


## Chapter 12

# Servant Leadership in the Hospitality Industry

Engin Bayraktaroglu

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9956-2593>

Anadolu University, Turkey

### ABSTRACT

*Servant leadership is a mindset structured on the leaders' desire to serve their followers. Servant leadership is not just a type of leadership; it is a paradigm, a way of life, and an ontological stance that determines the behaviour patterns of leaders. For this reason, when examining servant leadership, it is not enough to talk only about the benefits of leadership. In this study, servant leadership in service industries was evaluated. As a result of this study, which can be considered a non-systematic literature review, theoretical suggestions were made for the future of servant leadership research.*

### INTRODUCTION

The concept of servant leadership was first used by Greenleaf in leadership research (Spears, 1996; Singfiel, 2018). Greenleaf combines the roles of the servant and the leader in a single concept, emphasizing that every leader is also a follower. In this concept, the servant role outweighs the leadership, and for this reason, the desire to serve lies at the basis of servant leadership (1977). Theories other than servant leadership do not involve leaders' serving desire to their subordinates. The concept of service is used to define a framework: the leader supports his subordinates and struggles in every matter in their favour. Servant leadership includes suggestions to meet subordinates' needs and leaders' support for subordinates to participate in decision-making. Servant leaders start from service behaviour, which is a different way of describing the leader's responsibilities (Vargas & Hanlon, 2007; Savage-Austin & Honeycutt, 2011). Servant leaders have the instinct to serve, and consciously choose to lead (Bass, 2000).

Servant leadership is a new-generation leadership approach that brings about serious changes in the roles of the leaders (Yıldırım, 2019). While many other leadership models focus primarily on the mission and then on empowering followers to achieve that mission, servant leaders focus primarily on developing the abilities of individuals. The success of the mission is put on focus after the empowerment

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-6684-6713-8.ch012

of individuals (Gandolfi & Stone, 2018). Servant leaders are more able to identify the primary needs of their followers and put more effort into meeting them (Farling et al., 1999). Apart from the desire to serve, the servant leader has other remarkable features such as taking initiative, listening, understanding, imagination, acceptance, empathy, intuition, foresight, awareness, perception, persuasion, conceptualization, and community-building skills (Joseph & Winston, 2005). In addition to these, features such as creating a vision, being honest, acting ethically, empowering staff, altruism, emotional healing, and helping the development and success of followers are also attributed to servant leaders (Wong & Page 2003; Patterson 2003; Winston 2003; Liden et al., 2008; Baldonado, 2017).

Individuals are affected by the attitudes, thoughts, and behaviours of the ones they take as role models and internalize their positive behaviours (Bandura, 1977). Servant leaders can influence their followers by acting as role models in the workplace (Hunter et al., 2013), and followers can internalize their leaders' behaviour by modelling them (Liden et al., 2014). There is scientific evidence that a leader-follower relationship that emerges as a result of servant leadership increases employee satisfaction, performance and organizational commitment (Liden et al., 2014; Muller et al., 2018; Schwarz et al., 2016). Servant leaders are influential throughout the organization, affecting both individuals and groups (Hu & Liden, 2011).

In this section, the concept of servant leadership will be examined under the headings of servant leadership dimensions, the characteristics of servant leaders and servant leadership in the hospitality industry. Thus, it is aimed to give an overview of the servant leadership practices encountered in hospitality businesses.

## **DIMENSIONS OF SERVANT LEADERSHIP**

Considering the dimensions of servant leadership, it has been seen that various approaches have been used by different researchers. Eva et al., (2019) identified 16 different measurement tools that included the dimensions of servant leadership. Within the scope of this study, the nine-dimensional structure used by Liden et al., (2008) and Liden et al., (2015); and the six-dimensional structure used by Sendjaya et al., (2008), Sendjaya & Cooper (2011), and Sendjaya et al., (2019) were evaluated.

Liden et al., (2008) interpreted some of the taxonomies made before [such as Page & Wong (2000), Spears & Lawrence (2002), and Barbutto & Wheeler (2006)], and defined servant leadership under 9 dimensions. These dimensions are; (1) emotional healing, (2) creating value for the community, (3) conceptual skills, (4) empowering, (5) helping subordinates grow and succeed, (6) putting subordinates first, (7) behaving ethically, (8) relationships and, (9) servanthood. *The emotional healing* dimension is defined as the act of showing sensitivity to the personal concerns of other individuals. *Creating value* for the community dimension is the leaders' conscious, genuine concern for helping the community. *Empowering* dimension is the act of encouraging and facilitating others in identifying and solving problems while determining how to complete tasks. *Helping subordinates grow and succeed* is the dimension that defines a leader's genuine concern for others' career development by providing support and mentoring. The dimension of *putting subordinates first* can be defined as leaders' use of actions and words to make it clear to others that satisfying their work needs is a priority. *Behaving ethically* dimension expresses how open, fair, and honest are leaders in their relationships with others. *The relationships* dimension can be defined as the genuine efforts of leaders to know, understand, and support others in the organization, with an emphasis on building long-term relationships. *The servanthood* dimension is defined as the way

10 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage:

[www.igi-global.com/chapter/servant-leadership-in-the-hospitality-industry/318279](http://www.igi-global.com/chapter/servant-leadership-in-the-hospitality-industry/318279)

## Related Content

---

### Development of a Biomedical Research Workforce Through the Support of Advisory Committees

Argentina Ornelas (2018). *The Role of Advisory Committees in Biomedical Education and Workforce Development: Emerging Research and Opportunities* (pp. 89-104).

[www.irma-international.org/chapter/development-of-a-biomedical-research-workforce-through-the-support-of-advisory-committees/192243](http://www.irma-international.org/chapter/development-of-a-biomedical-research-workforce-through-the-support-of-advisory-committees/192243)

### Trust Management and Delegation for the Administration of Web Services

Michele Tomaiuolo (2016). *Leadership and Personnel Management: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools, and Applications* (pp. 570-589).

[www.irma-international.org/chapter/trust-management-and-delegation-for-the-administration-of-web-services/146409](http://www.irma-international.org/chapter/trust-management-and-delegation-for-the-administration-of-web-services/146409)

### Does the Organizational Change Induced by the Pre-Implementation of an IS Proceed as a Planned Process?

Amira Sghari, Jamil Chaabouni and Serge Baile (2021). *Encyclopedia of Organizational Knowledge, Administration, and Technology* (pp. 219-232).

[www.irma-international.org/chapter/does-the-organizational-change-induced-by-the-pre-implementation-of-an-is-proceed-as-a-planned-process/263540](http://www.irma-international.org/chapter/does-the-organizational-change-induced-by-the-pre-implementation-of-an-is-proceed-as-a-planned-process/263540)

### COVID-19 and the Call for Elder Change Leadership

Stan Amaladas (2021). *Global Perspectives on Change Management and Leadership in the Post-COVID-19 Era* (pp. 218-239).

[www.irma-international.org/chapter/covid-19-and-the-call-for-elder-change-leadership/274206](http://www.irma-international.org/chapter/covid-19-and-the-call-for-elder-change-leadership/274206)

### Applying Theory U: The Case of the Creative Living Lab

Simone Schweikert, Jens O. Meissner and Patricia Wolf (2014). *Perspectives on Theory U: Insights from the Field* (pp. 193-206).

[www.irma-international.org/chapter/applying-theory-u/94892](http://www.irma-international.org/chapter/applying-theory-u/94892)