Examining Gender Differences of Servant Leadership: An Analysis of the Agentic and Communal Properties of the Servant Leadership Questionnaire

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Abstract

This study examined the use of five servant leadership dimensions including altruistic calling, emotional healing, wisdom, persuasive mapping, and organizational stewardship by male and female servant leaders. Staff members (368) employed in county government offices across a Midwestern state were sampled using the Servant Leadership Questionnaire and a series of demographic questions. Results indicated males and females equally and effectively utilized both communal and agentic servant leadership dimensions. These findings contest prevailing gender role stereotypes in leadership.

Introduction

The conceptualization of servant leadership has inspired many thought-provoking essays describing a service-first leadership orientation counter to most other perspectives in the field (Buchanan, 2007; Greenleaf, 1970). Spears (1995) identified ten characteristics of servant leaders, which, at the time, was the first multi-dimensional model of servant leadership. Barbuto and Wheeler (2006) clarified the construct and operationalized servant leadership for research with the development of the Servant Leadership Questionnaire. A plethora of research opportunities of servant leadership have resulted from this operationalization.

Other scholars have followed with servant leadership constructs and measures (Liden, Wayne, Zhao, & Henderson, 2008; Sendjaya, Sarros, & Santora, 2008).

For the purpose of this research *gender* is the appropriate term, rather than sex, because this study is testing the socialized difference that make up agentic and communal behaviors.

As the concept of servant leadership pervades the field identifying the nature and development of the construct offers timely and necessary lines of inquiry. Avolio, Walumbwa, and Weber (2009) suggested that servant leadership be examined from a follower-centric perspective in an effort to more clearly differentiate servant leadership from similar leadership constructs such as transformational.

Workplace issues related to sex and gender have not been empirically evaluated in the servant leadership literature. Several scholars have examined sex differences for other leadership constructs with mixed results (Eagly & Johnson, 1990; Eagly & Karau, 1991). Others have tested sex differences for full range leadership behaviors (Antonakis, Avolio, & Sivasubramaniam, 2003; Barbuto, Fritz, Matkin, & Marx, 2007), leader-member exchange relationships (Pelled & Xin, 2000), and sources of work motivation (Barbuto & Gifford, 2008). Other studies have used dispositional, biological and psychological variables in comparative examinations of male and female gender role leadership behaviors (Eagly & Carli, 2004). Barbuto et al. (2007) investigated the use of influence tactics and found that less educated female leaders used more pressure influence tactics than less educated male leaders although difference weakened with increased education.

Those few studies that have been conducted to date have tested the impacts of servant leadership on positive organizational outcomes (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006; Neubert, Kacmar, Carlson, Chonko, & Roberts, 2008). The antecedents of servant leadership have not been tested. Among the plethora of leadership constructs that have been tested in the organizational behavior and applied psychology field, servant leadership is among the few leadership constructs that has yet to be tested for its gender roles and differences. Scholars have called for new research testing followers' perceptions of gender role behaviors of servant leaders (Barbuto et al., 2007). The present study tests these sex differences by examining agentic and communal servant leadership behaviors against positive organizational and follower outcomes.

Servant Leadership

Greenleaf (1970) originally conceptualized servant leaders as those who displaced self-interest in lieu of prioritizing the needs of those being led. Servant leaders bring a service-oriented approach to leadership that is manifested by enabling followers to grow and develop. Servant leaders have been described as having an ability to invoke organizational wisdom, fold experience and knowledge into decision-making to make pro-social choices and also possessing many of the

characteristics of transformational leaders but moving beyond those behaviors by aligning motives and values with followers (Bass, 2000; Bierly, Kessler, & Christensen, 2000).

More recently, scholars have sought to delineate the behaviors associated with servant leadership. Spears (1995) identified ten characteristics of a servant leader – listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to growth of people and community building. Farling, Stone, and Winston (1999) conceived servant leadership as a hierarchical model operating as cyclical processes, which consist of behavioral (vision, service) and relational (influence, credibility, trust) components. Other scholars have made distinctions between servant leadership and other constructs (Smith, Montagno, & Kuzmenko, 2004).

Ehrhart (2004) developed a measure and tested leadership's role in predicting organizational citizenship behavior. The measure appeared to be based on unpublished work and some of the earliest works on the construct. Barbuto and Wheeler (2006) clarified the servant leadership construct with a comprehensive critique of the literature and developed a measure for a revised construct. Two subsequent measures were developed offering alternative constructs to the seminal work (Liden et al., 2008; Sendjaya et al., 2008). Barbuto and Wheeler (2006) identified five dimensions of servant leadership: altruistic calling, emotional healing, wisdom, persuasive mapping, and organizational stewardship.

Altruistic Calling

Bass (2000) suggested that one of the key differences between transformational leaders and servant leaders was the intent of the leader. Servant leaders are likely to exhibit more altruistic motives. Greenleaf's (1970) original conception of servant leaders argued that a conscious choice is made to serve others, which was contrary to the notion that leaders pursue such positions with the intention of leading others. Barbuto and Wheeler (2006) operationally defined altruistic calling as having both desire and willingness to put aside self-interest in order to benefit followers.

Emotional Healing

Spears (1995) conceptualized healing as the ability of an individual to provide emotional support when another individual fails at a task, dream or relationship. Other scholars have argued that the ability to provide emotional healing to employees is not only a powerful skill for leaders to maintain but also provides for the emotional stability and support for the entire organization (Dacher, 1999; Weymes, 2003). Barbuto and Wheeler (2006) operationalized emotional healing as having the ability to recognize when and how to foster the healing process within others.

Wisdom

Servant leaders have been described as categorically wise (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2002). Bierly et al. (2000) argued that servant leaders are able to monitor surroundings, understand implications of happenings and anticipate consequences of actions. This ability to invoke wisdom in a variety of settings allows servant leaders to make both altruistic choices and the best possible decision at any given time (Greenleaf, 1970). Barbuto and Wheeler (2006) drew from the concepts of awareness and foresight and defined wisdom as the combination of height of knowledge and utility.

Persuasive Mapping

The ability to influence others has regularly been regarded as a cornerstone of the ability to lead (Yukl, 2006). Leaders use both sources of power and influence tactics as a means to persuade followers in one direction or another (Yukl & Falbe, 1991). Falbe and Yukl (1992) tested the effectiveness of influence tactics and found that rational influence behaviors were more effective than forceful influence tactics. Mapping lends itself to an inspirational, futuristic approach to rational influence. Barbuto and Wheeler (2006) argued that leaders who utilize persuasive mapping are able to map issues and conceptualize greater possibilities and are compelling when articulating these opportunities. Effective persuasive mapping encourages others to visualize the organization's future in such a way that is persuasive and offers compelling reasons to get followers to engage.

Organizational Stewardship

Understanding that organizations do not operate within a vacuum and instead can have both positive and negative impacts upon society, servant leaders prepare individuals within an organization to sustain positive effects beyond the organization (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2002). Pro-social and altruistic behaviors have been widely researched within the field of psychology where findings have indicated that such behaviors are often indicative of an individual's attitude towards a situation and can have subsequent effects on observers (Batson, Chang, Orr, & Rowland, 2002). Barbuto and Wheeler (2006) defined organizational stewardship as extending leadership beyond the organization by taking responsibility for the well-being of the community and ensuring that strategies and decisions undertaken reflect the commitment to give back to a larger community.

Leadership and Gender Roles

With increased gender representation in upper management, women should experience fewer hurdles for advancement (Federal Glass Ceiling Commission, 1995). However, Eagly and Carli (2007) likened a woman's path to leadership as traversing through a labyrinth with unexpected turns, dead ends, roadblocks and

confusion. Ely (1995) posited that socially constructed views of female behavior were not congruent with leadership positions. Counter-productive social constructions have led to negative associations with female leadership behaviors as women try to balance behaviors perceived to be more masculine such as authoritative, confident and motivated with socially constructed feminine behaviors such as caring, compassionate and kind (Eagly, Makhijani, & Klonsky, 1992). Other work has demonstrated little to no sex difference (Barbuto, Fritz, & Plummer, 2003). Barbuto et al. (2007) reported gender differences only when moderated by education and age.

Social role theory suggested that individuals would behave in accordance with preconceived notions about the roles that individuals occupy (Eagly & Johnson, 1990). Categorically, individuals, who can be classified into defined roles, will adjust behaviors based upon the norms of that role. Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, and Engen (2003) argued that leaders tend to simultaneously conform to the defined roles both within an organizational hierarchy and within societal gender roles. Gender roles refer to "shared expectations (about appropriate qualities and behaviors) that apply to individuals on the basis of their socially identified gender" (Eagly, 1987, p. 12). Within the context of social role theory, females have largely been considered to fulfill more supportive and interpersonal roles whereas males are considered more likely to fulfill functional roles such as the primary breadwinner and negotiator (Eagly, 1987). Gender roles have an implicit manifestation in the functionality of an organization (Gutek & Morasch, 1982).

Gender roles and stereotypes have been a widely researched topic (Quinn, Macrae, & Bodenhausen, 2007). Research has generalized that most individuals possess assumptions that are biased by gender specific stereotypes (Ely, 1995). This means that certain behaviors are expected based on the gender of leaders and followers. While this pattern of assumptions has been confirmed, the research that would warrant these assumptions has produced mixed results (Barbuto et al., 2007; Eagly et al., 2003; Eagly & Johnson, 1990). This has led to a call for research testing the socialized aspects of gender specific behaviors, which led to differentiations between agentic and communal gender role behaviors (Eagly, 1987).

Agentic behaviors refer to give-and-take tendencies (Eagly, 1987). An individual who displays agentic behaviors is likely to be described as assertive and would utilize resources as leverage for obtaining a goal. Agentic behaviors include self-sufficiency, independence, dominant, aggressive and task-oriented (Carli, 2001; Eagly, 1987; Eagly et al., 2003). Men are more likely to display agentic behaviors than their female counterparts (Eagly et al., 2003).

Communal behaviors refer to a concern with interpersonal relationships (Eagly, 1987). An individual who displays communal behaviors is likely to be described as caring, empathetic and nurturing. Communal behaviors include showing sympathy, socially oriented, helpful and expressive (Carli, 2001). Eagly et al.

(2003) found that women are more likely to display communal behaviors than their male counterparts.

Transformational leadership refers to the leader's ability to enhance followers' performance beyond personal and the leader's expectations (Bass, 1985). Transformational leadership behaviors include individualized consideration (an identification of the personal needs of each follower), intellectual stimulation (seeking to encourage innovative thinking from followers), inspirational motivation (assisting followers in achieving levels of performance thought to be impossible), and idealized influence (inspiring a charismatic admiration and emulation of the leader by having a genuine purpose and confident vision) (Bass, 1985). In the most recent factor analysis of transformational leadership behaviors, the idealized influence scale was divided into attributed (eliciting respect and pride from followers because of the association with the leader) and behavior (inspiring a buy-in effect to the organization's mission through verbal and non-verbal communication behaviors) (Avolio & Bass, 2002). Judge and Piccolo (2004) examined 87 studies in a meta-analysis and found that leaders who scored higher on the four transformational behaviors were rated as more effective by their followers. These meta-results indicated that transformational leadership consistently led to positive organizational outcomes.

Transactional leadership behaviors are characterized by the use of contingencies to reinforce desirable behavior (Avolio, 1999). Transactional leadership behaviors include passive management by exception (using punishment or penalty in response to deviations from desired performance standards), active management by exception (actively looking for deviations from desired standards and taking preventive actions before mistakes are made), and contingent reward (using incentives and other rewards in exchange for meeting desired goals) (Bass, 1996). Finally, laissez-faire leadership is classified as the absence of leadership. This sedentary approach to leadership includes behaviors such as ignoring problems and needs, an inability to recognize followers' achievements and an overall lack of responsibility for management duties (Bass, 1996; Yukl, 2006). This category of leadership is described as the most ineffective and passive form of leadership (Avolio, 1999).

Eagly et al. (2003) used social role theory as a theoretical basis and hypothesized that female leaders were more likely to be seen as transformational leaders than males. The behaviors associated with transactional leadership and laissez-faire leadership have distinct linkages to the masculine behaviors commonly associated with agentic behaviors (Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt, 2001). Eagly et al. (2003) reported that gender roles have spillover effects into the practice of leadership within organizations. Female leaders scored significantly higher in the use of transformational leadership behaviors (with the exception of idealized influence-behavior scale) and the use contingent rewards. Male leaders displayed significantly higher use of passive management by exception, active management by exception and laissez-faire leadership. In contrast with transactional leadership

behaviors and laissez-faire leadership, transformational leadership behaviors have shown to produce extra effort from followers as well as increase satisfaction with and perceived effectiveness of the leader (Judge & Piccolo, 2004). Eagly et al. (2003) examined these outcomes across sexes and reported female transformational leaders scored significantly higher on effectiveness, extra effort and satisfaction scales. Taken together, considerable evidence indicates that leadership behaviors may be influenced by agentic and communal dynamics.

Implications for Servant Leadership

This study tests the behavioral differences servant leadership between males and females. As discussed, previous research has indicated somewhat mixed results when analyzing leadership behavioral differences between males and female leaders. In this study, followers' perceptions of leaders were examined for behavioral differences of male and female servant leaders as well as the extent that male or female leaders were considered to be more effective.

Communal Servant Leadership Behaviors

Using Eagly's (1987) differentiation between communal behaviors, which are most commonly associated with females, the servant leadership behaviors that classify as communal behaviors are altruistic calling, emotional healing, and organizational stewardship.

Altruistic calling implies a selfless motivation for engaging in leadership activities. Helping behaviors are often associated with an altruistic person (Batson et al., 2002). Such behaviors tend to direct the leader's attention to others within the community or organization. Female leaders are expected to display significantly higher altruistic calling behaviors than male leaders (H1a).

Emotional healing behaviors indicate an empathetic approach toward followers. Leaders who utilize emotional healing are able to sense the emotions and feelings of other individuals. Such ability is often associated with females. Eagly (1987) stated that women are often expected to care for the emotional needs of followers. Female leaders are expected to display significantly higher emotional healing behaviors than male leaders (H1b).

Organizational stewardship turns the leader's attention to a focus on the community. Stewardship implies preparation for contributions to a larger cause (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2002). Other research on organizational stewardship argued that leaders should be concerned with their legacy and the legacy of the organization within the immediate community and the larger society (Coleman, 1998). Eagly (1987) stated "the caring and nurturing aspect of the female role may also be extended to some extent to the problems of the larger community" (p. 44). Female leaders are expected to display significantly higher organizational stewardship behaviors than male leaders (H1c).

Agentic Servant Leadership Behaviors

As previously discussed, agentic leadership behaviors are aligned with a task-focused orientation, assertiveness, calmness in crises, and strength (Eagly et al., 2003). Such behaviors have been commonly aligned with behaviors displayed by male leaders. Using Eagly's (1987) differentiation between agentic behaviors, which are most commonly associated with females, the servant leadership behaviors that classify as agentic behaviors are wisdom and persuasive mapping.

Wisdom is a combination of institutional knowledge as well as the ability to apply such knowledge in appropriate situations (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2002). The ability to apply wisdom from a leadership position within an organization has been found to be most often attributed to male leaders (Eagly & Johnson, 1990). Male leaders are expected to display significantly higher wisdom than female leaders (H2a).

Persuasive mapping implies and ability to forecast the future and prepare an organization to sustain a course to achieve its goals (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2002). Such skills lend themselves to task-oriented behaviors where the successful completion of one task provides a step forward to the next task and onward to a final goal. Task-oriented behavior is commonly associated with male leaders (Eagly, 1987). Male leaders are expected to display significantly higher persuasive mapping behaviors than female leaders (H2b).

Outcomes

Outcomes associated with the use of communal and agentic leadership behaviors are also of interest. Eagly et al.'s (2003) meta-analysis found that leaders who used more communal behaviors scored higher levels of satisfaction from followers, stimulated greater levels of extra effort from followers and were rated as more effective leaders. Leaders who use communal servant leadership behaviors are expected to receive significantly higher ratings of satisfaction than leaders who use agentic servant leadership behaviors (H3a). Leaders who use communal servant leadership behaviors are expected to receive significantly higher ratings of extra effort than leaders who use agentic servant leadership behaviors (H3b). Leaders who use communal servant leadership behaviors are expected to receive significantly higher ratings of effectiveness than leaders who use agentic servant leadership behaviors (H3c). Ratings of satisfaction, extra effort, and effectiveness were judged by followers.

Methods

Data were collected from 75 elected community leaders and 388 raters. Leaders served as treasurers in their respective counties and were elected by eligible voters in those specific counties. Sixty-five percent of the leaders were female with an average age of 51, where 50% had earned a bachelor's degree and 20% had

earned an advanced degree. Raters were colleagues or subordinates of the leader. Fifty-three percent of the raters were female with an average age of 46 years, where 42% of the raters had earned a bachelor's degree and less than 10% had earned an advanced degree. Leaders' scores were matched with their individual followers to form a total of 368 usable leader-follower dyads.

Servant Leadership

Servant leadership behaviors were calculated using the Servant Leadership Questionnaire (SLQ) (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006). Followers scored leaders on the SLQ instrument. Followers were assured anonymity and returned instruments directly to the primary investigator via United States mail. Each of the five servant leadership subscales achieved acceptable reliability based on Cronbach's alphas ($\alpha > .82$). A sample item from the altruistic calling subscale includes "This person puts my best interests ahead of his/her own." A sample item from the emotional healing subscale is "This person is one I would turn to if I had a personal trauma." A sample item from the wisdom subscale is "This person is good at anticipating the consequences of decisions." A sample item from the persuasive mapping subscale is "This person encourages me to dream big dreams about the organization." A sample item from the organizational stewardship scale is "This person believes that the organization needs to play a moral role in society."

Outcomes

The outcomes affected by leadership behaviors were calculated using the outcomes scales of extra effort, satisfaction, and effectiveness from the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (Avolio & Bass, 2002). Eagly et al.'s (2003) meta-analysis of sex differences across full-range leadership behaviors also analyzed these positive outcome variables. Followers' ratings of leaders on each of these three subscales were used in the analysis. All three subscales achieved acceptable reliability with Cronbach's alphas of $\alpha = .82$ and higher. A sample item from the extra effort subscale is "This person gets others to do more than what they expected to do." A sample item from the satisfaction subscale is "This person uses methods of leadership that are satisfying." A sample item from the effectiveness subscale is "This person is effective at meeting others' job-related needs."

Gender

Leaders self-reported gender as part of a demographic profile that included age and education. Leaders were asked to choose either male or female to report their gender.

Results

Descriptive statistics and the ANOVA results between groups on the five servant leadership behaviors are reported in Tables 1 and 2, respectively. Results indicate that none of the hypothesized relationships were significant. Therefore, both male and female servant leaders displayed equal levels of both communal and agentic servant leadership behaviors.

Additionally, no main effects were found on any of the three outcome variables between leaders whose dominant leadership behaviors were communal leadership behaviors as opposed to agentic leadership behaviors. Results of the ANOVA for outcome variables and dominant leadership behavior are reported in Table 3.

TABLE 1. *Descriptive Statistics for Servant Leadership Behaviors and Outcomes Among Male and Female Leaders*

	Men (n=129)		Women (n=239)	
	M	SD	M	SD
Altruistic Calling	2.68	0.67	2.76	0.80
Emotional Healing	2.45	0.83	2.71	0.97
Wisdom	3.00	0.72	3.25	0.72
Persuasive Mapping	2.50	0.59	2.58	0.81
Organizational Stewardship	3.15	0.52	3.12	0.74
Extra Effort	7.75	1.66	8.58	2.32
Satisfaction	6.17	1.34	6.48	1.49
Effectiveness	9.09	1.87	9.74	2.10

TABLE 2. *Analysis of variance for Altruistic Calling, Emotional Healing, Wisdom, Persuasive Mapping and Organizational Stewardship*

		F				
Source	df	AC	EH	Wisdom	PM	OS
Gender	1	0.11	0.72	1.51	0.12	0.02
Within Group	367	(0.63)	(0.94)	(0.51)	(0.64)	(0.54)

Note. Values in parentheses represent mean square errors.
AC=Altruistic Calling, EH=Emotional Healing, PM=Persuasive Mapping, OS=Organizational Stewardship

TABLE 3. *Analysis of variance for Extra Effort, Satisfaction and Effectiveness*

Source	df	F		
		Extra Effort	Satisfaction	Effectiveness
Dom Behav	1	1.50	0.54	1.02
Within Group	367	(5.33)	(2.20)	(4.39)

Note. Values in parentheses represent mean square errors. Dom Behav=Dominant Behavior

Discussion

This study tested the gender differences in servant leadership and found no significant differences. This means that males and females are equally capable of utilizing both agentic and communal leadership behaviors. This lack of difference is counter to prior work that found agentic and communal behavioral differences for transformational leadership (Eagly et al., 2003). This disparity in findings speaks to the credibility of separating transformational from servant leadership (Barbuto & Wheeler. 2006; Smith et al., 2004). Gender differences have previously been found with transformational leadership but were not found with servant leadership in this study.

Altruistic calling, emotional healing and organizational stewardship were operationalized as communal behaviors for this study. Wisdom and persuasive mapping were operationalized as agentic behaviors for this study. Since results found no significant differences it is evident that male leaders are equally capable of effectively exercising altruistic calling, emotional healing and organizational stewardship behaviors, which would be more commonly associated with female gender roles. Likewise, female leaders are equally capable of effectively exercising both wisdom and persuasive mapping, which would be more commonly associated with male gender roles. The lack of gender differences speaks well to the potential of all leaders to develop capacity to exhibit each of the five dimensions of servant leadership, regardless of their agentic or communal properties. This also provides reason for caution in making agentic and communal assumptions about leaders.

These findings are counter to prior work testing the spillover effect of gender role norms to positions of leadership. It appears that servant leaders are able to effectively embrace counter-stereotypes often associated with gender norms (Eagly et al., 2003). It is possible that the altruistic nature of servant leaders allows these leaders to serve followers in the best possible manner, which leads to a reduction in the implementation of standard gender roles while in positions of

leadership. This assertion requires empirical inquiry before generalized beyond the population sampled in this study.

Most importantly, no differences were found on the outcome variables of extra effort, satisfaction and effectiveness, which indicate that servant leaders are efficiently using both agentic and communal behaviors to achieve these outcomes. The lack of findings appears to contradict prior research that found that communal leaders were rated significantly higher when compared with agentic leaders (Eagly et al., 2003). One explanation of this finding may be that the altruistic motive of servant leadership diminishes the negative effects previously associated with agentic behaviors. However, this conclusion would need to be tested to determine if altruism neutralizes these relationships. Additionally, the ability of both male and female servant leaders to find an acceptable balance between agentic and communal behaviors may explain the trend towards positive outcomes.

This sample included more female than male leaders. While homogeneity of variance tests found the groups to be acceptable for comparison, a sample with more equal male representation could strengthen this line of research. The sample was drawn from public officials who, by the nature of the position, have accepted a role serving the public. Further investigation drawing samples from a variety of vocations would merit future inquiry.

This work demonstrated that men and women have equal ability to develop and demonstrate both agentic and communal characteristics of servant leadership as measured on the Servant Leadership Questionnaire. The two more recent measures of servant leadership constructs should also be tested for any of these agentic or communal patterns. An important line for future research is to consider a multi-study, multi-population research design to fully access gender differences of servant leadership across a variety of contexts. Such an endeavor may provide a more in-depth analysis of the gender differences or lack thereof described in this study.

Conclusion

This study examined the servant leadership behaviors employed by men and women in the workplace by delineating between agentic servant leadership behaviors and communal servant leadership behaviors. The effect of agentic and communal leadership behaviors on followers' satisfaction with leadership, extra effort and ratings of leader's effectiveness was also examined. No differences were found between men and women in the utilization of communal and agentic servant leadership behaviors. This result contradicts many previous findings on leadership gender roles, which have reported that men utilized more agentic leadership behaviors and women utilized more communal leadership behaviors (Eagly et al., 2003). Additionally, followers did not discriminate on the outcomes

of extra effort, satisfaction and effectiveness regardless of the leaders' use of agentic servant leadership behaviors or communal servant leadership behaviors.

Servant leadership performed differently than transformational leadership when tested for agentic and communal properties. This difference warrants additional work to replicate these findings and also to test other leadership constructs such as LMX, authentic leadership, shared leadership and charismatic leadership for their agentic and communal influences. Future research may also test multiple leadership constructs together in the same research design to account for possible differences between constructs, their antecedents, and impacts. Avolio et al. (2009) argued that research should seek to differentiate servant leadership from other leadership constructs.

The present study contributes to this research direction for servant leadership and offers insight into the uniqueness of servant leadership. To the extent that the focus of servant leaders is on the needs and concerns of the followers, the altruistic nature of servant leadership that sets it apart from other leadership models allows leaders to step out of gender role norms and provide the most appropriate leadership for followers.

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