awareness & empathy.

Objectives of the study:

- To study the traditional & servant leadership styles.
- To discuss the impact of servant leadership on society & economy
- To highlight the achievements of some servant leaders
- To suggest some measures for effective & influencing leadership.

Research Problems: There have been numerous researches on the topic but the problem is not solved. It is so because there is a lack of education & awareness programs on mass level among society. The most of the people are of the greedy nature and they want only economic return at the earliest.

Methodology: The study is based on secondary data collected from different sources such as published and published reports and websites of public and private sector undertakings and a mixture of data is used to reach the conclusions of the study.

Introduction:
Servant leadership is a philosophy developed by Robert K. Greenleaf in 1970s. Its main aim is to serve the members or followers. The leader & members may be different as in case of a company (manager & employees), school or college (teacher & his students) and organisation (Chairman / president & his team members/ followers).
A servant leader has strong will, good characteristics and habits of serving others. He has empathy, self –awareness, strong listening skill, and positive influence and encourages collaboration. The main focus in servant leadership is on the needs of its members and not on managing for results.
Koontz & O’ Donnel defined the leadership as the ability of a manager to motivate the subordinates to work with confidence & zeal. (Rao, 2022)
Louis A. Allen says that a leader is a person who provides guidance and directions to other people. He must give their efforts, directions and purpose.” (vandana)
Hersey and Blanchard defined Leadership as the process of influencing the activities of a person or a group of persons to attain the goals in a given situation.” (investoinfo, 2023)
According to John C. Maxwell, “A leader is a person who knows the way, goes the way and shows the way.” (Alumni Association, 2022)

After studying the above definitions, we may say that leadership is the quality of a person of serving and motivating others to influence their thoughts and actions in very useful, meaningful and achievable directions.

A servant leader has the following characteristics...

- A servant leader has the quality of listening others.
- He is persuasive and has the ability to influence, shape and transform the opinions/behaviours/actions of others without having any formal authority over them.
- A servant leader has the quality of healing or the quality of being able to resolve issues & conflicts.
- A servant leader with empathy, awareness & compassion builds a mentally and emotionally healthy workforce.
- A servant leader is foresighted. He learns lessons from the past, observes the realities of present and anticipates the likely consequences of a decision for future.
- Stewardship leader focuses on others and not on him. He invests in financial & emotional wellbeing of his employees. When workers feel valued & respected, they become stewards of the values & mission of the organisation.
- Leadership is a personal quality. This quality motivates the individuals to become a leader.
- It influences the individuals’ behaviour for achieving the organisational objectives.
- A leader’s actions inspire others to dream more, learn more and do more.
- A leader finds him by losing himself in the service of others.
- A leader’s objective is not to create followers but to create more leaders.
The knowledge & experience of a leader is not more important but his care for members is most important.
There is a close relationship between a leader and his followers.
It is a continuous process of influencing the behaviour of others.

Principles of servant leadership
- **Diversity of thoughts**: The members may have different thoughts but a good leader always takes advice of each & every person in the team respects them and then takes an important decision necessary & beneficial for the entire organisation.
- **Culture of trust**: When there is trust between employees & managers, customers & company, it has a long time effect on the organisation and promotes socio-economic development.
- **Developing leadership**: A servant leader by inviting his followers / members for participation in management develops leadership qualities in them and thus he supplies leaders for the future.
- **Unselfish mind-set**: A servant leader is never selfish. He always does sincere efforts for supporting & developing his followers and these efforts creates collaborative leadership among members and they are ready for better performance.

Qualities of a servant leader

- **Foresighted**
- **Listens others**
- **Transforms opinions into actions**
- **Self awareness & empathy**
- **Servant Leader**
- **Inspires, motivates & influences his followers**
- **Trust & respect**
- **Good relations in the organisation**

Different Styles of leadership
- **Autocratic style**: Here, most of the decisions are taken by the leader himself at top level and there is no opportunity for subordinates or followers. Such style is mostly found in manufacturing & construction industries and military type organisations. Selection of a topic himself & giving lecture to the students is also an autocratic style of a teacher. Hitler & Napoleon Bonaparte were the political leaders who adopted this style.
- **Democratic style**: It is also known as Participative style. A leader provides opportunities to his followers for participation in management. A democratic leader always takes decisions by taking advices or after knowing views of people in the organisation. He invites the representatives of subordinates / employees and in this way creates better relations among employees & peaceful environment for work. This type of leadership is found out in most of the countries of the world as India, USA, UK, in Colleges & Universities and various forms of business organisations & work places.
- **Authoritarian style**: The leaders mobilises people towards a vision.
- **Permissive style**: a leader believes that his subordinates have proper knowledge about work and the way of doing work. He doesn’t want to interfere in the work of his subordinates. He provides the necessary resources but decision making is done by subordinates. A leader thus exists for the name and he is neither active nor dominant.
- **Bureaucratic style**: It is based on formal rules & regulations as in military organisation or police department. IAS Officers function in bureaucratic style. There is a hierarchical structure or clear chain of command and each level of hierarchy has a specific area of responsibility. (Drew, 2023)
- **Professional style:** In this style, leadership is recognised as profession. A leader must have more education & experience of that field as MBA, MFC, MTA, CA, ICWA etc.
- **Servant leadership style:** This style put the needs of other first. (IMD, 2023). A servant leader always gets feedback and accepts his criticism from his followers which in turn constantly improves servant leadership skills and team members also feel free to give honest feedback about the issues or problems they encounter with projects. It may create an innovative and flexible work environment. He always leads by example and recharges his team members by working hard together. He helps his team members by taking a genuine personal interest in their growth and development professionally and personally. He encourages growth of his team members, offers a sense of purpose, presents a clear vision and creates a healthy working environment.

### Points of Differences between Traditional & Servant leadership

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.N.</th>
<th>Traditional Leadership</th>
<th>Servant Leadership</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>A leader cares about his own advancement</td>
<td>A leader always wants the growth of his team</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>This leader measures success through results or A traditional leader has main focus on result, Shareholders second and then customers</td>
<td>A servant leader always puts his team first, customers second and shareholders last.</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>In traditional leadership, authoritative rank is used to stand above others</td>
<td>Here leadership is supposed an opportunity for serving the teammates/others.</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>A traditional leader considers him as a boss.</td>
<td>A servant leader considers him as a servant first.</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>A traditional leader likes to show his power to his subordinates</td>
<td>A servant leader always surrenders his authority and puts his team first.</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>It is a selfness/selfhood type of leadership</td>
<td>It is a selfless type of leadership.</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>A leader wants to be welcomed by his followers.</td>
<td>Here the team members feel welcomed and supported by their leader.</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>The needs of organisation are first for a traditional leader</td>
<td>In servant leadership, the needs of employees are first</td>
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<td>9.</td>
<td>A leader is valued by his power or communication skills</td>
<td>Here understanding the needs of his team members and listening to them is more important.</td>
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<td>10.</td>
<td>The followers are not so free to share their views with the leader.</td>
<td>The followers are free to share their views/opinions with their leader. A servant leader values/evaluates different opinions and creates an innovative environment.</td>
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<td>11.</td>
<td>A leader’s actions are based on management principles</td>
<td>A leader’s actions are based on servant principles</td>
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<td>12.</td>
<td>Traditional leaders think that they are accountable only to their superiors</td>
<td>Servant leaders are accountable to everyone in the organisation</td>
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<td>13.</td>
<td>The main objective is to promote his leadership.</td>
<td>The main objective is to develop leadership qualities in others.</td>
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<td>14.</td>
<td>Here pride of a leader is seen</td>
<td>Here humility is found in a leader</td>
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<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>The team members serve their leader</td>
<td>The leader serves the team members.</td>
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- **Impact of servant leadership on Society & economy:**
  After making distinction between a traditional leader and a servant leader, we may understand easily that our society should produce & support servant leaders who may care for society & country and develop a civilised & hardworking society or a welfare
state where there is always happiness and the people may live without any fear with rules of law. Servant leadership creates & promotes good relations among society which in turn fosters the rate of economic growth & pace of development in the country.

The Renowned Servant Leaders in the world

The servant leaders always work for the betterment of people and help & support others for meeting their interests, requirements & ambitions. The great servants leaders give a new look to the society & economy by serving their followers fairly and by motivating them for attaining their personal, community and national goals in a cooperative & peaceful environment. Servant leadership has its roots in religious teachings. In every religion whether Hindu, Buddh, Jain, Christian or Islam, emphasis has been given on the welfare work for others. Prophet Mohammad (Peace be upon him) was called Sadiq (Truthful) & Ameen(Trustworthy) by the people of Makka city. He is the best example of servant leadership. He forgave to those people of Makka city who rebuked, taunted & mocked at him, abused and tried to kill him. When he escaped to Madina, they waged many wars against him. But when he entered Makka city victorious, he did not take revenge on anyone. He forgave all his deadliest enemies.

- **Second caliph of Prophet Mohammad (S.A.W.), Hazrat Umar Al-Farooq ( Razi Allahu Taala Anh)** in 637 B.C. entered Jerusalem in humility walking in with note, the caliph, but his servant was comfortably riding on a camel.
- **Gautam Buddha** was also a great servant leader. According to Hanh, the characteristics of Buddhist leadership were..(i) The virtue of cutting off - one can get rid of anger, desire & ignorance. (ii) The virtue of loving - one should be compassionate, thoughtful & forgiving and (iii) the virtue of insight- one should use his wisdom to bring happiness for others. (Acharya)
- **Swami Vivekananda** was a Hindu philosopher who argued that the growth of a leader and the achievement of goals is impossible without the development of his subordinates. (Panda, 2023)
- **Abraham Lincoln:** He did best works during civil war in U.S.A. He was always present even for the lowest ranked persons of society.
- **Martin Luther King Jr.:** He focussed on the well-being of others, upholding standards but with dignity and respect for all. (Tilley)
- **Nelson Mandela:** He was a great servant leader. His quotes about servant leader were..

“If you want to make peace with your enemy you have to work with your enemy. Then he becomes your partner.”

“It is better to lead from behind and to put others in front, especially when you celebrate victory or when nice things occur. You take the front line when there is danger. Then people will appreciate your leadership.” (Lichtenwalner, 2013)

- **Mahatma Gandhi:** He started a non-violence movement to get freedom from British and presented effective & influential qualities of a servant leader from his life & work. After his return to India in 1915, his mission was freedom of Indians from British rules and towards the end of his life, his mission was to remove hatred between Hindus & Muslims and make Indians live in harmony. (PennState, 2022)
- **Mother Theresa:** was a renowned servant leader in India who dedicated her life for serving others. She quoted that if you want to judge the people, you will loss the time of loving them. It means that we should love everyone in the society without making any distinction on any basis.
- **A good teacher is also a servant leader** because he tries his best to develop his students personally and professionally. He helps his students in converting them into good/honest humans and making them responsible citizens. He develops the capacity in his students to think creatively & positively. He listens the questions of his students carefully and then answers each & every question or query with example and satisfies them. He is a best communicator & role model for his students and good contributor to the society. He motivates his students to compete with hard work & honesty to make their dreams come true & lays the foundation for a new generation.

Conclusions & Suggestions

Servant leadership has great importance in creating a nurturing environment where members feel like they are appreciated and respected. This feeling among members builds strong work culture with high morale & engagement and paves the ways for more growth & development. The people get the answers of their questions, solve problems and get inspired. Therefore, a servant leader must have patience, confidence, empathy, emotional intelligence, clear & realistic visions, social & cultural awareness and strategic & effective decision making capacity. He must be honest & accountable and have effective communication with his team/subordinates/ followers and should persuade, inspire, motivate & empower them for achieving the organisational goals. The people should vote & support a leader who possesses the above qualities. Such type of leadership will promote mutual relations and surely develop a peaceful & civilised society. But this type of leadership may not be suitable in all the situations as for military type organisations or law implementing agencies where there is the matter of security & defence.