INVESTIGATING SERVANT LEADERSHIP IN THE CONTEXT OF CAUSE-RELATED

SPORTING EVENTS

A Dissertation

by

DENISE L. PARRIS

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of
Texas A&M University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

December 2011

Major Subject: Kinesiology

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Approved by:

Chair of Committee,	Jon Welty Peachey
Committee Members,	Patricia Goodson
	Paul Keiper
	Ben Welch
Head of Department,	Richard Kreider

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ABSTRACT

Investigating Servant Leadership in the Context of Cause-Related Sporting Events.

(December 2011)

Denise L. Parris, B.A., B.S., University of California – Santa Barbara, CA;

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This dissertation presents three separate studies designed to provide systematic and evidence-based insight into how servant leadership could be a crucial success factor in helping non-profit organizations (NPOs) hosting cause-related sporting events achieve their missions. Thus, the purpose of my dissertation was to advance the literature and the practice of servant leadership.

In Study one, I conducted a systematic literature review of studies that explored an application of servant leadership. A disciplined screening process resulted in a sample population of 39 studies. The synthesis of these applied studies revealed: a) there is no consensus on the definition of servant leadership; b) servant leadership is being applied across a variety of contexts, cultures, and themes; c) researchers are using multiple measures to explore servant leadership; and d) these studies provide strong evidence that servant leadership helps organizations and improves the well-being of followers.

In Study two, I explored the leadership style of the founder of a cause-related sporting event to understand how this leadership style motivated volunteers. This was achieved through semi-structured personal interviews, document analysis, and personal observations of

the 25th National Kidney Foundation (NKF) Surf Festival. Results indicated that the founder was a servant leader who influenced volunteer motivation by generating a shared vision dedicated to helping others, building a caring and loving community, and creating the freedom and resources for followers to become servants themselves.

In Study three, using a longitudinal case study, I qualitatively explored if a cause-related sporting event could inspire participants to become servant leaders, and if so, how does the event achieve this? Data collection methods included focus groups, open-ended qualitative questionnaires, direct observations, document analysis, and semi-structured personal interviews with participants of the U.S. NKF Transplant Games, specifically Team Florida. Analyses revealed the event inspired participants to serve others and helped to build a community of servant leaders. It was found that three specific mechanisms of the Games generated community-level outcomes, which led to impacts on participants and helped them develop servant leadership. I then developed a model to describe a cause-related sporting event's ability to inspire participants to become servant leaders.

DEDICATION

To my mother, Linda Parris, and the servant leadership legacy she left after passing in June, 2009. Her smile, kindness towards individuals, unconditional willingness to help others and belief that tomorrow can be better lives in me today. To my father, Dennis Parris, who taught me serving others as a way of life and that dreams can come true through hard work, love, and courage. And, to my husband, Josh Bowers, for his unfaltering love and support. All three are true servant leaders who have helped me pursue my passions, serve others, and become the woman I am.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In addition to my parents and husband, I wish to acknowledge others whose care, compassion, and support made the completion of this dissertation possible. First, I would like to thank my fourth grade teacher, Miss Mosley, and the numerous others teachers and coaches throughout my life. They helped me develop the courage, dedication, confidence, and determination to persist despite the challenges. Secondly, I would like to thank my friends and colleagues for your never-ending support, understanding and guidance. Thank you for being my cheerleaders rain or shine. Thirdly, I would like to thank the National Kidney Foundation (NKF) of Florida for its service to others, which has inspired me to never stopped asking, "How can I help?" Specifically, I wish to express gratitude to the following members of NKF of Florida: CEO Stephanie Hutchinson, NKF Surf Festival founders Rich and Phil Salick, the board of the NKF, the dedicated volunteers, and all of the team members for the U.S. Transplant Games. Through their service and friendship these people have shown that the true gift of life is each other. Though I cannot mention all of the above individuals by name, know that you are all appreciated and have made a difference in my life, as well as in the lives of others.

Finally, I would like to thank my committee members, Patricia Goodson, Paul Keiper, and Ben Welch for their encouragement and helpful comments that strengthened this project. I would like to thank Jon Welty Peachey, my committee chair, for his positive support, encouragement, constructive feedback and guidance. He taught me a great deal about being a scholar, the power of persistence, and about myself.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Cause-related sporting events use an event as a focal point that provides an important and tangible activity for disparate groups to attend in order to support a specific cause (Deloitte, 2010). "Given the multifaceted ability of sport to contribute to health, engage a diverse audience, and promote social inclusion" (Sherry, 2010, p. 61), *non-profit organizations* (NPOs) have increasingly used cause-related sporting events to connect with consumers and create social capital by linking the company or brand to a relevant social issue (Higgins & Lauzon, 2003; Pope, Isely, &Asamoa-Tutu, 2009; Principle & Thompson, 1999).

In the last three decades the NPO sector has experienced remarkable growth. In fact, between 2009 and 2010, the growth rate of NPOs was 76%, which has resulted in increased competition. In the United States there are 1.1 million small-to-mid size NPOs, representing 68% of total NPO market space in the U.S. and $237 billion in revenue, all vying for limited resources in an economic downtown and an environment of decreased government spending on social services (NCCS, 2011). Unlike the private sector, NPOs' financial resources do not come "directly from those who receive the benefits which the organization produces" (Lewis, 1998, p. 436). Thus, it is important that NPOs hosting cause-relating sporting events strive to impact and inspire event participants who have no previous association with the cause of a given event.

NPOs rely not only on money to fulfill their missions but also on another essential resource that is perhaps even more rare – human capital. As such, a significant challenge

_____
This dissertation follows the style of *Sport Management Review.*

faced by NPOs is high volunteer and leadership attrition rates (Eisner, Grimm, Maynard, & Washburn, 2008; Hustinx, 2010; Tierney, 2006). Each year, many NPOs lose more than one-third of their volunteer base, which equates to approximately $38 billion in lost labor (Eisner et al., 2008). In addition, the expansion of the NPO sector along with retiring baby boomer executives has resulted in a leadership deficit that will require "some 640,000 new executives, nearly two and a half times the number currently employed" (Tierney, 2006, p. 26). Therefore, NPOs hosting cause-related sporting events need to inspire participants to become leaders, to adopt the mission of the NPO and champion it.

At the core of these events is the far-reaching and intangible goal of creating positive social change and inspiring others to help make the world a better place. Thus, servant leadership could be a critical success factor helping NPOs hosting cause-related sporting events achieve their missions. Servant leadership is a philosophy which has as its core a focus on making life better for others (Keith, 2008; Prosser, 2010). Greenleaf (1977) articulated servant leadership as a way of life, starting with "the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve *first*" (p. 7). He believed servant leadership could resolve the leadership crisis of the 21st century because servant leadership recognizes that human beings need each other, can accomplish more working together, and are the best and the only resource to move into the future. As Greenleaf (1977) said, "the only way to change a society (or just make it go) is to produce people, enough people, who will change it (or make it go)" (p. 60).

<div align="center">Statement of Purpose</div>

The purpose of this dissertation, therefore, is to answer the following overarching research questions: *a) How is servant leadership manifested in the context of cause-related*

sporting events; and b) Does servant leadership represent a crucial success factor in helping

NPOs achieve their mission(s)?

Research Paradigm

Choice of Methodology

As my research questions are exploratory in nature, I have chosen a qualitative research approach. This approach is well suited for addressing my primary research questions and uncovering the multiple levels of personal and societal change influenced by a NPO hosting a cause-related sporting event, such as the National Kidney Foundation of Florida (NKF) Surf Festival or the NKF Transplant Games (Berg, 2009). Burnett and Uys (2000) argue that sport programs which aim to bring about social change should be measured using three levels of analysis: macro—where the focus is at the event level and societal impact; meso—which is situated at the team and community level; and, mirco—where the focus resides on the individual participant of the sporting event (Brunett, 2001; Cunningham & Sagas, 2008). The multi-dimensionality of impact can be examined in detail through qualitative investigations (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Qualitative methods enable the principal investigator to understand, examine, and interpret the experiences of participants or situations in a manner quantitative methods cannot (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Maxwell, 2005; Rubin & Rubin, 1995).

Acknowledgement of Social Self

The human instrument (I) was used for data collection in these studies investigating servant leadership in the context of cause-related sporting events (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Therefore, to begin, I will start with a self-assessment and reflections about myself as I am situated in a socio-historical context (Newman, 2006).

I am a white female who grew up in an upper middle class family in southern California. From an early age I learned to appreciate the value of serving others through the influence of my parents. My late mother was a public school teacher for 36 years and my father was a fireman for 30 years. They both chose helping professions as their careers and as a way of life. Throughout my childhood my family and I volunteered, visited people in hospitals and nursing homes, helped strangers for hours even on our family vacations, and stopped to do the smallest things to put a smile on someone's face. Thus, one assumption that I bring to this research is that serving others is desirable.

Another passion my parents and I shared is a love for sports. Through sport I have watched others, as well as myself, develop the courage, dedication, confidence, and determination to make dreams come true. This has led me to become increasingly involved in cause-related sport events. Ever since the day I volunteered at the 2006 NKF Surf Festival, I have never stopped asking, "How can I help?" My involvement in the NKF has shown me how cause-relating sporting events can serve as a vehicle to help save and change lives through the power of sport.

Additionally, I do acknowledge that although the benefits of sport, such as personal and positive social change, have been well documented there is not a general agreement among scholars as to the outcomes and impacts of sport. Much like the outcomes of sport, social change can be both positive and negative (Green, 2008; Holt, 1989). An interpretation of potential change through sport is best examined through the lens of relativism due to the fact that perception of sport as a change agent is a social construct and should be examined with no single view point or value proposition that is essentially better than others. According to Green (2008) "it is not the sport per se that is responsible for particular

outcomes; it is the ways that sport is implemented" (p. 131). In other words, it is the specific

socializing agents of a particular sport that guide individuals and communities to positive or

negative outcomes.

My experience as a participant, volunteer, executive director of an NPO, consultant,

and researcher has allowed me to see the many challenges and issues facing NPOs hosting

cause-related sporting events. This is an asset in my current studies as it provides me the

requisite background to understand the context of cause-related sporting events, while

enhancing my ability to draw inferences and conclusions from the data.

My Epistemological Orientation

My epistemological orientation embraces the interpretive social science paradigm

with a constructionist viewpoint. The constructionist position, as defined by Newman (2006),

is an orientation toward reality which assumes that people create beliefs and meanings that

they use to fundamentally define their perception of reality. This position will be used in

accordance with an interpretive social science view which states that the purpose of social

science is to understand social meaning within its context (Newman, 2006). Furthermore,

interpretive social science adopts the perspective of relativism, where elements or aspects of

an experience, culture, or organization are dependent upon other elements or aspects, and that

all viewpoints are equally valid for those who hold them (Anderson, 1986). These

orientations and frameworks support a qualitative case study methodology, as defined below.

Design

This dissertation comprises three interrelated studies. The theoretical framework that

informs all three studies is servant leadership. Specifically, this dissertation: (a) examines the

current body of research literature that either quantitatively or qualitatively explores an

application of the concept of servant leadership; (b) presents findings from a qualitative case study, which explored the leadership style of the founder of a cause-related sporting event and sought to understand how this leadership style motivated volunteers; and (c) explores if a cause-related sporting event can inspire participants to become servant leaders, and if so, how the event achieves this. In addition to the theoretical framework of servant leadership, I adopted Chalip's (2006) social leverage theory to inform the third study of this dissertation. Collectively, these studies examine the application of servant leadership in the context of cause-related sporting events.

Implications for NPOs and Sport Organizations

The aim of this research is to aid in the advancement of sport management theory and practice, provide further supporting evidence for the applicability of servant leadership in the sport context, and assist in developing guidelines for hosting cause-related sporting events that can create larger, sustainable communities to work for the mission of the organization. Collectively, these studies illustrate how NPOs can use sporting events as a catalyst for social awareness and social change. For sport organizations, servant leadership could provide a way to unify disparate groups of people engaged in creating positive social change.

Dissertation Format

This dissertation is written in a journal article format. Each article is self-contained; however, the articles together comprise all elements that would be covered in the traditional five-chapter dissertation format. Since a journal article format is adopted for this dissertation, the content and flow of the chapters varies from that of the book-chapter format. It should be noted that Chapters II-IV consist of three independent pieces to be submitted for publication in peer-reviewed journals. Chapter III has already been submitted to the *Journal of Non-*

profit Management and Leadership and is presently in second review. The following is a brief description of the dissertation contents, based on a journal article format:

- Chapter I: General overview and rationale for the dissertation project.

- Chapter II: A systematic literature review of the current body of literature regarding the application of servant leadership. The following research questions guided this review: a) how was servant leadership defined?; b) how was the philosophy of servant leadership applied?; c) how was servant leadership examined (i.e., the methodology)?; and, d) what were the results of the examination? This chapter represents the first journal article.

- Chapter III: A qualitative case study of the National Kidney Foundation (NKF) Surf Festival, a cause-related sporting event, with the following guiding research questions: (a) What is the founder's leadership style; and (b) How has the founder's leadership style contributed to motivating core volunteers for over 25 years? This chapter represents the second journal article.

- Chapter IV: A qualitative case study of the 2010 U.S. Transplant Games, a four-day Olympic style competition for recipients of organ transplants, held every two years. Research questions for this endeavor were as follows: (a) Does the Transplant Games help to inspire donor families, donors, and transplant recipients to become servant leaders themselves? If so, (b) how does the Transplant Games inspire them to achieve this? This chapter represents the third and final journal article.

- Chapter V: Elaboration of the meanings and lessons learned from the three studies. Theoretical and practical implications for NPOs and sport organizations, as well as future research directions, will also be addressed.

CHAPTER II

THE PRACTICE OF SERVANT LEADERSHIP: A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE

REVIEW OF APPLIED STUDIES

Leadership is one of the most comprehensively researched social influence processes in the behavioral sciences. This is because the success of all economic, political, and organizational systems depends on the effective and efficient guidance of the leaders of these systems (Barrow, 1977). A critical factor to understanding the success of an organization, then, is to study its leaders. Leadership is a skill used to influence followers in an organization to work enthusiastically towards goals specifically identified for the common good (Barrow,1977; Cyert, 2006; Plsek & Wilson, 2001). Great leaders create a vision for an organization, articulate the vision to the followers, build a shared vision, craft a path to achieve the vision, and guide their organizations into new directions (Banutu-Gomez & Banutu-Gomez, 2007; Kotter, 2001). According to Schneider (1987), the most important part in building an organization with a legacy of success is the people in it, which includes the followers (i.e., employees and volunteers) as well as the leaders. Servant leadership (Greenleaf, 1977) is one leadership philosophy that emphasizes service to others and recognizes that the role of organizations is to create people who can build a better tomorrow.

Servant leadership, coined by Robert K. Greenleaf (1977), has received significant attention in the popular press – (e.g., *Fortune* magazine and Dateline) (Spears Center, 2011). Leading organizational management authors have discussed the positive effects of servant leadership on organizational profits and employee satisfaction; Max DePree (*Leadership Is an Art*, 1989), Stephen Covey (*Principle Centered Leadership*, 1990), Peter Senge (*The Fifth*

Discipline: The Art and Styles of the Learning Organization, 1990), Peter Block (*Stewardship: Choosing Service over Self Interest*, 1993), and Margaret Wheatley (*Finding Our Way: Leadership in an Uncertain Time*, 2005). However, some critics argue that servant leadership is too idealistic and impractical (Wong & Davey, 2007). Even Greenleaf admitted servant leadership is unorthodox, and would be difficult to operationalize and apply, as "it is meant to be neither a scholarly treatise nor a how-to-do-it manual" (Greenleaf, 1977, p. 49). In addition, despite servant leadership being an accepted leadership model for over three decades (Spears, 2005), most of the research being conducted consists of developing theoretical frameworks and establishing measures with the intention that in the future scholars can apply these tools to explore the applicability of servant leadership. This leaves organizations, practitioners, and researchers left to ponder, how does servant leadership work, and how can we apply it? Currently, there does not exist a comprehensive summary of applied studies (e.g., a systematic literature review), which is a gap in the extant literature. Applied studies engaged a sample population to assess the mechanisms, outcomes, and impacts of servant leadership. As servant leadership has been explored across disciplines and in a variety of contexts, a systematic literature review would be helpful to ascertain the current state of the field in servant leadership research.

Thus, the purpose of this study was to systematically examine and organize the current body of research literature that either quantitatively or qualitatively explored an application of the philosophy of servant leadership. Although there have been three reviews conducted on servant leadership (Russell and Stone, 2002; Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006; Van Dierendonck, 2011), none of them were done in a systematic manner (i.e., no methodology to select articles or limit bias), and none of them specifically explored applied research.

The following research questions guided this investigation of reviewed articles: a) how was servant leadership defined?; b) how was the philosophy of servant leadership applied?; c) how was servant leadership examined (i.e., the methodology)?; and, d) what were the results of the examination? We begin this paper by summarizing the origin and development of servant leadership by Robert K. Greenleaf, and follow with a short summary of the current state of research in servant leadership. Next, a summary of the method used for selecting and reviewing the literature is explained, with details on search strategy, analysis, assessment of the quality of the reviewed studies. Then, we present our findings of the systematic literature review on studies that have applied the philosophy of servant leadership.

Origin and Development of Servant Leadership by Robert K. Greenleaf

The philosophy of servant leadership emerged from Greenleaf's three foundational essays – *The Servant as Leader* (1970), *The Institution as Servant* (1972), and *Trustees as Servants* (1972) – all of which he published after retiring from 40 years of management work at AT&T. Upon retirement in 1964, Greenleaf launched a second career, which spanned 25 years, in which he articulated his new leadership paradigm – servant leadership. He promoted servant leadership in many publications and presentations, including lectures at Massachusetts Institute of Technology's (M.I.T.) Sloan School of Management, Harvard Business School, Dartmouth College, and the University of Virginia; and served as leadership consultant to institutions such as Ford Foundation, Lilly Endowment, M.I.T., R.K. Mellon Foundation, and the American Foundation for Management. In 1964 he founded the Center for Applied Ethics, renamed the Robert K. Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership in 1985, which helps people understand the principles and practices of servant leadership (Greenleaf Center, 2011). Over 20% of *Fortune* magazine top 100 companies have sought

guidance from the Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership, such as Starbucks, Vanguard Investment Group, Southwest Airlines, and ID Industries (Greenleaf Center, 2011).

<div align="center">Servant Leadership in Research</div>

Although the philosophy of servant leadership is a growing trend being practiced by private and non-profit organizations alike, there is still a lack of research on servant leadership (Farling, Stone, & Winston, 1999). The majority of research in servant leadership has streamed from Greenleaf's (1977) foundational texts and the Greenleaf Center (see Akuchie, 1993; Bordas, 1995; Brody, 1995; Buchen, 1998; Chamberlain, 1995; Frick, 1995; Gaston, 1987; Kelley, 1995; Kiechel, 1995; Kuhnert & Lewis, 1987; Lee & Zembke, 1995; Llyod, 1996; Lopez, 1995; McCollum, 1995; McGee-Cooper & Trammell, 1995; Rasmussen, 1995; Rieser, 1995; Senge, 1995; Smith, 1995; Snodgrass, 1993; Spears, 1995, 1996; Tatum, 1995; Vanourek, 1995). Many of these writers present applied examples of servant leadership in organizational settings; however, this is also the primary limitation of much of the servant leadership literature, which is anecdotal in nature instead of empirical (Bowman, 1997; Northouse, 1997; Sendjaya & Sarros, 2002). Bass (2000) acknowledged that the concept of servant leadership requires extensive research, emphasizing that "the strength of the servant leadership movement and its many links to encouraging follower learning, growth, and autonomy, suggests that the untested theory will play a role in the future leadership of the learning organization" (p.33). The promise of servant leadership has since motivated scholars and practitioners to explore the possibilities of the servant-first paradigm.

Since Farling et al.'s (1999) call for empirical research, there have emerged three streams of research (Van Dierendonck & Patterson, 2011): a) a conceptual stream (Spears,

1998; Laub, 1999; Russell & Stone, 2002; Patterson, 2003); b) a measurement stream (Page & Wong, 2000; Wong & Page, 2003; Ehrhart, 2004; Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006; Dennis & Bocarnea, 2005; Liden, Wayne, Zhao, & Henderson, 2008; Sendjaya, Sarros, & Santora, 2008; Van Dierendonck & Nuijte, 2011); and c) model development (Van Dierendonck, 2011). Notably absent from the above streams of research are studies that apply the concept of servant leadership. In addition, in spite of the growing amount of research on servant leadership, the concept is still under-defined, with various authors grappling with definitions (Anderson, 2009). This is as Greenleaf (1977) predicted, when he warned that servant leadership would be difficult to apply and operationalize. He described being a servant leader as a way of life and did not provide a management philosophy with bullet points; instead, he challenged readers to reflect, ponder, and grow (Frick, 2004; Spears, 1995).

To date, three reviews of servant leadership have been conducted, which help provide insight into how researchers have attempted to operationalize and apply Greenleaf's philosophy of servant leadership; however, none of them were systematic or focused on applied studies. Russell and Stone's (2002) review on the existing literature on servant leadership revealed the following nine functional attributes, or operative qualities and distinctive characteristics of servant leaders; vision, honesty, integrity, trust, service, modeling, pioneering, appreciation of others, and empowerment. In addition, Russell and Stone (2002) also determined 11 accompanying attributes, which are interrelated and supportive of the nine core attributes listed above: communication, credibility, competence, stewardship, visibility, influence, persuasion, listening, encouragement, teaching and delegation. From this assimilation of attributes Russell and Stone (2002) developed a model of servant leadership to spark future application and research. While Russell and Stone's

review provides a conceptual overview of servant leadership, it lacks a methodology. Barbuto and Wheeler (2006) developed an integrated model of servant leadership after conducting a literature review, which synthesized the attributes of servant leadership into five factors; altruistic calling, emotional healing, persuasive mapping, wisdom, and organizational stewardship. The third review by Van Dierendonck (2011) also concludes with a model to test with future research. Van Dierendonck's review provides a historical background, key characteristics, measurement tools, and results of selected studies. However, it also lacks a systematic method to determine the articles included or excluded from the review.

This current paper, therefore, represents the first systematic literature review of servant leadership. Given that previous studies have reviewed the concept and measurement tools for servant leadership, the present review focuses only on applied studies. This paper is also the first review to address how servant leadership works in practice based upon evidence in published peer reviewed journals.

Methodology

The systematic literature review (SLR) is often contrasted with traditional literature reviews because systematic reviews are objective, replicable, systematic, comprehensive, and the process is reported in the same manner as for reporting empirical research (Weed, 2005). The origin of SLRs is in the medical, health care, and policy fields, where they have been used to assemble the best evidence to make clinical and policy decisions (Cook, Mulrow, & Haynes, 1997; Tranfield, Denyer, & Smart, 2003). SLRs in management are used to provide transparency, clarity, accessibility, and impartial inclusive coverage on a particular area (Thorpe, Holt, Pittaway, & Macpherson, 2006). Klassen, Jahad, and Moher (1998) define SLR as "a review in which there is a comprehensive search for relevant studies on a specific

topic, and those identified are then appraised and synthesized according to a pre-determined explicit method" (p.700). The SRL in this paper specifically explored research studies that have applied the philosophy of servant leadership. The approach of this review entailed extensive searches of relevant databases with the intention of ensuring, as far as possible, that all literature on servant leadership was identified while maintaining the focus on literature of greatest pertinence to the research questions – (i.e., applied studies). Next, we discuss our search methods, inclusion and exclusion criteria, sample, and data analysis.

Search Methods

Published studies were identified through searches of electronic databases accessible through the Texas A&M library. Databases included in this review were: PsycInfo, Eric, Sociological Abstracts, PAIS International, Social Services, Communication Abstracts, International Bibliography of the Social Sciences (IBSS), Physical Education Index, World Wide Political Abstracts from the vendor CSA, Academic Search Complete, Business Source Complete, Communication and Mass Media Complete, Education and Administration Abstracts, Gender Studies, CINAHL, Health Source: Nursing/Academic Edition, Human Resources Abstracts, and Medline through the vendor EBSCO. All results were limited to English-only peer reviewed journal articles. The searches for published studies were conducted in a systematic manner, following the order of the databases listed above.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

The initial search required that articles included in the review were studies that must: a) be published in a peer-reviewed journal; b) be in the English language; and (c) use the keyword "servant leadership." No restriction was placed on year of publication. The number of articles containing the keyword "servant leadership" retrieved from each database was

recorded. Next, we examined if there were any external duplicates from the current database being searched and the previous databases that had already been searched. We recorded the number of external duplicates, and then deleted the duplicated journal articles from the last database searched while keeping a running total of new articles found.

Once all possible studies had been identified, we conducted a second screening to assess eligibility against inclusion criteria and then full text articles were retrieved for those that met the inclusion criteria. The inclusion criteria for the second screening required that the published peer-reviewed article meet all of the following four specifications: a) be in the English language; b) be an applied study (i.e., not an essay, book review, letters, literature review, editorial, opinion, journalistic or antidotal article); c) discuss servant leadership as the main topical theme; and d) examine an application of servant leadership either quantitatively or qualitatively. Articles were excluded if any of these four components was not addressed in the abstract, results, or discussion sections of the respective study. Finally, additional articles meeting the inclusion criteria were found by examining the bibliographies of resources identified through the secondary screening.

Sample

Peer reviewed publications were identified using the key terms outlined in the inclusion and exclusion criteria section above. In all, at total of 381 articles where retrieved; however, after duplicates were deleted there remained 255 articles meeting the initial inclusion criteria. After the secondary search process was conducted, a final sample of 44 appropriate studies was obtained. Upon retrieving full text articles, an additional five articles were excluded after further examination because they did not satisfy the screening criteria. The final sample of articles constituted 39 studies that empirically applied the concept of

servant leadership. Peer-reviewed articles meeting the outlined criteria were published between 2004 and 2011. The 39 published articles were drawn from a variety of peer-reviewed journals (n=27). Table 2.1 depicts the list of journals included in the study, the number of articles included from each journal, and the database they were accessed through. We grouped the journals by their area of focus, which showed a concentration of research taking place in leadership (n=9), education (n=7), business (n=6), and psychology (n=6), with the fields of nursing (n=3), management (n=2), personal selling and sales management (n=2), ethics (n=1), park and recreation administration (n=1), services marketing (n=1), and sports (n=1) representing a smaller number of applied studies.

Data Analysis

The Matrix Method (Garrard, 1999) was utilized as the strategy for organizing and abstracting pertinent information from these publications. For this study, the following information was abstracted from each article: a) how was servant leadership defined?; b) how was the philosophy of servant leadership applied?; c) how was servant leadership examined?; and, d) what were the results of the examination? Last, for each publication, the methodology used to examine servant leadership was evaluated. For qualitative studies, we used a critical appraisal tool designed by Letts et al., (2007), and for quantitative studies we used a critical appraisal tool designed by the Institute for Public Health Sciences (2002). In addition to these two appraisal tools we used Stoltz, Udén, and William's (2004) critical appraisal, which assessed both quantitative and qualitative studies. We adopted these three critical appraisal tools to create a three-point scale to reflect the quality of studies: high (I); medium (II) – used if studies did not meet criteria for high (I) or low quality; and low (III). Table 2.2 describes our classification for high to low quality studies, which was based on the three critical

Table 2.1.

Database and Journals Included in Systematic Literature Review

Database	Journal	Count
Eric	*Alberta Journal of Educational Research*	1
PsycInfo	*Business Ethics: A European Review*	1
Eric	*Catholic Education: A Journal of Inquiry & Practice*	1
Eric	*Educational Management Administration & Leadership*	2
PsycInfo	*European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*	1
Scopus	*Global Virtue Ethics Review*	1
CINAHL	*Health Care Management Review*	1
PsycInfo	*Home Health Care Management & Practice*	1
Business Source Complete	*International Journal of Business Research*	1
Eric	*International Journal of Leadership in Education*	2
Scopus	*International Journal of Leadership Studies*	2
PsycInfo	*International Journal of Sports Science & Coaching*	1
PsycInfo	*Journal of Applied Psychology*	3
Business Source Complete	*Journal of Business & Economics Research*	1
Academic Search Complete	*Journal of Interprofessional Care*	1
PsycInfo	*Journal of Management Development*	1
Academic Search Complete	*Journal of Park & Recreation Administration*	1
PsycInfo	*Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management*	2
Business Source Complete	*Journal of the Academy of Business & Economics*	1
Eric	*Journal of Women in Educational Leadership*	1
PsycInfo	*Leadership*	1
PsycInfo	*Leadership & Organization Development Journal*	6
PsycInfo	*Non-profit Management and Leadership*	1
PsycInfo	*Personnel Psychology*	1
Business Source Complete	*Review of Business Research*	2
Business Source Complete	*Services Marketing Quarterly*	1
PsycInfo	*The International Journal of Human Resource Management*	1

Table 2.2.

Classification and Quality Assessment of Studies

	I = High	II = Medium	III = Low
QNT	Study using quantitative analysis of data. Clearly focused study, sufficient background provided, well planned, method appropriate, measures validated, applicable and adequate number of participants, data analysis sufficiently rigorous with adequate statistical methods, findings clearly stated.	–	Not focused study, insufficient background provided, poorly planned, inappropriate method, invalidated measures, inapplicable and inadequate number of participants, data analysis insufficiently rigorous, with inadequate statistical methods, unclear findings.
QAL	Study using qualitative analysis of data. Purpose stated clearly, relevant background literature reviewed, design appropriate, identified researcher's theoretical or philosophical perspective, relevant and well described selection of participants and context, procedural rigor in data collection strategies and analysis, evidence of the four components of trustworthiness (credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability) results are comprehensive and well described.	–	Vaguely formulated purpose, insufficient background, few or unsatisfactory descriptions of participants and context, trustworthiness inadequately addressed, lacks in description of data collection, data analysis, and results.

QNT, quantitative study; QAL, qualitative study; I, high quality; II, medium quality; III, low quality.

appraisal tools mentioned above. The findings from these studies were summarized and placed into matrixes (i.e., tables). Our systematic literature review findings consist of a synthesis of the results from all 39 applied studies along with the assessment of quality for each study. Further, we assess the level of supporting evidence for thematic conclusions drawn from combining the results of multiple studies.

Findings

Overall, this review highlights that the philosophy of servant leadership is being researched and tested in applied cases across a variety of contexts, cultures, disciplines, and themes. Our sample included 11 qualitative studies, 27 quantitative studies, and one mixed method study, all applying the concept of servant leadership. Thus, this review illustrates that servant leadership is being explored both quantitatively and qualitatively, and the topic has an international appeal with studies being conducted in 11 countries. In the quality assessment, 22 studies were classified as high, 12 as medium, and five as low quality. Conclusive statements were made based upon the synthesis of findings from each article. The conclusions (see Table 2.3) were classified as A (strong evidence) or B (moderate evidence) based on scientific strength. If two or more studies of high quality supported a conclusion or one study of high quality in addition to two or more studies of medium quality supported the conclusion, we assigned it an (A) rating. On the other hand, conclusions with one study of high quality and one study of medium quality or two studies of medium quality were assigned a (B) rating. If a conclusion(s) did not fall under (A) strong evidence in favor of conclusion or (B) moderate evidence in favor of conclusion, we classified it as insufficiently supported and labeled insufficient evidence. The following discussion of our findings is organized around the four central research questions.

Table 2.3. *Overview of Conclusion*

Result Themes	Conclusion	Evidence	References
Cross-cultural applicability	SL is accepted and practiced in various cultures; however, components of SL have different weights	Strong evidence in favor of statement (A)	Cerit, (2009, 2010) (QNT I, ONT I); Hamilton & Bean (2005) (QAL III); Hale & Fields, (2007) (QNT I); Han et al., (2010) (QAL II); Pekerti & Sendjaya, (2010) (QNT I)
SL attributes	Spears' (1998) 10 characteristics are representative of a servant leader applied in different context	Strong evidence in favor of statement (A)	Boroski & Greif, (2009) (QAL III); Crippen, (2004) (QAL II); Crippen & Wallin, (2008a) (QAL II), (2008b) (QAL II); Sturm, (2009) (QAL I)
	Patterson (2003) and Winston (2003) models of SL are supported	Strong evidence in favor of statement (A)	Winston, (2004) (QAL I); Dingman & Stone (2007) (QAL II)
Team level effectiveness	SL leads to increased leader trust and organizational trust	Strong evidence in favor of statement (A)	Joseph & Winston, (2005) (QNT I); Reinke, (2004) (QNT II); Senjaya & Pekerti, (2010) (QNT I); Washington et al, (2006) (QNT I)
	SL fosters organizational citizenship behavior	Strong evidence in favor of statement (A)	Ebener & O'Connell, (2010) (QAL I); Hu & Liden, (2011) (QNT I); Ehrhart, (2004) (QNT I); Walumbwa et al, (2010) (QNT I)
	Procedural justice is positively associated with SL	Strong evidence in favor of statement (A)	Ehrhart, (2004) (QNT I); Walumbwa et al, (2010) (QNT I); Chung, et al., (2010) (QNT II)
	SL increases team effectiveness	Strong evidence in favor of statement (A)	Irving & Longbotham, (2007) (QNT I); Schaubroeck et al (2011) (QNT I); Hu & Liden, (2011) (QNT I)
	SL is associated with greater leadership effectiveness	Strong evidence in favor of statement (A)	Taylor et al, (2007) (QNT II); Mayer et al., (2008) (QNT I); McCuddy & Cavin, (2008) (QNT III)
	SL enhances collaboration	Moderate evidence in favor of statement (B)	Garber et al., (2009) (QNT II); Sturm, (2009) (QAL I); Irving & Longbotham, (2007) (QNT I)
Followers' well-being	SL increases employee job satisfaction	Strong evidence in favor of statement (A)	Cerit, (2009) (QNT I); Jenkins & Stewart, (2010) (QNT I); Mayer et al., (2008) (QNT I); Chung, et al., (2010) (QNT II)
	SL creates a positive work climate	Strong evidence in favor of statement (A)	Neubert et al., (2008) (QNT I); Black, (2010) (Mixed Method: QNT II & QAL III); Jaramillo et al., (2009a) (QNT I)
	SL supports employee creativity and helping behaviors	Strong evidence in favor of statement (A)	Jaramillo et al., (2009b) (QNT I); Neubert et al., (2008) (QNT I)
	SL improves followers well-being	Strong evidence in favor of statement (A)	Jaramillo et al., (2009b) (QNT I); Rieke et al., (2008) (QNT I)
	SL lowers employee turnover	Strong evidence in favor of statement (A)	Jaramillo et al., (2009a) (QNT I); Babakusa et al., (2011) (QNT I)
	SL increases commitment	Strong evidence in favor of statement (A)	Cerit, (2010) (QNT I); Hamilton & Bean (2005) (QAL III); Hale & Fields, (2007) (QNT I); Han et al., (2010) (QAL II); Pekerti & Sendjaya, (2010) (QNT I) Jaramillo et al., (2009a) (QNT I); Jaramillo et al., (2009b) (QNT I)
Spirituality	SL is associated with workplace spirituality	Insufficient evidence	Herman, (2010) (QNT II)
Demographics	Propensity toward engaging in SL is associated with demographic variables	Insufficient evidence	Fridell et al., (2009) (QNT II); McCuddy & Cavin, (2009) (QNT III); Taylor et al, (2007) (QNT II)
Implementation of SL	Knowledge and framing of SL can affect adoption	Insufficient evidence	Hamilton & Bean (2005) (QAL III); Savage-Austin & Honeycutt, (2011) (QAL III)
	Positive relationship between succession planning and SL	Insufficient evidence	Dingman & Stone (2007) (QAL II)

SL, servant leadership; QNT, quantitative study; QAL, qualitative study; I, high quality; II, medium quality; III, low quality.

How was Servant Leadership Defined?

The philosophy of servant leadership was introduced to readers by authors of applied studies by citing one or all three of the following: Greenleaf (1977), Spears (1995, 1998, 2004), and Laub (1999). Generally, authors would describe servant leadership quoting one of these three authors in addition to citing multiple other authors, including, but not limited to: Barbuto and Wheeler (2006), Graham (1991), Ehrhart (2004), Liden et al., (2008), Page and Wong (2000), and Patterson (2003). Here, we discuss the three most cited works on servant leadership that have provided definitions.

Greenleaf (1970, 1972, 1977), the grandfather of servant leadership, was cited by 37 of the 39 applied studies. The majority of authors used part or all of Greenleaf's description from his original essay, *The Servant as Leader* (1970):

It begins with the natural feeling one wants to serve, to serve *first*. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. That person is sharply different from one who is leader first. . . . 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 this: 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, 1970 as cited in Greenleaf 1977, p. 27).

The majority of authors in our sample, like Greenleaf himself, defined servant leadership in a descriptive manner. These descriptions usually cited multiple scholarly works in the

conceptual and measurement research streams, in addition to citing leading organizational management authors.

The second most referenced author defining servant leadership was Larry Spears. Like Greenleaf, Spears gained his knowledge from practice with most of his works being non-empirical. He served for 17 years as the head of the Greenleaf Center, has authored more than 10 books on servant leadership, and in 2008 established the Larry C. Spears Center for Servant Leadership, Inc. (Spears Center, 2011). Spears (1995, 1998, 2004) identified 10 characteristics of servant leaders from Greenleaf's writings: listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people, and building community. These attributes are described in Table 2.4. Four of the qualitative studies in our sample used Spear's 10 characteristics to inform their analysis (Crippen, 2004; Crippen & Wallin, 2008a, 2008b; Strum, 2009).

The third most cited author in defining servant leadership is Laub (1999). His Organizational Leadership Assessment (OLA) was an outcome of his dissertation. The OLA assesses an organization's health based upon the six key areas of an effective servant-minded organization by exploring the perceptions of top leaders, managers and supervisors, and the workforce; however, it does not assess the servant leadership of individual leaders (OLA Group, 2011). Authors in our sample used Laub's (1999) definition, which terms the practice of servant leadership as placing "the good of those led over the self-interest of the leader" (p.81). In addition, authors would list and describe Laub's (1999) six key variables of an effective servant-led organization: a) values people – believing, serving, and non-judgmentally listening to others; b) develops people – providing learning, growth, encouragement and affirmation; c) builds community – developing strong collaborative and

Table 2.4.

Spears' (1998) 10 Characteristics of a Servant Leader

Characteristic	Description
Listening	Automatically responding to any problem by receptively listening to what is said, which allows them to identify the will of the group and help clarify that will.
Empathy	Striving to accept and understand others, never rejecting them, but sometimes refusing to recognize their performance as good enough.
Healing	Recognizing as human beings they have the opportunity to make themselves and others 'whole'.
Awareness	Strengthened by general awareness and above all self-awareness, which enables them to view situations holistically.
Persuasion	Relying primarily on convincement rather than coercion.
Conceptualization	Seeking to arouse and nurture theirs' and others' abilities to 'dream great dreams'.
Foresight	Intuitively understanding the lessons from the past, the present realities, and the likely outcome of a decision for the future.
Stewardship	Committing first and foremost to serving others needs.
Commitment to the growth of people	Nurtures the personal, professional, and spiritual growth of each individual.
Building community	Identifies means of building communities among individuals working within their institutions, which can give the healing love essential for health.

personal relationships; d) displays authenticity – being open, accountable, and willing to learn from others; e) provides leadership – foreseeing the future, taking initiative, and establishing goals; and f) shares leadership – facilitating and sharing power. The OLA has been widely used in health organizations (OLA Group, 2011), and was used in six quantitative studies in our sample (Herman, 2010; Black, 2010; Cerit, 2010; Cerit, 2009; Irving & Longbotham, 2007; Joseph & Winston, 2005).

In summary, our results confirm Anderson's (2009) and Van Dierendonck's (2011) assessments that servant leadership remains under-defined with no consensus on its definition or theoretical framework. Scholars are still seeking to articulate Greenleaf's conceptualization of servant leadership by using a variety of definitions sourced from multiple works.

How was the Concept of Servant Leadership Applied?

Our sample illustrates servant leadership is being applied across cultures, contexts, and across a diversity of research foci. Overall, the sample consisted of studies in 11 countries, which included four cross-cultures studies. These findings illustrate that servant leadership is accepted and practiced in various cultures, specifically: U.S. (n=23), Canada (n=4), China (n=2), Turkey (n=2), Indonesia (n=1), New Zealand (n =1), Kenya (n=1), and the Republic of Trinidad (n=1), with five cross-culture studies comparing U.S. and Ghana, U.S. and UK, U.S. and China (n=2), and Indonesia and Australia.

A contextual analysis of the sample revealed that servant leadership is being applied in the following organizational settings: education (n=17), which consisted of religious schools (n=6) and secular schools (n=11); secular for profit organizations (n=14) including financial services (n=4); nursing (n=3); public organizations (n=2); religious organizations

(n=1); non-profit organizations (n=1); and in a historical context (n=1). It is important to note that servant leadership was examined in a religious context in seven of the 39 studies, and that the education field represents 44% of the contextual environment for the entire sample.

The synthesis of how servant leadership is being applied revealed seven research themes with some studies containing more than one area of focus. The themes and their associated studies are presented in Table 2.3. An overall count and description of each theme is as follows: a) cross-cultural applicability – acceptance, practices, and different weights of servant leadership in a variety of cultures (n=7); b) servant leadership attributes – conceptual models' characteristics are studied (n=7); c) team level effectiveness – effects of servant leadership explored at the unit level (n=20); d) followers' well-being – effects on employees in a servant-led environment (n=20); e) spirituality – connection between spiritual workplace and servant-led workplace was investigated (n=1); f) demographics (n=3); and g) implementation of servant leadership (n=3). We discuss a synthesis of these themes below in the last section of our findings, where we provide an overview of the results of studies included in the sample.

How was Servant Leadership Examined?

All of the 27 quantitative studies used surveys as the data collection method. The two most popular measures of servant leadership used by these applied studies was Laub's (1999) OLA instrument – used by six studies (Herman, 2010; Black, 2010; Cerit, 2010; Cerit, 2009; Irving & Longbotham, 2007; Joseph & Winston, 2005) and the Servant Leadership Scale developed by Ehrhart (2004) – used by six studies (Ehrhart, 2004; Jaramillo et al., 2009a, 2009b; Mayer et al., 2008; Neubert et al., 2008; Walumbwa et al., 2010). Instruments that were used by two studies included: Barbuto and Wheeler's (2006) instrument (Jenkins &

Steward, 2010; Garber et al., 2009); Liden et al's. (2008) instrument (Hu & Liden, 2011;

Schaubroeck et al., 2011); and Sendjaya et al's. (2008) survey (Pekerti & Sendjaya, 2010;

Sendjaya & Perketi, 2010). Taylor et al. (2007) used Page and Wong's (1998) self-

assessment measure. Washington et al. (2006) used Dennis and Winston's (2003) instrument,

which was an adopted version of Page and Wong's (2000) instrument. Rieke et al., (2008)

used Hammermeister et al.'s (2008) instrument, which was also an adopted version of Page

and Wong's (2000) instrument. Babakusa et al. (2011) and Hale and Fields (2007) used

lesser known scales, those of Lytle et al. (1998) and Dennis (2004) respectively. One study

used a survey designed by the U.S. Office of Personal Management (OPM). Four studies

developed their own survey: Fridell et al. (2009), Reinke (2004), and McCuddy and Cavin

(2008, 2009). In summary, out of 27 applied survey studies, there were 14 different survey

measures used. It is important to note that the majority of these authors combined multiple

measurement scales to construct their surveys. In addition, the majority of these measures

explored servant leadership at the unit level of analysis while only a few examined it at the

individual level of analysis.

Similarly, the 11 qualitative studies used a variety of servant leadership frameworks

to inform their analyses, while three studies did not provide any information on frameworks.

Four of the qualitative studies used Spear's (1998) 10 characteristics to inform their analyses

(Crippen, 2004; Crippen & Wallin, 2008a, 2008b; Strum, 2009). Two studies used Patterson

(2003) and Winsten's (2003) models – Dingman and Stone (2007) and Winston (2004). Han

et al. (2010) used multiple dimensions and definitions of servant leadership in Western

literature including but not limited to: Barbuto and Wheeler (2006); Liden et al. (2008);

Ehrhart (2004); and Sendjaya et al. (2008). The multiple quantitative and qualitative

measures used by the studies in our sample reinforce our findings for research question one, where it was found that authors have defined servant leadership in various ways. Similarly, as this review demonstrates, there is still not an agreed upon measurement strategy for the philosophy of servant leadership.

What were the Results of the Examination?

Our sample of applied studies illustrated that servant leadership is a viable and valuable philosophy on an individual and an organization level, which can lead to increased overall effectiveness of individuals and teams. In Table 2.3, a synthesis of the conclusions from our sample of articles is divided by theme, with a rating of the evidence to support each individual conclusion. We discuss the results of these applied studies by theme below.

Cross-cultural applicability. The cross-cultural studies (Hamilton & Bean., 2005 – U.S. and UK; Hale & Fields, 2007 – U.S. and Ghana; Han et al., 2010 –U.S. and China; Pekerti & Sendjaya, 2010 – Indonesia and Australia; Schaubroeck et al. (2011) – U.S. and China) all indicated servant leadership might be culturally universal. However, these studies also show that the different attributes perceived to make up servant leadership are not weighted equally across cultures. For example: Hale and Fields (2007) found that vision had a significantly stronger relationship with leader effectiveness for Ghanaians in comparison to North Americans; Han et al. (2009) found "being dutiful" to be an extended form of servant leadership in China; Hamilton and Bean (2010) discovered that introducing servant leadership within a Christian context was perceived as obtrusive in the United Kingdom; and Perkerti and Sedjaya (2010) found that Australian leaders exhibited more behaviors with authentic self, while Indonesian leaders exhibited more behaviors with responsible morality and transforming influence. In contrast to these findings, Schaubroeck, et al. (2011) found no

significant differences in perceptions of servant leadership between Hong Kong and the United States. These cross-cultural studies along with studies conducted in different countries imply that servant leadership might be culturally universal, but culture-specific perceptions of servant leadership exist based on socialization and national context.

Servant Leader Attributes. Seven studies explored the conceptual definitions of servant leadership, and found Spear's (1998), Patterson's (2003), and Winston's (2003) attributes to be representative of servant leadership applied in different contexts. Five studies (Boroski & Greif, 2009; Crippen, 2004; Crippen & Wallin, 2008a, 2008b; Sturm, 2009) within three different contexts (schools, community, and nursing) supported Spear's 10 characteristics (see Table 2.3). Two studies (Winston, 2004; Dingman & Stone, 2007) provide support for Patterson's (2003) leader-to-follower and Winston's (2003) follower-to-leader models of servant leadership. Patterson's model of leader-follower interaction starts with the leaders' *agapaó* (love for others) which she conceptualizes as a collection of the following seven values: being teachable; showing concern for others; demonstrating discipline; seeking the greatest good for the organization; showing mercy in the actions and beliefs with all people; meeting the needs of followers and the organization; and creating a place where peace grows within the organization. These seven values are based upon the biblical concepts of the seven beatitudes from Matthew 5 (Patterson, 2003; Winston, 2003, 2004). Instead of focusing on leader-follower interaction as Patterson's model does, Winston's model focuses on the follower-to-leader interactions. Winston's follower-to-leader model starts with the followers' *agapaó* and then shows how the followers are servant leaders themselves by utilizing the same variables as Patterson's model. As stated above, studies confirm the applicability of the variables in both of these models: trust,

empowerment, vision, altruism, intrinsic motivation, commitment, and service (Winston, 2004; Dingman & Stone, 2007). Thus, the attributes identified by Spears, Patterson, and Winston were represented within the measurement instruments discussed above.

Team level effectiveness. Sixteen applied studies explored servant leadership at a unit level. Overall, these studies found that a servant-led organization enhances leader trust and organizational trust, organizational citizenship behavior, procedural justice, team and leader effectiveness, and the collaboration between team members. Several studies found that a servant-led environment provided affirmation of justice and fair treatment, which is positively associated with procedural justice, or the perception of how a work group as a whole is treated (Ehrhart, 2004; Walumbwa et al., 2010; Chung, et al., 2010). Procedural justice fosters trust in the servant leader and in the servant-led organization (Joseph & Winston, 2005; Reinke, 2004; Senjaya & Pekerti, 2010; Washington et al., 2006). This creates an open and trusting environment, which can enhance collaboration among team members (Garber et al., 2009; Sturm, 2009; Irving & Longbotham, 2007). Collaboration in a servant-led organization creates a helping culture (i.e., a spirit of willingness), which increases team members' organizational citizenship behavior, defined as pro-social and altruistic behaviors that have been shown to improve organizational performance (Ebener & O'Connell, 2010; Hu & Liden, 2011; Ehrhart, 2004; Walumbwa et al., 2010). Servant leadership also improves overall team effectiveness (Taylor et al., 2007; Mayer et al., 2008; McCuddy & Cavin, 2008) and can enhance leaders' effectiveness (Irving & Longbotham, 2007; Schaubroeck et al., 2011; Hu & Liden, 2011). In summary, servant leadership creates a trusting, fair, collaborative, and helping culture that can result in greater individual and organizational effectiveness.

Followers' well-being. Findings from 15 applied studies illustrated that servant leadership enhances followers' well-being. These applied studies showed conceptually and empirically how servant leadership relates to followers' well-being by creating a positive work climate (Neubert et al., 2008; Black, 2010; Jaramillo et al., 2009a), which is related to greater organizational commitment (Cerit, 2010; Hamilton & Bean, 2005; Hale & Fields, 2007; Han et al., 2010; Pekerti & Sendjaya, 2010). Greater commitment to the organization increases employee job satisfaction (Cerit, 2009; Jenkins & Stewart, 2010; Mayer et al., 2008; Chung, et al., 2010) and consequently decreases employee turnover (Jaramillo et al., 2009; Babakusa et al., 2011). Servant leaders create these positive outcomes by developing trust while nurturing followers, which encourages the creativity, helping behaviors, and well-being of followers (Jaramillo et al., 2009a; Babakusa et al., 2011; Rieke et al., 2008). Overall, these studies support the notion that the practice of servant leadership can improve followers' well-being.

Spirituality. One study (Herman, 2010) found a positive connection between workplace spirituality and servant leadership, while six applied studies explored servant leadership within religious intuitions. In addition, many scholars described servant leadership using the teachings of Jesus Christ as a reference (Ebener & O'Connell; Hamilton & Bean, 2005; Winsten, 2004). Although there appears to be a relationship between spirituality and servant leadership, there was insufficient evidence to draw conclusions for this review.

Demographics. Three studies (Fridell et al., 2009; McCuddy & Cavin, 2009; Taylor et al., 2007) attempted to identify demographic characteristics conducive to practicing servant leadership. However, these studies lacked methodological quality sufficient to support any conclusions. In addition, many of the findings of these studies contradicted each

other as well as other studies within our sample. For example, one study found differences based on gender (Fridell et al., 2009), while another study found no difference (McCuddy & Cavin, 2009). Also, one study found that socio-economic factors were positively related to servant behaviors (McCuddy & Cavin, 2009), while another study found no demographic variable significantly related to servant leadership (Taylor et al., 2007) Therefore, it remains to be discovered if there are in fact demographic characteristics that are related to servant leadership.

Implementation of Servant Leadership. Three studies examined servant leadership in various organizational processes (Hamilton & Bean, 2005 – leadership development; Savage-Austin & Honeycutt, 2011 – organizational change; Dingman & Stone, 2007 – succession planning). Nevertheless, these studies were not supported by other applied studies nor was their methodological quality sufficient to provide any conclusions.

Conclusion

This systematic literature review illustrates that the philosophy of servant leadership is applicable in a variety of cultures, contexts, and applied organizational settings. Even though Greenleaf first coined the philosophy in the 1970s, it has taken until 2004 for servant leadership to be explored in an applied manner. This systematic literature review did not place any limitation on the publication year of peer-reviewed journal articles; however, no applied studies were found across all the databases searched before 2004. To date, the majority of research in servant leadership is either attempting to conceptually define and model the philosophy or develop measurement tools to empirical test it. Thus, the greater part of research on servant leadership is addressing one of the major criticisms of the philosophy, which is the difficultly of operationalizing its concepts and principles (Brumback, 1999;

Wong & Davey, 2007). Quay (1997) is not alone in his sentiments on Greenleaf's works: "For all his good advice and many practical ideas, he is a Don Quixote trying to convince managers to pursue good and eschew evil" (p.83). By Greenleaf's own admission, his ideas are unorthodox, yet the value of these applied studies included in our analysis illustrate that the philosophy of servant leadership works.

The first question of this review sought to discover how servant leadership is being defined in applied settings. Although our findings indicated the majority of authors use Greenleaf (1970, 1972, 1977), Spears (1998), and Laub (1999) to help define the philosophy of servant leadership, there still does not exist an accepted consensus over its definition. This lack of consensus creates confusion (Van Dierendonck, 2011) amongst researchers, as they come up with their own variations of definitions and models. Perhaps one day there will be a general accepted definition of servant leadership, but the applied cross-cultural studies in this review highlight that while servant leadership is a universal concept, it has different meanings based on socialization and national context. In addition, Greenleaf (1977) argued that servant leadership is an inward life long journey, implying that the meaning of servant leadership could change throughout one's life time. Therefore, this review does not conclude with a model or another definition of servant leadership; however, it does provide researchers with an overview of multiple definitions of servant leadership currently being used in applied studies.

Second, this review explored how servant leadership is being applied. Our review illustrates the diversity of cultures, organizational settings, and research foci in which servant leadership is being explored. There seems to be pronounced interest in exploring servant leadership in the U.S. and throughout the Asia Pacific region; however, there is a

paucity of studies being conducted in other parts of the world. Organizational settings that have explored servant leadership the least are: medical institutions, public organizations, non-profit organizations, and community-level organizations. Currently, the majority of studies are exploring servant leadership in an educational setting (44% of our sample). Research on applying servant leadership is concentrated in the fields of leadership, education, business and psychology; whereas, there is only a small number of studies in the fields of nursing, management, personal selling and sales, ethics, parks and recreation administration, services marketing, and sports. The research themes being explored the least are: spirituality, demographics, and implementation of servant leadership. Thus, this review helps researchers identify areas which are relatively unexplored.

Third, this review examined the tools that can be used to measure the existence and outcomes of servant leadership. The multiple quantitative and qualitative measures used by the studies point to the fact that there is currently not an agreed upon measurement instrument of the philosophy. The review helps researchers be aware of the current measurement tools available, how they are being used, and in what contexts they are being applied. Last, this review synthesized the findings of these applied studies (See Table 2.3.). Seven research themes emerged: cross-cultural applicability, servant leadership attributes, team level effectiveness, followers' well-being, spirituality, demographics, and implementation of servant leadership. This synthesis helps researchers identify the current findings in the extant literature, and to discover research foci that remain relatively underexplored.

In summary, this systematic literature review of applied studies on servant leadership helps to further our understanding of the definition(s) of servant leadership, illustrates the

diversity of cultures, organizational settings, and research foci in which it can be applied, identifies tools that can be used to measure its existence and outcomes, and shows that servant leadership is a viable leadership philosophy that helps organizations and the well-being of followers.

CHAPTER III

BUILDING A LEGACY OF VOLUNTEERS THROUGH SERVANT LEADERSHIP: A

CASE STUDY OF A CAUSE-REALATED SPORTING EVENT

Non-profit organizations (NPOs) have used cause-related sporting events to connect

with consumers and create social capital by linking the company or brand to a relevant social

issue (Pope, Isely, & Asamoa-Tutu, 2009; Principle & Thompson, 1999). These events have

become increasingly popular because of "the multifaceted ability of sport to contribute to

health, engage a diverse audience, and promote social inclusion" (Sherry, 2010, p.61). The

growth in cause-related sporting events is also a consequence of the explosion of NPOs; from

1981 to 2009 the number of NPOs in the U.S. increased 4.7 times reaching over 1.9 million

(IRS, 2009). Cause-related sporting events have the explicit goal to generate net profit;

however, at the core of these events is the far-reaching and intangible goal of creating

positive social change. To make these events successful NPOs need leaders and volunteers

who build a legacy of service.

A legacy of dedicated volunteers requires more than hosting a cause-related sporting

event. The leaders and the people of an organization, rather than the structure, are the

fundamental determinants of organizational behavior (Schneider, 1987). Organizational

cultures are created by passing down the founder's values, goals, attitudes, practices, and

behaviors that followers learn over time and then apply to organizational decision-making

processes (Schien, 1990). A key to understanding the success of a cause-related sporting

event and volunteer motivation, then, is to study the leadership style of the founder.

However, there remains little discourse on motivations of stakeholders and the leadership style contributing to the success of these events.

Therefore, the aim of this study was to explore the founder's leadership style of a cause-related sporting event and to investigate the effects of this leadership style on motivating volunteers. This investigation focused on the National Kidney Foundation (NKF) Surf Festival, which has achieved a worldwide audience while simultaneously cultivating community-level engagement. Our research questions framing this study were: (a) what is the founder's leadership style; and (b) how has the founder's leadership style contributed to motivating core volunteers for over 25 years? By establishing how leadership style influences and motivates volunteers in a cause-related sporting event, we address a significant gap in the leadership literature, and we contribute to the theoretical development of leadership in the NPO sector.

Theoretical Framework

Leadership Theory

Two contemporary leadership models that have received substantial attention are Bass's (1985) transformational leadership and Greenleaf's (1977) servant leadership frameworks. To understand the key differences between these leadership models it is important to discuss two distinct paradigms of leadership. Patton (1978) defined a paradigm as "a world view . . . a way of breaking down the complexity of the world" (p. 203). There are two leadership paradigms, which distinguish how the leader views him or herself; as a leader first or as a servant first. An individual who is a leader first will serve others only after leadership has been established "perhaps because of a need to assuage an unusual power drive or to acquire material possessions" (Greenleaf, 1977, p. 27). The reverse is true for an

individual who is a servant first. Greenleaf framed the servant as leader from his impressions of *Journey to the East* by Hesse (1956), and used the character Leo to describe a true servant: "Leadership was bestowed upon a man who was by nature a servant. . . . His servant nature was the real man, not bestowed, not assumed, and not to be taken away" (Greenleaf, 1977, p. 21). The leader-first and the servant-first paradigms are polar opposites because between them is an endless variety of human nature (Greenleaf, 1977). The two styles of leadership central to this study are servant leadership and transformational leadership – the commonalities and distinctions between their theoretical assumptions have been discussed since the early 1990s. We will first define both leadership styles and then discuss their resemblances and distinctions.

Transformational leadership was first mentioned by Downton (1973), introduced in a political context by Burns (1978), and proposed as an organizational theory by Bass (1985). Transformational leaders go beyond the exchange of resources, or transactional leadership, by appealing to followers' higher psychological needs (Bryman, 1992). A transactional leader manages by contract and reward, focusing on task completion, rules, and procedures over personal relationships or building a united vision (Bass, 1990). By contrast, transformational leadership is the process of "influencing major change in attitudes and assumptions of organizational members by building commitment for the organization's missions and objectives" (Yukl, 1998, p. 204). Avolio, Waldman, & Yammarino (1991) defined four characteristics of transformational leadership: (a) idealized influence – models vision and mission, imparts trust, pride, and respect; (b) inspirational motivation – communicates high expectations; (c) intellectual stimulation – challenges followers promoting vigilant, intelligent, rational problem solving; and (d) individualized consideration

– mentors followers giving individual attention. The idealized influence characteristic was originally defined by Bass (1985, 1990) as charisma – motivates   followers through personal identification (Yulk, 2010).

Unlike transformational leadership, servant leadership has seen limited empirical studies. Writing on servant leadership, which has streamed from Greenleaf's (1977) foundational text, has consisted mostly of applied anecdotal examples (Bowman, 1997; Northouse, 1997). Greenleaf (1977) conceptualized servant leadership as a way of life rather than as a management technique. Servant leadership is distinguished by its primary motivation to serve (what the servant leader does) and self-construction (who the servant leader is), and then from this conscious choice of 'doing' and 'being' one aspires to lead (Sendjaya & Sarros, 2002). Greenleaf (1977) admitted that servant leadership would be difficult to operationalize and apply. Servant leadership is unorthodox, calling for a radical change in how a leader acts and reasons. It inverts the traditional leadership paradigm, placing the leader at the bottom of the hierarchy (Rieke, Hammermeister, & Chase, 2008; Westre, 2003). A servant leader's highest priority is serving the least privileged by building an institution "with a leadership that has a firmly established context of people first" (Greenleaf, 1977, p. 54). Trust is developed by the leader selflessly serving others while helping followers grow, which inspires followers to become servants themselves (Greenleaf, 1977).

Several definitional and conceptual models of servant leadership have emerged (Laub, 1999; Spears, 1998; Patterson, 2003). Although many writers have decoded Greenleaf's work into conventional lists of attributes, none of them fully capture the essence of Greenleaf's philosophical conceptualization of the servant leader (Prosser, 2010). Thus,

the data in this study will be discussed in relation to Greenleaf's work and Laub's (1999) Organizational Leadership Assessment (OLA). The OLA operationalized servant leadership as the following: a) values people – believing, serving, and non-judgmental listening to others; b) develops people – providing learning, growth, encouragement and affirmation; c) builds community – developing strong collaborative and personal relationships; d) displays authenticity – being open, accountable, and willing to learn from others; e) provides leadership – foreseeing the future, taking initiative, and establishing goals; and f) shares leadership – facilitating and sharing power. The willingness to serve others is a common theme infusing all models of servant leadership (Sendjaya, Sarros, & Santora, 2008).

Stone, Russell, and Patterson's (2004) comparison of servant and transformational leadership revealed many similarities but also key distinctions. The styles share attributes of influence, vision, trust, respect, risk sharing, integrity, and modeling; however, the primary difference between them is the leader's focus. According to Stone el al., "transformational leaders tend to focus more on organizational objectives while servant leaders focus more on the people who are the followers" (p.349). Both theoretical frameworks stress individual consideration and appreciation of followers, but servant leadership gives greater prominence to serving followers (Stone et al., 2004). In contrast, Yukl's (1998) definition of transformational leadership highlights building organizational objectives as the primary focus of the leader, with the development of followers as the secondary focus. Another distinction is how these leaders influence followers. A servant leader gains influence through servanthood, whereas the transformational leader relies on charisma, enthusiasm, expertise, and strength of relationships (Bass, 1990; Stone et al., 2004).

Additionally, empirical studies have confirmed that servant and transformational leadership are distinct constructs (Liden, Wayne, Zhao, & Henderson, 2008; Parolini, Patterson, & Winston, 2009). By contrasting servant and transformational leadership, Parolini et al.'s (2009) discriminant analysis revealed the following distinct characteristics: a) moral distinction (separate values versus collective values), b) focus distinction (individual versus organization), c) developmental distinction (serve versus lead), and d) influence distinction (freedom versus control). Scholars have stressed the morality of servant leadership and absence of morality of Bass's (1985) conceptualization of transformational leadership (Parolini et al., 2009). Graham (1991) emphasized that transformational leaders could use "followers without concern for their moral development" and "tap the creativity of followers for solving organizational problems and serving organizational purposes" (p.111). Giampetro-Meyer, Brown, Browne, and Kubasek (1998) highlighted how transformational leaders' core focus of aligning their own needs and others' interest with the good of the organization may result in narcissism with disastrous long-term costs. On the contrary, servant leadership has always been grounded in the personal values of humility, authenticity, interpersonal acceptance, and unconditional love, with the belief that service as well as power are gifts (Van Dierendonck, 2011). The difference between these theories and practices is a function of the organizational context in which the leaders choose to work and the leader's personal values (Stone et al., 2004).

Volunteer Motivation

Volunteer participation is essential for NPOs to be able to offer services (Fisher & Ackerman, 1998). The majority of research regarding volunteer motivation centers on individual socioeconomic and psychological traits while ignoring social and organizational

contexts (Smith, 1994). Volunteer motivation literature uses dimensional models to explain the helping behaviors of volunteers. First, two-dimensional models use egoistic or altruistic motivations in explaining volunteer motivation. Individuals who help for egotistic reasons are motivated to gain tangible and intangible benefits or to fulfill social pressures of guilt. In contrast, those who help for altruistic reasons genuinely care about others (Bendapudi, Singh, & Bendapudi, 1996). Second, three-dimensional models define motivations as altruistic, material, and social (Taylor, 1995). Finally, Monga (2006) employed a five-dimensional model examining altruistic, material, social, affiliation, and egoistic motivations, finding that the strongest motive for volunteering at special events was derived through affiliation (i.e., the individual's passion and attachment to the event activity and the attraction of the unique culture [ambience] created by the event).

Individuals are social beings whose interaction with their surroundings shape their values, social constructs, and world view (Mead, 1934). A growing body of literature shows group affiliation is the catalyst for volunteering (Haski-Leventhal & Cnaan, 2010; Wilson, 2000). Mannheim (1936) recognized that "we belong to groups . . . primarily because we see the world . . . the way . . . [the group] does" (pp. 21-22). However, there remains minimal research addressing the effects of leaders on volunteer motivation.

The National Kidney Foundation Surf Festival

Our research was set in the context of the NKF Surf Festival, a project developed Richard Salick, a former professional surfer, and his twin brother Philip, who donated a kidney to save Salick's life. In 1973, after qualifying for the World Championships, Salick suffered a dramatic decline in health and was faced with dialysis treatments and an inability to do the things he loved. His physicians said he would never surf again. After a successful

kidney transplant in 1977, he developed a padding system to protect his kidney, and following a slow recovery, Salick re-entered competition and earned first place at the second event he entered (NKF, 2010).

To improve the lives of kidney patients, the Salicks utilized their life-long knowledge of the surf industry to create a series of surf tournaments to raise money and awareness about kidney disease. At their first event, the brothers raised $125, which they delivered to the local dialysis center in a brown paper bag. The event grew and became noticed on the national stage, becoming the largest charity surfing competition in the world. Currently, the NKF Surf Festival involves over 300 volunteers and has raised over $4 million to help people with kidney disease. Over the last 25 years, Salick's event has become synonymous with the NKF of Florida and is its second largest fundraiser.

Method

We used an exploratory, qualitative case study methodology to analyze the founder's leadership style and its effects on volunteer motivation. Case studies are an essential form of social science inquiry and are appropriate to examine multivariate conditions (Yin, 2003). As our aim was to elaborate leadership theory, we searched for an extreme case (Pratt, Rockman, & Kaufman, 2006). We selected the NKF Surf Festival because of the longevity of the leader and volunteers, the unique sport setting, and the success of the event. The founder's and core volunteers' dedication for over 25 years is an anomaly in the non-profit sector, which faces high volunteer and staff turnover (Eisner, Grimm, Maynard, & Washburn, 2009; Tierney, 2006). A surf contest is a unique sport setting in the non-profit sector, where walks, long distance bike rides, marathons, and golf tournaments are more common (Edwards & Kreshel, 2008). Surfing is a grassroots action sport representing a

growing sub-segment of consumers (SMGA, 2005 as cited by Miloch & Lambrecht, 2006). Little discourse has occurred on NPOs hosting cause-related grassroots action sporting events which target these subcultures. Built around the surfing culture with many of the volunteers who were on the founder's original surf team as youths, the event has been14 times more financially successful than the average cause-related sporting event (Higgins & Lauzon, 2003). These factors contributed to our selecting the Surf Festival as an extreme case. The first author has also volunteered with the NKF for five years, which built trust with the organization and participants.

Data Collection

Data were collected through: a) semi-structured personal interviews, b) document analysis of public materials pertaining to the event, and c) personal observations (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). We conducted interviews with 19 individuals, including the founder, the CEO of NKF of Florida, board members, employees, sponsors, competitors, and volunteers. Purposive sampling was used to select participants based on their involvement with the NKF Surf Festival to ensure that "certain types of individuals or persons displaying certain attributes [were] included in the study" (Berg, 2001, p. 32). Based on the guidelines provided by Lincoln and Guba (1985), interviews were conducted in a semi-structured format – an interview guide provided structure while questions were allowed to naturally emerge over the course of the interview. All interviews were conducted by the first author in a private setting, lasted between 40-90 minutes, were digitally audio recorded, and transcribed verbatim. The first author documented personal observations in a reflective journal to extend the understanding of the social dynamics impactful to the research process (Glense, 2006).

Data Analysis

Open, axial, and selective coding were used to analyze the data and to form conceptual codes (Creswell, 1998; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). During the initial stage of analysis, open coding was utilized to condense the data into preliminary categories. For example, some of the open codes encompassed: a desire to serve (moral calling); the leader as facilitator (sharing power and status, serves other's needs before one's own); personally committed spiritually liberated (strong dedication to the mission, but free and autonomous to leave organization); develops people (builds others through encouragement and affirmation); builds community (creating and attracting a community of leaders); provides leadership (generates a shared vision), and volunteer motivation (service to others, affiliation, and shared ownership). In congruence with Miles and Huberman (1994), some codes were assigned based on prior leadership theory (i.e., Greenleaf, 1977; Laub, 1999) while others emerged from the data. Next, we organized the open codes into axial codes (the themes presented in the results and discussion section), by clustering and linking the codes together to discover key analytic categories (Neuman, 2006). Finally, selective coding was employed to integrate the data from all data collection methods to support the emerging conceptual codes (Creswell, 1998). We stored and integrated the data with NVivo 9.

Creswell and Miller (2000) define trustworthiness in a qualitative study as "how accurately the account represents participants' realities of the social phenomena and is credible to them" (p. 124). A qualitative study has trustworthiness if the investigation has credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Schwandt, 2007). Credibility, an analog to internal validity, was established by using triangulation of measures and by conducting member checks with participants, where they reviewed interview transcripts,

study interpretations, and provided feedback (Janesick, 1994). Transferability, an analog to external validity, was achieved by the first author keeping a reflective journal that provided a contextual narrative that others can use to examine the degree of similarity to their organization (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In order to improve dependability (similar to reliability) and confirmability (similar to objectivity), the second author, who was not involved in data collection, served as an auditor and reviewed all codes, analyses, and interpretations (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, & Allen, 1993).

Results and Discussion

The Founder as a Servant Leader

Our first research question sought to discover the founder's leadership style. Findings indicated that the founder is a servant leader as a result of meeting Greenleaf's (1977) philosophical conceptualization of a servant leader and Laub's (1999) model of servant leadership. As such, the founder (a) is a servant first; (b) displays unconditional love and a moral calling to serve; (c) inspires others to serve through his love; and (d) is committed to helping others, not the organization, while having a positive impact on the least privileged in society.

Leader as servant first. Salick is a servant leader because his leadership materialized from his desire to serve. Many leadership styles, like transformational and transactional leadership, are defined by what the leader does, whereas servant leadership is distinguished by both its primary motivation to serve (what leaders do) and self-concept (who leaders are) (Sendjaya & Sarros, 2002). Faced with the adversity of having kidney disease and overwhelmed with the charity of friends along with the gift of life from his brother, Salick turned his transplant success and his knowledge of the surf industry into an event to help

others combat kidney disease. His primary motivation in life was no longer finding the best waves in the world as a professional surfer; it was dedicated to serving others, which turned into his career.

Salick was first a servant and then he made the conscious choice to lead. When asked to describe his job, Salick revealed how his passion for helping others led to self-fulfillment:

> I have been doing this for 37 years in one way or another since the first transplant. I just sit and wonder, 'God what I am going to do . . . for a career.' I have been sitting in my career for a lot of years.

It is important to note that "servant leadership is not about self-sacrifice or self-denial. It is about self-fulfillment" (Keith, 2008, p. 68). Since his first transplant, Salick, along with his brother and surfing friends, have been hosting the Surf Festival to raise money for direct patient aid. Loving and helping others is what Salick and his followers do, and it is who they are. Being a servant leader is a fundamental way of being that is part of one's psyche, as it goes beyond knowledge and skills and requires an internal transformation (a paradigm shift) and the will (a choice) to make life better for others, rather than for one's self (Greenleaf, 1977). Above all other attributes, the primary focus on service distinguishes servant leadership from other leadership theories (Prosser, 2010), which Salick exemplified here.

Displays unconditional love and a moral calling to serve. Salick's service to others begins with his love for people and a moral calling to help, which are two essential attributes of servant leaders (Keith, 2008). Greenleaf (1977) argued "any human service where the one who is served should be loved in the process requires community, a face-to-face group in which the liability of each other and all for one is unlimited " (p. 52). All study participants emphasized the founder's love for others, using words such as, love, kindness, empathy,

compassion, consideration, and care. A NKF staff member's quote is representative of many participants' comments regarding Salick: "he's the kind of person that has compassion for everybody, not just people with kidney disease." When asked why people volunteer at this event for such a long time, one volunteer affirmed that "I think that in this group of people [long pause . . . started crying] . . . they love Richard [Salick]. And, they want to be there for him." The leaders' and followers' *agapaó* (love) for others was expressed by participants, including the founder, not just in their words but also in their tears and actions. In the New Testament *agapaó* means unconditional love embedded in behavior towards others (Hunter, 1998). Our findings parallel Patterson's (2003) leader-to-follower and Wintson's (2003) follower-to-leader servant leadership models, which start with a person's (leader's or follower's) *agapaó* for others and ends with service. Starting with a love for people, the leader makes the conscious choice to value others first and models this by behaving humbly and altruistically (Laub, 1999; Winston, 2004). This contrasts with transformational leaders' "inclination to lead first, allegiance toward organization, and influence through conventional charismatic approaches as well as control" (Parolini et al., 2009, p. 289).

Inspires others to serve through love. Salick is also a servant leader because through his love he inspires others to service. Salick is a model of the axiom "love is as love does." Modeling is important in servant leadership and is the foundation of the leader's influence (Russell & Stone, 2002). For example, a volunteer of 12 years said that Salick is "a leader of a different kind. He leads by inspiration . . . people feel very honored to watch this man in action, because . . . he walks the talk." If one is tired or down in spirits, as a volunteer of 37 years pointed out, all one needs to do is find Salick, because despite having had three transplants, "he actually physically does the work . . . he is the ox underneath the cart that

carries all the weight." All participants provided examples of how Salick's servanthood influenced them through his actions, displaying authenticity and valuing people (Laub, 1999). Participants also acknowledged, although with less emphasis, his charismatic abilities, enthusiasm, and strength of relationships with others, which are recognized as transformational leadership qualities (Bass, 1990). However, Salick's core inspiration comes from serving others, and this became evident after participants told their stories of how his service to both them and others helped them see how they could serve, too.

Two fundamental concepts of servant leadership are that it is contagious and that it has a transforming influence (Farling, Stone, & Winston, 1999; Sendjaya et al., 2008). The comments of a young volunteer with kidney disease represent many participants' reflections when she described what it is like to be around the founding brothers, saying that "they're always having fun and it's just contagious . . . you're . . . always going to want to come back and be around that." Also, in support of Winston's (2004) contention, we found that Salick's *agapaó* and service inspired followers' to become servants. The original group of volunteers, who were part of the brothers' surf team, has taken ownership of different aspects of the event. For instance, immediately prior to the event, Salick was hospitalized for 14 days, and said that "those guys just took over." All of the original volunteers have become servant leaders, adopting the mission of the founder and championing it year round.

Committed to helping others, not the organization, while having a positive impact on the least privileged in society. Servant leaders' commitment and mission is to help others, and organizations are great places to do that; however, organizations do not own them (Greenleaf, 1977; Keith, 2008). This is a key distinction from transformational leadership, where leaders focus more on organizational objectives (Stone et al., 2004). Although for the

last 25 years the Surf Festival has been hosted in conjunction with the NKF, direct patient aid is not a mission of the NKF. Salick, with conviction, stated that "I will be the first one out of this organization if we drop our patient aid." While Salick does not believe the organization is essential, he does believe the shared community is necessary for making a difference. To illustrate this point, the first author observed the volunteers gathering throughout the year to plan the Surf Festival, brain storming how they could raise money, sharing stories and supporting each other through weddings, cancer, and funerals. Some participants told stories describing the transforming effect of how giving a $75 gift card for groceries enables a dialysis patient to keep fighting, and the first author has personally accompanied the founder to purchase groceries for those in need. Thus, two noteworthy outcomes of the founder's servant leadership are that his *agapaó* for others has inspired his followers to be servant leaders, and that together as servants they have had a positive effect on the least privileged in society (Greenleaf, 1977).

Building Volunteer Motivation

Our second research question explored how the founder's leadership style contributed to motivating core volunteers for over 25 years. Salick, identified as a servant leader, motivated his volunteers by (a) generating a shared vision dedicated to helping others, (b) building a caring and loving community, and (c) creating the freedom and resources for followers to become servants themselves. The community of volunteers built through Salick's service is representative of Laub's (2003) definition of a servant organization: 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" (p. 3).

Generating a shared vision dedicated to helping others. Servant leadership is based on a commitment to love and serve others, which becomes the mission of the leader and followers (Greenleaf, 1977). All study participants embraced a common mission, as stated best by a volunteer of over 25 years: "It's all for raising funds for patient services. It's mostly helping the patients." The vision of a servant leader is not based on egocentric ambition or immorality; it is driven by a spiritual and virtuous calling to help others in harmony with moral and ethical doctrines (Lanctot & Irving, 2010; Sendjaya et al., 2008). Each study participant explained that they volunteered for philanthropic reasons, which aligns with the volunteer literature finding that altruistic motivations are prominent for volunteers (Monga, 2006).

Salick modeled service through his actions, and this encouraged his followers to embrace a service orientation. A long-time sponsor and volunteer articulated the shared calling of this event and its impact:

> We all have a common goal and it's not for a self-profit. It's to help other people. And when you get a group of people . . . whose heart is in the same place, I think you have a lot more in common than you would, say in a workplace.

The association with others who choose to serve first helps form an attachment to the event and an attraction to the unique culture created by this servant volunteer community. This supports findings that affiliation is a strong motivator in volunteering at special events (Haski-Leventhal & Cnaan, 2010; Monga, 2006; Wilson, 2000). The fact that the fundamental motivation for the leader (Salick) and followers (volunteers) is the desire to serve others illustrates the distinguishing attribute of servant leadership (Russell & Stone, 2002).

Serving others has become a way of life for the volunteers. The Surf Festival is an integral part of their lives, as illustrated by a sponsor and volunteer for over 25 years, who said "it has been something that you just in your mind could never imagine Labor Day without this particular event . . . it is imprinted on the memory of people." Every study participant spoke about planning family vacations around the event and how the participants have become like extended family. This four-day festival, as one volunteer of 12 years stated, is "an exhausting event. It's always a labor of love. I never feel like it's not worth every ounce of my energy . . . [and] the most worthwhile thing I did." Through the founder's service, those served become more likely to become servants (Greenleaf, 1977). This is demonstrated by a young volunteer, who when asked about the future of the event, said "I will put everything that I can towards making it last. And do my best to bring in . . . more volunteers." All study participants indicated their commitment to continue the mission of the event while expressing a will to carry on as servant leaders.

Building a caring and loving community. Although the Surf Festival is held once a year, the founder and followers are servant leaders throughout the year, which has fostered a loving and caring community. A volunteer for 37 years, who has taken ownership of various parts of the event, pointed out that at "different times we will meet for beer at the surf shop or . . . dinner at Norman's . . . you do end up with a . . . fellowship that is shared." The volunteers and founder are an extended community whose ties are as strong as a family. When the first author's mother suddenly passed away, the Surf Festival community pulled together and provided emotional, logistical, and daily needs assistance. As a member of the NKF staff said, "they'll do anything in the world for you if you ask." Greenleaf (1977) argued "the only sound basis for trust is for people to have the solid experience of being

served by their institutions" (p. 83). The community around the event extends beyond the beach and touches lives on a personal level. One long-time volunteer tells with tears in his eyes about when he was in a coma, "those guys came every day. . . . I did not know that they had a birthday party for me . . . they were pulling for me." This personal touch creates a relationship based on love and trust and increases the likelihood of organizational citizenship behavior (Ebener & O'Connell, 2010).

Notable to this community is the multi-generational make-up of the volunteers. This is highlighted by one of the original volunteers, who said "our long-time volunteers have their kids involved now." Another volunteer, who has started her own NPO, stated "I've seen kids as young as four helping out . . . if you get the parents involved . . . you can get the kids involved, and it's just fun." Salick has built a community that includes people from early childhood to adult life, where volunteering for the Surf Festival is an integral part of their social surroundings that shapes their behaviors, beliefs, perspectives, and values (Mannheim, 1936; Mead, 1934). This multi-generational, volunteer- driven event supports Haski-Leventhal and Cnann's (2010) claim that social and community norms have an effect on the individual's tendency to volunteer. Built around the surfing culture, the founder along with his volunteers has created a loving and caring community that shows multiple generations the powerful gift of service.

Creating the freedom and resources for followers to become servants themselves. Servant leaders motivate followers by serving them, which entails asking them what their needs, wants, hopes, and dreams are (Greenleaf, 1977). The founding brothers stated that they want volunteers to do what they do best. For example, Salick's brother said "we just ask them. What do you want to do? What would make you happy?" All study participants spoke

enthusiastically about the ownership and freedom with which they are entrusted to perform multiple roles at the event. The four-day event includes a silent auction along with the Taste of Brevard, where local restaurants donate food, a professional and amateur surfing contest, a VIP party, a press party, a bikini contest, exhibitions, and any new idea a volunteer has to make the event better. An example of Salick calling forth volunteer talents is when the leader of the silent auction, who works in computer technology, identified the difficulty of tracking auction items and preparing thank you notes. Salick gave her the ownership of the auction, which enabled her to take initiative and design a computer program to automate this process. Also, the leader of beach volunteers revealed that the event:

> has been successful . . . because . . . they [the volunteers] really take ownership. . . . they divide their tasks and there's a leader . . . of the volunteers, there's a leader at the winetasting, there's a leader . . . in the beach area.

The greatest example of ownership is seen in a lifelong volunteer who recently passed away, as recalled by another volunteer; "when you made eye contact . . . or hollered his name . . . he was there. . . . whatever you needed . . . he improved it and no matter what . . . always came through (16th Street, 2010). As Greenleaf (1977) emphasized, a servant leader is *primus inter pares* (first among equals), and leadership is not limited to individuals in positions of authority. This servant-led event has not only empowered its volunteers to take ownership but has given them the freedom and resources to become leaders. For over 25 years, Salick's servant leadership has resulted in a core group of volunteers who pass these social and community norms to their children, which is unique in the non-profit sector that struggles with high volunteer and leadership attrition rates (Eisner et al., 2008; Tierney, 2006). Thus, our findings support Haski-Leventha and Cnaan's (2010) claim that group affiliations

influence volunteerism. Through a core group of volunteers, the NKF of Florida has raised millions of dollars, which would not be possible without the long-term support of a multi-generational volunteer base.

Limitations

A limitation of this study is that the results are based on only one individual and the findings may not be generalizable. Even though results revealed a positive link between Salick's servant leadership and volunteer motivation, this does not necessarily indicate that servant leadership will be effective in all NPOs. Since the data represent the experiences, knowledge, and opinions of the interviewees, this brings with it the possibility of biases, as well as research bias (Miles & Huberman, 1994). By the first author conducting personal observations, document analyses, and the second author reviewing codes and interpretations, we helped mitigate bias and assisted in providing information and insight about the individuals and organization (Erlandson et al., 1993). Additionally, we tested conclusions with study participants, who confirmed that the findings reflected the founder's leadership style and the culture of the Surf Festival (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Implications and Future Research Directions

Bass (2000) emphasized that "the strength of the servant leadership movement and its many links to encouraging follower learning, growth, and autonomy, suggests that the untested theory will play a role in the future leadership of the learning organization" (p.33). From a theoretical standpoint, we provide an empirical example of servant leadership by showing how it can lead to the development of long-term volunteers who then become servant leaders. Also, our study contributes to the development of leadership theory by providing further evidence of the applicability of servant leadership in a NPO sport context

with regards to volunteer motivation. Our work extends previous studies in the sport industry which have shown servant leadership to be an effective coach behavior, as athletes being coached by these leaders had an increase in motivation, higher mental acuity, were more satisfied with their sport experience, and performed better than those led by a non-servant leader (Hammermeister et al., 2008; Rieke, et al., 2008; Taylor, 2008; Westre, 2003). In addition, servant leadership has historically been associated with religious teachings, but as Winston (2004) and Ebener and O'Connell (2010) suggest, there is merit in selecting a secular organization to explore servant leadership. Indeed, our results show that the tenets of servant leadership are applicable to a secular organization.

In terms of practical implications, Haski-Leventhal and Cnaan (2010) highlight the importance for NPOs to find new resources for volunteers and call for investigation into the role of groups in enhancing pro-social volunteer behavior. Our study identifies three leadership mechanisms that NPOs can tap to cultivate long-term volunteer motivation: (a) generate a shared vision dedicated to helping others; (b) build a caring and loving community; and (c) create the freedom and resources for followers to become servants themselves. If servant leadership enhances volunteer motivation, as our findings suggest, NPOs hosting cause-related sporting events should strive to incorporate servant leadership models.

Several intriguing directions for future research emerged from our study. First, it is feasible for researchers to explore how a cause-related sporting event can be designed to encourage servant leadership. Second, there is need to investigate how a NPO can create a personal connection with stakeholders to foster a caring and loving community that includes

multiple generations. Lastly, researchers can examine how these events serve as resource

tools to empower others to make a difference.

CHAPTER IV

HOW A CAUSE-RELATED SPORTING EVENT INSPIRES PARTICPANTS TO

BECOME SERVANT LEADERS

For centuries, sport has been a tool for social and personal change, and has been considered an accepted ideological truth worth pursuing (Green, 2008). Scholars have suggested sporting events have the multifaceted ability to promote social change by engaging a diverse audience, fostering collective social responsibility, contributing to health and wellness, improving participants' self-concept and self-efficiency, promoting social inclusion, and by advocating values such as cooperation, respect, and awareness of others (Kaufman & Wolff, 2010; Sherry, 2010). However, the *process* for achieving social change through sport is unclear (Smith & Westerbeek, 2007). To date, the research on sporting events has focused on their economic or social impact and has not evaluated their social leverage (i.e., influence to create change) or provided an understanding of why outcomes occurr (Chalip, 2006). Although sport may be utilized to accomplish social goals by numerous and diverse organizations, this paper focuses on how *not-for-profit organizations* (NPOs) can create lasting social change by hosting cause-related sporting events.

The causes supported by NPOs are often vague, intangible ones, such as transplantation and hunger, which affect a small minority. NPOs financial resources do not come "directly from those who receive the benefits which the organization produces" (Lewis, 1998, p. 436). Therefore, it is essential for NPOs to inspire participation from individuals and organizations with no previous association with the NPO in order to develop both financial and human capital (Taylor & Shanka, 2008). Hosting a cause-related sporting event has

become an increasingly popular and effective intermediary for NPOs to connect to consumers and create social capital (Higgins & Lauzon, 2003). These events serve as a catalyst for change by providing an important and tangible activity for disparate groups to come together and support a specific cause (Deloitte, 2010).The celebratory nature of these events creates a 'liminoid' space—a felt energy—engendering a sense of community (*communitas*), which can create social change by building social capital (Chalip, 2006). Thus, event organizers need to "enable, optimize, and then use liminality" (Chalip, 2006, p. 112) to nurture participants' commitment to serve and inspire individuals to make the conscious choice to serve by adopting the mission of the NPO and championing it.

Inspiring participants' altruistic motivations to help others aligns with the philosophy of servant leadership, which has as its core a focus on making life better for others (Keith, 2008; Prosser, 2010). Servant leadership recognizes that human beings need each other, can accomplish more working together, and are the best resource to build a good society. As Robert Greenleaf, the founder of servant leadership, said, "caring for persons, the more able and the less able serving each other, is the rock upon which a good society is built" (Greenleaf, 1977, p.62). Therefore, servant leadership could be a critical success factor helping NPOs hosting cause-related sporting events achieve their missions.

The purpose of this study, therefore, was to investigate the development of servant leadership in participants of a cause-related sporting event, and to determine how the event facilitated this development. The investigation focused on the National Kidney Foundation's (NKF) U.S. Transplant Games, a cause-related sporting event. The mission of the Transplant Games is to foster personal change through participation while simultaneously cultivating community-level engagement and increasing the awareness of organ donation across the

nation. The research questions for this endeavor were as follows: (a) Do the Transplant Games help to inspire participants to serve others and to become servant leaders? If so, (b) How do the Transplant Games inspire them to achieve this? We next provide an overview of the philosophy of servant leadership and social leverage theory, a description of the Transplant Games, and the methods used in this study. We then present our findings and discussion, along with practical implications for NPOs hosting cause-related sporting events. Last, we propose future research to aid in the advancement of social leverage theory and the practice of servant leadership in the context of cause-related sporting events.

Conceptual Framework

To understand the development of servant leadership in participants of the Transplant Games, and to explain the structures and processes of the event that aided in achieving this development, we utilized Greenleaf's (1977) servant leadership framework coupled with Chalip's (2006) social leverage theory. These two lenses were combined because they have been used to assess outcomes of sport, and their underlying principles complement and reinforce one other. Both acknowledge people's need for a deeper purpose and meaning, and the power of people working together (i.e., social capital) to create positive change.

Servant Leadership

In 1977, Greenleaf conceptualized servant leadership as a way of life, which begins with "the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve *first*" (p. 7). He developed this concept from 40 years of management experience at AT&T. Although servant leadership has roots in Judeo-Christianity, Greenleaf framed the servant as leader from Herman Hesse's (1956) parable, *Journey to the East*. The choice to serve first—a moral calling—embarks the servant on an inward life-long journey where she or he "views any problem in the world as *in*

here, inside oneself, not *out there*." (Greenleaf, 1977, p. 57).This conscious choice of 'doing' and 'being' comes from the servant leaders' primary motivation to serve (what they do) and their self-construction (who they are), which inspires them to lead (Sendjaya & Sarros, 2002). Greenleaf called upon servant leaders to lead by ensuring that other people's highest priority needs are being served instead of their own personal needs or interests. He believed the best test of servant leadership was if a leader could answer the following questions in the affirmative: "Do those served grow as persons? Do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants?"(Greenleaf, 1977, p. 7). Followers are held in the highest regard, which is evident by the leader taking no actions that will knowingly hurt others. Servant leaders inspire followers to become servants themselves by helping followers grow while serving others (Greenleaf, 1977).

Servant leaders believe more is possible by cultivating a sense of togetherness. Greenleaf (1977) emphasized that a servant leader is *primus inter pares* (first among equals), and leadership is not limited to individuals in positions of authority. It is a radical change to place the leader at the bottom of the hierarchy requiring a different way of acting and reasoning from traditional leadership paradigms. Greenleaf (1977) held that no person is complete, but a group of equals can build upon one another's talents. This philosophy creates an opportunity for others to become leaders themselves.

Greenleaf (1977) admitted that servant leadership would be difficult to operationalize and apply. Critics agree, adding that it is also too idealistic and impractical (Wong & Davey, 2007). Greenleaf did not provide a detailed management philosophy; instead he challenged readers to reflect, ponder, and grow (Frick, 2004; Spears, 1995). While many scholars have

defined servant leadership (Farling, Stone, & Winston, 1999; Spears, 1998) and others have developed quantitative measures (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006; Dennis & Bocarnea, 2005; Laub, 1999, 2005; Liden, Wayne, Zhao, & Henderson, 2008; Wong & Page, 2003), none of them fully capture the essence of servant as leader (Prosser, 2010). Thus, this study was informed by Greenleaf's work along with the 10 characteristics of servant leadership identified by Spears (1998). Spears' (1998) characteristics have been widely used by scholars describing servant leadership (Van Dierendonck, 2011; Joseph & Winston, 2005; Russell & Stone, 2002), and has also been used as an evaluation tool (Crippen, 2004; Talyor, 2008; Westre, 2003). Table 4.1 provides a description of these attributes.

Studies have shown that servant leadership is applicable in a sport setting—specifically as an effective coaching behavior. Athletes coached by servant leaders had an increase in motivation, higher mental acuity, were more satisfied, and performed better than those led by a non-servant leader in several studies (Hammermeister et al., 2008; Rieke, Hammermeister & Chase, 2008; Taylor, 2008; Westre, 2003). Our work extends these previous studies on servant leadership in sport into the NPO sport context.

Social Leverage Theory

We used Chalip's (2006) social leverage theory to inform our understanding of how the processes and mechanisms of the Games helped participants become servant leaders. Chalip (2006) advanced that participants of sporting events should be recognized as social resources, and event organizers need to leverage the celebratory nature of these events to create lasting social value. In social leverage theory, Chalip (2006) links liminality and *communitas* as two essential themes for building social capital and strengthening the social

Table 4.1.

10 Characteristics of a Servant Leader Identified by Spears' (1998)

Characteristic	Description
Listening	Automatically responding to any problem by receptively listening to what is said, which allows them to identify the will of the group and help clarify that will.
Empathy	Striving to accept and understand others, never rejecting them, but sometimes refusing to recognize their performance as good enough.
Healing	Recognizing as human beings they have the opportunity to make themselves and others 'whole'.
Awareness	Strengthened by general awareness and above all self-awareness, which enables them to view situations holistically.
Persuasion	Relying primarily on convincement rather than coercion.
Conceptualization	Seeking to arouse and nurture theirs' and others' abilities to 'dream great dreams'.
Foresight	Intuitively understanding the lessons from the past, the present realities, and the likely outcome of a decision for the future.
Stewardship	Committing first and foremost to serving others needs.
Commitment to the growth of people	Nurtures the personal, professional, and spiritual growth of each individual.
Building community	Identifies means of building communities among individuals working within their institutions, which can give the healing love essential for health.

fabric. The celebratory nature of sporting events gives people a sense that something more is happening – a sense that is felt more than understood, which is defined as liminality. Liminality creates a collective energy and provides a safe place where participants can "probe, test, and cultivate their identity with reference to their social context" (Chalip, 2006, p. 111). From this shared energy emerges a communal atmosphere with a heightened sense of community among participants called *communitas*. Thus, Chalip (2006) argues these positive feelings are leverageable resources to help build networks, address social issues, inspire community action, and bring entrepreneurial success.

Social leverage theory fosters social capital (Chalip, 2006), which is defined as "the sum of the resources, actual or virtual, that accrue to an individual or a group by virtue of possessing a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 119). Scholars have identified three different types of social capital: *bonding, bridging*, and *linking social capital* (Coleman, 1988; Putman, 1995). The term *bonding social capital* describes the close ties with family, friends, and individuals within one's community, such as neighbors (Sherry, 2010). The concept of *bridging social capital* refers to individuals and groups that have more distant ties to similar others who share common interests and goals with the NPO or other types of organizations (Burnett, 2006; Sherry, 2010). The final concept is *linking social capital*, which "delineates those relationships between individuals and groups that cross boundaries, drawn from dissimilar situations" (Sherry, 2010, p. 62). It is the linking of social capital that allows organizations to unite dissimilar groups around a cause or event, which then creates a larger group that can draw from an even larger pool of resources. Sustainable

social capital is the desired outcome of cause-related sporting events. Social leverage theory argues this can be accomplished by encouraging social interaction and a sense of celebration.

To foster celebration (liminality) and camaraderie (*communitas*), Chalip (2006) recommended the following five strategies and mechanisms for event organizers to employ: a) enabling sociability – opportunities for participants to share time, space, and activities with each other; b) creating event-related social events – social mixers for participants such as running events and parades; c) facilitating informal social opportunities – ongoing festivities such as food, pin trading, and meeting places; d) producing ancillary events – arts and music activities; and e) developing themes – visual cues with multiple interpretations that signal a celebratory atmosphere and reinforce a felt sense of meaning for participants. Several scholars have incorporated social leverage theory to help understand the impact of sporting events, and to develop guidelines for designing them (Kellett, Hede, & Chalip, 2008; Misener & Mason, 2010).

United States National Kidney Foundation Transplant Games

The U.S. NKF Transplant Games is a four-day Olympic style competition held every two years since 1990.The 2010 Games had 45 teams representing all 50 states and attracted over 1,500 athletes and 7,000 supporters. The Games had 47 competitive events contested within 14 sports for transplant recipients to demonstrate that transplantation works and that it saves lives. Living donors competed in selective events to illustrate that they can remain active and healthy after donation. Some of the sports included in the Games were: table tennis, 3-on-3 basketball, cycling, swimming, track and field, bowling, racquetball, ballroom dancing, and golf. Athletes ranged from two to over 80 years old.

The Games is more than just a sporting event; it is a celebration of life. The event features numerous activities in addition to the athletic competitions designed to involve everyone touched by donation or transplantation. These additional events include:

- Exhibition of the 350-foot National Donor Family Quilt commemorating deceased donors –open all through the event and is accompanied by a quilt pinning ceremony.

- Expo—provides information and products for the transplant community.

- 5K race for organ, eye, and tissue awareness.

- Pre-opening tailgate party—meet and greet, facilitated by trading pins.

- Opening Ceremony—team processions, torch lighting, and pre-show.

- Educational workshops.

- Living donor and donor family ceremonies.

- Youth excursions.

- Sharing sessions—coffee houses with an open microphone forum.

- Closing Ceremony and farewell party.

- Donor-recipient golf outing.

Every attendee registered for the Games is a member of an official NKF U.S Transplant Games team that has been established in a statewide or regional area near a local NKF office. Historically, the key to the success of this national program depends upon the collaborative efforts of team members—recipients, living donors, donor families and other supporters. The teams' responsibilities include recruitment, marketing, media relations, community outreach, fundraising, budgeting, and team competition coordination and planning. Each team has a team manager; donor family liaison; planning, public relations, and team uniform committees; and a team captain.

Method

We used an exploratory qualitative case study methodology to explore the mechanisms, development, and dynamics of servant leadership generated through individuals and their collective involvement in the NKF U.S. Transplant Games. We selected this event as the context of our investigation because unlike other cause-related sporting events that focus on raising money and awareness for one NPO's cause (i.e., kidney disease), it involves the entire transplant community in a collaborative effort for the benefit of organ donation. Since this study investigated change, a longitudinal approach was utilized including multiple data collection points beginning at the event and ending one year after the Games (Burnett, 2006; Welty Peachey, 2009). Exploratory data analysis can be used to uncover multi-dimensional impacts, discover unanticipated patterns in data, and consequently gain new insights in understanding natural phenomena (Berg, 2009).

Sample

The setting for this research was the 2010 NKF U.S Transplant Games, held in Madison, Wisconsin from July 30 to August 4, 2010. This case study specifically examined Team Florida – the third largest state team – which consisted of 124 members, including 54 transplant recipients, four living donors, donor families, supporters, and caregivers. The Florida team was selected because the first author has volunteered with the NKF of Florida for five years, which built trust with the organization. The human instrument was used in this study for data collection purposes and therefore, the information from the qualitative interviews is influenced by the rapport established in that context (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). It is important to note that the interviewer, who is the first author, was a Games team member, a Florida resident and a family donor. The first author's mother suddenly passed away and

upon her wishes the family donated her organs; this gift gave a transplant recipient the ability

to see again. Being a family donor allowed the first author to be a participant in events and

activities, which helped to establish a personal connection to the Games and form a common

bond with participants. Longitudinal case design extended the research setting to also include

team events, social gatherings, and funerals of team members occurring in Florida one year

after the Games.

Data Collection

This study was conducted from July 2010 to July 2011, to best incorporate the impact

of time in change research (George & Jones, 2000). All participants were over 18 years old

and from Team Florida. Purposive sampling was used to select all participants to ensure that

"certain types of individuals or persons displaying certain attributes are included in the

study" (Berg, 2001, p. 32).The sample population consisted of a representative mixture of

transplant recipients, living donors, donor families, professionals, supporters, and caregivers.

Participants' attendance at the Games ranged from one to 20 years (i.e., maximum of 10

Games as the event is held every two years).

Several data gathering techniques were utilized in order to allow for cross

examination. As well, in an event setting with the challenges of scheduling, manpower, and

participants' exhaustion from five days of activities, multiple data collection methods was

best suited for maximizing participation. First, we conducted three focus groups, consisting

of two pre-event (n=6 and 12 participants respectively) and one post-event (n

=10).Participants who could not attend the post-focus group, but were available on the same

day were interviewed individually (n=3); however, some participants were unavailable (n=5).

Second, we administered open-ended, qualitative questionnaires pre- and post-event (n=26),

which consisted of focus group participants (n=11) and non-focus group participants (n=15). Third, the first author directly observed the following during the event: athletic competitions (n=23), educational workshops (n=7), ceremonies (n=3), sharing sessions (n=4), ancillary events (n=3), and social gatherings (n=25). There were also additional social gatherings (n=5) held after the event that were observed. Fourth, a document analysis was conducted, which included: game programs (n=3), websites (n=1), social media (blogs and message boards) (n=5), memorabilia videos (n=12), and media publications (n=10). Finally, semi-structured personal interviews were conducted nine months after the event (n =14). Half of the participants of the follow-up interviews (n =7) also participated in the survey and/or initial focus groups, while the other interviewees were identified by asking study participants to suggest other potential respondents. Thus, a loop of purposive "snowball" sampling was created by identifying participants who may have otherwise been overlooked (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Focus group, personal interview and qualitative survey questions were informed by a review of the servant leadership literature (i.e., Greenleaf, 1977; Spears, 1998), social leverage theory (Chalip, 2006), and by peer debriefing with NPO executives. Lincoln and Guba (1985) acknowledge peer debriefing as a strategic tool in designing non-biased interview questions. Similar questions were asked in the focus groups, interviews, and surveys to allow for cross examination (i.e., triangulation). Focus groups fostered interaction among participants, which allowed participants to ask questions of each other and open discussion to different avenues of exploration that the researcher may have otherwise ignored. Focus groups and interviews were conducted in a semi-structured format–an interview guide provided structure while questions were allowed to naturally emerge

(Lincoln & Guba,1985).The questions were designed to evaluate and understand the role of team membership, individual and group involvement, and personal change from participation (see Appendix A). All focus groups and interviews were conducted by the first author in a private setting, lasted between 40-90 minutes, were digitally audio recorded, and transcribed verbatim. Last, the first author, as a participant by virtue of being a family donor, maintained documentation and field notes in a reflective journal before, during, and up to a year after the event (Glense, 2006).

Data Analysis

Consistent with Creswell (1998) and Strauss and Corbin (1990), open, axial and selective coding were used to analyze the data and to form conceptual codes. Initially, open coding was utilized to condense the data into preliminary categories. Based on recommendations from Miles and Huberman (1994), some codes were assigned a priori based on the literature on servant leadership (i.e., Greenleaf, 1977; Spears, 1998) and on social leverage theory (Chalip, 2006), while others emerged from the data. For example, several of the open codes included: a desire to serve (moral calling); each of the 10 characteristics of servant leadership identified by Spears (1998) (each characteristic was a distinct open code); liminality (felt energy) and *communitas* (sense of community); fostering social interaction (enabling sociability, event-related social events, informal social opportunities); and prompting a feeling of celebration (ancillary event and themes). After the open coding process, preliminary codes were organized into axial codes (the themes presented in the results and discussion section below) by clustering and linking the codes together to discover key analytic categories (Neuman, 2006). In the last stage of analysis, selective coding was utilized to integrate the data from all data collection methods to support

the emerging conceptual codes (Creswell, 1998). We stored and integrated the data with NVivo 9.

Trustworthiness in a qualitative study is determined by "how accurately the account represents participants' realities of the social phenomena and is credible to them" (Creswell & Miller, 2000, p. 124).A qualitative study has trustworthiness if the investigation has credibility (an analog to internal validity), transferability (an analog to external validity), dependability (an analog to reliability), and confirmability (an analog to objectivity) (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Schwandt, 2007). Credibility was established through triangulation of measures, including member checks with participants where participants reviewed and provided feedback on their interview transcripts and study interpretations (Janesick, 1994). In addition, we used multiple data collection methods as outlined above to corroborate findings and reinforce themes. Transferability was achieved by the first author keeping a reflective journal that provided a contextual narrative that others can use to examine the degree of similarity to their organization (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In order to improve dependability and confirmability, the second author, who was not involved in data collection, served as an auditor and reviewed all codes, analyses, and interpretations (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, & Allen, 1993).

Results and Discussion

Games Participants Inspired to Serve Others

Our first research question sought to discover whether the Transplant Games inspired participants to serve others and to become servant leaders. Informed by Greenleaf's (1977) philosophical conceptualization of a servant leader and Spears' (1998) 10 characteristics of servant leadership, our findings revealed the event had a pronounced positive impact on

participants' desire to serve others. We have crystallized the impacts of the Games, which have inspired participants to make the conscious choice to serve others and help to build a community of servant leaders, into three main themes: a) developing broader identities – altruistic self-identifications and identity groups; b) nurturing participants' abilities to see they can make a difference; and c) strengthening participants' awareness of the healing power of service.

Instead of identifying one leader, we discovered the Games helped to form a community of servant leaders, which is supportive of Greenleaf's (1977) concept of *primus inter pares* (first among equals). Representative quotations from participants are presented in Table 4.2. These quotations demonstrate Spears' (1998) 10 characteristics of servant leadership and are positioned within the three overarching themes presented here. These respondents along with others have formed a community of servant leaders which is dedicated to helping those touched by organ donation and transplantation, advocates for the cause, and is motivated by the healing of its members. The connection between impacts of the Games and participants' inspired service is illustrated in Table 4.2. Next, we discuss the community of servant leaders and Spears' (1998) 10 characteristics within the context of our three main themes.

Developing Broader Identities. Becoming a servant leader as Greenleaf (1977) emphasized is an inward journey that starts inside oneself, where one identifies himself/herself as a servant, a servant *first*. Therefore, our analysis examined how participants identified themselves. When asked questions regarding their involvement in the Games, describing themselves and their actions, the majority of participants labeled themselves using altruistic self-identities such as: supporter, caregiver, advocate, and

Table 4.2.

Representative Quotations Demonstrating Spears' (1998) 10 Characteristics of Servant Leadership: A Community of Servant Leaders

Developing broader identities	Stewardship	Being part of the games and supporting a team is something that I like to do. It always makes me wish I could do more. ~ *Living Donor Focus group* We're able to help other people. And other people are able to help me . . . . I want to help other families by what I experienced. ~ *Caregiver Follow-up interview*
	Building a community	I came home realizing that my family grew to thousands. ~ *Donor Family NKF Website* I just enjoy meeting people, and I ask everybody, "Tell me your story. Tell me why you're here. What brought you to the Transplant Games?" And it starts a discussion. ~ *Supporter Focus group*
	Commitment to the growth of people	If a person is a new transplant you can give them your experience, so your knowledge. . . . you're learning from them, and hopefully they're learning something from you. ~ *Recipient Focus group* Each time new relationships and talents are built, and they learn new ideas, respect each other and eager to bring new energy to the table for the future. ~ *Donor Family Survey*
	Persuasion	Donor family and recipient must see themselves as a light, as a beacon of hope. Wherever they go they should promote organ and tissue donation, because you don't know who you will touch. ~ *Donor Family Follow-up interview* You're walking around Wal-Mart and you bump into somebody and then you're the commercial for transplantation. ~ *Recipient Focus group*
Nurturing participants' ability to see they can make a difference	Conceptualization	I think it's to let the world know, yes, even though everyone lives with some sort of chronicisity . . . there are horizons. To me it's horizons. ~ *Caregiver Focus group* People really need to see that transplantation works. . . . It would help . . . people to sign donor cards. ~ *Supporter Follow-up interview* Always gives me a positive perspective on life. There is hope for people to be nice everywhere! ~ *Living Donor Survey*
	Foresight	Because of your experience, you may help others . . . by doing that . . . on a large scale. . . you can make things even better as time goes on. ~ *Caregiver Follow-up interview* Now we are in the process of having my entire company, encompassing thousands. . . . to . . . share organ donation with the entire company, their families, their friends. You can just imagine what an impact this will have for other people. ~ *Donor Family Follow-up interview*
Strengthen participants' awareness of the healing power of service	Awareness	For me, [it] is the donor families . . . pay . . . my respect and thanks . . . for making it possible for me to continue on being married to my wife and see my son graduate . . . . my goal is to . . . pay that forward. ~ *Recipient Focus group*
	Empathy	My pain is for . . . the loss of my son . . . but when I listen to her story . . . I draw that compassion and I draw that . . . empathy. ~ *Donor Family Follow-up interview* Sharing stories, most important-understanding better from the donor perspective. What happens on their side. ~ *Supporter Survey*
	Healing	A place to share and not only help myself but help others with [daughter's] story. ~ *Donor Family Survey* There could not be a better, more healing, and more life transforming experience than bringing all these people together to compete, cheer, laugh, and cry together. ~ *Donor Family Follow-up interview*
	Listening	Being on common ground we were more comfortable and relaxed to share and listen to stories and the meeting of new families and recipients really blessed us at the games. ~ *Donor Family Follow-Up interview* I met many interesting people valuable stories and incidents that will promote the transplant community in the future. ~ *Recipient Survey*

volunteer. The following recipient's response on his survey is representative of the majority of participants' self-constructions (who they are): "Transplant recipient, Games participant, volunteer, fundraiser." These altruistic titles imply that participants have committed themselves to serving others first, which is defined by Spears (1998) as stewardship. These lists extended beyond participants' name tags, which everyone wore throughout the games identifying them as either donor family, living donor, recipient, or supporter. Often participants would ask one another, *'Tell me your story'*, referring to the name tags as an indicator of each other's connection to the cause. As the first author – from a donor family – observed and listened to these responses, usually after receiving a heartfelt hug from the stranger, the participants would begin with how they were touched by organ donation and transplantation, and then the majority would talk about their altruistic actions to help the cause. From their experience at the Games, many of the Team Florida members increased their level of service within their local communities. The following quote from a follow-up interview is indicative of these stewardship actions taken by a donor family member, who has become a servant leader:

> Once you attend these games you go back home and talk about your experience. I . . . wrote . . . articles . . . [have] given presentations to hospital [staff] . . . community clubs . . . support groups . . . health fairs . . . TV interviews and . . . high school classes.

These altruistic identities (who they are) along with participants' descriptions and observed actions of service (what they do) indicated that the Games do inspire participants to serve, and through this service they aspire to lead (Sendjaya & Sarros, 2002).

Another identity formed at the Games, which provides further support for participants adopting a service-first orientation and becoming a community of servant leaders, is a group-level identity formed at the state or regional level. According to the Games Team Member Handbook, each team's philosophy should reflect the spirit of organ and tissue donation—a selfless act of love and compassion from one person to another. In this spirit of altruism, each team member is encouraged to 'pay it forward' by adopting the philosophy that "their involvement extends beyond the personal to serve the greater good of the community" (p. 5). The team's philosophy, culture, and structure is designed to build a community committed to the growth of people, which represents two essential attributes of servant leadership (Spears, 1998). The identification of Team Florida members went beyond wearing their team T-shirts, hats, and pins to encompass who they are and what they do. A representative statement of all team members is captured by this donor family member's response to a survey: "I am a part of team Florida . . . we are here to spread a unique story . . . so others can find hope." Being a Team Florida member meant being part of a "family" to many participants, which provided them with necessary help and support and enabled them to help others. The team identity allows members to invite others to participate, cultivate helping behaviors, persuade members to take initiative, and facilitate development of members' abilities (Ebener & O'Connell, 2010). Servant leaders use persuasion (Spears, 1998). This use of persuasion is illustrated in the following invitation to serve by an active Florida team member and family donor, who volunteers with multiple NPOs along with starting an awareness program at his workplace: "If I can do it, I know you can do it better than me. So I encourage you to press on and do better than me" (Follow-up interview).

Nurturing Participants' Ability to See They Can Make a Difference. Servant leaders through conceptualization seek to nurture theirs' and others' abilities to 'dream great dreams' (Spears, 1998). The conceptualization that the advocacy of one person can be the engine for change is exemplified and nurtured throughout the Games. For example, the majority of participants spoke about how hearing a double lung recipient play "The Star Spangled Banner" on the bagpipes, one of the most physically demanding instruments (The Power of Two, 2011), gave them hope and sparked their imagination. As a family donor stated in her survey response, the role of the Games helps participants "recognize that life is valuable and all of us can make a difference." Many attendees described a heightened awareness of the role of advocacy, along with a vision of what they could do to help. This foresight, a characteristic of servant leadership (Spears, 1998), helps provide and maintain a feeling among the community (i.e., the 'Games family' as referenced by many participants) that their lives are intertwined and they are moving towards a identifiable and rightful goal (Keith, 2008). This outlook was crystallized by the following recipient's statement: "The main benefit . . . in the Games . . . is to meet people from other states, to learn . . . to hear . . . to see . . . how we can help the community advance transplantation . . . and . . . make it a cohesive effort" (focus group).

A basic tenet of servant leadership is the belief in the worth and goodness of people, and that serving others "requires community, a face-to-face group in which the liability of each other and all for one is unlimited" (Greenleaf, 1977, p. 52). This belief is not only fostered and practiced at the Games for five days every two years, but participants continue to share this sentiment the other 725 days between the Games. As one recipient declared

during a post-focus group, "I've said many times before, if the world operated like the Transplant community does, it would be a better place to live."

Strengthening Participants' Awareness of the Healing Power of Service. Greenleaf (1977) suggested servant leaders make the conscious choice to serve others because they are motivated by their own healing. As he stated, "there is something subtly communicated to one who is being served and led if, implicit in the compact between servant leader and led, is the understanding that the search for wholeness is something they share" (p. 50). Healing and awareness are two characteristics identified by Spears (1998) that are represented by a donor family member's description of the healing role of the Games:

> Strangers on the bus were thanking me for making the donation of my son's organs . . . knowing without people like me . . . they might not be alive. I lost a son and that will never change, but. . . . I can now make a difference by bringing awareness to organ transplantation (NKF, 2010).

Servant leaders have the potential to heal themselves and others (Spears, 1998). Another donor family member echoed this sentiment nine months after the Games, when he said: "What I know . . . is [it's] got to be a way of life. . . . we need to let our voices, and our ideas be documented, be heard, and we're going to get results."Serving others is not concerned with self-denial or self-sacrifice, but it is about self-fulfillment (Keith, 2008). The majority of participants attributed the healing role of the Games to their amplified awareness and empathy, which was gained through listening to others' stories. In a post-survey a donor family member replied that the skills and knowledge she gained from the Games was: "To listen . . . to hear . . . to feel for others." According to Spears (1998), healing, awareness, empathy, and listening are all tenets of servant leadership.

In summary, the Games inspired participants to serve others and to become servant leaders, which is evident by many participants practicing Spears' (1998) 10 characteristics of servant leadership. By the Games helping participants develop broader identities, it inspired them to practice stewardship, build a community, commit to the growth of people, and use persuasion to invite others to join the cause. Through nurturing participants' ability to see they can make a difference, the Games enabled participants to conceptualize a better tomorrow while having the foresight as to how this can be achieved. Last, through listening to others' stories, participants developed a deeper level of empathy while heightening their general awareness and their self-awareness, which leads to an understanding that they should chose to serve others "for one's own healing" (Greenleaf, 1977, p. 50). Our results imply that many Team Florida Games participants have become servant leaders for their own healing, because of a renewed ability to 'dream great dreams' along with the foresight of how to make them a reality, and because they recognize that they are no longer alone but are part of a community of servant leaders that fosters a belief that if each person does his/her part, together we can make a difference.

Mechanisms and Outcomes that Inspire Servant Leadership

Our second research question sought to understand how the Transplant Games inspires participants to serve others and to become servant leaders. We identified three mechanisms and community level outcomes of the Games which helped to achieve this: a) creating event-related social events and producing ancillary events to build a community, b) encouraging themes and hosting ceremonies to create a culture of storytelling and safe spaces, and c) facilitating formal and informal gathering places to foster an atmosphere of celebration. The outcomes of these mechanisms helps to produce the individual level impacts

of the Games, and as our results for research question one suggest, these impacts led to the development of servant leadership. The integration of our findings is depicted in Figure 4.1. We next discuss the mechanisms and outcomes of the Games and how these contribute to the development of servant leadership.

Creating Event-Related Social Events and Producing Ancillary Events to Build a Community. The Games are more than just a sporting event; it is a celebration of life and considered the 'Transplant Family Reunion.' To create this fun family atmosphere and a sense of *communitas* (Chalip, 2006), the Games includes additional activities such as event-related social events (meet and greets, sharing sessions, team photos) and ancillary events (Expo and 5K run). These additional events help build a community – (i.e., an extended family) through the three different types of social capital – bonding, bridging, and linking (Sherry, 2010). Each participant of this study said they left the Games being part of an extended community. This community helps participants develop boarder identities, which as described in research question one, inspires participants to be servant leaders. These links between event-related social events, building a community, developing broader identities, and development of servant leadership are illustrated in Figure 4.1. One of the broader identities developed at the Games is being part of the Transplant Games Family, and this sentiment is reflected in a recipient's statement during a follow-up interview at the social events: "You . . . build a network and you . . . call it your transplant family, because that's how close you get. They become your family members."

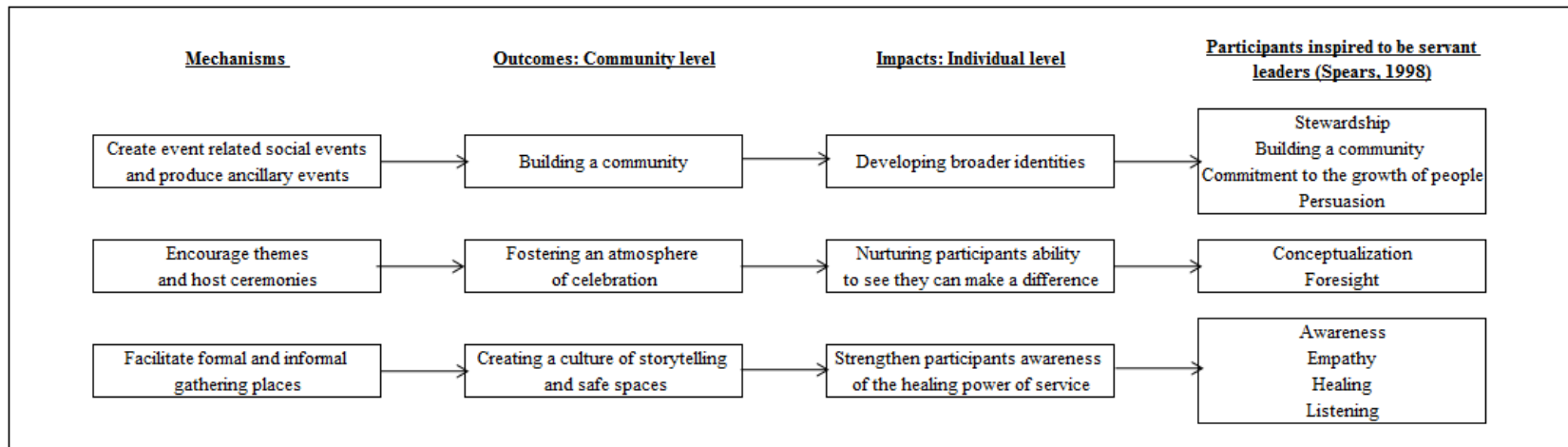| Mechanisms	Outcomes: Community level	Impacts: Individual level	Participants inspired to be servant leaders (Spears, 1998)
Create event related social events and produce ancillary events	Building a community	Developing broader identities	Stewardship Building a community Commitment to the growth of people Persuasion
Encourage themes and host ceremonies	Fostering an atmosphere of celebration	Nurturing participants ability to see they can make a difference	Conceptualization Foresight
Facilitate formal and informal gathering places	Creating a culture of storytelling and safe spaces	Strengthen participants awareness of the healing power of service	Awareness Empathy Healing Listening

Figure 4.1.

A Cause-Related Sporting Event's Ability to Inspire Participants' to Become Servant Leaders

The Games host multiple event-related social events to bond donor families and donors with transplant recipients, which previously was uncommon, if not impossible. As many participants highlighted, these are two different sides of the same coin. For instance, a donor family member said that, "It is no longer my mother's liver, it is his liver, but he's my family now, he's part of us," while a recipient stated that "I came to honor my donor family. I've never met them, but I owe my entire life to them" (NKF, 2010). Events that facilitate this interaction include meet and greets, displaying of the Donor Family Quilt throughout the Games, sharing sessions, hospitality suites for donor families, living donors, and teams, and team photos. The majority of participants stated that they enjoyed these additional events because they were places where donor families, recipients, and supporters could be "on common ground [where] we were more comfortable and relaxed to share and listen to stories and the meeting of new families and recipients" (donor family follow-up interview). Although all stories are different, they do share a commonality, as one supporter summarized during a post-focus group: "the bonding of the transplant community, whether it be the donor, the recipients, the caregiver . . . becomes a cohesive group . . . . It's meaningful to everyone in their own specific way, but as a community."

These events with their family atmosphere allowed space for participants to be themselves and develop broader identities. The first author recalls a donor family visiting the display of the Donor Family Quilt, where she experienced and witnessed emotions ranging from tears of happiness and sadness, rejoice, love, moments of peaceful silence, to laughter. After an impromptu game of tag with a heart recipient, who teased that he could out run her as 'a regular' – (i.e., non-recipient), the first author met a donor mom who was sitting there knitting. When asked who the shawl was for she said:

I volunteer for Threads of Compassion [a NPO in Wisconsin], that knits or crochets comfort shawls given to organ and tissue donor families at the time of their loved donation. This is how I heal and help others by giving families comfort in their time of sorrow and transition.

She went on to tell stories of her son, how she learned of this community of volunteers at the last Games, and how another donor mother persuaded her to start knitting, healing, and helping others. The display of the Quilt and the giving of the shawls are only two examples of event-related social events at the Games, which help build a community where participants can develop broader identities. This encourages participants to become servant leaders by practicing stewardship, building a community, committing to the growth of people, and by using persuasion (see Figure 4.1). At the 2010 Games, after the donor family ceremony volunteers for Threads of Compassion gave each donor family in attendance a shawl.

The transplant family of the Games also includes the medical field, which is invited to participate as volunteers and as sponsors of the ancillary events, such as the Expo and the 5K run. The Games bridge social capital through fostering relationships and creating links between similar groups that share support for a common cause by hosting additional events that include the whole transplant community (Burnett, 2006; O'Brien & Chalip, 2007). For those in the medical field the Games offer a unique experience beyond the hospital setting to witness the celebration of life for both recipient and donor families. The exhibition hall at the Games creates an opportunity for sponsors to connect with consumers, and as one sponsor commented: "The Transplant Games is completely different than traditional conventions. For us, it's about community and social responsibility, not product awareness. In fact, we didn't even have one mention of our product at the exhibit hall" (NKF, 2010). A recipient recalled

from "speaking to nurses . . . dialysis technicians, [and] administrative personnel who attended the games . . . [it] changed their perspective not just about transplantation but about the human spirit. Resilience and just never losing hope" (follow-up interview). A medical professional also stated that the Games "gave me reassurance as a transplant coordinator that what I do is valuable!" (NKF, 2010). Figure 4.1 illustrates that the connection made at these ancillary events between professionals, recipients and donor families helps extend the transplant community and provides a persuasive message that the commitment of medical professionals to the growth of people works. The Games provides the medical professionals a community, support, and the inspiration to continue doing what they do.

The opportunity to create lasting social leverage was realized when Games attendees shared their experiences upon returning home, which is fostered by the Games Team structure. Games Teams, at the state or regional level, are encouraged through NKF National's "Give Back" program to 'pay it forward' – (i.e., inspire and uplift) their communities by hosting additional outreach events throughout the year (NKF Games Souvenir Program, 2011).These local events facilitate the linking social capital that allows individuals or organizations to unite dissimilar groups around a cause which then creates a larger group that can draw from an even larger pool of resources (Sherry, 2010). Florida team members were propelled to help people attend the Games that could not afford to go. To do this, these members have become leaders – servant leaders – of a charity hosting various fundraisers (car shows, bowl-A-thons, 5Ks, barbeques, excursions, selling items) (See Figure 4.1). As one member said "we do whatever we can to raise money. . . . It helped send a family to the last Games who probably would not have made it otherwise" (follow-up interview). The first author observed throughout the Games during all focus group sessions,

and at local gatherings after the event, that Florida team members continued to collaborate and seek ways to make a difference by reaching out to the community, companies, and individuals. In summary, creating event related social events and producing ancillary events helps to build a community, which leads to individuals developing boarder identities. These identities inspire and enable event participants to express four attributes of servant leadership: stewardship, building a community, commitment to the growth of people, and persuasion (See Figure 4.1).

Encouraging Themes and Hosting Ceremonies to Foster an Atmosphere of Celebration. The second key element for the creation of liminality is engendering a sense of celebration, which nurtures participants' ability to see they can make a difference. This leads to the practice conceptualization and foresight, two attributes of servant leadership. (Spears, 1998). Celebration can be a source of social imagination and innovation strengthening the social fabric (Chalip, 2006). This was articulated by a donor family member, who said that "your body cannot heal without play. Your mind cannot heal without laughter. Your soul cannot heal without joy . . . this is what the Games does in many ways" (follow-up interview). The Games fosters a fun celebratory atmosphere through creating themes and hosting multiple ceremonies, which adds appeal and highlights the liminoid character of the event (Chalip, 2006). This celebratory space nurtures participants' ability to see they can make a difference through helping them conceptualize and have foresight that tomorrow can be better (See Figure 4.1).

The storytelling atmosphere of the Games acknowledges that the journey of transplantation and organ donation can be difficult while the celebratory atmosphere of the Games recognizes that life is gift, and we are here, so let's celebrate! Visual cues that

indicate a celebration is taking place at the Games include: "T-Shirts, ball caps, jackets, banners, flags, jewelry and miscellaneous theme items . . . [for] every state team . . . . A lot of thought goes into the colors, design, by the volunteer committees" (donor family follow-up interview). As one recipient said, "everybody enjoys seeing the different uniforms, or pins, or hats that have been created. It is a lot of interaction among the team" (follow-up interview). Another recipient recalled how the themed 'party' fostered interaction between states: "Team Maryland had crab hats, the lobster hats. And . . . I . . . had a flamingo hat for Florida. And everybody trades hats" (follow-up interview). All participants expressed that the team themes reinforced a sense of social camaraderie and helped to create a fun atmosphere. This helped to create unified spirit, with many team members chanting "Celebrate, support, educate" (Personal observation).

The sense of celebration was further engendered through the multiple ceremonies at the Games. The Games started with an Opening Ceremony, which all participants compared to the Olympic Games Opening Ceremony. Echoing them, a supporter in a follow-up interview stated: "I think there is no better celebration of life than the opening ceremonies. . . . Each state is announced. They all walk in together. It is a whole procession." First, the recipients walk with their teams holding their state banners and are seated, then the living donors and donor families march in and "there is loud cheering for the donor families by the recipients! At that point, all recipients become our recipients! I have chills just talking about it now" (donor Family follow-up interview). In addition to the Opening Ceremony there is the donor and living donor recognition ceremonies, and the Closing Ceremony, all of which have performances by those touched by the cause. The emphasis on celebration and the experience was illustrated when event organizers willingly changed the donor family

recognition ceremony's schedule to allow a donor mom, a performer, to watch her son's heart recipient compete (YouTube, 2011). These performances by other Games' participants helped attendees see that they, too, can make a difference, which enhanced their ability to dream big dreams and to see how they can make these dreams come true (See Figure 4.1). All participants reminisced about how these "successful stories . . . breed [grow] more people willing to go out there and make that gift available to their loved ones or maybe to strangers" (personal observation – a caregiver's statement). In summary, we found that the Games does have the ability to inspire participants to serve others and form a community of servant leaders dedicated to each other and serving a cause by linking together the mechanisms, outcomes, and impacts of the Games (See Figure 4.1).

Facilitating Formal and Informal Gathering Places to Create a Culture of Storytelling and Safe Spaces. The Games fostered social interaction by creating safe places for participants to tell stories (Chalip, 2006) while also making storytelling a part of the culture. The Games encouraged storytelling through both formal and informal social gatherings, which generated a sense of social camaraderie – one of two key elements for the creation of liminality (Chalip, 2006). For example, one recipient described her Games experience during a follow-up interview:

> It was overwhelming. . . . You laughed you cried. . . . You meet people just like you; you hear their stories and you realize maybe yours is not so bad after all. And you really witness human willpower to overcome and do things.

Also, a caregiver said: "If I had to use one word to summarize the atmosphere of the Transplant Games, I would say emotional. Very emotional" (follow-up interview). The atmosphere of the Games was described by all participants using the words: loving, friendly,

supportive, life altering, energetic, encouraging, uplifting, fun, sad, understanding, warming, and welcoming. The most common question asked during the Games was "Tell me your story?" (personal observation), which occurred at formal social gathering events (tailgate party, sharing sessions, meet and greets), and informal social gatherings (hotel lobbies, waiting for the bus, team dinners). Scholars across disciplines agree story telling is the currency of human contact, which helps individuals, groups, and organizations make sense of their history, beliefs, experiences, and self-constructions; provides a means to reconstruct and supplement memories; creates and sustains cultures; and enhances their ability to address problems (Barge, 2004; Barry, 2007; Boje, 1991).

Storytelling helps to create a collective energy – a liminoid space (Chalip, 2006), providing a safe place for participants to explore their identities. The Games began with a pre-opening tailgate party, and as one recipient recalls "we had our own team table, and then we could go mingle with other teams [and] trade pins" (follow-up interview). Informal interaction throughout the Games was facilitated by trading pins; each state or regional team had a pin. One recipient, who tried to get as many pins as possible, described: "You have to give a pin to get a pin. . . . And from that, you can always start a conversation" (follow-up interview). The pin trading created an open culture, as another recipient, echoing many attendees, stated: "I had no trouble walking up to complete strangers and introducing myself" (NKF, 2010). There were many stories shared at the Games about meeting strangers, and then forming friendships. Several of the participants discussed using social media to keep in touch with people from across the country and to use it as a form of advocacy. As many participants highlighted, informal interactions begin in the airport when you saw another

person wearing a Games T-shirt, and continued on buses to venues, in hotel lobbies, in the bleachers, at dinners, and while touring the host city.

Formal interaction for storytelling at the Games was facilitated at workshops and coffee houses. The majority of participants emphasized "that the diversity in the sense of activities allows people to feel comfortable with whatever they want to do" (recipient follow-up interview). The workshops were one example of this, as these educational sessions were designed to help those touched by the cause by facilitating conversation on topics such as advocacy, healing, understanding, and ways to help others. The workshops brought healing and comfort to donor families, for as one donor family stated: "we were able to build a lot of relationships and friends. We were able to share our story. . . . Other families talked about their children and there were moments of laughter . . . sadness, and tears" (follow-up interview). The coffee houses created "a place for people to relax and talk and get to know one another" (supporter follow-up interview), with an open microphone forum to encourage people to tell their stories. As one recipient stated: "The coffeehouse enabled me to hear stories and better understand the experiences and feelings of donor families" (NKF, 2010). Another formal and informal social gathering space was created around the display of the National Donor Family 350-foot Quilt, called "Patches of Love." NKF provided a patch-making handbook and workshops at the Games to help donor families be creative in designing a patch to honor their loved one. A quilt pinning ceremony was where a "[donor] family member can bring their patch, tell why they chose the theme in memory of their loved one and pin it on the quilt" (donor family follow-up interview), while other attendees were encouraged to be there for support. At any time throughout the Games, as one supporter described, you can visit the Quilt "to read the different stories on the piece of quilt" (Follow-

up interview). These formal and informal spaces for sharing along with the storytelling culture of the Games facilitated opportunities for healing, joy, love, friendship, gratitude, humility, and rejoicing.

The storytelling culture of the Games, as an outcome of the formal and informal social gatherings, helped strengthen participants' awareness of the healing power of service (See Figure 4.1). This was exemplified by a donor family member who became acutely aware at the Games that his identity of being a donor dad was powerful: He could empathize with other donor families, and listen to recipients experiences with unconditional love, as he did his son. Encouraged by the healing power of storytelling, he continued to tell his story when he returned home from the Games and approached his employer, a national organization with offices across the U.S. Telling his story resulted in that organization "trying now to have a workplace partnership that we will share organ donation with the entire company" (follow-up interview). In summary, facilitating formal and informal gathering places creates a culture of storytelling and safe spaces, which strengthens participants awareness of the healing power of service resulting in them being inspired to practice awareness, empathy, healing and listing four characteristics of servant leadership (See Figure 4.1).

Limitations

As with all studies, this investigation did have limitations. The study incorporated results focusing on the Games experience of one team, Team Florida, thus the findings might not generalize to other teams. The pre-post focus group and survey method may have not given time for participants to adequately reflect upon the Games' impacts. We attempted to mitigate this concern by incorporating a longitudinal design where participants could reflect

upon their experiences at a later time, and we could ascertain if these impacts had lasting effects. Due to logistics of an event setting and limited resources, some respondents were unable to participate in all parts of the study; however, using multiple data collection methods permitted more participants to be included in the study. As a qualitative study the data represents the experiences, understanding, and perspectives of participants that might lead to biases (Miles & Huberman, 1994). To mitigate bias the first author collected and analyzed the data, while the second author reviewed codes and interpretations. In addition, conclusions were tested with participants, who confirmed the findings (Erlandson et al., 1993). Last, even though our results revealed a positive link between participants' desire to serve and the mechanisms and processes of the Games, this does not eliminate alternative explanations to the success of the Games or indicate that servant leadership will be effective in all NPOs.

<div align="center">Implications and Future Research Directions</div>

Our study also contributes to the understanding of why people would make the conscious choice to serve others – to serve *first* – by expanding on Greenleaf's (1977) philosophy of servant leadership. Our findings provide supporting evidence that servant leaders make the conscious choice to serve others that begins with the motivation for one's own healing, which is more about self-fulfillment then self-sacrifice or self-denial (Keith, 2008). The servant leaders identified in our study confirm that servant leadership is a way of life that goes beyond actions (what they do) and becomes part of their identity (who they are) (Sendjaya & Sarros, 2002). In addition, our study adds further validation for the practice and applicability of Spear's (1998) 10 characteristics of servant leadership.

Theoretically, we provide an empirical example of how the practice of servant leadership can be inspired in participants as an outcome of attending a cause-related sporting event (see Figure 4.1). Given that the financial resources of NPOs come from stakeholders who do not receive their services (Lewis, 1998), it is critical for NPOs hosting cause-relating sporting events to impact and inspire event participants with no previous association with the cause of a given event in order to develop both financial and human capital (Taylor & Shanka, 2008). Our findings developed a model to help event organizers create, optimize, and then use liminality and *communitas* (Chalip, 2006) to nurture participants' commitment to serve and inspire individuals to become servant leaders adopting the mission of the NPO and championing it. We identified three mechanisms and outcomes of the Games which helped to achieve this: a) creating event related social events and producing ancillary events to build a community, b) encouraging themes and hosting ceremonies to create a culture of storytelling and safe spaces, and c) facilitating formal and informal gathering places to foster an atmosphere of celebration. These outcomes impacted the participants by: a) developing broader identities; b) nurturing participants' abilities to see they can make a difference; and c) strengthening participants' awareness of the healing power of service. It is imperative when designing a cause-related sporting event that organizers understand the connections between event mechanisms, their outcomes, the impact on participants, and their desired end goal of building a community of servant leaders who are dedicated to improving the cause and making tomorrow better (see Figure 4.1).

To date, the applicability of servant leadership in a sport setting has only been examined as an effective coaching behavior. Our study is the first to apply servant leadership in sport in the NPO sector. Future research should further explore the applicability of servant

leadership in the NPO sport sector as well as in other sport environments such as, professional, college, and amateur sports. In addition, researchers need to address challenges of managing these events by exploring the logistics, marketing, finances, services, public relations, site selection and design. Researchers also need to explore how to not only design cause-related sporting events, but also how to design programs, structures, and cultures that help foster continued service and build a community of servant leaders that contributes to the potential lasting social leverage of these events.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this dissertation was to provide systematic and evidence-based insight into how servant leadership could be a crucial success factor in helping *non-profit organizations* (NPOs) hosting cause-related sporting events achieve their missions. Specifically, the overarching research questions were: a) How is servant leadership manifested in the context of cause-related sporting events; and b) Does servant leadership represent a crucial success factor in helping NPOs achieve their mission(s)? In the NPO sector in the U.S., the remarkable growth rate of 76% from 2009 to 2010 saw 1.1 million small-to-mid size NPOs competing for scarce financial and human resources (NCCS, 2011; Pope, Isely, & Asamoa-Tutu, 2009). A significant challenge for NPOs, therefore, is how to generate support from stakeholders other than their immediate constituents – those who need their services (Taylor & Shanka, 2008). One strategy designed to gain a competitive advantage that has become an increasingly popular way of raising funds for the NPO sector is hosting a special event involving some physical activity (Higgins & Lauzon, 2003). Chalip (2006) proposed that event organizers need to leverage the celebratory nature of these events to create lasting social value through recognizing event participants as social resources. Another challenge NPOs face is high volunteer and leadership attrition rates (Eisner, Grimm, Maynard, & Washburn, 2008; Hustinx, 2010; Tierney, 2006). Thus, this research sought to address the human capital problem by exploring these events' ability to inspire participants to become servant leaders volunteering for the cause and championing it.

The first study sought to discover if servant leadership is a viable philosophy to help NPOs solve their human capital problem through a systematic literature review of applied

studies. Servant leadership is a philosophy articulated by Greenleaf (1977) as a way of life, starting with "the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve *first*" (p. 7), which recognizes that human beings are the best resource to create a better tomorrow. Although servant leadership has been accepted by leading organizational management scholars, received significant attention in the popular press, and the Greenleaf Center has been consulting and sharing the philosophy since 1964 (Greenleaf Center, 2011), critics still argue that servant leadership is too idealistic, impractical, and difficult to operationalize (Wong & Davey, 2007). Other scholars claim there is lack of support by well-designed research for defining servant leadership as a distinct construct (Brumback, 1999; Farling, Stone, & Winston, 1999). However, the systematic literature review identified 39 applied studies that illustrate the philosophy of servant leadership is applicable in a variety of cultures, contexts, and applied organizational settings. Thus, this systematic literature review validated servant leadership as a viable and valuable philosophy, and therefore, servant leadership was used to inform our subsequent methodology for Chapters III and IV. Similar to the authors of these applied studies, Greenleaf's (1977), Spears' (1995, 1998, 2004), and Laub's (1999) conceptual frameworks of servant leadership were used to guide the investigations, which applied the philosophy in the context of cause-related sporting events.

Second, a qualitative investigation of the leadership style of the founder of a cause-related sporting event was conducted to understand how this leadership style motivated volunteers. Up to now, there has been little discourse on motivations of stakeholders and the leadership style contributing to the success of cause-related sporting events hosted by NPOs. The 25th National Kidney Foundation (NKF) Surf Festival, a cause-related sporting event benefiting patients of kidney disease, was selected as an extreme case (Pratt, Rockman, &

Kaufman, 2006) because of the longevity of the leader and volunteers, the unique sport

setting, and success of the event. Results revealed that the founder aligned with Greenleaf's

(1977) philosophical conceptualization of a servant leader and Laub's (1999) model of

servant leadership by: (a) being a servant first; (b) displaying unconditional love and a moral

calling to serve; (c) inspiring others to serve through his love; and (d) committing to helping

others, not to the organization, while having a positive impact on the least privileged in

society. Next, the study identified three mechanisms of servant leadership that NPOs can tap

to cultivate long-term volunteer motivation: (a) generate a shared vision dedicated to helping

others; (b) build a caring and loving community; and (c) create the freedom and resources for

followers to become servants themselves. Thus, by exploring the effects of the founder's

servant leadership, this study addressed the overall research question of how servant

leadership is manifested in the context of cause-related sporting event. An empirical example

of servant leadership is provided that demonstrates how the philosophy can lead to the

development of long-term volunteers who then become servant leaders. If servant leadership

enhances volunteer motivation, as these findings suggest, the incorporation of servant

leadership models by NPOs hosting cause-related sporting events could provide a viable

solution to address the high volunteer and leadership attrition rates plaguing the NPO sector.

 Third, a qualitative study was conducted to explore if a cause-related sporting event

can inspire participants to become servant leaders, and if so, how does the event achieve this?

The U.S. National Kidney Foundation (NKF) Transplant Games, a four-day Olympic style

competition for transplant recipients, was selected as the context for this investigation

because it unites the greater transplant community in a collaborative effort for the benefit of

organ donation. Specifically, this case study examined the participation of Team Florida,

because the researcher, by virtue of being a family donor and Florida resident, was able to be a team member, which allowed her to attend events and helped to establish a personal connection with participants, increasing trust and access.

In synthesizing the findings, a model was developed to describe a cause-related sporting event's ability to inspire participants to become servant leaders (See Chapter IV, Figure 4.1). The model starts with the mechanisms of the Games designed to generate a specific community-level outcome, which helped to inspire participants to serve others and to build a community of servant leaders. Three mechanisms were identified that led to community-level outcomes: a) creating event-related social events and producing ancillary events to build a community, b) encouraging themes and hosting ceremonies to foster an atmosphere of celebration, and c) facilitating formal and informal gathering places to create a culture of storytelling and safe spaces. These mechanisms and their outcomes then generated individual-level impacts on participants, which helped them develop servant leadership by: a) developing broader identities; b) nurturing participants' abilities to see they can make a difference; and c) strengthening participants' awareness of the healing power of service. As depicted in the model, event participants made the conscious choice to serve others, as evident in their self-constructions (who they are) and their actions (what they do), which were representative of Spears' (1998) 10 characteristics of servant leadership. One year after the Games, the participants of this study were still a community of servant leaders seeking to make a difference by serving others and championing the cause.

Thus, empirical evidence is provided of how a cause-related sporting event can be designed to foster the development of servant leadership in event participants. If NPOs hosting a cause-related sporting event can foster the development of servant leadership in

event participants, as the findings suggest, event participants as servant leaders can help

NPOs achieve their mission(s) by carrying the 'torch' of the event through their

communities, and continuing to spread the message of the cause long after these events are

over. Therefore, as related to the second overall research question for this dissertation,

servant leadership can represent a crucial success factor in helping NPOs achieve their

mission(s) when event participants as servant leaders take the goals of the event and ensure

they are carried through year-around.

Collectively, this research illustrated how servant leadership is manifested in the

context of cause-related sport, how it can help NPOs achieve their mission(s), and therefore,

how it can be a critical successful factor for NPOs by generating servant leaders who are

dedicated to serving the cause 365 days a year. These investigations provide further

supporting evidence for the applicability of servant leadership, specifically into the NPO

sport context. In congruence with Greenleaf's (1977) sentiment that human beings are the

best resource to build a better society and Chalip's (2006) identification of event participants

as social resources, this research demonstrates that through the practice and development of

servant leadership at cause-related sporting events, the leaders of these events as well as the

participants can create lasting social change extending beyond the event as a result of their

continued commitment to serve others. Finally, the model developed in Chapter IV (see

Figure 4.1) can assist NPO event organizers in designing cause-related sporting events that

can create larger, sustainable communities to work for the mission of the organization.

Although it is said nothing lasts forever, these cause-related sporting events that have

embraced the philosophy of servant leadership are continuing to make a difference. These

events not only demonstrate the power and the gift of serving others, but they are also

celebrations of life and talents. They encourage participants to develop new and lasting relationships and experience the joys of competition, bring hope to individuals, and connect people and organizations. Through the practice and development of servant leadership, these events have changed lives and attitudes forever. Thus, this research shows that servant leadership is an effective philosophy that can help NPOs solve their human capital problem by inspiring event participants to serve others and become servant leaders. As such, the practice and development of servant leadership can be a crucial success factor in helping NPOs hosting cause-related sporting events achieve their missions.

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APPENDIX A

Sample Questions

Pre-Event

- What do you perceive to be the main benefits participants receive from taking part in the Transplant Games?

- What drew you to being involved in the Transplant Games? What motivated you to be involved? How has being involved in the Transplant Games impacted you personally?

- Have you been looking forward to this event?? What about this event has gotten you excited? What things have you looked forward to the most? Is there anything you are worried or nervous about?

- How is the Transplant Games organized? Describe the event and the key goals of event.

- What is the role of you team in the Transplant Games? Describe your team. How many members? Who are they? What is their contribution as team members?

- Describe the interaction of team with your local community.

- How do you include others in the event and bring awareness to the event and cause?

- How have you been involved in fundraising for the Transplant Games? Please explain what you have done to fundraise.

- How has being involved with NKF Transplant Games impacted your team as a whole and its individual members on a personal level, both professionally and personally?

- How do you think the Transplant Games will change your life?

Post-Event Questions

- How did being involved in the Transplant Games make you feel about yourself? Did you meet a lot of new people here?

- What things about this experience have you enjoyed the most? Was there anything you did not enjoy?

- Did you have certain goals you hoped to achieve at the Transplant Games? Did you achieve them?

- What skills or knowledge did you gain by participating in the Transplant Games?

- How do you think the Transplant Games will change your life?

- How would you describe the atmosphere or culture of the NKF Transplant Games?

- How do you think your team members have changed from their participation?

- How does the atmosphere or culture of the team compare to other organizations that you have been involved in?

- If you were responsible for hosting NKF Transplant Games, what you change? How do you think the games can be improved and how would you go about it?

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